



Policy Statement SEX EDUCATION

St Edmund's Catholic School seeks to provide education, guidance and support within a spiritually enriching community, where every pupil is valued and enabled to achieve their full potential.

The School's Mission Statement highlights the gospel message as taught by the Catholic Church. This lies at the heart of the School's Policy of Sex Education. Through the partnership negotiated with parents, the school sees the role as supporting young people through adolescent to Christian life.

In a Catholic school any teaching or formation on human love or human development must be within the whole context of our faith in God who reveals himself in Jesus Christ. It is through our love of God and of our neighbour that we reciprocate that love. For many Christians this happens through the love between man and woman. Marriage is the school in which many Christians can meet Christ through the adventure of learning to love one another.

God created man and woman in his own image, with equal dignity, different yet complementary. Our sexuality is a gift from God, and must be expressed according to his will of love. Our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, and we are one body with Christ. Chastity should be presented in a positive way; it is a gift from God, leading to a self-control which frees us to behave towards ourselves and others with love and with justice.

The Bishops Conference of England and Wales publication, *Cherishing Life*, gives a Catholic perspective on fundamental issues relating to the moral and spiritual well-being of the human person in society, especially with reference to the value and protection of human life. It contains a section on the Church's teaching on sexuality.

In their statements from the Low Week Conference of 1987 the Bishops of England and Wales wrote:

"We must protect our children from ignorance and they should be given all the necessary information, and correct answers to their questions. Within the Christian community there is a real need for giving gradual and positive sex education to our children. Each school, in consultation with governors, teachers and parents, should have or build a 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 right actions in the many and varied situations in which they may find themselves."

Education for personal relationships is taught at St Edmund's as part of the Religious and Personal Studies scheme of work, and is presented to the pupils in the context of family love, loving relationships and respect of others within a framework of morality understood and articulated through the school's ethos.

Although taught for the most part in Religious and Personal Studies, education in sexuality is only a part of education in personal relationships. Consequently each member of the school is entitled to experience a climate in which the quality of relationships between staff and pupils, between pupils themselves, is marked by honesty, personal identification, warmth, trust and security.

For such education to be meaningful it must be fully integrated within the curriculum because of its very nature, it is cross curricular. Every subject within the curriculum conveys values and helps in the moral growth of pupils.

The school's policy acknowledges the biological aspects of secondary education, the content of which is taught as part of the science curriculum in line with statutory requirements.

Statutory requirements for the Science curriculum include:

By the end of Key Stage 3, young people are expected to know "that fertilisation in humans is the fusion of a male and female cell; about the physical and emotional changes that take place during adolescence; about the human reproductive system, including the menstrual cycle and fertilisation; how the foetus develops in the uterus; how the growth and reproduction of bacteria and the replication of viruses can affect health.

By the end of Key Stage 4, young people are expected to understand 'the way in which hormonal control occurs, including the effects of sex hormones; some medical uses of hormones, including the control and promotion of fertility; the defence mechanisms of the body; how sex is determined in humans."

Since the Sex and Relationship Education Policy in a school is a Governors' Policy the Governors should receive an annual report on the sex education provided and the policy should be reviewed accordingly.