



## **Relationship and Sex Education Policy**

## **Mission Statement**

**To educate young people to meet the challenges of life courageously, to use their talents to the full and to live the values of Christ's Gospel.**

Our Sex and Relationship Education Policy is based upon relevant sex and relationships guidance received from both the Diocese and the Department of Education.

*"Sex and relationship education is a lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about the understanding of the importance of marriage for family life, stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care."*

*"Effective sex and relationship education is essential if young people are to make responsible and well informed decisions about their lives."*

### **Aims of Sex and Relationship Education:**

1. To engender growth in self-respect and self-worth, recognising that each of us is created in the image of God. This is the foundation for responsible and caring relationships.
2. To explore attitudes and values stressing the importance of marriage and family life, promoting the general ethos of the school. Teachers will be aware that students come from a range of backgrounds and be sympathetic to their particular circumstances.
3. To develop a responsible attitude to human sexual behaviour, including some realisation of the Law of God as revealed in the Bible, namely that, sexual intercourse should be reserved for a relationship of total commitment.
4. To enable students to develop informed, reasoned, and responsible decisions and to be aware of the extent to which their choices and decision affect others.
5. To develop the knowledge to help girls protect themselves against illegal or unwanted experiences.
6. To encourage students to recognise the sanctity of human life, the responsibilities and the value of family life, the implications of parenthood and the needs of the very young.
7. To encourage due regard for correct behaviour in both public and private situations and to enable students to understand and enjoy relationships based on mutual respect, equality and understanding, realising that love is central and the basis of all meaningful relationships, which is to uphold Gospel values.
8. To counteract misleading myths and false assumptions and to encourage unembarrassed acceptance of sexuality by providing appropriate vocabulary for all parts of the body and encouraging a positive attitude to all bodily functions.
9. To prepare children for puberty.
10. To have an awareness of where students are in their own knowledge and understanding so that concerns can be identified.

11. To help students develop their critical faculties and be aware of and, where necessary, resist peer pressure together with social and media pressure.
12. To give equal access to all students by integrating sex and relationship education into the broader curriculum and to provide appropriate help and support in understanding the relevant information. In all these things, our primary concern is the safety and wellbeing of all our students and as staff, we endeavour to walk with them through these formative years, in a supportive role.

### **The Introduction of Sex and Relationship Education in the Prep School and the role of parents/guardians**

The school is aware that the primary role in children's sex and relationships education lies with parents and carers. We therefore wish to build a positive and supportive relationship with our parents, through mutual understanding, trust and co-operation. To promote this objective we:

- inform parents about the school's sex education policy and practice;
- answer any questions that parents may have about the sex education of their child;
- take seriously any issue that parents raise with teachers or governors about this policy, or about the arrangements for sex education in the school;
- inform parents about the best practice known with regard to sex education, so that the teaching in school supports the key messages that parents and carers give to children at home.

We believe that, through this mutual exchange of knowledge and information, children will benefit from being given consistent messages about their changing bodies and their increasing responsibilities.

### **The Whole School Dimension**

There are no areas of school life that potentially cannot contribute to sex and relationship education and be of benefit to the whole school and its wider communities. How our school community lives, the relationships which develop, the way in which issues are tackled in the classroom and students participate and feel a sense of belonging, underpins the ethos of our school.

### **Content of Programme**

In Years 1-4 sex and relationships education is integrated into the normal school curriculum as well as PSHE lessons and emphasises the family unit, family relationships, growing up, respect for others, and physical, emotional and spiritual needs. Basic information on parts of the body is included and any specific questions are answered openly and honestly as they arise.

We believe that it is important to introduce the correct language for parts of the body from an early age and for the reproductive organs when appropriate. All staff are aware of this and attempt to introduce this in a consistent manner. The PSHE provision in the Prep. School at Thornton College is a 'spiral curriculum' meaning that the specific learning builds for pupils as they move through the school, gradually expanding and deepening their knowledge, skills, and attributes. The learning

opportunities have been divided into three core themes: **Health & Wellbeing; Relationships; Living in the Wider World.**

In Year 5 talks are given on puberty, focusing mainly on body changes, feelings and ‘growing up.’ In Science, lessons are delivered on the human life cycle, which includes puberty. In Year 6, further talks are given on puberty and menstruation. Girls in Year 6 take home a variety of products and leaflets following the talks.

By the end of Year 6 most children should be able to:

- name the main sexual and reproductive parts of the human body using correct terminology, and describe the functions of some of them
- describe the main physical and emotional changes in puberty for both boys and girls, and the difference between them
- identify basic facts about menstruation
- explain that there are different rates of change during puberty for different people and give some reasons for this
- deal positively with concerns or questions they have about puberty and know where to go for further help and information if they need it

### Senior programme

Sex and Relationship Education is integrated throughout the RE, PSHEE and Science syllabus in the Senior School. While RE studies and teaches the ‘Values of Christ’s Gospel’, PHSEE seeks to examine the practice of these values in day-to-day life

One of the compulsory sections in PHSEE is Social/Moral Education, which includes Citizenship and EPR (Education for Personal Relationships). Another is Health, which includes aspects of personal safety and Sex Education. In the context of these sections, the following topics are covered:-

	RE	PHSEE	Science
Year 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community</li> <li>• Marriage and family relationships</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Puberty and menstruation (Revision)</li> <li>• Consent</li> </ul>	<b>Key Stage 3</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Male and female reproductive organs</li> <li>• Functions of organs</li> <li>• Fertilisation</li> <li>• Development of a baby in the womb and the function of the placenta</li> <li>• Birth</li> <li>• Feeding baby</li> </ul>
Year 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Importance of the Family</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Friendship issues</li> <li>• Family issues</li> <li>• Peer Pressure</li> <li>• Appropriate Behaviour</li> </ul>	..

Year 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marriage and family Relationships in Islam and Judaism</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contraception</li> <li>• Risk Situations</li> <li>• Grooming</li> <li>• Inappropriate Sexual Behaviour</li> <li>• FGM</li> <li>• Drugs/Alcohol</li> <li>• Body Image</li> </ul>	..
Years 10/11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Right to Life</li> <li>• Sex and Relationships</li> <li>• Marriage and Family Life</li> <li>• Parenting</li> <li>• Contraception</li> <li>• Family Responsibilities</li> <li>• Personal Responsibility</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parenting</li> <li>• Contraception (Revision)</li> <li>• STDs AIDS</li> <li>• Well-woman issues</li> <li>• Staying Safe</li> <li>• Child Exploitation/ Human Rights/ Grooming</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Co-ordination and control</li> <li>• Menstrual Cycle</li> <li>• Contraception</li> </ul>

## Years 12/13

The Year 12 Core RE is based on a variety of social and ethical themes and aspects of relationships are covered as part of this. The context, while encouraging and recognising a broad and inclusive approach, is rooted in Scripture and the teaching of the Catholic Church.

## Well-Being Programme

During tutor time, on a Wednesday and Friday, tutors take part in a well-being activity, which acts to build on key topics and issues which have been address in PSHEE and RSE; which includes topics examining equality diversity and inclusion, anti-bullying, target setting and physical and emotional well-being. A tutor programme is in place, which can be accessed, by all form tutors and Heads of Year, on the one drive. There are also resources which complement each topic available on Firefly. Heads of Year will ensure that resources are sent through each week to cover any given topic and thought is given to ensuring these resources are age appropriate.

## Disclosures

Teachers conduct Sex and Relationship Education lessons in a sensitive manner, and in confidence. However, if a child makes a reference to being involved (or being likely to be involved) in sexual activity, then the teacher will take the reference seriously, and deal with it as a matter of child protection. Teachers will respond in a similar way if a child indicates that they may have been a victim of abuse. They will immediately inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

## Monitoring and review

It is the responsibility of the Head of Thornton College and her Deputy Head to ensure that both staff and parents are informed about the Sex and Relationship Education Policy.

The Head of Thornton College and her Deputy Head monitor the programme, and report to governors, when requested, on the effectiveness of the policy.

The Curriculum Committee of the governing body monitors the impact of our Sex and Relationships Education Policy. The Curriculum Committee gives serious consideration to any comments from parents about the Sex Education programme, and makes a record of all such comments. Governors require that a written record, giving details of the content and delivery of our Sex Education programme is available.

**Professional Development:**

Staff continually participate in professional development to ensure that RSE is taught in a way that is compliant: Courses attended in academic year 2021-2022: RSE Training Course, AGBIS Everyone's Invited Webinar series, Webinar two and RSE Sex and Health Education Curriculum.