

**Sex**  
and  
**Relationship**  
**Education**  
  
in  
  
**The**  
**Primary School**

**Mission Statement**

**BRES serves the Kingdom of God in assisting teachers and parents to develop the growth in Faith, Knowledge and Understanding of God in Schools.**

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## **Sex and Relationship Education in the Primary School A Catholic Vision**

We are created by God in his image – male and female (Gen. 1:27). Thus, our sexuality is an integral part of our individuality. In order that children may grow healthily towards maturity, they need to be taught the implications of their gender and sexuality (Cf. CCC §1604; § FC37). Successful relationships can only be built when individuals are comfortable with themselves and are developing their self-knowledge.

“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 sexual 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 the right actions in the many and varied situations in which they may find themselves.” (Bishops’ Conference of England 1987)

Our policy echoes St. John’s Gospel: “I have come that you might have life and have it to the full” (10:10) and St Irenaeus who said: “The glory of God is the human person fully alive”. To achieve this, we recommend the development of programmes in these areas:

growing in friendship with

- ourselves,
- others,
- the world and
- God.

I strongly recommend this policy for use in our Primary Schools to support the production of developmental programmes according to local needs. I am grateful to headteachers and school communities for all that they do in the moral education of our young people in accordance with Church teaching.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Fr. John Stokes', with a horizontal line underneath the name.

January 2008.

*CCC - Catechism for the Catholic Church  
FC – Familiaris Consortio*

## VATICAN II states ...

“ ... 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.1]  
Second Vatican Council.

## STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

1988 Education Reform Act stated that Sex Education and Health Education are to be given a high priority in our schools.

1993 Education Act put in place the requirement for all schools to have a Sex Education Policy in place by September 1994.

Circular 5/94 from the DFE defined what should and should not be included in Sex Education.

2000 DfEE Guidance for Headteachers, Teachers and Governors entitled *Sex and Relationship Education* in which Government stressed the importance of ‘stable relationships’ and recognition for ‘religion and cultural background’ failed to emphasise adequately the importance of marriage as the essential building block of community and society for the future. It did declare its intention to stop ‘inappropriate and unsuitable’ materials being used in schools. The paper omitted to explain what ‘inappropriate’ or ‘unsuitable material’ actually means.

2000 *Exploring Life’s Choices: Education for Personal Relationships in Catholic Schools. A resource for Inservice training and the Certificate of Religious Studies* produced for the National Board of Religious Inspectors and Advisers by Adrian Dempsey, Chris Fallon, Sean Hall and Paul Uden provides the means for teachers to prepare or update themselves for SRE in today’s climate.

2000 Archbishop Nichols on behalf of the Bishops’ Conference for England & Wales criticised the DfEE guidance paper for its lack of moral principle as a foundation for its recommendations. He declared the hierarchy’s intention to ensure that SRE be taught in the context of the Church’s moral teaching.

2003 Dr Jack Dominian OBE:

“The only way to live a Christian sexual loving life is through making Education steeped in love.”

## **ROLE OF GOVERNORS**

Governors have the legal responsibility of deciding whether or not EPR and Sex Education should be taught in school. Diocesan advice is that the needs of children require that schools provide such education. Governors also, in consultation with staff and advisors, should be involved in the dialogue as to what materials might be used to teach EPR.

## **THE ROLE OF PARENTS**

We recognise that it is the privilege and responsibility of the family to inform and educate their children in all matters pertaining to human growth and development, particularly in the area of sex education.

The primary role of parents is paramount to the successful implementation of any policy on EPR. The Church community also has a privileged role on collaborating with parents in their educative task and as a school we see our role as supporting them.

The supporting role of the school will be exercised with sensitivity. The dignity, privacy and modesty of children will always be respected. Teachers will ensure that no pupil feels pressured to reveal or discuss private matters not to be involved in a way in which they might feel distaste or embarrassment.

The links between home/school and parish are of fundamental importance. We see our EPR programme as complementing the teaching and life of home and family. It is supportive and of special importance when the home environment is limited.

## **RIGHT OF WITHDRAWAL**

Parents have the legal right to withdraw their children from sex education where this is not contained in the National Curriculum. We would hope that parents would see the value of educating children in these matters within the context of the faith.

Many Catholic parents turn to the Church to take up the task of providing guidance and suggestions for educating their children ... in childhood and adolescence.

*Truth and Meaning of Human Sexuality -Vatican Publication 1995.*

# **FOUNDATION AND KEY STAGE 1**

## **SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT**

Although children at this stage are living in a self-centred world with limited horizons, they are able to appreciate beauty and wonder and are naturally inquisitive. They are only beginning to distinguish between fantasy and reality, the spiritual and material.

## **INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT**

Children at this stage have uninhibited curiosity about the world around them. They start to recognise, distinguish and name their different emotions.

## **SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**

Children are primarily self-centred, but gradually develop a concern for others. Family relationships are very influential in the development of social skills. The love, support and approval of parents and significant adults are a major influence in the development of self-esteem.

## **MORAL DEVELOPMENT**

The basic motive for good behaviour is the simple principle of reward and punishment.

Responsible and self-controlled behaviour does begin to be seen in the classroom.

**Conscience is the capacity for judging right and wrong. It is the judgement that this here and now, is what I ought or ought not to do. It is the primary means by which I grow to a greater responsibility for my own actions. Obedience to my conscience is the ultimate test of my moral integrity.**

**The education of conscience is thus essential to growth to maturity and it is lifelong.**

Bishop David Konstant, "Teaching Right from Wrong"  
The Tablet, 20<sup>th</sup> January 1996.

# **OVERALL AIMS OF A POLICY FOR SEX AND RELATIONSHIP EDUCATION IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS.**

We aim to encourage the development of the ‘fully alive’ person in each area of their relationships. We do this in the context of supporting parents as the first educators of their children.

## **To grow in friendship with themselves**

- ◆ to know that they are uniquely loved
- ◆ to appreciate their personal worth and talents
- ◆ to recognise and positively respond to their limitations
- ◆ to respect and care for themselves
- ◆ to make informed choices and accept personal responsibility
- ◆ to understand their physical development respecting and reverencing the wonder of their bodies.

## **To grow in friendship with others**

- ◆ to know that others are also uniquely loved
- ◆ to deepen their appreciation of their relationship with their parents
- ◆ to appreciate and respect the worth and talents of others
- ◆ to respect the beliefs, values and cultures of others
- ◆ to develop friendships and positive relationships
- ◆ to cope with difficulties in relationships
- ◆ to understand and appreciate the wonder of human love and the creation of new human life
- ◆ to understand their social responsibilities
- ◆ to enable them to become responsible citizens
- ◆ to encourage a progressive understanding and engagement in commitment.

## **To grow in friendship with the world around**

- ◆ to appreciate the goodness of creation as loved by God
- ◆ to appreciate the wonder of the beauty of the natural world
- ◆ to learn to respect and care for the natural world
- ◆ to understand the importance of our natural environment and grow in understanding for our responsibility for it.

## **To grow in friendship with God**

- ◆ to appreciate that God loves us first and forever
- ◆ to appreciate and value relationship with God as integral to human fulfilment
- ◆ to appreciate the whole of creation as a sign of God’s love
- ◆ to develop their personal relationship with God through prayer and meditation
- ◆ to develop their relationship with God through shared prayer and worship.

# FOUNDATION STAGE AND KEY STAGE 1

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

### Growing in friendship with themselves.

The child will:

- a) Be encouraged to appreciate their personal worth, talents and achievements.
- b) Be given the opportunity to solve some problems alone.
- c) Experience support in the face of personal failures.
- d) Learn about his/her body and how to care for it. e.g. substance misuse, as is appropriate to circumstances and age of children.
- e) Be taught the proper terminology for naming all parts of the male and female bodies and be given a basic understanding of their functions as appropriate to circumstances. We must be aware that there are cases of early maturing in Key Stage 1. It will be necessary to respond appropriately and sensitively to such children's needs.
- f) Appreciate the need for personal privacy.
- g) Be encouraged and supported in expressing feelings related to abuse.

### Growing in friendship with others.

The child will:

- h) Understand the co-operative role of parents and other adults in the nurturing of human life.
- i) Understand the responsibility to contribute positively to his/her own family life.
- j) Experience a reinforcement of authentic religious ideas and values within the home.
- k) Explore family history and the family's unique identity.
- l) Be helped to see the value of friendship and loyalty.
- m) To appreciate and celebrate the goodness and achievements of others.
- n) Be encouraged and supported in expressing feelings related to bereavement and loss.
- o) Develop a capacity for tolerating and appreciating differences in others.
- p) Learn to distinguish between "good and bad" touching.
- q) Begin to accept responsibilities for others.

### Growing in friendship with the world.

The child will:

- r) Have opportunities to develop their sense of wonder at the beauty of creation.
- s) Be encouraged to care for the school environment and the natural world.
- t) Learn to respect and care for their classroom and school resources.

### Growing in friendship with God.

The child will:

- u) Be helped to grow in their love of God as their Father, of Jesus – God's Son and their Brother, and of the Holy Spirit who is always with them.
- v) Be encouraged to speak with God using both the formal prayers of the Church and in their own words.
- w) Learn to praise and thank God for the beauty of creation and the gift of His love to us through all those around us.
- x) Appreciate forgiveness in the home as an expression of Christian forgiveness.

***"The years of innocence must never be disturbed  
by unnecessary information about sex"***

Truth and Meaning of Human Sexuality, Vatican Publication. 1995.

## **KEY STAGE 2**

### **SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT**

At this level children are growing in their awareness of values like goodness, truth beauty and fairness. They are beginning to develop their own judgements on the basis of their own life experiences.

### **INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT**

The significant growth at this level is in the child's developing capacity for deductive reasoning. Children at this stage want to gather more information. They are beginning at this stage to understand and classify emotional responses.

### **SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**

Children become more interested in their peers and friends. Although family relationships still dominate they are increasingly coming under the influence of other social groups which can lead to their questioning family values.

Boy/girl relationships become more self-conscious and the boys and girls segregate naturally at the social level, albeit in class and in team situations they can work naturally together.

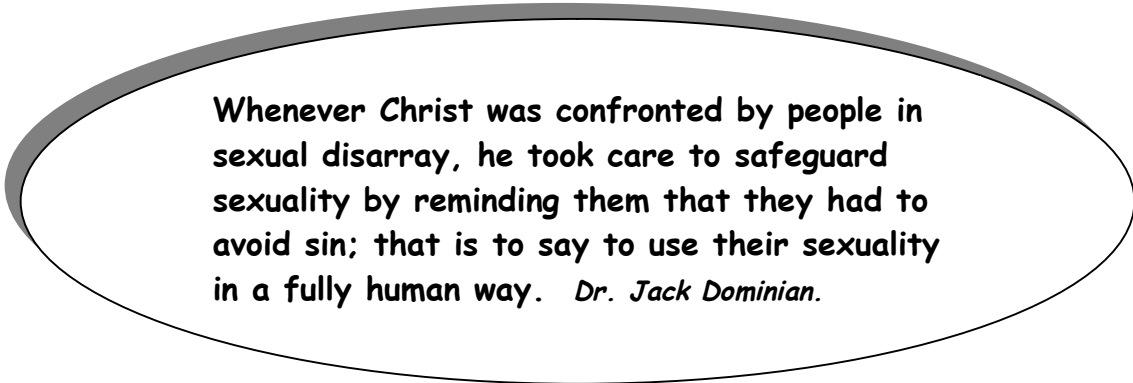
### **MORAL DEVELOPMENT**

Children look for approval from their parents and other significant adults in their lives. Positive reinforcement and praise for proper behaviour are very important. At this stage it is also important to recognise the developing sense of independence in the child which is to be supported and encouraged.

Rules and their observance largely determine their moral attitudes. At the same time there are the beginnings of a development of a sense of personal responsibility.

### **SEXUAL DEVELOPMENT**

Interest is more personal than at Key Stage 1. At first, the child still wants to know about the body, as opposed to their own body. Later information starts to take on much more personal significance, although the timing varies between children. (For example, children who enter puberty early will become interested sooner).



**Whenever Christ was confronted by people in sexual disarray, he took care to safeguard sexuality by reminding them that they had to avoid sin; that is to say to use their sexuality in a fully human way. Dr. Jack Dominian.**



## KEY STAGE 2

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

#### **Growing friendship with themselves.**

The child will:

- a) Appreciate increasingly their personal worth, talents and achievements.
- b) Progressively accept responsibility for themselves.
- c) Recognise and accept their limitations.
- d) Be aware of the emotional changes that might accompany puberty – sensitivity, mood swings, anger, boredom etc.
- e) Appreciate the different rates of sexual maturity and be assured of the normality of his/her own rate of change.
- f) Experience the value of personal privacy.
- g) Be encouraged and supported in expressing feelings related to abuse.

#### **Growing friendship with others.**

The child will:

- h) Develop a sense of responsibility by freely contributing to the tasks and functions of family, school, parish and society.
- i) Understand and discuss some of the virtues essential to friendship, such as loyalty and responsibility.
- j) Recognise and celebrate the abilities and achievements of others.
- k) Experience support even when there has been personal failure in themselves or in their relationships with others.
- l) Feel encouragement in developing a spirit of tolerance for self and for the differences perceived in others e.g. different traditions, cultures, disability or disadvantage.
- m) Develop in an appropriate way for their age an understanding of human reproduction.
- n) Be provided with positive role models of each gender. The child will grow in awareness of the harmfulness of gender stereotypes and sex discrimination.
- o) Be helped to understand the reality of AIDS and some of the ways it can and cannot be transmitted; develop compassion for victims of AIDS.
- p) Develop an ability to evaluate as a Christian, popular images of sexuality.
- q) Experience the value of commitment through accepting responsibilities.

#### **Growing in friendship with the world.**

The child will:

- r) Grow in their understanding of the wonder of creation.
- s) Learn and take responsibility for the environment of the school and the wider world.
- t) Understand the need to care for the world's resources.

## Growing in friendship with God

The child will:

- u) Appreciate that God's love accepts us as we are and as we change.
- v) Value increasingly the importance of prayer and worship both with others and by themselves.
- w) Reflect on the presence of Christ in their daily lives.
- x) Experience the importance both of forgiving and being forgiven and of celebrating God's forgiveness.

