

Rationale

This policy seeks to define what we consider to be outstanding practice for positive relationships at Christ the Sower and describes our desire for children and adults' growth as a respectful community where all individuals have a sense of connection and belonging. We aim to build a safe community at Christ the Sower where love, trust and hope are valued alongside honest and open communication with each other. We aim to seek and offer forgiveness when things go wrong. We believe that although we often use the word behaviour, what we mean is how adults and children conduct themselves as a result of the choices they make. We believe that good conduct needs to be carefully nurtured and established to ensure all children can learn effectively in a calm, supportive environment, where they can choose the good and reject what is harmful or disrespectful. This is really important especially for the adults in the school, since what they say can increase – or militate against – children's social engagement. We want to be a school that increases children's social engagement in the way we speak, show interest, encourage and build warm relationships with each other and with the children we are called here to serve.

The key to this is to look to Jesus and the way that he demonstrated, through selfless love, commitment to truth, compassionate dealing with the sin in others and clear teaching on what makes for the best and most effective relationships in society and the family, what really effective, respectful, loving, open relationships can be in a community.

What community looks like, and the effort we make to grow it, is best summarised in this quote from Wendell Berry (from the essay *Sex, Freedom, Economy and Community*):

*A community identifies itself by an understood mutuality of interests. But it lives and acts by the common virtues of **trust, goodwill, forbearance, self-restraint, compassion, and forgiveness**. If it hopes to continue long as a community, it will wish to – and will have to – have to encourage respect for all its members, human and natural. It will encourage **respect for all stations and occupations**. Such a community has the power – not invariably, but as a rule – to enforce decency without litigation. It has the power, that is, to influence behaviour. And it exercises this power not by coercion ...but by teaching the young and by preserving stories and songs that tell (among other things) what works and does not work in a given place (pp119-120)*

Our vision

Part of our school vision declares that we are seeking for ways to be:

A loving community: *At our heart is an ever-increasing understanding of God as the source of love. Because we know each child as a unique treasure, we value each other, treating each other as we would expect to be treated ourselves. Being motivated by love, we strive to be a community where everyone works for the good of everyone else.*

A community together: *We rejoice in our diversity and recognise that we are parts of the same body journeying together, walking hand-in-hand with God. We aim to provide a rich and true experience of Christian community, being a beacon of love, light and hope here on the West flank of Milton Keynes.*

Social engagement: its importance to our community, and how we foster it.

School is in many ways an unnatural place to be for children. The mass schooling of children can alienate children from their parents, from their community and often from themselves. The earliest days of compulsory schooling in the USA had this as an aim – to alienate children from their families and themselves in order to re-mould them to be citizens directed to a national economic purpose. Inasmuch as this type of thinking has infected the national purpose of schooling in the UK over the last 130 years, we regard it as wholly unnatural and wrong. Therefore we take particular pride in our commitment to engaging children socially at every opportunity, using body language, speech and actions to make them feel as strong a part of our community as we possibly can. If we get this social engagement right, we believe that the level of alienation will be minimised within our school community, and as a result, we will see more content learners, better equipped emotionally and cognitively to engage with friends, adults and their learning.

Dan Hughes (2017, *Building the Bonds of Attachment*, Rowman & Littlefield, 3rd ed.) uses the acronym PACE in his work to restore order and love to the world of children who have suffered deep trauma and loss resulting in detachment. The acronym stands for *play, acceptance, curiosity, empathy*. It is a useful framework to keep in mind throughout this policy because of its impact on relationship building whether between adults, or between adults and children or between children. In all we seek to do, the direction of travel is toward *engagement with* and *acceptance of*, one another.

Restorative Relationships: what they are and how we build them.

Principles and Aims

Paul Dix (2017, *When the Adults Change, Everything Changes*, Independent Thinking Press) tells us what we already know, that the culture of a school is set entirely by the way that adults behave. That is why, in living out a policy such as this one, we need to ensure that all we do takes strong account of the relational context in which we do it. Restorative practice is the relational context that we work in at Christ the Sower, and it is vital that we see it primarily as a tool to impact adult conduct before we expect anything at all from children! The principles of restorative practice are as follows:

1. Relationships are a central focus of this approach. A key principle is that respectful and collaborative relationships have to be made and maintained by the interactions and communications that take place between and among people.
2. Everyone is part of a web of interconnecting relationships – we are all both informed and formed by the words and actions of others.
3. Communication is the practice of relationships: If we want individuals to develop respectful and collaborative relationships they have to experience respectful and collaborative communication.
4. An important principle is unconditional positive regard for all individuals and a commitment to ensure that social learning (rather than social control) enables individuals to experience a sense of responsibility for their words and actions.

Practices:

1. Community-building

Informally, this involves all communication and interaction between people that contributes to a sense of connection and belonging. This could be as simple as a smile or it could be involvement in a shared activity.

Formally, the practice of daily circle ‘go-arounds’ gives a voice to all individuals helping to create a restorative relationship climate of mutual respect, personal responsibility and social inclusion

At Christ the Sower, this means

- We use respectful language to one another as adults, modelling it to the children at all times.
- We hold twice-daily community circles, reinforcing our class community with simple questions so that children can “check-in” and “check-out” each day.
- We use community circles in our classes whenever a member has hurt another member of that community, so as to restore the relationships and allow the class to say how they feel.

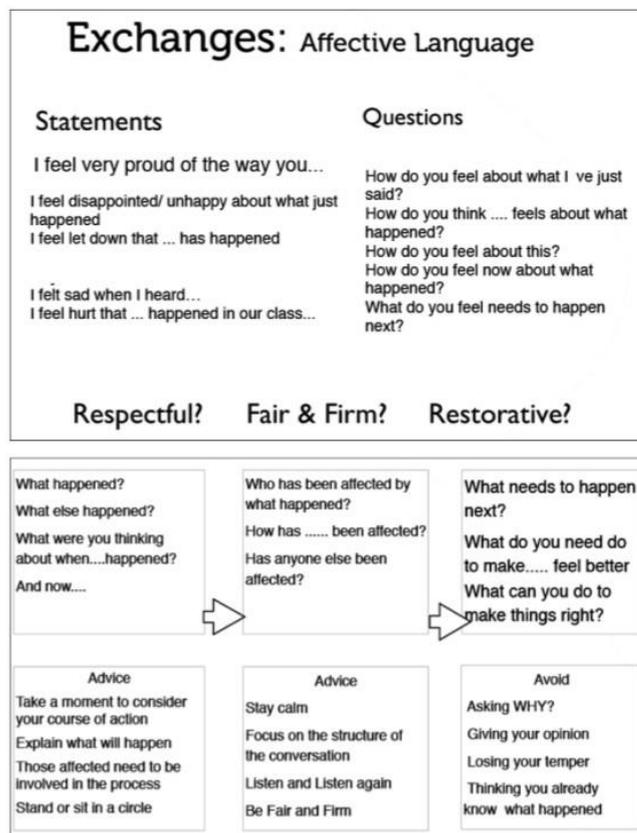
2. Restorative Dialogue

Informally, this involves the practice of reflective dialogue through which individuals may reflect on the consequences of their actions. The aim is to provide reassuring connection and an opportunity for individuals to learn from feedback provided within a supportive relationship context.

Formally, the practice of holding restorative conversations and meetings creates a context in which individuals may learn about others and reflect on their own actions-providing opportunities to restore and strengthen their relationships.

At Christ the Sower, this means:

- We use the dialogue shown in this box, to help us separate out the person who has offended from the action we all have to learn from and fix, holding all concerned in unconditional positive regard.



- We hold restorative conferences to restore relationships and fix situations. These are chaired by an independent person, one not affected by what has gone on, and allow everyone affected to have their say, starting with the perpetrator, then any witnesses affected by the action, and finally by the victim, using the affective language in the box to the right. The aim of the chairperson is to secure learning from the situation, to ensure that consequences are clearly laid out, and to fix the problem so it minimises the risk of it happening again.

3. Family Partnership

Informally, a sense of partnership will be created over time through all of the communication and interactions that take place between school and home. This will involve staff making positive connections that value and appreciate the contribution of families and it will involve families becoming receptive to the idea of working in partnership with school staff.

Formally, this involves creating opportunities for families to actively engage in learning about the practice of community-building and restorative dialogue. This may involve a variety of activities such as: observation, individual conversation, written information, participation in circles and meetings and small group workshops.

At Christ the Sower, this means:

- We regularly inform parents about our approach to relationships and invite them to restorative circles where this would help resolve issues.
- We work hard at building our community with parents, ensuring that we speak to them of the good their children have achieved, not just speaking to them when something has gone awry.
- We may invite parents to a restorative dialogue (one-to-one) or restorative conference (where often they may be the one person that the perpetrator is sorry they have offended) using the principles above.
- We also use restorative dialogue between adults working in school when a relationship has been damaged, or between a parent and a staff member if needed.

Conduct

Children at Christ the Sower consistently meet the high standards of behaviour that we set them as a community. We do not have a great number of “school rules”, but encourage each class at the beginning of each year to re-negotiate the conduct that will work best for their own class, and which is expressed in a way that all children in that class can easily learn and understand, and which is rooted in a deep mutual respect.

Underpinning this is a series of agreed, whole-school “Golden Rules” which serve as a code of conduct. This is a commitment to respect for each other, both adults and children, respect for property, both my own and other peoples, and to treat all other people as we would ourselves want to be treated, honouring one another more than ourselves. These are rooted in Jesus’ teaching in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7) and whilst difficult, they also present to us a range of challenges to character development that will serve children through life.

This can be hard to achieve, and we use rewards to encourage good choices. When wrong choices are made, consequences are put in place (such as lost break time) and relationships are fixed using restorative language and the restorative principles of being respectful and fair. All staff receive training in restorative practice and understand the consequences and rewards and use them to encourage the conduct we desire. The underlying principle is that we reinforce good conduct with praise and expect children to notice this and respond by choosing conduct that supports and deepens respectful relationships.

Whilst we expect the highest standards of conduct of our pupils at all times and wherever they are, this policy does NOT cover incidents of bullying or poor conduct outside the school site and outside school hours.

The Headteacher has overall responsibility for behaviour management in the school. There will be regular opportunities for professional development for all staff to promote effective behaviour practices.

Contact with Parents

Teachers should aim to build a positive relationship with the parents of all the children in their class wherever possible. This can however be a challenge in some cases where parents are not able to come to school to meet or drop off their children. Contact will need to be made by using a communication book, phone or e-mail as agreed. It is good practice to build this contact and relationship before any negative conduct needs to be discussed. Parents should be informed by the class teacher of any incident which results in loss of breaktimes or the child being sent to a senior/phase leader. If a child is not responding to the rewards and consequences in place, then a meeting with the parents should be organised to agree a more regular system of communication which can enable the agreed systems to be reinforced at home. It may also be appropriate for a phase leader or the SENCo to be present at this meeting depending on the level of concern. For more serious incidents resulting in a child being sent to the Assistant Head, Deputy Head or Headteacher, they may choose to contact parents themselves.

The Golden Rules

At Christ the Sower:

- We treat each other the way we would love to be treated ourselves.
- We respect ourselves and one another.
- We speak the truth in love and kindness at all times.
- We strive for excellence by working our hardest and seeking to improve.
- We don't give up and we try and learn from our mistakes.
- We take pride in looking after ourselves, our school and our environment.
- We always take responsibility for our own conduct.
- We are thankful for all we have.

These are displayed around the school and in our classrooms and interpreted through our Christian school virtues. They are shared with the children and success is celebrated on a daily basis. In Foundation Classes, these are often simplified to *kind hands, kind mouths, kind hearts*.

Praise, Reward and Consequence

At Christ the Sower we acknowledge the power of praise and rewards in encouraging good conduct and changing behaviour trends. No system is perfect, or works for absolutely everyone, but the agreed approaches to reward and consequence work for the very large majority. Rewards for good behaviour include:

- Verbal praise given as often as possible for what has been achieved or noticed.
- Staff may use stickers
- Sending a "praise postcard" home in the post
- 'Marvellous Monsters' are given whenever children meet or exceed the staff's expectations for them in their conduct or learning. If the children earn above a particular 'expected' amount (chosen by the teacher according to their own preferences of rewarding monsters), they will earn a weekly sticker.
 - 5 stickers = bronze certificate,
 - 10 stickers = silver certificate,
 - 20 stickers = gold certificate
 - 30 stickers = diamond certificate, within one academic year.

On average, between $\frac{1}{2}$ and $\frac{3}{4}$ of the class should be earning a sticker each week, so please set the amount of monsters required accordingly. In Foundation classes, stickers, not monsters, are awarded.

- Showing work to a senior leader.
- Entry in the Golden Book leading to children's names being listed in the newsletter. Parents are also texted to inform them.
- Class treat afternoon once per term.

Rewards and sanctions should not be linked. For example, rewards such as monsters or weekly stickers that have been earned should not be taken away when break time or class treat is lost. Children would not normally be chosen for entry into the Golden Book at the end of the week, however, if they have lost any break time or the class treat, or their reward might be postponed by a week so as to avoid mixed messages.

Golden Rules



Teachers should ensure lessons are planned in a way that promotes positive conduct and gives every child the chance to succeed. For any children who are finding appropriate conduct difficult, a variety of strategies - such as warning looks, praising others who are conducting themselves appropriately, or giving the child something to do - should be used. When a final warning is given, the child's name should be moved to the warning space of the break time loss display, a visual prompt that if the behaviour continues, break time will be lost.

Where incidents of inappropriate conduct occur, we will use restorative language – find out what happened; who has been affected; who should take responsibility, i.e. what needs to happen to make it right. The following consequences are part of our agreed process for fixing relationships within the school community and should be used alongside the responsibility to 'fix it' with those directly affected.

Loss of break time (cannot be earned back)

- Not meeting expectations clearly set and reinforced regularly by the class teacher
- Persistently making the wrong choices
- Repeating a minor offence
- Distracting others ('stealing learning')
- Disrespect towards another pupil or adult

Loss of breaktime (outside staff room/in class/ accompanying teacher on duty as appropriate),
lunchtime play

- Use of foul and abusive language
- Hurting as a deliberate choice

Send to Phase leader

- Intentional damage to school property
- Repeated hurting as a deliberate choice

- Disrespect towards an adult

Send to Assistant Head/Deputy Head or Headteacher

- Swearing at a member of staff
- Violence towards an adult
- Three recent incidences of hurting as a deliberate choice or just one if serious injury is caused.

N.B. Children who have lost two or more break times will be spoken to by a senior leader. If this happens regularly, the child may be asked to report daily or weekly to the office with a monitoring sheet.

Consequences – Exclusion

The decision to exclude any child for unacceptable conduct will be used as a last resort by the Headteacher, where:

- pupil conduct has been deliberately aggressive and significant injury has been caused to the victim
- in spite of repeated warnings, the child presents as a danger to those around him, for instance in unwarranted sexualised activity of threat to another child, constant verbal threat to hurt or inflict pain etc.
- following a long period of poor conduct and after a final warning has been sent to the parents/carers.

The Headteacher, class teacher, parents/carers and learning mentor may all meet to create a plan for any child who has been excluded, to support re-integration back into school life. Any victim of such conduct is of course offered support and parents will be informed immediately. Local Authority and other agencies may also be involved at this time to offer further support for both perpetrator and all those affected: e.g. Specialist Teacher for SEMH (Social, Emotional and Mental Health) or the CAMHS (Specialist Child Mental Health) Team. Children at risk of permanent exclusion because of their conduct will be referred to the Primary Pupil Referral Unit in Bletchley.

Anti-bullying guidelines

We aim to provide a safe, caring environment at Christ the Sower free from all forms of humiliation, racial abuse, physical, cyber-bullying and mental abuse. All staff are committed to creating a secure environment for the children and therefore any reports of bullying are taken very seriously and followed up.

Sometimes a child's unacceptable behaviour takes the form of bullying. This behaviour is characterised by a group or individual causing another group or individual to feel negative emotions over a period of time. It usually happens with the knowledge of a wide group of children and therefore with their collusion although this may not always be the case. It is constant and occurs over a period of time.

Bullying can be:

- verbal – name calling, insulting, making offensive remarks
- physical – hitting, kicking, taking belongings
- indirect – cyber-bullying, spreading stories, exclusion from social groups, etc.

If an incident of bullying takes place, we aim to ensure that:

- children feel safe enough to tell an adult about the incident
- incidents are not repeated
- victims are given support and care is taken to raise their self-esteem and confidence
- children instigating bullying are made aware that their behaviour and its consequences are unacceptable, and are helped to work out any personal issues.

In most incidents of bullying, parents of all parties should be involved. The following strategies are employed.

- Immediate intervention by staff

- Inform Headteacher and other relevant staff, discuss child's behaviour
- Support victim(s). Inform parents.
- Talk individually with instigators. Inform parents.
- Talk to parents of instigator (without child), counsel, share and gather information. Agree on strategies.
- Talk to parents and child.
- Involve support of Specialist Teacher for Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH).
- Set specific targets with child and parents. Agree any consequences. Agree regular review sessions.
- Implement strategies and consequences. Continue contact with victim(s) and observe potential situations.
- If there is a recurrence of incidents, implement consequences. Begin formal procedure for exclusion. Involve Governors.
- Provide regular opportunities for the class to be supported and discuss bullying issues on a regular basis through assemblies and circle time.

Guidelines for dealing with racist incidents

Racist behaviour is defined as any act or expression which causes harm or offence, directed by a member of one racial or ethnic group to others where the motivation or effect is to create racial dislike or hatred.

Incidents may include:

- Threatened or actual assault
- Derogatory name calling, insults, racist jokes and racist language
- Racist graffiti (on books/furniture)
- Verbal abuse
- Incitement of others to behave in a racist way
- Racist comments in the course of a discussion during class
- Teasing in relation to language, religion or cultural background
- Refusal to co-operate with others because of their race
- Expressions of prejudice calculated to offend others

Important points to note include:

- Racial harassment may be only one aspect of a larger incident
- Teachers may need to deal with comments made by parents or other adult
- Incidents may involve group as well as individual behaviour
- Racist incidents are not always explicit
- Racist behaviour can occur without any people from an alternate culture or religion being present (e.g. telling jokes)
- Offence may be taken by any person – regardless of race
- The effects of a racist incident must be dealt with – giving the victim particular attention

Opportunities for discussion to develop respect for others will be a key part of work at Christ the Sower to develop a healthy respectful community which rejoices in our diversity. This will be done during conversations about golden rules but whole school opportunities could be through Collective Worship, Circles, RE and Prayer Space times.

The Headteacher is the named person responsible for dealing with racist incidents. All incidents must be recorded on a 'Racist Incident Form' a copy of which must be kept in the Racist incidents File. At the end of term details of racist incidents are reported to the Governing Body.

Prejudice-based bullying

Added to this policy May 2017

Under the Equalities Act 2010 it is against the law to discriminate against anyone because of:

- age
- being or becoming a transsexual person
- being married or in a civil partnership
- being pregnant or having a child
- disability
- race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin including Gypsy, Roma, Travellers
- religion, belief or lack of religion/belief
- sex /gender
- sexual orientation

These are called 'protected characteristics'. As part of the requirement on schools to promote fundamental British values, schools must proactively challenge derogatory and discriminatory language and behaviour including that which is racist, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic and disabilist in nature. We will record these types of bullying, even that which represents a one-off incident, and report them to the local authority for monitoring purposes. Other bullying include:

- bullying related to appearance or health
- bullying of young carers or looked after children or otherwise related to home circumstances

Although the above do not currently receive protection under the Equality Act 2010, bullying for these reasons is just as serious. There is no hierarchy of bullying – all forms should be taken equally seriously and dealt with appropriately.

As a church school, we seek to work within the guidelines of the 2014 publication **Valuing All God's Children** (Church of England Archbishop's Council Education Division) which is a clear explanation of the nature and impact of prejudice-based bullying and supports schools who seek to tackle it in a range of useful ways. Part of this policy is a commitment to adopt its 10 recommendations (Valuing all God's Children, p4) over the next two years.

Prejudice-related language

Racist, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic and disabilist language includes terms of abuse used towards people because of their race/ethnicity/nationality; because they are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transsexual, or are perceived to be, or have a parent/carer or sibling who is; because they have a learning or physical disability. Such language is generally used to refer to something or someone as inferior. This may also be used to taunt young people who are different in some way or their friends, family members or their parents/carers. In the case of homophobic, biphobic and transphobic language particularly, dismissing it as banter is not helpful as even if these terms are not referring to a person's sexual orientation or gender identity they are using the terms to mean inferior, bad, broken or wrong. We will challenge the use of prejudice related language in our school even if it appears to be being used without any intent. Persistent use of prejudice related language and/or bullying will be dealt with as with any other form of bullying.

Cyberbullying

The increasing use of digital technology and the internet has also provided new and particularly intrusive ways for bullies to reach their victims. Cyberbullying can take many forms and bullying online can often start in school and then be progressed online or start online and influence behaviour in school. Whilst most incidents of Cyberbullying occur outside school we will offer support and guidance to parents/carers and their children who experience online bullying and will treat Cyberbullying with the same severity as any other forms of bullying, and includes:

- Hacking into someone's accounts/sites
- Posting prejudice/hate messages
- Impersonating someone online
- Public posting of images
- Exclusion
- Threats and manipulation

- Stalking

We will ensure that our children are taught safe ways to use the internet (see our e-safety policy) and encourage good online behaviour. Bullying can take place between:

- Young people
- Young people and staff
- Between staff
- Individuals or groups

Homophobic/transphobic bullying and language

Homophobic language is terms of abuse used towards lesbian, gay and bisexual people or those thought to be LGB. It is also used to refer to something or someone as inferior. This may also be used to taunt young people who are different in some way or have gay friends, family members or their parents/carers are gay. Dismissing it as banter is not helpful as even if these terms are not referring to a person's sexuality they are using the terms to mean inferior, bad, broken or wrong. We will challenge the use of homophobic language in

our school even if it appears to be being said without any homophobic intent. Persistent use of homophobic language or homophobic bullying will be dealt with as with any other form of bullying.

Transphobic bullying often occurs as a result of others' prejudice being directed at a child or young person because:

- They are transgender
- They are perceived to be transgender
- They do not fit with traditional gender norms (eg. boys with long hair or wearing make-up, girls playing team sports)
- They have transgender friends or family members
- They are perceived as being different

We will challenge the use of any unkind behaviour in our school and teach children to celebrate our differences. Persistent use of transphobic language or bullying will be dealt with as with any other form of bullying.

The use of physical intervention

The use of physical control or restraint can only be used:

- where action is essential in self-defence or because there is an imminent risk of injury;
- where there is a developing risk of injury, or significant damage to property;
- where a pupil is behaving in a way that is compromising good order and discipline.

Staff may need to intervene as a last resort by:

- physically interposing between children;
- blocking a child's path
- leading a child by the hand or arm
- shepherding a child away by the hand or placing a hand in the centre of the back

- holding or pushing if absolutely essential
- NB Only those trained in restraint should attempt to restrain a child in a formal manner.

Staff must not:

- hold a child by the collar or neck
- slap, punch or kick a child
- twist or force limbs against a joint
- trip up a child
- hold or pull a child by the ear or hair
- hold a child face down on the ground.

For further information see *the 2017 Physical Intervention and Restraint Policy.*

Record keeping

There is provision within the school's ongoing system of record keeping to record comments about the children's general behaviour. However, if a child's behaviour needs monitoring or is causing concern, more detailed notes are kept by the class teacher. These are essential if, at a later date, outside agencies become involved. Notes made about specific incidents or meetings with parents are also kept. The Headteacher records incidents of a more serious nature in the Incident Book. Incidences of restraint are recorded in a ***special Bound and Numbered Book (V3).***

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)

Definition of Relationships and Sex Education

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about the understanding of the importance of family life, stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care. It is also about the teaching of the main parts of the human life cycle and preparing children for the body changes at puberty. It is not about the promotion of sexual orientation or sexual activity.

At Christ the Sower we aim to provide a caring, supportive, developmental programme for relationships and sex education within a Christian context. We hope the programme will provide children with understanding which is more than just biology and the fundamentals of reproduction. We aim to provide knowledge and skills and understanding for children of the changes facing them as they grow into adolescence and adulthood at a level appropriate to the child's maturity and developmental needs. We aim to provide reassurance about self body image, behaviour, emotions and relationships.

In planning and presenting this part of the curriculum, children should have the opportunity to express themselves within a trusted and safe environment. They need to be able to articulate their feelings, thoughts and anxieties to enable them to develop the skills to make responsible decisions, communicate effectively and develop healthy and appropriate relationships.

The development of positive self-esteem is essential to an effective health curriculum to allow children to make responsible choices and decisions. If young people feel good about themselves they are more likely to take care of themselves and others and therefore develop non-exploitative, caring relationships. They are also more able to resist peer pressure and be exploited by others.

At Christ the Sower we will work in partnership with parents in the delivery of relationships and sex education. We aim to ensure that teachers' personal beliefs and attitudes will not influence the teaching of this subject.

- Parents are the key people in teaching their children about growing up, relationships and sex
- Many parents find it difficult to talk to their children about growing up, relationships and sex
- We will consult regularly (annually) with parents on the content and delivery of the relationships and sex education programmes
- Parents have the right to withdraw their child from all or part of the relationships and sex education programme
- We will involve health professionals in complementing this work
- The Governing Body will review the provision for relationships and sex education and receive feedback from the school staff regularly.

As a staff, we feel that relationships and sex education should be taught as a natural part of the curriculum. It is part of the National Curriculum for Science. Children study reproductive processes in animals and humans and the changes as humans develop from birth to old age within the science curriculum.

Main elements of Relationships and Sex Education

Attitudes and values

- Children are taught the importance of values, individual conscience and moral choices
- Children learn the value of family life, marriage and stable loving relationships for the nurture of children
- Children learn the value of respect, love and care

- Children develop critical thinking as part of decision making

Personal and social skills:

- Children learn to manage emotions and relationships confidently and sensitively
- Children develop self respect and empathy for others

- Children learn to make choices based on understanding of difference and with an absence of prejudice
- Children learn to take responsibility for their actions in all situations
- Children learn to manage conflict
- Children develop protective behaviour strategies to learn to recognise and avoid exploitation and abuse

Knowledge and understanding

- Children learn and understand physical development at appropriate stages
- Children develop knowledge of reproduction, health, emotions and relationships

Involvement

- Governing Body – to agree and revise policy

- Parents and carers – to view programme materials/content
- Staff – provide appropriate training and support
- Ensure children’s views are listened to

Guidelines

At the primary stage we would not envisage covering certain aspects of relationships and sex education, although there may be occasions when these are touched upon or are discussed with certain children.

These would generally be:

- HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases
- Abortion
- Sexual orientation
- Information about confidential contraception and advice
- Protected sex

Consideration of the different cultures represented will also be taken into account when planning teaching sessions. Single sex teaching groups may be used for parts of the programme. Children with special needs must be included in Relationships and Sex Education. All children must understand their own physical and emotional development to enable them to make positive decisions in their lives.

Teaching strategies for Relationships and Sex Education

In order to help young people develop confidence in talking and listening about these issues the following strategies may be used:

Ground rules

It is important to create a safe environment through the use of ground rules for example:

- No one (teacher or pupil) will have to answer a personal question
- No one will be forced to take part in the discussion
- Only the correct names of body parts will be used
- Meanings of words will be explained in a sensible and factual way

Distancing techniques

Teachers may protect privacy by de-personalising discussions. Role play may be used, using invented characters and scenarios. Appropriate video may help pupils discuss sensitive issues and develop decision-making in a safe environment.

Dealing with questions

Clear parameters need to be set according to what is appropriate/ inappropriate in a class setting.

- If a question is too personal, remind the pupil of the ground rules. Refer to an appropriate person for additional support if necessary
- A teacher should always acknowledge when he/she does not know the answer. The answer can be found out later.
- The teacher should promise to attend to questions on an individual basis later if:
 - It is too explicit
 - Feels too old for the pupil

- Is inappropriate for the whole class
- Raises concerns about sexual abuse

In these cases the teacher should acknowledge the question and discuss it later on an individual basis with additional support if necessary.

If there are any concerns regarding sexual abuse then child protection procedures must be followed.