

## EDUCATION FOR PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS POLICY

This Education for Personal Relationships Policy is drawn up in the light of the 1993 Education Act: Sex Education in Schools, Circular No. 5/94, the Sex and Relationships Guidance July 2000 and the subsequent response from the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, 11<sup>th</sup> July 2000. This policy is formulated within the framework of the Mission Statement. St Bernard's has a clear responsibility for the personal, social, moral, intellectual and physical development of all students.

"Sex education is not reducible to simple teaching material, nor theoretical knowledge alone, nor does it consist of a programme to be carried out progressively, but it has a specific objective in view: an effective maturation of pupils' self control and of correct behaviour in special relationships."

Education Guidance in Human Love

*Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education 1983*

Parents are the primary educators of their children. The school seeks to work with the family in the area of human growth and sexual development so that our young people will have an awareness of the fullness and meaning of life rooted in the love of God.

Education for Personal Relationships is delivered through Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE), Science lessons and Religious Education lessons in a cross-curricular programme.

The Education for Personal Relationships Policy has the following aims:

To provide a Catholic framework within which students can grow in their understanding of human sexuality.

To give students a full understanding of their own physical and emotional development.

To foster self-esteem and a sense of moral responsibility.

To encourage students to build relationships based on mutual respect.

To enable students to challenge assumptions on sexuality in the secular society in which they live.

To recognise the sanctity of family life.

Our teachers are aware that effective personal relationship education may lead to disclosure of a child protection issue and will rely on the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection policy to handle any such matter as confidentially as possible.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following guidance and policies:

DFE: 'Sex and Relationship Education Guidance 2000', PHSE policy, Safeguarding and Child Protection policy and Anti-bullying policy.

Accepted by the Catholic Life of the School Committee 10<sup>th</sup> October 2018

Review Date: Autumn 2020

## **EDUCATION FOR PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS**

### **DESCRIPTION OF PRACTICE**

At St Bernard's education for personal relationships is part of a whole school approach to personal and social development and is guided by the values and teachings of the Catholic Church. The delivery of education for personal relationships is a continuous process, based on a planned, balanced and cross-curricular programme throughout the school and is placed in the context of and supported by the strong Christian ethos of the school itself and the mission statement that drives our school.

Our programme hopes to complement the role of the parents/guardians as their children develop into adulthood. The programme affirms our Catholic teachings about marriage and family life. It provides opportunities to address the needs of our students with Christian perspectives in a world that may present different pressures and values.

Education for personal relationships involves the development of knowledge, skills and self-esteem which will enable our students to make well informed decisions. We recognise that relationship education is lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about the importance of stable and loving relationships, and about respect, love and care. We believe that sexual intimacy is best placed in the context of a loving marriage but recognise the challenges that today's society presents to this model. As such, our relationship education provides students with factual knowledge and an understanding of the influences on young people, encouraging them to be aware of the options open to them and to take charge of decisions about their own behaviour. It encourages the development of personal and interpersonal skills, the awareness and respect of self and others and encourages reflection and responsibility.

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the sex education part of the PSHE programme and alternative arrangements will be made for their children's supervision. The request to withdraw must be made in writing to the Headteacher. However, parents do not have the right to withdraw their children from the biological aspects of human growth and reproduction necessary under National Curriculum Science.

We recognise the need for careful and sensitive teaching in all areas of education for personal relationships. The main aims of our education for personal relationships policy are outlined below.

We aim to develop positive attitudes and values through:

- Promoting respect, value, love and care of themselves and others including respect for individual and cultural differences.
- Developing understanding and promoting sensitivity towards the needs and views of others and modelling appropriate behaviours.
- Discussing moral issues including concepts associated with right and wrong; encouraging responsibility for their own actions and promoting positive self-images.
- Exploring responsibility to the school, their family and the wider community.

We aim to develop knowledge and understanding through:

- Imparting Christian ideals to the students and building upon these values.
- Ensuring that all students receive suitable education and guidance for personal relationships.
- Giving students accurate information about the facts of reproduction in the context of caring relationships and family life.

- Promoting a positive attitude to body change and preparing students for the changes at puberty, both physical and emotional.
- Developing body awareness and physical control.
- Offering a secure environment and the opportunities to discuss fears and anxieties, to answer questions and give reassurance by emphasising normality.
- Emphasising the importance and desirability of sex within marriage.
- Exploring issues involving love, marriage and relationships and to emphasise the importance of raising children within a loving family.
- Preparing students for adult life and develop their skills in making good choices within relationships. This includes the discussion of all relationships and the Catholic teaching and approach to human relationships.
- Developing an understanding of their own and others' sexuality, sex health, emotions and relationships.
- Learning about healthy lifestyles.
- Enabling each student to grow in dignity as a person and to stand against all that undermines the dignity of self and others.
- Giving full and accurate information about all forms of contraception.
- Alerting students to the reality and dangers (moral, legal, physical and psychological) of related issues such as sexually transmitted diseases, pornography, rape, abortion, human embryonic-based research and IVF.
- Giving sound information about the nature and transmission of HIV and to explore attitudes to HIV and AIDS in our society.
- Helping students to develop a positive self-image and self-esteem so that they can have better control over their own lives and behaviour.
- Teaching within the context of pressure placed on young people in society today and to develop an understanding of individual freedom and corporate responsibility.
- Developing an understanding of their ability to influence the environment.
- Learning how to assert one's self appropriately and safeguarding to avoid abusive exploitation.
- Learning when privacy is appropriate and how to protect one's own privacy.
- Emphasising the uniqueness of human love and the sanctity of marriage and family life.

As part of our education for personal relationships programme, issues of contraception, sexually transmitted disease, HIV/AIDS, sexuality, unwanted pregnancies and abortion will be addressed. Our teaching is guided by the values and teachings of the Catholic Church yet facts are presented in an objective and balanced way, with students being encouraged to consider their own attitudes and values in the context of their faith, culture and community.

Our methods of teaching include presentations, small group discussion, visiting speakers, the use of worksheets, video and textbooks.