



St. Ethelbert's Catholic Primary School Policy **Education in Human Love**

"I serve Jesus with my body, heart, mind and soul."

Serviam means 'I serve'. Jesus Christ has taught us that it is more blessed to serve than to be served. At St Ethelbert's school, following our Catholic faith, we serve the whole person – mind, heart, body and soul.

Body – because we care for our wellbeing, our parish neighbourhood and our environment.

Heart – because we teach love and respect for all.

Mind – because we believe in excellent education.

Soul – because we learn to pray and become closer to God as his children.

Rationale

A good and well-rounded education in human life and love is essential for every child. During our lives we work our way through 'developmental stages'. Each stage presents its own unique set of challenges or tasks, which must be mastered in order to move to the next. If children do not successfully complete these tasks they may be at a disadvantage as they move towards adolescence and eventually adulthood.

As Catholics and Christians we believe that sexuality is good, holy and sacred and that through marriage it works to forge a healthy society based upon the family. At St Ethelbert's, sex and relationship education is provided in accordance with the teachings of the Catholic Church, and in such a way that it encourages pupils to consider morals, and the value of marriage and family life. The school refers to this area of learning as Education in Human Love.

Sex and Relationship Education is a non-statutory part of primary school curriculum. Guidance from Ofsted states, however, that *effective SRE can make a significant contribution to the development of the personal skills needed by pupils if they are to establish and maintain relationships and make informed choices and decisions about their health and well-being*. St Ethelbert's takes this guidance into serious consideration in offering education in human loving at each learning stage.

Programme Content

Share Your Love Nursery to Year 4

Alive to the World Years 5 and 6.

Purpose and aims of Education in Human Love at St Ethelbert's

1. To encourage pupils to acquire appropriate knowledge, skills and values in order to mature with confidence and without fear.
2. To encourage pupils to prepare for growth, development and change.
3. To encourage an appreciation of marriage and the family as the foundation of a healthy society.
4. To encourage at the right time an understanding of human reproduction as procreation, an act of love, in a context of commitment for the purpose of begetting new life.

5. To encourage better, appropriate, respectful communication about relationships and sexual matters between children, their parents/carers, family and friends.
6. To encourage pupils to respect and value themselves and others, to treat their bodies with reverence and know how to avoid dangers and risky behaviour.
7. To encourage pupils to develop relationships based on mutual respect and responsibility, to value the virtues of modesty and chastity
8. To encourage pupils to develop their conscience in order to make the right choices based on Catholic/Christian values.
9. To encourage a broader awareness of sources of help and to aid pupils in developing the skills needed to use them
10. To encourage an appreciate of the sanctity of human life and love

What is the Church's guidance on these matters?

The Church has quite specific guidelines on the teaching of human sexuality which every Catholic school is obliged to follow. These can be found in the document *The Truth and Meaning of Human Sexuality* (from now on TMHS). Some of the key principles of TMHS concern:

- The primacy of parents in the formation of their children in matters relating to human sexuality and the home as the first place of such teaching
- The need to avoid explicit or premature sexualisation of children in education
- The requirement to teach matters of sexuality exclusively within a Catholic framework, which means reaching clear moral conclusions about right and wrong behaviour, promoting marriage as the right relationship for the use of procreative powers and the promotion of the virtues of chastity and modesty

Working with Parents in a Catholic School – The heart of our policy on Education in Human Love

Sex education, which is a basic right and duty of parents, must always be carried out under their attentive guidance, whether at home or in educational centres chosen and controlled by them. In this regard, the Church reaffirms the law of subsidiarity, which the school is bound to observe when it cooperates in sex education, by entering into the same spirit that animates the parents (Pope John Paul II, Familiaris Consortio, no. 37; see also 1994 Letter to Families from Pope John Paul II, no. 16).

At St Ethelbert's we see Education in Human Love, as with general PSHE and the promotion of Christian virtues, as a joint partnership between the school and parents at every level. Parents and school are called to co-operate to foster a genuine appreciation of questions relating to faith and morals, family and human love.

As the child matures, it is the privilege and responsibility of parents to communicate the truth and meaning of human sexuality to their child and to help him/her through the stages of development. The relationship and trust that parents establish, will help the child to navigate his/her way from childhood, through adolescence, to adulthood in a virtuous and successful way. Parents choose schools to support them in promoting and fostering the Christian values of human loving in the lives of their children.

When it comes to matters of sexual intimacy and especially the sexual act it is the right and duty of parents to educate their children. In the context of the home issues of human sexuality can be dealt with

in an appropriately sensitive, personal and timely (age appropriate) manner. These matters although delicate are not terribly complicated and while the parent may be reticent and embarrassed to take on this responsibility they should be encouraged and given all the resources that they need. If a parent is not willing or fully able to address this aspect of formation in the life of their child then they may ask another to act as a substitute and this ‘other’ may be the school. The school will never presume to teach the intimacies of sexuality without explicit parental awareness and consent. The school will not act as judge as to whether a parent is capable of teaching this material to their child or not. The Catholic Church clearly states that:

“No society or school should institutionalise parents’ non-involvement in this crucial area of moral formation. Rather, great care should be taken to provide Christ-centred support for the family” (TMHS, nos. 145-146).

Each child is a unique and unrepeatable person and must receive individualised formation. Since parents know, understand, and love each of their children in their uniqueness, they are in the best position to decide what the appropriate time is for providing a variety of information, according to their children's physical and spiritual growth. No one can take this capacity for discernment away from conscientious parents.

If parents choose to ask help from the school in these matters then the school is ready to help at a time and in a way judged to be appropriate. The school, however, will always expect parents to be involved, and does not take the parental responsibility away. Parents are the prime educators of their children and the school seeks to support them in this role when they choose to speak to their own children about matters of human intimacy or ask for assistance. Either way the parents will be invited to review all material and resources that will or may be used.

Content of the Curriculum at St Ethelbert’s

St Ethelbert’s takes a whole school approach to education in Human Love as part of its general aims and purpose. It forms:

- Part of the NC Science
- Part of the taught curriculum including RE and PSHE
- Through assemblies
- Support of professionals who act fully in tune with Catholic values
- Through the daily life of the school

In Years Five and Six the option for a more complete education in human love will be offered. Here information about sexual body parts, puberty and menstruation will be taught if the parents give their consent and thereby make this request. Parents will be shown the teaching materials (which are found in the course books *Alive to the World*) beforehand and encouraged to play a supporting role (resources for which will be provided). If parents choose to withdraw they will also be supported by practical resources which they may choose to use.

Education on Human Loving and the Statutory Science Curriculum

Aspects of Education in Human Love will inevitably be touched on in National Curriculum Science programmes of study at Key Stage One and Two. The statutory requirements here speak of general understanding of reproduction in living systems, the human life cycle and how human reproduction is like animal reproduction. However, in line with Catholic teaching in TMHS, and the options available

within the various Science programmes, all explicit and intimate details regarding the sexual act will be avoided and care will be taken to prevent any premature sexualisation of children¹. Any details of the Science curriculum which relate to matters of human love, even those which are statutory, will be shared with the parents beforehand.

The science curriculum will also be taught within the context of Catholic/Christian values. At St Ethelbert's we believe that teaching in Science needs to be supplemented, in the school context, by aspects of the Church's teaching such as the importance of marriage, chastity, respect and the sanctity of life.

Teaching Methods

The way that education in human love is taught is as important as the content. Children need to feel confident and safe enough to talk about the things that worry them. Teachers will use a variety of methods and resources such as projects, group work, role play, drama and Circle Time.

Resources

- RE Programme 'The Way, the Truth and the Life'
- SRE Schemes 'Alive to the World' for Years 5 and 6
- PSHE Scheme of Work and resources that are fully in line with Catholic values and the ethos of the school².
- Visitors and outside agencies in line with the Visitor Policy.

Staff Training

The school believes that good and effective sex education is based on teachers who feel confident and skilled to deliver this sensitive part of the curriculum and therefore the school will ensure that the staff are offered appropriate training always in harmony with a Catholic understanding of human sexuality.

The effectiveness of the school's approach to Education in Human Love will need assessing. This will include feedback from staff, parents and pupils. Staff need to be wary of the Year 5 and 6 science curriculum where it could go further than this policy allows in the resources / media.

By the end of Key Stage Two

Pupils should be able to:

- Have an appreciation of loving marriage as the stable foundation for family life
- Talk about their values regarding relationships and respect for others
- Listen to, and support and even challenge others as they express their own options and ideas
- Recognise their changing emotions amongst friends and family and be able to express their feelings clearly and positively
- Have confidence and calm as they begin develop through the stages of adolescence

¹ In Key Stage 3 (secondary school) the science curriculum demands more explicit teaching regarding the fertilisation of the human egg and sperm by which time children should have received sufficient education in human love from their parents or school in order to contextualise the information received.

² In line with our Equal Opportunities Policy resources will be monitored and considered for continued suitability.

- Identify adults they can trust and whom they can ask for help
- Form strong values that they can articulate to a variety of audiences
- Recognise their own worth and identify positive things about themselves
- Appreciate the view points of others including their parents and carers
- Discuss moral questions and reach moral answers
- Recognise and challenge stereotypes, for example in relation to gender and the way human sexuality and the body are misrepresented and often trivialised
- Recognise the pressure of unwanted physical contact and know ways of resisting it
- Have respect for the body and an appreciation of the virtue of chastity and modesty

Pupils should know and understand:

- That the life processes common to humans and other animals include growth and reproduction
- That human reproduction is unique, free, loving and sacred and is therefore called procreation
- About the main stages of the human life cycle
- The need for trust and love in established relationships
- About the physical changes that take place during puberty, why they happen and how to manage them.
- The many relationships in which they are all involved, the difference between appropriate and inappropriate relationships
- Where individual families and groups can find help
- How the media impacts on forming attitudes both positively and negatively
- About keeping themselves safe from harm and avoiding risky activities and behaviours
- That their actions have consequences and they are able to anticipate the results of them
- About bullying being always unacceptable

Headteacher November 2016

To be reviewed in January 2018