

PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS & SEX EDUCATION

It is the intention of this statement to inform parents of the school's aims in relation to sex education and to inform them of the general content of the lessons.

The Catholic Church has clear teachings and guidelines on the issue of relationships between the sexes. The school upholds these principles and promotes the ideal of one partner in life who is faithful within the context of the sacrament of marriage.

Home and school are the major influences on our pupils. In the home, children have their first experience of love. They learn to feel acknowledged, wanted and appreciated. Just as all of us received the gift of loving because God first loved us, so children receive the capacity to love through their experience of parents. Parents are their children's first teachers and the school aims to support parents with regard to the provision of sex education.

In school we hope to assist pupils in gaining the appropriate skills and knowledge essential for positive personal relationships without in any way replacing the home in these matters. Issues such as sexuality, contraception, abortion, divorce and aids are all addressed. Through instructions and discussions we seek to encourage the development of Christian moral values among all our young people.

THE SEX EDUCATION SYLLABUS

YEAR 7

Both the Science and religious, Personal and Social education Faculties contribute to the sex education syllabus. As part of National Curriculum requirements the Science Faculty deals with reproduction, giving pupils a clear understanding of the processes of contraception and heredity. Pupils are also taught how sex is determined and how disease can be inherited.

In RPSE the syllabus is divided into three parts.

1. 'Adolescence' which concentrates on the physical changes outside the body that occur during teenage years and inside the body that deals with what is happening internally.
2. 'The way you feel' which looks at worries, difficulties, shyness and friendships as well as changing moods.
3. 'Looking good, feeling good' is about healthy diet and hygiene.

YEAR 8 and YEAR 9

This section of the RPSE course that related to sex education is on 'marriage' with an explanation of a range of issues relating to the topic, e.g. multi-cultural aspects.

During this time the emotional aspects of relationships are discussed and we address the question of why sex need not be an essential element of teenage relationships despite peer and media pressure.

YEAR 10 and YEAR 11

During the final two years of school, our programme is called 'Valuing Values'. It is a special programme devised to promote sex education in the Catholic tradition. The Salford Diocese has recommended it to schools. We hope that on completion of the course each pupil will have developed an awareness of the truth and beauty of genuine Christian values, specifically life-and-family values and that they will be inspired to affirm and live them.

The topics studied are

- Made in God's Image (self esteem).
- Valuing Values (nine values).
- Male and Female God Created Them (puberty).
- Feelings of Attraction (sexual attraction).
- Equality for Males and Females (sexism and stereotypes).
- Making Decisions (consequences).
- Developing Relationships (dating).
- Saying 'No' (positive peer pressure).
- New Human Life (pregnancy and birth).
- Making the Heart Grow Fonder (abstinence).
- It Takes Two (teen pregnancy).
- There Is No Easy Answer (choices facing pregnant teenagers).
- Staying Healthy (Aids and sexually transmitted diseases).
- Some Touch Hurts (incest, rape and sexual abuse).

The school is mindful of its obligation to parents and children in these matters and parental comment on any aspect of our sex Education Programme will always be appreciated.