



St Anthony's Catholic Primary School

An Academy within The Catholic Academy Trust in South Hampshire

'Children in our heart, Christ at the centre'
'We love, we learn and we live'



Name of Policy	Personal Development Learning (PDL) Policy & Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy
Reference Number	
Date of e-signoff	November 2025
Headteacher	Katrina Straker
PDL & Wellbeing Lead Governor	Rose Leslie
Date for review	November 2027

Personal Development Learning (PDL) including Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) Development Policy and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy



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The St Anthony's mission statement is 'Children in our heart, Christ at the centre. We love, we learn and we live.' To live out this mission, we are guided and led by our Catholic ethos that places the Catholic Social Teaching principles of Human Dignity and the Common Good at the heart of our school. We recognise that each of us is unique and loved by God and we are called to lead by example, as Christ did, to show respect and love to every person because each of us is made in the image of God.

Introduction:

- These policies are central at St Anthony's Catholic Primary School, as they are essential to ensure the wellbeing and resilience of every child in today's busy, multicultural society. As with all learning, these curriculums are carried out within the context and spirit of the school's Mission Statement. Consequently, it supports and reinforces valuing all children equally and as individuals and equipping them to lead confident, healthy, happy and independent lives, and to ensure all pupils have the knowledge and skills necessary to make informed ethical decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships (DfE, 2020) both while at St Anthony's and in the future.

This Personal Development Learning (PDL) policy aims to give a comprehensive overview over three curriculum areas that are closely interlinked: Personal Development Learning, Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development and Relationships and Sex Education.

Curriculum Intent:

Our intention with the PDL planned provision, is to promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, social, mental and physical well-being and development of all pupils. In conjunction with the school's general ethos and mission, we aim to provide a programme that ensures pupils at our school are prepared for the opportunities, relationships, responsibilities and experiences of later life (Education Act 2002/ Academies Act 2010).

The two key intentions that form the cornerstone for our PDL curriculum are:

Intention 1:

To develop an effective PDL curriculum which tackles barriers to learning, raises pupil aspirations, improves all children's, including vulnerable and disadvantaged pupils, life chances. We aim to ensure that PDL offers the basis of a 'curriculum for life', preparing all pupils for the opportunities, challenges and responsibilities they **will** face in today's fast paced, technological, multicultural society.

Intention 2:

To develop the whole life of the school in order to effectively support and celebrate each individual pupil. Of particular importance in promoting spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC) is the example set by adults in the school, the quality of relationships and the standard of daily collective worship, central to our distinctive Catholic ethos, promoting awe and wonder in both God and the world around us.

Curriculum Implementation

Intent	Research Link	Implementation	Impact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To develop an effective PDL curriculum which tackles barriers to learning, raises pupil aspirations, improves all children's, including vulnerable and disadvantaged pupils, life chances. To develop a 'curriculum for life'. Developing a child centred learning environment. 	<p>Research by Bruner,(1960) and Harden, (1999) states that planning a 'spiral programme' which introduces new and more challenging learning, while building on what has gone before, reflects and meets the personal developmental needs of children and young people.</p> <p>Power et al (2018) British Educational Research Association (BERA) Children's progress, especially in PDL where there is 'invisible learning' needs to be assessed by teachers, parents and children. Fostering strong relationships will ensure each child is making progress.</p>	<p>A clear and effective scheme of work, that is spiral in nature and provides broad, deep and meaningful coverage of the National Curriculum.</p> <p>Teaching and learning should facilitate progression across all key stages, whilst reflecting on the particular needs of each class and individual. Wider community and world events need to be drawn on as they present themselves to ensure the PDL curriculum is contemporary and relevant to the world in which we live, while promoting a high level of engagement in British society.</p> <p>Engaging with parents and caregivers to ensure a secure, triangulated relationship that is centred around the child.</p>	<p>Children will face a range of challenges confidently, having a sound ability to respectfully critique and assess different issues and the part they have to play to the wider community and British society whilst accomplishing their own goals. Developing a PDL curriculum that meets the children's needs and that their parents and caregivers feel confident and secure in.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To develop the whole life of the school in order to effectively support and celebrate each individual pupil. 	<p>Studies by Po and Tin-Yao Lo (1994), Reid and Scott (2006) and Buck 2003 suggest that the most effective programmes of PDL follow a whole</p>	<p>Developing strong and close relationships between teachers and parents, so a child centred approach is adapted.</p> <p>Keeping children and parents informed of new</p>	<p>Children will be secure, confident, adaptable, respectful members of British society, adopting the British values of</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To promote spiritual, moral, social and cultural development 	<p>school integrated pedagogy where both staff and pupils are invested in the curriculum.</p> <p>Boud, Keogh and Walker (1985) Maslow (1954) confirm that PDL cannot be considered to be 'emotion free' subject and that a safe, informed, emotional learning environment needs to be in place so that effective learning can take place.</p>	<p>curriculum changes (for example the new RSE curriculum 2020), to develop an open and supportive environment for each child to explore and feel safe in.</p> <p>Provide a safe and supportive learning environment where children and young people can develop the confidence to ask questions, challenge the information they are offered, draw on their own experience, express their views and opinions and put what they have learned into practice in their own lives.</p> <p>An integrated curriculum where PSL, SMSC and RSE topics are interwoven in all curriculum subjects when relevant, including through collective worship and assembly time.</p>	<p>democracy, tolerance, mutual respect, rule of law and liberty in all that they do.</p> <p>Personally, children will be aware of their own mental and physical help, with a strong sense of personal identity, strong self-esteem and a high level of resilience.</p>
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Social, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

Spiritual development

Pupils' spiritual development involves the growth of their sense of self, their unique potential, their understanding of their strengths and weaknesses, and their will to achieve. As their curiosity about themselves and their place in the world increases, they try to answer for themselves some of life's fundamental questions. They develop the knowledge, skills, understanding, qualities and attitudes they need to foster their own inner lives and non-material wellbeing. As a Catholic school, we place special emphasis on the specific teaching and beliefs of the Catholic faith, both within the daily life of the school and through the curriculum.

Moral development

Pupils' moral development involves pupils acquiring an understanding of the difference between right and wrong and of moral conflict, a concern for others and the will to do what is right. They are able and willing to reflect on the consequences of their actions and learn how to forgive themselves and others. They develop the knowledge, skills and understanding, qualities and attitudes they need in order to make responsible moral decisions and act on them. The system of rules and codes of behaviour established in our school is an important early introduction to issues of fairness for all and to the consequences of operating outside the accepted rule system. Pupils are encouraged to understand the need for a common code and to follow it from conviction rather than because of

consequences or sanctions. Moral development, based on Christian principles, should enable pupils to become increasingly responsible for their own actions and behaviour.

Social development

Pupils' social development involves pupils acquiring an understanding of the responsibilities and rights of being members of families and communities (local, national and global), and an ability to relate to others and to work with others for the common good. They display a sense of belonging and an increasing willingness to participate. They develop the knowledge, skills, understanding, qualities and attitudes they need to make an active contribution to the democratic process in each of their communities. The school, but in particular the classroom, provides a suitable environment for promoting social development within a Christian context. Pupils learn to lead, to use their initiative and to use individual skills and strengths when working together towards a common goal. The ability to be led, to support others and to recognise the different skills of other group members can be developed when children work co-operatively.

Cultural development

Pupils' cultural development involves pupils acquiring an understanding of cultural traditions and ability to appreciate and respond to a variety of aesthetic experiences. They acquire a respect for their own culture and that of others, an interest in others' ways of doing things and curiosity about differences. They develop the knowledge, skills, understanding, qualities and attitudes they need to understand, appreciate and contribute to culture. In order to make provision for cultural development existing knowledge, interests and experiences are strengthened and then built upon further. In this way pupils gain a deeper understanding of their own culture and the factors which influence it and gain a broader understanding of other cultures and cultural influences. All areas of the curriculum can be used to promote and develop cultural awareness, although the arts, music, dance, drama and art are those used the more frequently.

Teaching Sequence in PDL, SMSC and RSE	Big Picture: Recalling previous knowledge and skills, relevant to the area and learning.
	Drawing on pupils' real-life experiences of the subject being looked at and providing realistic, impartial and relevant information.
	Acknowledging and facilitating the emotive nature of PDL, SMSC and RSE, using relevant support systems (such as ELSA, DSL, Priest, Peer Mediators, GIFT Team, Listening Ear) as necessary, revisiting topics whenever necessary and appropriate
	Providing a wide range of learning style activities to ensure children are engaged and learning interactively, including embedding learning opportunities by using our Farm and Forest School Provision.
	Developing an awareness of meta-cognition, providing opportunities to reflect on concrete and abstract experiences wherever possible. This includes trialling new methods of teaching and assessment and ensuring our PDL and RSE lessons are inclusive, providing a high and appropriate standard of learning for our disadvantaged children and children with SEND and/or an EHCP.

At St Anthony's we recognise the importance of offering a wide range of pedagogical approaches when undertaking the teaching of the PDL curriculum. This is in part, to reflect the various strengths of our highly skilled teachers and support staff as well as acknowledging the variety of the PDL curriculum and the importance of ensuring every child is highly engaged with the curriculum as it aims to develop the whole child, in every aspect of their development.

Possible pedagogical	Behaviourism	Offer a wide variety of teaching and learning styles within PSHE education,
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approaches used in PDL, SMSC and RSE		with an emphasis on interactive learning and the teacher as facilitator. Rogers (1979) O'Neill and McMahon (2005)
	Experiential	Encourage young people to reflect on their learning and the progress they have made, and to transfer what they have learned to say and to do from one school subject to another, and from school to their lives in the wider community. Dewey (1933) Kolb (1984) Bourner (2003)
	Constructivism/ Social Constructivism	Provide opportunities for children and young people to make real decisions about their lives, to take part in activities which simulate adult choices and where they can demonstrate their ability to take responsibility for their decisions. Simulation-based learning is a constructivist learning model that provides learners with an experience of working on an usually simplified simulated world or system De Jong et al (1998) Bodemer (2005)

Curriculum Impact:

Although it is acknowledged that the impact of St Anthony's PDL provision will not often be assessable during the pupils' time at school (Ofsted 2019), staff nevertheless undertake to meaningful assessments of children's progress wherever possible. This is undertaken through discussion, pupil's general self-managed wellbeing, self-esteem, resilience and relationships. In addition to these soft assessment points, pupil progress will also be monitored through regularly specific PDL book reviews, throughout their work in the wider curriculum, in formal PDL lesson observations and during opportunities for staff to reflect and bench mark individuals during dedicated PDL subject focussed CPD meetings.

Right to withdraw a child from RSE (Relationships and Sex Education)

Parents/carers do not have the right to withdraw their child from relationships education. Parents/carers have the right to withdraw their child from the non-statutory/non-science components of sex education within RSE. However, at St. Anthony's we have decided, based upon best meeting the needs of our children, that we will not teach any of the non-statutory elements of sex education. If there were a change and the needs of the children changed, we would fully consult with the parent body before implementing any teaching of the non-statutory sex education learning intentions in the RSE guidance.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing and addressed to the headteacher, Mrs Straker. The head teacher will then offer a meeting with the parents/ carers.

Alternative schoolwork would be given to pupils who are withdrawn from sex education.

RSE teaching resources are communicated with parents on a half termly basis. Parents can also request to see these resources in person. An appointment time, mutually convenient to both teachers and parents must be agreed in advance for this to take place.

Roles and Responsibilities

The role and responsibilities of the PDL leader is to:

- Communicate and facilitate the effective communication of the PDL and RSE curriculum with the parent and carer body.
- Allocate and monitor the effective use of resources.
- Monitor standards to ensure high quality teaching and learning. This may include pupil voice discussion, work scrutiny, lesson observation and moderation.
- Involve all staff in the development of the PDL curriculum.
- Keep staff informed with the developments of the PDL curriculum, including its implementation of RSE curriculum since it became a legal requirement in Sep 2020.
- Ensure the school follows the National Curriculum and adapts the curriculum in line with the DfE updates issued in the Summer of 2025. To ensure these changes are implemented by September 2026.
- Support the need of staff in their ability to deliver the PDL curriculum.
- Acknowledge that extra support may be required for some staff, given the emotive nature of the PDL curriculum.
- Evaluate and promote the SMSC curriculum throughout the school.
- Advocate a whole school, curriculum wide approach to PDL.
- Ensure that Safeguarding remains of paramount importance given the potentially sensitive nature of some topics within the PDL curriculum.

The Governing Body is responsible for:

- Ensuring that the Church Foundation of the school is honoured and that the SMSC Development Policy promotes an ethos based on Christian principles and practice.
- Ensuring that SMSC is put into practice and monitored by the Standards and Admissions sub-committee.