



St. Matthew's
Roman Catholic High School
VOLUNTARY ACADEMY



Relationships & Sex Education Policy

Reviewed:

February 2026

To be reviewed:

February 2028



We **Pray**
We **Care**
We **Achieve**

MISSION Statement



St. Matthew's
Roman Catholic High School

All policies and procedures are underpinned by our School Mission Statement:



WE PRAY

As a community with Christ and with the teachings of the Gospel at our centre, shown in the things we do and in the ways we worship together.



WE CARE

For everyone in our school community, respecting them as individuals created by God and recognising and celebrating talents and successes. We see caring for others in the world outside of our school as part of our Christian responsibility.



WE ACHIEVE

The best we can in all aspects of school life by learning in lessons, succeeding in examinations and committing to extra-curricular activities.



We **Pray** · We **Care** · We **Achieve**

**“I have come that they may have life and have it to the full.”
(John 10:10)**

1. Mission Statement

St Matthew’s RC High School is a Catholic community where:

- We Pray
- We Care
- We Achieve

All policies are rooted in the belief that each person is created in the image and likeness of God and is called to live a life of dignity, respect and love.

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is integral to our mission to educate the whole person – spiritually, morally, emotionally, physically and socially.

2. Rationale

At St Matthew’s, RSE is provided in the context of our Catholic faith and the teachings of the Church.

We recognise that:

- Parents are the primary educators of their children.
- The school supports parents in forming young people for healthy, respectful and life-giving relationships.
- Young people need accurate knowledge, moral guidance and the skills to make safe and responsible decisions.

RSE enables pupils to:

- form positive relationships
- develop self-respect and respect for others
- understand the value of family life
- recognise and manage risk
- stay safe in an increasingly complex world.

3. Statutory Framework

This policy complies with:

- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- DfE (2019) *Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education*
- Equality Act 2010
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (current)
- Data Protection Act 2018 / UK GDPR

RSE is **statutory in secondary schools**.

Sex Education may be withdrawn by parents (see Section 11).

4. Catholic Vision of the Human Person

In accordance with:

- Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales
- Catholic Education Service
- Diocese of Salford

RSE is rooted in:

- the dignity of every human person
- the belief that sexuality is a gift from God
- the vocation to love
- the importance of marriage and family life
- the virtues of chastity, respect, fidelity and responsibility.

While reflecting Catholic teaching, the school ensures that all pupils feel respected, valued and safe, regardless of their personal circumstances or family background.

5. Aims of RSE

The programme aims to:

Develop attitudes and values

- respect for self and others
- understanding of human dignity
- appreciation of family life
- responsibility and moral decision-making
- compassion and empathy.

Develop personal and social skills

- forming healthy relationships
- managing emotions
- resisting pressure and exploitation
- communication and consent
- resilience and self-esteem.

Provide knowledge and understanding

- puberty and human development
- reproduction and fertility
- contraception and sexual health
- sexually transmitted infections
- the law relating to relationships and sexual activity
- online safety and media influence.

6. Curriculum Content

RSE is delivered through:

- PSHE curriculum
- Science curriculum
- Tutor programme
- Whole-school ethos and pastoral work.

Content includes:

Relationships

- healthy friendships
- respect and boundaries
- bullying and discrimination
- consent
- domestic abuse and coercive control.

Health and Sexual Education

- puberty and body changes
- reproduction
- contraception
- pregnancy and parenting
- sexual health services.

Online Safety

- social media and digital relationships
- sharing images and exploitation
- pornography and unrealistic expectations
- online grooming and reporting concerns.

Teaching is age-appropriate, inclusive and sensitive.

7. Inclusion and Equality

The school meets its duties under the Equality Act 2010.

Teaching will:

- promote respect for all people
- challenge prejudice and discrimination
- recognise different family structures
- ensure no pupil feels excluded or judged.

Catholic teaching is presented with pastoral sensitivity and respect for all pupils.

8. Safeguarding

RSE is delivered within the safeguarding framework of the school.

In line with Keeping Children Safe in Education:

- Pupils are taught how to recognise abuse, exploitation and harmful relationships.
- Ground rules are used to create a safe learning environment.
- Staff will not offer unconditional confidentiality.
- Any safeguarding concerns or disclosures will be referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

RSE contributes to the prevention of:

- child sexual exploitation
- peer-on-peer abuse
- online harm
- sexual harassment and violence.

9. Teaching and Delivery

RSE is delivered by trained staff using a range of methods:

- discussion and reflection
- scenario-based learning
- group work
- distancing techniques
- values clarification.

Teaching is:

- balanced and factual
- rooted in Catholic teaching
- respectful of different viewpoints
- non-judgemental.

10. External Speakers

External visitors may contribute to RSE where appropriate.

They will:

- be approved by the school
- follow safeguarding procedures
- deliver content consistent with Catholic ethos
- complement, not replace, teacher-led learning.

The school follows CES guidance for external speakers.

11. Parents and Carers

Parents are the primary educators of their children.

The school will:

- consult parents when reviewing the policy
- provide curriculum information via the website
- communicate upcoming topics where appropriate.

Right to Withdraw

Parents may request withdrawal from Sex Education (not Science).

Process:

1. Written request to the Headteacher
2. Meeting offered to discuss the request
3. Alternative supervised provision arranged

If a pupil wishes to receive Sex Education after their 15th birthday, the school will arrange this.

12. Roles and Responsibilities

Governing Body

- Approves and monitors the policy
- Ensures compliance with CES, Diocese and DfE
- Consults parents
- Monitors effectiveness.

Headteacher

- Overall responsibility for implementation
- Liaison with Diocese and Governors.

RSE/PSHE Lead

- Curriculum planning and delivery
- Staff training
- Monitoring and evaluation.

All Staff

- Promote positive relationships
- Model respectful behaviour
- Follow safeguarding procedures.

13. Managing Sensitive Issues

Sensitive topics are handled with care and professionalism.

Teachers will:

- establish ground rules
- use distancing techniques
- avoid personal disclosures
- respond factually and appropriately.

Where questions raise safeguarding concerns, staff will follow safeguarding procedures.

14. Confidentiality and Support

Pupils are encouraged to seek support from trusted adults.

Staff will:

- explain limits of confidentiality
- refer concerns appropriately
- signpost to appropriate services where needed.

15. Monitoring and Evaluation

The programme is monitored through:

- lesson observations and planning review
- student voice
- staff feedback
- parental feedback
- governor oversight.

The policy is reviewed every two years in consultation with parents and using current guidance from the CES, the Diocese of Salford and our school Trust.

16. Links to Other Policies

This policy should be read alongside:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection
- Behaviour Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Equality Policy
- SEND Policy
- PSHE Policy.

17. Key Guidance

- DfE (2019) RSE and Health Education
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (current)
- Equality Act 2010
- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- Catholic Education Service Model RSE Policy
- Diocese of Salford guidance
- Bishops' Conference of England and Wales.



St. Matthew's

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Contact

St Matthew's RC High School
Nuthurst Road
Moston
Manchester
M40 0EW

Tel: 0161 681 6178

Web: www.smrchs.com

Email: contact@smrchs.com

Headteacher: Mr A Nightingale



DIocese of  SALFORD

OUR MISSION

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