

St. Mark's Catholic School



RSHE POLICY

Effective Date:	Review Date:	Prepared by:	Designated SLT:	Governor's Committee:
Jun 2026	Jun 2027	AJA/SMG	SMG	Faith, Missions & Ethos

Our Mission:

St Mark's is a Catholic community inspired by Gospel values where relationships are rooted in love. At the heart of our mission is a commitment to live out our faith and a dedication to embrace excellence in all that we do. We believe in education that instils possibilities, transforms lives and enables all to fulfil their potential.

At St Mark's, our mission is to live out our faith through a love of God, service to others and a commitment to the education and wellbeing of every young person in our care. We seek to foster a spirit of truth, reconciliation, justice and peace, and are committed to developing the spiritual, emotional, intellectual, moral, cultural, social and physical potential of all members of our school community within a safe and supportive environment.

Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) is a statutory component of the curriculum. This policy outlines St Mark's approach to the planning and delivery of RSHE. It has been developed in consultation with pupils, parents and carers, staff, governors and the Diocese. This consultation has included a review of curriculum content, feedback from stakeholders and consideration of local needs. The views expressed through this process have informed the development of both the policy and the RSHE programme and are consistent with Catholic teaching.

This policy adheres to the statutory guidance issued by the Department for Education (DfE), *Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education* (2025), which becomes statutory from 1 September 2026. The school also has regard to relevant safeguarding guidance, including *Keeping Children Safe in Education*, and fulfils its duties under the Equality Act 2010.

This policy will be made available to all staff and governors and will be published on the school's website. Information about the RSHE curriculum, including the resources used to support teaching and learning, will also be available through the school website and parental information events.

Definition and Aims of RSHE

RSE refers to Relationships and Sex Education, while HE refers to Health Education. This policy encompasses both elements within the broader framework of Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE).

The Department for Education (DfE) guidance states that young people need to know how to be safe and healthy and how to manage their academic, personal and social lives positively.

The aim of RSE is to provide pupils with accurate, age-appropriate information that enables them to develop healthy and respectful relationships. Pupils will learn about the characteristics of positive relationships, including friendships, family relationships and committed adult relationships. They will develop the knowledge and skills to recognise unhealthy behaviours, understand the importance of consent and mutual respect, resist pressure and coercion, seek support when needed, and understand how the law protects them.

Health Education aims to enable pupils to make informed decisions about their physical health, mental wellbeing and personal safety. It supports pupils in developing resilience, self-respect and strategies for maintaining positive wellbeing throughout their lives.

Through RSHE, pupils will:

Develop attitudes and virtues, including:

- respect for the dignity of every person;
- compassion and empathy;
- integrity and honesty;
- responsibility for their actions; and
- an appreciation of the importance of family life and commitment.

Develop personal and social skills, including:

- communication and relationship skills;
- emotional literacy and resilience;
- conflict resolution;
- recognising and responding to peer pressure; and
- help-seeking and decision-making.

Know and understand:

- the characteristics of healthy relationships;
- Catholic teaching relating to relationships and sexuality;
- the physical and emotional changes associated with puberty;
- fertility, reproduction and sexual health; and
- how to keep themselves safe and access support.

Our Rationale

The teaching of RSHE at St Mark's is rooted in the teachings of the Catholic Church and Gospel values and reflects our mission to live out our faith. We believe that every person is created in the image and likeness of God and is therefore unique, valued and worthy of dignity and respect. Promoting self-respect and an understanding of the inherent worth of others is central to this subject.

As educators, we are committed to the formation of the whole person – spiritual, physical, intellectual, moral, social, emotional and cultural.

RSHE at St Mark's is delivered in a spirit of compassion, kindness and respect for all. We recognise that relationship education is underpinned by the modelling of virtues and supports pupils in developing a well-formed conscience.

We take an inclusive and non-discriminatory approach to the curriculum, ensuring that pupils understand both the Catholic perspective and the legal framework within which they live as citizens of modern Britain. Teaching will foster understanding, challenge prejudice and promote a culture of safeguarding, belonging and mutual respect.

RSHE will be taught in a manner that is sensitive to the needs, maturity and personal circumstances of individual pupils, including those with special educational needs and disabilities. Through all

aspects of school life, we aspire to live out the values we teach and any behaviour that does not adhere to this will be dealt with using our school behaviour policy.

In accordance with statutory guidance, teaching will be factual, evidence-informed and age-appropriate. Where topics involve differing beliefs or perspectives, pupils will be supported to understand the relevant legal position and engage thoughtfully with a range of viewpoints. Staff will avoid presenting contested opinions as established fact and will encourage critical thinking and respectful discussion.

Teachers will establish clear ground rules to create a safe learning environment in which pupils feel able to ask questions and express their views without fear of embarrassment, ridicule or discrimination. Questions will be answered honestly and in an age-appropriate manner. Where questions raise safeguarding concerns, are overly personal or are not appropriate to address within the classroom context, staff will respond in accordance with safeguarding procedures and professional judgement.

Working with Parents and Carers

At St Mark's we identify with the statement made by the Catholic Bishops of England and Wales that, "parents have the prime responsibility in teaching their children how to build healthy, loving relationships." We see our role as one of partnership and support, and our aim is that all parents and carers have confidence in the school's RSHE programme.

We will continue to consult with parents and carers when developing and reviewing this policy. We will provide information about the content of the RSHE curriculum, share details of the resources used and notify parents and carers when more sensitive aspects of RSE are due to be taught. Information about the programme will be published on the school's website.

Parents and carers have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE, other than those elements included within the National Curriculum for Science. Requests for withdrawal should be made in writing to the Headteacher. The Headteacher will discuss the request with parents and carers and explain the educational benefits of receiving this important aspect of the curriculum. In accordance with statutory guidance, a pupil who is three terms from their sixteenth birthday may choose to opt into sex education where a parent has previously requested withdrawal.

Outline of the RSHE Programme

The programme used at St Mark's to deliver RSHE is balanced, age-appropriate and accessible to all pupils.

Catholic teaching is promoted sensitively and in a manner that creates space for respectful dialogue and reflection. The content of the curriculum is based upon the God-given dignity of each pupil and, through an understanding of virtues, supports young people in making healthy and responsible choices.

Teaching will include factual information about relevant legislation relating to sex, relationships and protected characteristics. Pupils will learn about the legal protections afforded to individuals under the Equality Act 2010 and other relevant legislation, while recognising that individuals may hold a range of beliefs and perspectives. Teaching will be delivered sensitively and in a manner consistent with the Catholic ethos of the school and the dignity of every person.

The specific programme used by the school is *'Life to the Full'*, produced by **TenTen** and based on the Catholic Education Service model programme.

RSHE includes learning about:

- **Online safety and digital relationships**, including social media use; digital footprints and online reputation; maintaining healthy boundaries and understanding consent in online interactions; recognising grooming, image-based abuse, sextortion and exposure to sexually explicit material; identifying misinformation, disinformation and harmful online influences; and knowing how to seek help and report concerns.
- **Recognising and responding to harmful behaviours**, including sexual harassment, sexual violence, misogyny, controlling and coercive behaviours, and other forms of abuse; understanding that such behaviours are never acceptable; and knowing how to report concerns and access support.

Health Education

Health Education will be delivered through PSHCE lessons and through cross-curricular opportunities using resources created by the PSHCE lead that fully cover the remainder of the statutory framework. Tut are created and presented outside of the TenTen resources.

Health Education will support pupils in developing knowledge and skills relating to mental wellbeing and emotional resilience, recognising signs of poor mental health and accessing support, internet safety and online harms, physical safety (including awareness of knife crime), physical health and fitness, healthy eating and lifestyle choices, substance misuse (including alcohol, tobacco and drugs), health prevention and screening, healthy sleep routines, basic first aid including CPR, personal safety and risk management, and understanding the changing adolescent body.

External organisations may be used to enrich the RSHE and Health Education curriculum. The school remains responsible for the planning, delivery and quality assurance of all teaching. External contributors will be appropriately vetted, their materials reviewed in advance and their contributions monitored to ensure consistency with statutory guidance, safeguarding requirements and the Catholic ethos of the school.

Assessment within RSHE

Assessment in RSHE will focus on pupils' acquisition of knowledge, understanding and skills rather than on personal beliefs, values or experiences. Teachers will use a range of assessment approaches, including discussion, reflection, written activities and retrieval tasks, to evaluate pupils' progress and inform future planning.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding is central to the delivery of RSHE at St Mark's. Teaching will enable pupils to recognise unsafe or abusive relationships, understand their rights, identify trusted adults and know how to seek help. Staff will follow the school's safeguarding procedures and respond appropriately to any disclosures in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. Pupils will be reminded that confidentiality cannot be guaranteed where there are concerns about a child's safety or wellbeing. Staff will remain vigilant to indicators of vulnerability and act promptly where concerns arise.

Staff Training

Staff involved in delivering RSHE will receive appropriate professional development to ensure they are confident in delivering the curriculum accurately, sensitively and in accordance with statutory guidance, safeguarding requirements and Catholic teaching.

Roles and responsibilities within RSHE

Governing Body

- approve and review the policy;
- monitor statutory compliance;
- ensure parental consultation takes place.

SLT

- oversee implementation;
- ensure appropriate staffing and training.
- coordinate curriculum planning;
- monitor delivery and assessment;
- provide support and training.

RE subject leader, RE team and form tutors

- deliver RSHE in accordance with the policy;
- maintain professional boundaries;
- follow safeguarding procedures.

Monitoring and Review

The Governing Body will monitor the effectiveness of this policy and hold leaders to account for ensuring statutory compliance. The RSHE Lead will review curriculum content annually to ensure it remains responsive to statutory guidance, emerging safeguarding themes and the needs of pupils. Consultation with parents, carers, pupils, staff and governors will continue to inform future developments.

Appendix A

Ten:Ten's 10 Principles for teaching Catholic RSE

1. Our bodies are good
2. As we grow in our loving relationships with others, we become closer to the image and likeness of God
3. Catholic RSHE should be about the whole person
4. Catholic RSHE should be taught in partnership with parents
5. Our deepest identity is as a child of God
6. Story can change hearts and minds
7. Catholic RSHE is an education in virtue
8. Catholic RSHE is an education in conscience
9. RSHE is about striving for the Common Good
10. Prayer, Scripture and the Sacraments underpin and make possible the living out of Catholic teaching

Appendix B

TenTenWebsite

<https://www.tentenresources.co.uk/parent-portal/>

Username: st-marks-tw3

Password: gold-12-tw3

St Mark's RSHE programme

https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1mDuUlpjcFObXMsYn9mIHd9pw1cTxNAO7DobiK3I9-BU/edit?slide=id.g3ec52887648_0_51#slide=id.g3ec52887648_0_51

GOV.UK documents

Statutory guidance: *Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education (for introduction from 1 September 2026)*

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education>

Understanding Relationships, Sex and Health Education at your child's secondary school: a guide for parents

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-sex-and-health-education-guides-for-schools>

Keeping Children Safe in Education

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>