



DIOCESE OF HEXHAM AND  
NEWCASTLE

**SEX AND  
RELATIONSHIP  
EDUCATION**  
*Education for Love*

*Our Lady & St Thomas R C  
Primary School*

Spring 2008

*This guidance draws heavily on 'Education in Sexuality' Catholic Education Service guidelines for  
Teachers and Governors in Catholic Schools*

## RATIONALE FOR SEX AND RELATIONSHIP EDUCATION

At the heart of Catholic education is the development, growth and journey of the whole person towards becoming 'fully human, fully alive', as a unique creation made in God's image.

*"... Children and young people should be helped to develop harmoniously their physical, moral and intellectual qualities ... they should receive a positive and prudent education in matters relating to sex ... and young people have the right to be stimulated to make sound moral judgements based on a well-informed conscience and to put them into practice with a sense of personal commitment..."*

Gravissimum Educationis (para. 3)  
Second Vatican Council

The personal, moral and social development of all our pupils, needs to ensure that they have the ability to accept their own and others' sexuality in positive ways and to enjoy relationships based on mutual respect, dignity and responsibility, free from any abuse. Understanding and appreciating our sexuality is important for our human development.

*"Sexuality is a fundamental component of personality, one of its modes of being, of manifestation, of communicating with others, of feeling, of expressing and of living human love." "The human body, with its sex, and its masculinity and femininity, seen in the very mystery of creation."*

Educational Guidance in Human Love  
Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education (1983)

In our Catholic schools today, more than ever the young people in our care need help, guidance and sex and relationship education. One of the challenges facing the Church in contemporary society is teaching young people how to love.

*'Man cannot live without love. He remains a being that is incomprehensible for himself, his life is senseless if love is not revealed to him, if he does not encounter love, if he does not experience and make it his own, if he does not participate intimately in it.'*

Pope John Paul II  
Familiaris Consortio

The Bishops of England and Wales in their 1987 Low Week statement, "*Laying The Foundation*," they asked all schools urgently "*to consider their role in [Sex and Relationship Education] and to review their programme, so that our children and young people are given positive guidance and a true appreciation of all their human gifts.*" The Bishops went on to say that

*"Each school in consultation with Governors, teachers and parents, should have or build a [whole person, whole school] developmental programme which aims to help our young people to have a properly formed conscience, to enable them to make right judgements, and to take the right actions in the many and varied situations in which they find themselves."*

In their 1994 Low Week conference which said: "*In a society which so often focuses on the superficial and trivial, the value and essential goodness of the sexual relationship and, indeed, its sacredness, will be seriously undermined unless young people are helped to form a true understanding of their meaning.*"

## Underlying Principles in Catholic schools

- Sexuality is understood by the church as part of our 'giftedness'. Sexuality is essential to our personal identity. It is God's **gift** to us. As we grow in our capacity to love, we are open and make present the divine at the heart of the human.
- Education in sexuality should be **developmental**, sex education should enable sexuality to be integrated with personal growth from infancy through adolescence and beyond.
- Sex education is **integral** to our spiritual, intellectual, moral, social and cultural development.
- It involves **dialogue** and **co-operation** with parents and teaches of each key stage, i.e. foundation to Key Stage 4.
- It is centred on Christ's vision of being human as **good news** and should be **positive**, showing the potential for development, while enabling the dangers and risks involved to be understood and appreciated.
- All education in sexuality should **be in accordance with the Church's moral teaching** and should emphasis the central importance of marriage and the family.

## Aims for Sex and Relationship education at Our Lady & St Thomas

- Education in sex and relationship is about facilitating growth and emotional maturity, helping the individual to go beyond the "self" to the "other" and to have "responsibility".
- Education in sex and relationship is a life-long process.
- Education in sex and relationship recognises that human sexuality is a gift from God. It is concerned with the spiritual and moral as well as the physical and social.

## Sex and Relationship Education Programme Objectives

- To have an awareness of where children are in their own knowledge and understanding, so that their concerns can be identified and misinformation corrected.
- To engender growth in self respect and self worth, recognising that each of us is created in the image of God.
- To explore the meaning and value of life and help children to appreciate the values of family life.
- To enable pupils to have some understanding that love is central to and the basis of meaningful relationship.
- To encourage children to be aware of their attitudes and values and to have a sense of responsibility for themselves.
- To help children to develop their critical faculties and be aware of the values conveyed by media in relation to self-image and sexuality.

*By the end of Key Stage 1*

*Pupils should be able:*

- to understand the importance of valuing themselves and others;
- to recognise their membership of the family and recognise the roles of individuals in families;
- to understand growth and name themselves as male or female;
- to be able to name the main external parts of the body;
- to recognise babies have special needs;
- to appreciate relationships, friends, family, working together, sharing, playing together;
- to name rituals that mark life and death, birth, marriage, death appropriate to their age and ability;
- to recognise the range of emotions and how we deal with them;
- to know about being safe;
- to know the difference between good and bad touching;
- to appreciate that some diseases are infectious;
- to have an awareness of personal health and safety, personal hygiene;

*By the end of Key Stage 2*

***Pupils should be able:***

- to value themselves as a child of God, and their body as God's gift to them;
- to understand that they grow and change throughout life;
- to understand what is meant by relationships within families, friends and communities;
- to develop an appreciation of what is involved in bringing up children and what responsibilities parents have;
- to become aware of the different patterns of friendship;
- to know the rituals celebrated in Church, marking birth, marriage and death;
- to be aware of their changing emotions and the need to respect other peoples emotions and feelings;
- to begin to know about and understand the changes that come about though puberty;
- to know and understand their own bodies and their need for personal hygiene;
- to know the proper names for the parts of the body;
- to know the basic biology of human reproduction;
- to appreciate that life is precious and a gift from God;
- to become aware of the choices they make and that there are good choices and wrong choices;
- to recognise the importance of forgiveness in relationships.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **a) *Governors***

In accordance with the Education Act of 1993 the governing body will keep up to date the school's policy for Sex and Relationship Education (SRE), in consultation with parents and will make copies of the policy available to them. We will make known to parents their right to withdraw their children from all or part of Sex and Relationship Education provided at school except for those parts included in the statutory National Curriculum.

### **b) *Teachers***

All teachers have a responsibility of care; as well as fostering academic progress they should actively contribute to the guardianship and guidance of the physical, moral and spiritual well-being of their pupils. Teachers will be expected to teach Sex and Relationship Education in accordance with the Catholic ethos of the school. Appropriate training will be made available for all staff teaching Sex and Relationship Education.

### **c) *Parents***

Recognising that parents are the primary educators of their children the school will seek to support them in this task. We will ensure that parents are kept informed of what is happening in Sex and Relationship Education and of our expectations of their children.

*In accordance with DfES guidance 2000*

*It is only in the most exceptional circumstances that we should be in the position of having to handle information without parental knowledge. Where younger pupils are involved this will be grounds for serious concern and child protection issues will be addressed."*

*Status: good practice*  
*Date of issue: July 2000*  
*Ref: DfEE 0116/2000*

## **Resources**

### **A Journey in Love - Sr Jude Groden RSM**

A developmental programme for children in the primary years

### **All That I am series for Years 5 - 13**

Includes Teacher's Handbooks, pupil's resources, information for Governors and parents, video's and DVD's.

All That I Am - Key Stage 2 (Y5)

All That I Am - The Road Ahead KS2 (Y6)

Where I Am - KS3

How I Am - KS4

Who I Am - KS5

Available from:

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Don Bosco House  
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Website: [www.all-that-i-am.co.uk](http://www.all-that-i-am.co.uk)

- Catechism of the Catholic Church*, Geoffrey Chapman, London 1994 Cf. especially Part Three - Life in Christ.
- Commentary on the Catechism of the Catholic Church*, M. Walsh (ed.), Geoffrey Chapman, London (1994). Cf. Especially the chapter by G. Hughes, N. Haring and J.A. Selling on Part Three of the Catechism.
- Education in Sexuality*, Catholic Education Service, London (1994) A very useful introduction to this aspect of EPR for all Key Stages in schools.
- Education for Love*, Catholic Education Service, London (1994) A helpful background to basic issues.
- Education in Personal Relationships*, M. McMenamin, Matthew James Publishing Lts., Chelmsford, (1997). A helpful handbook for school co-ordinators.
- The Truth and Meaning of Human Sexuality*, Pontifical Council for the Family, Family Publications, Oxford (1995). An outline of official teaching on sexuality from the Vatican Department concerned with these matters.
- Veritatis Splendor*, Pope John Paul II, CTS, London, (1993) The Pope's encyclical on approaches to Moral Theology.
- Exploring Life Choices, EPR in Catholic Schools*, Adrian Dempsey, Chris Fallon, Sean Hall, Paul Uden, Matthew James Publishing Ltd., Chelmsford, (2000).

## Appendix 1

# STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS FOR SEX EDUCATION AND RELATIONSHIP EDUCATION

Statutory requirements for sex education are set out in the following Education Acts: 1986, 1993 and 1996. In 2000 subsequent guidance from the DfES was also issued, entitled Sex and Relationship Education this replaces circular 5/94 and takes account of the revised National Curriculum, the new Personal, Social and Health Education framework and the Social Exclusion Unit report on teenage pregnancy. Governing bodies need to be aware of the subsequent advice on Healthy Schools Standards. Below is a summary of the statutory and curriculum responsibilities for primary and secondary schools.

## PRIMARY SCHOOLS

Governing bodies of maintained primary schools must decide whether discrete sex education is included in their school's curriculum. While "sex education" is not statutory at the primary phase, education for personal relationships is statutory in the foundation stage where the first of the areas of learning is 'Personal, Social and Emotional Development.' The above does not take into account the school's responsibility to deliver national curriculum science orders.

## SECONDARY SCHOOLS

The law requires that maintained secondary schools teach sex education, human growth and reproduction including education about HIV and AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections as set out in the National Curriculum. It also requires that the governing body and headteacher ensure that any sex and relationship education is provided in a way that encourages pupils to consider the value of family life.