St Ambrose College
Relationship and Sex Education Policy

Approved	To be reviewed
September 2026	February 2027

Vision and Rationale

As a Catholic College it is vital to offer an outstanding education across the curriculum. To reflect our mission statement we must ensure that our students are given support and guidance to discover who they are and to enable them to make appropraite and informed decisions especially in terms of personal relationships and in their physical and mental well being. The DFE guidance defines Relationship and Sex Education ("RSE") as "lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about the understanding of the importance of marriage and family life, stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care. It is also about the teaching of sex, sexuality and sexual health" [1]

RSE is about the development of the student's knowledge and understanding of him as a sexual being, about what it means to be fully human and being enabled to form healthy relationships with self and others and make moral decisions in conscience. The DFE identifies three main elements: 'attitudes and values, personal and social skills, and knowledge and understanding'.

RSE requires an integrated and holistic approach which respects the fundamental dignity of the individual and the responsibilities of parents and teachers.

> "….. 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 well-informed conscience and to put them into practice with a sense of personal commitment…"

Contents

Vision and Rationale 1

1 Aims 4

2. Statutory requirements 4

3. Policy development 5

4. Definition of Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) 5

5. Curriculum 6

6. Roles and responsibilities 7

7. Parents' right to withdraw 8

8. Training and CPD 8

9. Quality assurance, monitoring and evaluating 9

Appendix 1: TenTen mapping 10

Appendix 2: Parent form: withdrawal from sex education within RSE 16

1. Aims

At the heart of the Relationship and Sex Education curriculum is building upon a Catholic understanding of the human person and an appreciation that authentic human love is more than sexual expression. The core aims of the curriculum are:

- To support students to develop a greater awareness of the Catholic faith and its understanding of the human person, of true relationships and the nature of community;
- Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place;
- To enable students to use correct vocabulary to describe themselves, their bodies, prepare them for puberty and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene;
  - To provide accurate information about sex related issues and create a positive culture around these issues;
  - Increase students' self-esteem, confidence, empathy and dignity;
  - To develop students' respect, awareness and care for others;
  - To explore a range of attitudes and values towards sex related issues and help students to reach their own informed views and make their own choice for a healthier lifestyle;
  - To develop students' personal, social and emotional skills relating to sexual behaviour and situations (e.g. consent, communication, decision making, and risk assessment);
  - To give students support in becoming resilient and to develop confidence to discern messages in the media and the positive and negative effects of peer pressure.
- Ensure that we safeguard the dignity of the individual and support them as they get to know themselves and God.
  - The RSE curriculum will also develop students' understanding of online harms, including AI-generated content, deepfakes, sextortion, financial scams and fake online identities; promote healthy relationships with food, emotional regulation and age-appropriate mental wellbeing; teach conflict resolution, consent, healthy relationships, knife crime awareness, travel safety and the risks associated with vaping and nicotine products; address misogyny, incel culture and the harms of pornography; and ensure students understand equality, legal protections, safeguarding, reporting concerns and personal safety in line with the updated statutory guidance from September 2026. We also anticipate further guidance from the Catholic Education Service regarding gender identity.

2. Statutory requirements

At St Ambrose College we provide Relationship and Sex Education to all students pursuant to section 34 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017[2].

We are also committed to fulfilling out statutory obligations to meet the guidance set out in Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education for teaching from September 2020.
(Statutory Update Sept 2026): The College will implement the updated statutory Relationships, Sex and Health Education guidance from September 2026, including new requirements relating to online safety, AI, misogyny, mental wellbeing, travel safety, vaping, healthy relationships with food, equality and safeguarding. The College will ensure parents are consulted and provided with access to relevant curriculum information and teaching resources in line with statutory expectations.

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

As a Catholic school we have consulted the Catholic Education Service ("CES") and followed the advice given.

3. Policy development
This policy has been developed in consultation with staff, students and parents. The consultation and policy development process involved the following steps:

1. Review – working group, led by a member of the Senior Leadership Team, pulled together all relevant information including relevant national and local guidance;

2. Staff consultation – all College staff were given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations;

3. Parent/stakeholder consultation – parents and any interested parties were invited to attend a meeting about the policy;

4. Student consultation – information coming through regular student voice and external reviews relating to Relationship and Sex Education has been digested and implemented.

5. The policy will operate under the overarching vision, values, and policies of the Laetare CMAT.

6. Ratification – once amendments were made, the policy was shared with governors and ratified.

4. Definition of Relationship and Sex Education (RSE)ducation (RSE)
Ensuring that our students establish and maintain meaningful relationships and supporting them is of paramount importance and rooted in Gospel teaching. Relationship and Sex Education is lifelong learning about physical, sexual, moral and emotional development. Our programme focuses on giving young people the information they need to help develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds. We stress the importance of marriage and family life, stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care.

It is also about the teaching of sex, sexuality and sexual health. It is about the development of a student's knowledge and understanding of themselves as sexual beings, about what it means to be fully human and being enabled to form healthy relationships with self and others and make moral decisions in conscience and with respect for all in all settings to remain safe including online.

At St Ambrose College we strive to incorporate in our general curriculum an understanding of God's love and our response to this love. To this end an understanding of God's creative love, as embodied in human reproduction, is at the centre of our Religious Education and Science curriculum at a suitable level to the growing child (Key Stages 3 and 4). The moral teaching on sexual behaviour is based on the Gospel values of the Catholic Church and complies with the relevant Bishop's Directives for the Diocese. The Religious Education department liaises with Science and other curriculum areas, within the College to ensure these values are cross-departmental. RSE therefore involves a combination of sharing information and exploring issues and values.

God created man and woman in his own image, with equal dignity, different yet complementary. Our sexuality is a gift from God and must be expressed according to His will of love. Our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit and we are one body with Christ. Chastity should be presented in a positive way; it is a gift from God, leading to a self-control which frees us to behave towards ourselves and others with love and with justice. RSE is not about the promotion of sexual activity but instead is to promote the understanding, that God's holy gift of sexual intercourse is reserved for the permanent commitment of marriage, expressive of the bond of mutual love and open to God's gift of new life. Genuine love is the fundamental vocation of every human being.

RSE is therefore about the emotional, social and cultural development of students and involves learning about relationships, sexual health, sexuality, healthy lifestyles, diversity and personal identity.

5. Curriculum

Whilst promoting Catholic values and virtues and teaching in accordance with Church teaching, we will ensure that students are offered a balanced programme by providing an RSE programme that offers a range of viewpoints on issues. Although RSE is not a subject on the curriculum, there are from time to time, specific classes on various aspects of sex education in a variety of subjects. Questions will arise in these classes and teachers are asked to answer honestly, taking care to make answers simple and straightforward and be careful not to give rise to confusion or anxiety. All students are encouraged to refer to their parents for further information and should it be thought necessary by the Senior Leadership Team, parents and / or carers may be consulted.

(Statutory Sept 2026): The curriculum will explicitly include teaching on deepfakes, AI chatbots, fake social media accounts, online fraud and sextortion; misogyny and incel culture; the harms of pornography; emotional regulation and age-appropriate suicide prevention; knife crime and conflict resolution; travel, rail, road, water and fire safety; vaping, nicotine pouches and healthy relationships with food. These themes have been incorporated to ensure the curriculum remains relevant, age-appropriate and responsive to the safeguarding, health and wellbeing needs of young people, in line with the updated statutory guidance from September 2026.

Students will also receive clear scientific information as well as covering the aspects of the law pertaining to RSE (topics such as forced-marriage, female genital mutilation, abortion, the age of consent and legislation relating to equality). Knowing about facts and enabling young people to explore differing viewpoints is not the same as promoting behaviour and is not incompatible with the College's promotion of Catholic teaching. We will ensure that students have access to the learning they need to stay safe, healthy and understand their rights as individuals.

RSE will be delivered in a way that is sensitive, inclusive, and responsive to the specific needs of all individual students, including those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). Teaching will be adapted in respect of students' varying abilities, levels of cognitive and emotional maturity, and personal circumstances. We will ensure that RSE lessons do not subject students to discrimination and that appropriate support, differentiated resources, and reasonable adjustments are provided so all students can access the learning safely and effectively.

A full list of content and subjects covered is shown later in the policy in Appendix 1.

RSE is covered in many aspects of our curriculum but predominantly in Religious Education, Computing, (with focus on online safety), Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education ("PSHE") (our Catholic approved syllabus), Science, through acts of worship and by other external providers e.g. The Ten:Ten theatre company, a Catholic approved company providing resources and facilitators on many moral issues. The Key Stage 5 General RE and tutorial programmes have a number of age appropriate RSE foci.

We have developed the curriculum in consultation with parents, students and staff, taking into account the age, needs and feelings of students. If students ask questions outside the scope of this policy, teachers will respond in an appropriate manner and where required seek guidance from the SLT. We therefore ensure that our students are fully informed and know where to go for further support and guidance if required, as per our safeguarding procedures.

6. Roles and responsibilities

6.1 The governing body

The governing board will hold the Principal to account for the implementation of this policy.

The governing body have approved this policy

6.2 The Principal and College Senior Leadership Team

The Principal is responsible for ensuring that RSE is taught consistently across the College, through appropriate line management of key staff, and for managing requests to withdraw students from non-statutory/non-science components of RSE (see section 8).

6.3 Staff

Responsibility for the specific RSE programme rests with the relevant curriculum staff; this will normally include science, religious education, physical education, RSE and PSHE. However, all staff will be involved in developing the attitudes and values aspect of the RSE programme and have received training and guidance on how to discuss and approach such issues. They will be role models for students of good, healthy, wholesome relationships as between staff, other adults and students. They will also be contributing to the development of students' personal and social skills.

St Ambrose College will call upon help and guidance from outside agencies and health specialists to deliver aspects of RSE. Such visits will always complement the current programme. It is important that any external visitor is clear about their role and responsibility whilst they are in school delivering a session. Any visitor must adhere to our code of practice developed in line with CES guidance 'Protocol for Visitors to Catholic Schools'[3]. Health professionals should follow the College's policies, minimising the potential for disclosures or inappropriate comments using negotiated ground rules and distancing techniques as other teachers would. External agencies will ensure that all teaching is rooted in Catholic principles and practice.

All staff must:

- Deliver RSE in a sensitive way, following Catholic guidance;
- Model positive attitudes to RSE;
- Respond to the needs of individual students;
- Respond appropriately to students whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the non-statutory/non-science components of RSE;
- Ensure that they follow safeguarding procedures if they have a concern for a student.

Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching RSE. Staff who have concerns about teaching RSE are encouraged to discuss this with the Principal and or Assistant Principal, Mrs Reed.

Assistant Principal, Mrs Reed is responsible for the content of RSE at the College with support from the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

6.4 Students

Students are expected to engage fully in RSE and, when discussing issues related to RSE, treat others with respect and sensitivity following the Eight Essentials of being compassionate to others and treating all people with the dignity they deserve.

7. Parents' right to withdraw

At St Ambrose College we recognise that parents (and other carers who stand in their place) are the primary educators of their children. As a Catholic school, we provide the principal means by which the Church assists parents and carers in educating their children. Therefore, the College will support parents and carers by providing material to be shared with their children at home and workshops to help parents/carers to find out more.

Parent governors have been consulted in the composition of this policy and there is a governor link for PSHE including RSE. Parents will be able to view the resources used by the school in the RSE programme, namely TenTen resources.

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from RSE except in those elements which are required by the National Curriculum. This is the right of parents until 3 terms before the child turns 16. After this point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than being withdrawn it will be permitted. Should parents wish to withdraw their children they are asked to notify the College by contacting Mrs Reed, Assistant Principal initially, outlining the reasons for wishing to withdraw. Alternative work will be given to students who are withdrawn from RSE. A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed on the student's educational record. The

College will provide support by providing materials for parents to help students with their learning. We believe that the controlled environment of the classroom is the safest place for RSE to be delivered.

8. Training and CPD

Staff are trained on the delivery of our Catholic approved PSHE programme and staff from RE, Computing and Science have bespoke training on RSE as part of their induction. Where appropriate it will also be included in our continued professional development.

Assistant Principal, Mrs Reed will also invite visitors from outside the College, such as our school nurse, to provide support and /or training to staff teaching RSE if applicable.

9. Quality assurance, monitoring and evaluating

The delivery of RSE is monitored by the Principal and SLT through a variety of ways, for example:

- learning walks in curriculum areas;
- student voice and parental voice which will take place annually through a written questionnaire and meetings. Any feedback will be acted upon to ensure that the RSE curriculum is achieving its objectives.

Appendix 1

Relationships and Sex Education at St Ambrose College mapped against DFE guidance. Ten Ten curriculum map and resources are followed.

TOPIC	STUDENTS SHOULD KNOW	WHERE IS THIS COVERED AT ST AMBROSE?
Families	• That there are different types of committed, stable relationships	• RE Key Stage 4, PSHE Key Stages 3 and 4
	• How these relationships might contribute to human happiness and their importance for bringing up children	• RE Key Stage 4
	• What marriage is, including their legal status e.g. that marriage carries legal rights and protections not available to couples who are cohabiting or who have married, for example, in an unregistered religious ceremony	• RE Key Stage 4, PSHE Key Stages 3 and 4
	• Why marriage is an important relationship choice for many couples and why it must be freely entered into	
	• The characteristics and legal status of other types of long-term relationships	• RE Key Stage 4, PSHE Key Stages 3 and 4
	• The roles and responsibilities of parents with respect to raising of children, including the characteristics of successful parenting	
	• How to: determine whether other children, adults or sources of information are trustworthy: judge when a family, friend, intimate or other relationship is unsafe (and to recognise this in others' relationships); and, how to seek help or advice, including reporting concerns about others, if needed	• RE Key Stage 4, PSHE Key Stages 3 and 4 • RE Key Stage 4, PSHE Key Stages 3 and 4 • PSHE Key Stages 3 and 4 and Ten:Ten

TOPIC	STUDENTS SHOULD KNOW	WHERE IS THIS COVERED AT ST AMBROSE?
Respectful relationships, including friendships	• The characteristics of positive and healthy friendships (in all contexts, including online) including: trust, respect, honesty, kindness, generosity, boundaries, privacy, consent and the management of conflict, reconciliation and ending relationships. This includes different (non-sexual) types of relationship	• RE Key Stage 4, PSHE Key Stages 3 and 4
	• Practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships	• PSHE and Ten:Ten
	• How stereotypes, in particular stereotypes based on sex, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability, can cause damage (e.g. how they might normalise non-consensual behaviour or encourage prejudice)	• PSHE, RE Key Stage 4, General RE 6th Form and Ten:Ten,
	• That in school and in wider society they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and that in turn they should show due respect to others, including people in positions of authority and due tolerance of other people's beliefs	• School wide focus on the Eight Essentials, assembly themes, PSHE Key Stages 3 and 4
	• About different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying and how and where to get help	• PSHE Key Stages 3 and 4, Computing and Ten:Ten • PSHE Key Stages 3 and 4 and Ten:Ten
	• That some types of behaviour within relationships are criminal, including violent behaviour and coercive control	• PSHE Key Stages 3 and 4 and Ten:Ten
	• What constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable	
	• The legal rights and responsibilities regarding equality (particularly with reference to the protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010) and that everyone is unique and equal	• PSHE Key Stages 3 and 4 and General RE 6th Form and Ten:Ten

TOPIC	STUDENTS SHOULD KNOW	WHERE IS THIS COVERED AT ST AMBROSE?
Online and media	• Their rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts, including online	• PSHE Key Stages 3 and 4, Computing and Ten:Ten
	• About online risks, including that any material someone provides to another has the potential to be shared online and the difficulty of removing potentially compromising material placed online	• PSHE Key Stages 3 and 4, Computing and Ten:Ten
	• Not to provide material to others that they would not want shared further and not to share personal material which is sent to them	• PSHE Key Stages 3 and 4, Computing and Ten:Ten
	• What to do and where to get support to report material or manage issues online	• PSHE Key Stages 3 and 4, Computing and Ten:Ten
	• The impact of viewing harmful content	• PSHE Key Stages 3 and 4, RE Key Stage 4, Computing and Ten:Ten
	• That specifically sexually explicit material e.g. pornography presents a distorted picture of sexual behaviours, can damage the way people see themselves in relation to others and negatively affect how they behave towards sexual partners	• PSHE Key Stages 3 and 4 and Ten:Ten
	• That sharing and viewing indecent images of children (including those created by children) is a criminal offence which carries severe penalties including jail	• Computing and PSHE
	• How information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online	

TOPIC	STUDENTS SHOULD KNOW	WHERE IS THIS COVERED AT ST AMBROSE?
Being safe	• The concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, forced marriage, honour-based violence and FGM, and how these can affect current and future relationships • How people can actively communicate and recognise consent from others, including sexual consent, and how and when consent can be withdrawn (in all contexts, including online)	• PSHE Key Stages 3 and 4, General RE 6th Form and Ten:Ten

Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health	• How to recognise the characteristics and positive aspects of healthy one-to-one intimate relationships, which include mutual respect, consent, loyalty, trust, shared interests and outlook, sex and friendship	• PSHE Key Stages 3 and 4, Science Key Stages 3 and 4, General RE 6th Form and Ten:Ten.
	• That all aspects of health can be affected by choices they make in sex and relationships, positively or negatively, e.g. physical, emotional, mental, sexual and reproductive health and wellbeing	• Science Key Stage 3, Biology Key Stage 4, RE Key Stage 4, General RE 6th Form and Ten:Ten.
	• The facts about reproductive health, including fertility and the potential impact of lifestyle on fertility for men and women	• Science Key Stage 3 and Biology Key Stage 4
	• That there are a range of strategies for identifying and managing sexual pressure, including understanding peer pressure, resisting pressure and not pressurising others	• RE Key Stage 4, General RE 6th form and Ten:Ten
	• That they have a choice to delay sex or to enjoy intimacy without sex	• RE Key Stage 4 and Ten:Ten
	• The facts about the full range of contraceptive choices, efficacy and options available	• Science Key Stage 3, Biology Key Stage 4 and RE Key Stage 4
	• The facts around pregnancy including miscarriage	
	• That there are choices in relation to pregnancy (with medically and legally accurate, impartial information on all options, including keeping the baby, adoption, abortion and where to get further help)	• Science Key Stage 3 and Biology Key Stage 4
	• How the different sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV/AIDs, are transmitted, how risk can be reduced through safer sex (including through condom use) and the importance of and facts about testing	• Biology Key Stage 4
	• About the prevalence of some STIs, the impact they can have on those who contract them and key facts about treatment	• RE Key Stage 4 and Biology Key Stage 4
	• How the use of alcohol and drugs can lead to risky sexual behaviour	

TOPIC	STUDENTS SHOULD KNOW	WHERE IS THIS COVERED AT ST AMBROSE?
	• How to get further advice, including how and where to access confidential sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment	• PSHE Key Stages 3 and 4, Science Key Stages 3 and 4

Appendix 2: Parent form: withdrawal from sex education within RSE

TO BE COMPLETED BY PARENTS			
Name of child		Class	
Name of parent		Date	
Reason for withdrawing from sex education within relationships and sex education			
Any other information you would like the college to consider			
Parent signature			

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE SCHOOL	
Agreed actions from discussion with parents	