ST THOMAS MORE CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Horse Shoes Lane, Sheldon, Birmingham, B26 3HU

Principal: Mr M McLoughlin

T: 0121 743 3289
E: enquiry@sttommor.bham.sch.uk
www.sttommor.bham.sch.uk

Christ is the centre of our school community where we live, love and learn together.

Friday 6th October 2023

Dear Families,

Forgive me for the length of this letter, it is not my normal style, however you will understand why it needs to be so detailed and comprehensive.

In 2020, Relationships Education and Health Education became statutory for all primary schools in England.

As a Catholic school, our mission is to support the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all of our pupils, rooted in the wisdom and teaching of the Church. The education of children in human sexuality is an important, precious and privileged responsibility. The Church teaches us that this is very much a partnership with parents, in which parents are the 'first educators' of their children on these matters; ultimately, you confer on us the right to co-educate your children with you.

We adopt **Life to the Full** by Ten Ten Resources. Ten Ten Resources is an award-winning Catholic educational organisation that is well-respected and very experienced in this field of work. **Life to the Full** has been approved by our diocese. Furthermore, Ten Ten Resources have entered into a partnership with the Catholic Education Service and the Department for Education to provide training for teachers in Catholic schools on the subject of the RHE statutory curriculum. Therefore, we are confident that this programme is a very good fit for our school.

Through their programme, Ten Ten Resources understand the foundational role that parents have in educating and nurturing their children on these matters. Within the programme, they have built in resources which will not only keep you informed about what is being taught in school, but will also give you the opportunity to engage your children in discussion, activity and prayer.

We would like to have your feedback on our approach, and particularly on the **key decisions** that we need to take regarding the teaching of certain topics and we welcome your feedback.

You may recall that we wrote to you in the Summer term of 2021 regarding the implementation our statutory Relationship, Sex and Health Education programme which commenced fully in Autumn 2021. Thank you to those parents who viewed the materials, provided feedback and raised questions.
Please be assured that we will continue to treat all aspects of the following topics sensitively and will remain aligned to the teachings of the Catholic Church. We are agreed with the 10 principles outlined in the TenTen programme (approved scheme by the Birmingham Diocese) when implementing our RSHE programme:

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1. Our deepest identity is as a child of God
2. Our bodies are good!
3. Through our loving relationships we become close to the image and likeness of God.
4. Catholic RSHE is about the whole person.
5. Catholic RSHE should be taught in partnership with parents.
6. Story can change hearts and minds.
7. Catholic RSHE is an education in virtue.
8. Catholic RSHE is an education in conscience.
9. Relationship Education is about striving for the Common Good.
10. Prayer, Scripture and the Sacraments fuel the teaching.

Using the feedback provided, and following further discussions with principals, RSHE leads and members of the school standards committee , we took the following decisions in relation to certain aspects of the programme:
Decision 1: We will use the correct scientific terminology relating to the human body and genitalia in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 in an age appropriate way. We will do this because we believe this will provide clarity and support the safeguarding of our children.

Decision 2: We will continue to cover the topic of puberty from summer term in Year 4 onwards in our school.

Decision 3: The module 'Talking about sex' deals with where babies come from. This includes broad content about physical relationships in the context of a long-term loving relationship. Lumen Christi schools will only deliver on the statutory aspects of this topic for primary level and will **NOT** include information relating to sexual intercourse.

Decision 4: Online safety is a key current issue and it is important to ensure that children are aware of the existence of inappropriate materials which they may come across accidentally (NB- we will **NOT** be using the term 'pornography', but will use the term 'inappropriate images'. All materials, both film and written resources, will be monitored by teachers to ensure that the tone and content is appropriate. Teachers will be mindful to ensure that these important safeguarding lessons are given in context without inadvertently exposing children to themes or issues that they are not ready for.

The above four decisions have been taught since the implementation of the RHE curriculum.
After reviewing new content from Ten Ten and in consultation with RSHE leads across Lumen Christi, two further decisions have been included which are as follows:

Decision 5: Although the duty to teach about FGM is not statutory for primary schools, **Ten Ten Resources** have provided resources so that it can optionally be applied following consultation with parents and governors. The National FGM Centre advises that girls are at most risk at primary school age, and therefore recommends that primary schools also teach about FGM where possible. This will be taught in Yr. 3 / Spring 2 and Yr. 5 / Autumn 2. The term FGM will only be used in the Y5 session.

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Decision 6: The final area concerning a key decision that has been agreed to teach is linked to the Yr. 5 lesson, 'Build Others Up.' At the beginning of the session, children are invited to watch the film 'Imagine a world…' which introduces children to the terms fairness, bullying, prejudice, and discrimination, and the protected characteristics of age, disability, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, and religion or belief. The protected characteristics of sex, sexual orientation and gender reassignment are **not** explicitly named within the film. Later in the session, children are presented with a number of scenarios to discuss and sort. Three of these concern discrimination / bullying of the protected characteristics of sex and/or sexual orientation.

As Catholic schools, our mission is to support the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all of our pupils, rooted in the wisdom and teaching of the Church. The Church teaches us that this work is done very much in partnership with parents and we hope you have found this information helpful.
In case you would like to have a closer look at these materials again then please follow the links below.

- Access the Parent Tool here:

www.tentenresources.co.uk/parent-consultation-primary

- You will need the following login credentials for our school:

Username: st-thomas-more-b26
Password: brick-wall-8

In case you would like to have a closer look at these materials again then please contact the school so that we can arrange for you to view the videos and resources we will be using.

As previously stated, if you have any further questions please contact us by **emailing enquiry@sttommor.bham.sch.uk .**

We will be allowing three weeks of consultation, closing on Friday 27th October, to allow parents time to review the content and discuss further with us ahead of implementation.

Here at St Thomas More Catholic Primary School, Mr Jordan is our Relationship and Health Coordinator.

Yours Faithfully,

M McLoughlin

Mr M McLoughlin
Principal