



## **Relationships and Sex Education Policy**

“Today’s children and young people are growing up in an increasingly complex world and living their lives seamlessly on and offline. This presents many positive and exciting opportunities, but also challenges and risks. In this environment, children and young people need to know how to be safe and healthy, and how to manage their academic, personal and social lives in a positive way.

This is why we have made Relationships and Sex Education compulsory in all secondary schools.” (Department of Education)

The Governing Body of St Paul’s Academy has adopted and worked within this frame for teaching since 2020. The Catholic school is called to witness with joy and simplicity to the goodness of each and every person, especially the vulnerable and disadvantaged. The school is called to be a beacon and witness to God’s gracious gift of mercy shown us by the actions and words of Jesus Christ who is the Way, the Truth and the Life. Christ is at the centre of the Catholic school. To have a strong Catholic identity is not something mysterious or difficult. It is demonstrated in familiarity with daily prayer, symbols such as the crucifix, a chapel or place of prayer and relationships of respect and understanding. It is these relationships of respect and understanding which underpin our Sex and Relationships policy. Effective sex and relationship education is essential if young people are to make responsible and well-informed decisions about their lives.

The objective of Relationship and Sex education is to help and support young people through their physical, emotional and moral development. A successful programme designed to safeguard and support pupils as they explore key (age appropriate) topics and issues throughout their academic career. Helping young people learn to respect themselves and others and move with confidence from childhood through adolescence into adulthood. The aim of the programme is to give our young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships. It should enable them to know what a healthy relationship looks like and what makes a good friend, a good colleague and a successful marriage or other type of committed relationship.

As a Catholic Academy sponsored by the Archdiocese of Southwark it is our responsibility to provide an education in sexuality which reflects the centrality of Christ and his love and contributes to growth in faith. However, we also need to be mindful of our unique status as a Catholic school which allocates a third of its places exclusively to the local community. We also need to reflect the cultural and ethnic diversity of our student population and be aware of the many different cultures which are represented in our community. With this in mind, we will offer a programme of activities which will inform and equip each student to make the best choices personally, morally and spiritually, with wisdom and compassion. As outlined by the DfE all teaching and resources will be age-appropriate, building knowledge and life skills over time in a way that prepares pupils for issues they will soon face. They will likely focus on:

- Different types of relationships, including friendships, family relationships, dealing with strangers, intimate relationships, including an understanding and acceptance of who they are.
- How to recognise, understand and build healthy relationships, including self-respect and respect for others, commitment, tolerance, boundaries and consent, and how to manage conflict, and also how to recognise unhealthy relationships;

- How relationships may affect health and wellbeing, including mental health; • healthy relationships and safety online; and
- factual knowledge, at secondary school, around sex, sexual health and sexuality, set firmly within the context of relationships of all denominations.

Sex and Relationships education will be delivered through R.E and Science, Pastoral teams, the Inclusion Team, and at times the School Nurse.

## **Sex and Relationships in the R.E Curriculum**

**In Key Stage 3 the following are addressed:**

- New beginnings
- Friendships
- Respect and empathy for others
- Relationships and moral decisions
- Conscience
- Making Choices
- Acting without prejudice

**In Key Stage 4 the study of Christian Ethics allows students to:**

- Develop their knowledge, skills and understanding of religion by exploring the significance and impact of beliefs, teachings, sources, practices, ways of life and forms of expressing meaning.
- Express their personal responses and informed insights on fundamental questions and issues about identity, belonging, meaning, purpose, truth, values and commitments. Topics which are addressed directly include:
  - The Right to Life Abortion Views on when life begins the status of the embryo/foetus Pro-life and pro-choice arguments Alternatives to abortion
  - Fertility Treatments Artificial insemination – by husband (AIH) or donor (DEI/AID) In vitro fertilisation (IVF) Surrogacy (as an alternative to standard fertility treatments)
  - Gene Therapy and Genetic Engineering Saviour siblings Somatic cell therapy Designer babies
  - Cloning Reproductive cloning Stem cell (therapeutic) cloning
  - Marriage and Sexual Relationships Nature and purpose of marriage Human sexuality and sexual relationships (all sexual orientations and sexual identity) Chastity and sexual relationships outside marriage, including adultery. The legal age of consent for sexual intercourse. The role of Contraception. The law surrounding Female Genital mutilation (FGM). Within each of these topics,

students will explore Christian views with focus on the Roman Catholic teachings on the sanctity and quality of life; what it means to be human and the importance of commitment and responsibility.

## Pure & Applied Science – Sex & Relationship Teaching & Learning

(Only those teachers who feel confident delivering this area of the curriculum will be asked to do so.)

| Year Group  | Topics taught as per NC/GCSE content  | Additional areas address during Science lessons  |
|---|---|--|
| 7   | Cells 1: Male & Female Reproductive systems, sex cells. Adolescence and Puberty – physical & emotional changes Menstruation Sexual Intercourse and Fertilisation Foetal development   |  |
| 8   | Cells 2: Microbes and diseases transmission of some diseases.   | Further develop teaching and learning of STIs. Method to prevent transmission – condoms or abstinence. GSH – raise awareness of clinics and their confidential services. School nurse to visit Science lessons – and highlight her services.   |
| 9<br>(Double Science & Triple Science – post exams) | B1a: Healthy Lifestyle – fighting disease<br>Menstrual Cycle & Hormones<br>Controlling Fertility (IVF & The Pill)<br>Recreational Drugs – influence of alcohol<br><br>B1b: Cloning Genetic Engineering                                    | Contraception – all methods discussed<br>Abortion – legality/facts<br>Artificial insemination<br>Possible actions and consequences for those people under the influence (adjustment of inhibitions, peer pressure, drink ‘spiking’).<br>Surrogacy<br>Saviour siblings<br>Somatic Cell Therapy<br>Designer Babies |
| 10<br>(Double Science)                              | B1a: Healthy Lifestyle – fighting disease<br>Menstrual Cycle & Hormones<br>Controlling Fertility (IVF & The Pill)<br>Recreational Drugs – influence of alcohol  | Sex & Relationship Workshops   |
| 11<br>(Double Science & Triple Science)             | B2b: Mitosis & Meiosis – making the sex cells<br>Inheritance of Sex<br>Inheritance of Genetic Disorders<br>Stem Cells – embryonic & adult<br>There is a clear overlap in the topics covered in the Science and the RE curriculum, but the |  |

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|  | <p>approach and delivery will be different. Revisiting such important topics can only be beneficial for students.</p> |  |
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## Relationships and Sex education as part of the pastoral programme

The pastoral team will be key in exploring the sex education programme with pupils as they progress through the school.

Form tutors in KS3 will address key topics through 2 programmes.

Year 7:

- Health and wellbeing – Managing the transition
- The role of media on healthy life style and social pressures on young people – keeping yourself healthy. Accepting themselves and others.
- Maintaining physical, emotion and mental health – where to seek
- Puberty support (introduction of FGM – age appropriate)

Year 8:

- Choices and self-image and what influences our behaviour. Seeing themselves and others in the creation of God.
- Risks to your life from physical, mental, sexual and emotional health
- Boundaries – physical and emotional health (introduction to FGM)
- Commitment, trust and love in meaningful relationships – inc. marriage and civil partnerships.

Form tutors in KS4 will address topics through a 3 year programme, supporting pupils on their journey to adulthood.

Year 9:

- Assessing and managing risks to health, staying safe and keeping other safe
- Self-respect and Self-esteem, being happy with who you are and accepting those around you.
- Contraception (religious views / types of contraception / agencies for support).
- Changing nature of, and pressure on, relationships with friends/family Inc. responsibility of children

Year 10:

- How to make informed choices about health and wellbeing matters including drugs, alcohol and tobacco - maintaining a balanced diet, physical activity, emotional health and wellbeing and sexual health
- HIV and aids / STIs – knowledge of / keeping safe / support agencies
- What makes a healthy relationship and readiness for sexual relationship?
- How to access sexual health support services

- The law surrounding Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) – where and how to seek help – age appropriate.

Year 11:

- Legal and moral issues surrounding abortion/contraception and age of consent
- Consequence of close relationships including having children and how this will create family ties which impact on their lives and the lives of others
- Recognising the influence and pressures, including media, around sexual behaviour and respond appropriately

A vital role of the Inclusion faculty staff and key personnel is signposting young people to the relevant support agencies and other health professionals. They will work with young people, both individually and in small and large groups to support young people to become health decision makers in lifestyle choices, particularly in relation to physical activity and healthy eating, emotional wellbeing, smoking, sexual health and substance misuse. There will be occasions when assembly time will be used for Relationship and sex Education input. At other times, a specific group may be selected for an activity and when appropriate, boys and girls will be spoken to separately. The Academy is aware that it is particularly important that the needs of vulnerable groups are addressed and this will be the responsibility of the Inclusion faculty.

The policy will be reviewed in summer 2025.