



St Bede's Catholic High School

Education in Personal Relationships

***At St Bede's we believe that we
are part of God's creative process;
Providing the opportunity for each
individual to flourish in order to serve the Common Good.***



The guiding principles of our Catholic shared vision of life;

That we are all made in the image and likeness of God,

That the ultimate role model for being a full human being is the person of Jesus Christ.

Introduction

As a Catholic school, we are concerned with the development of the whole person. Through the curriculum offered we seek to promote the spiritual, moral, physical and intellectual growth of each child according to his/her needs and stage of development.

Relationships are of central significance in the life of each person and the adolescents in our care are at a very formative stage of their personal growth. Accordingly, the quality of relationships experienced in school is an important consideration in all that we do. All our work is in the context of our attempts to build a Christian Community and colleagues are urged to implement the Mission statement of the school through their teaching. The Personal and Social development of each child is affected by his/her learning in every situation. All teachers share with parents and parishes the task of promoting spiritual and moral development. Through the curriculum as a whole, a coherent and consistent approach is adopted which is shaped by our values as a Catholic community.

At St Bede's we are aware of our place within the Church and we base our policies on the teaching and guidance offered by the Bishops' Conference and the Archdiocese of Liverpool.

This Education for Personal Relations Policy is drawn up in the light of the 1993 Education Act: Sex Education in Schools, Circular No. 5/94, the Sex and Relationships Guidance July 2000 and the subsequent response from the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, 11th July 2000.

The law requires that maintained secondary schools teach sex education, human growth and reproduction including education about HIV and AIDS and other sexually transmitted



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infections as set out in the National Curriculum. It also requires that the governing body and headteacher ensure that any sex and relationship education is provided in a way that encourages pupils to consider the value of family life. Governing bodies must keep a written, up-to-date annual record of their decisions and have a statement setting out their policy.

In voluntary-aided schools the responsibility to produce an EPR policy is recognised as important for its own sake even though the legal obligation does not apply in the same way.

Liverpool Archdiocese guidelines confirm this:

"A major purpose of such a policy is to provide a context and framework within which programmes of study and pastoral strategies can be undertaken in response to the needs of the young people in our schools, their families and communities and the requirements of Church and state authority".

Statement of Policy

This present policy seeks to clarify the school's policy on the appropriate approach to Education of Personal Relationships. It has arisen following consultation with governors, SLT, Chaplaincy, PHSE steering committee and local catholic primary schools. It will serve to give teachers the confidence which arises from having principles clearly stated and understood.

We place the need to promote Christian responsibility in relationships very high on our agenda and expect parents of prospective pupils to consider this when seeking a Catholic Education at St Bede's.

This policy is formulated within the framework of the Mission Statement

Mission Statement

The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed,
which a man took, and planted in his field.

Though it is the smallest of all seeds, when it grows,
it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree,
so that the birds come and perch in its branches."

Matthew 13:31-32



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Enabled by the Holy Spirit we strive to make these principles a lived reality;

Through collective worship, assemblies, daily school routines, curriculum and policies we will reflect the values of the Gospels.

Our relationships will be guided by the Gospel values as described by Jesus in the Beatitudes; Faithfulness, Integrity, Dignity, Compassion, Humility, Gentleness, Truth, Justice, Forgiveness, Mercy, Purity, Holiness, Tolerance, Peace, Service, Sacrifice. (Matthew 5:1-12)

As a school community we are active in taking responsibility for others, those in our community and those in need around us locally, nationally and internationally.

We will nurture the growth of each pupil in our care through the artistic, academic, creative, practical, social, moral, physical and spiritual aspects of school life.

We will be a place of welcome by demonstrating God's love to all who come into our school community.

We will achieve this through working with all people of goodwill, particularly parents, families and the Church.

We will reflect the beauty of God's creation through aspiring to excellence in all we do.

St Bede's has a clear responsibility for the personal, social, moral, intellectual and physical development of all students.

"Sex education is not reducible to simple teaching material, nor theoretical knowledge alone, nor does it consist of a programme to be carried out progressively, but it has a specific objective in view: an effective maturation of pupils' self control and of correct behaviour in special relationships."

Education Guidance in Human Love

Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education 1983

Parents

We recognise that the primary responsibility for the education of children belongs to parents. The Church community and the school share the privilege of helping young people to learn and grow as individuals. The parents of St Bede's pupils appreciate the support which they receive from the school in this task and we strive to keep them fully informed in a variety of ways.

There is regular communication with parents and real openness in dealing with any problems. There are also opportunities for consultation and dialogue on all aspects of school life. The school seeks to work with the family in the areas of human growth and



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sexual development so that our young people will have an awareness of the fullness and meaning of life rooted in the love of God.

Although we recognise that, technically, parents have the legal right to withdraw children from such work we feel that it would raise questions in terms of their acceptance of our distinctive nature as a Catholic School.

Aims

Education for Personal Relationships is delivered primarily through Religious Education, Science and Personal, Health and Social Education in a cross-curricular programme.

The Education for Personal Relationships Policy has the following aims:

- To provide a Catholic framework within which students can grow in their understanding of human sexuality.
- To give students a full understanding of their own physical and emotional development.
- To foster self esteem and a sense of moral responsibility.
- To encourage students to build relationships based on mutual respect.
- To enable students to challenge assumptions on sexuality in the secular society in which they live.
- To recognise the sanctity of family life.

Education for Personal Relationships Description of Practice

At St Bede's Education for Personal Relationships is part of a whole school approach to personal and social development and is guided by the values and teachings of the Catholic Church.

The delivery of education for personal relationships is a continuous process, based on a planned, balanced and cross-curricular programme throughout the school.

The education for personal relationships is placed in the context of and supported by the strong Christian ethos of the school itself and the mission statement that drives our school.

Our programme hopes to complement the role of the parents or guardians as their children develop into adulthood. The programme affirms our Catholic teachings about marriage and family life. It provides opportunities to address the needs of our students with Christian perspectives in a world that may present different pressures and values.

Education for personal relationships involves the development of knowledge, skills and self esteem which will enable our students to make well informed decisions, have respect for themselves and others and be better prepared to make loving and lasting relationships. We recognise the need for careful and sensitive teaching in all areas of education for personal relationships.



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Objectives

The main objectives for our education for personal relationships policy are as follows:

- To impart Christian ideals to the students and build upon these values.
- To ensure that all students receive suitable education and guidance for personal relationships.
- To give students accurate information about the facts of reproduction in the context of caring relationships and family life.
- To prepare students for changes at puberty, both physical and emotional.
- To offer a secure environment and the opportunities to discuss fears and anxieties, to answer questions and give reassurance by emphasising normality.
- To emphasise the importance and desirability of sex within marriage.
- To explore issues involving love, marriage and relationships and to emphasise the importance of raising children within a loving family.
- To prepare students for adult life and develop their skills in making good choices within relationships.
- To enable each student to grow in dignity as a person and to stand against all that undermines the dignity of self and others.
- To give full and accurate information about all forms of contraception.
- To alert students to the reality and dangers of related issues such as sexually transmitted diseases, pornography, rape, homosexuality, abortion, genetic engineering and IVF.
- To give sound information about the nature and transmission of HIV and to explore attitudes to HIV and AIDS in our society.
- To help students to develop a positive self image and self esteem so that they can have better control over their own lives and behaviour.
- To set teaching within the context of pressure placed on young people in society today and to develop an understanding of individual freedom and corporate responsibility.
- To emphasise the uniqueness of human love and the sanctity of marriage and family life.