



Our Lady of Victories Catholic Primary School

(Voluntary Aided)

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Dear Parents,

We are preparing to meet the new curriculum requirements in Relationships Education, which came into force in September 2020 but which, due to Covid, were put on hold until April 2021. The new curriculums in Relationships and Health are both statutory, which means they must be taught at primary level.

In order to carry out their responsibilities, the full Governing Body asked a small group to form a working party to suggest the best way forward. After much research, we have decided to adopt a programme created especially for Catholic primary schools, called **Life to the Full**. This has been produced by the same Catholic organisation, TenTen, which we use for daily prayers and assemblies. TenTen have many years of experience in delivering relationships education.

The Governing Board is confident that the programme is the right one to support the growth and development of your child. **Life to the Full** is an entire platform of creative resources that will engage, inform and inspire our children and, we hope, you as parents. It includes interactive video content and story-based activities, employs a wide range of teaching tools, original worship music and has an accompanying programme of classroom prayers. The content is fully in line with church teachings about relationships and sexual intimacy. It is also fully compliant with the requirements of the DfE guidelines.

It provides an online parent platform so that you, as parents, can engage with the teaching if you choose to do so, which will deepen the experience for your child. Attached as a separate document, is a summary of the content of the entire programme which will be delivered from Year 1- Year 6. Early Years materials will soon be available for Reception age children.

Life to the Full is intended to be used in a partnership between home, school and church. We know that you already do a fantastic and fundamentally important job and we see this new programme as a means to further develop, support and enrich the partnership between home, school and church, so that your child is fully supported.

Relationships Education inevitably touches upon Sex Education. The Sex Education Curriculum does not become compulsory until secondary school. However the primary Science curriculum, which is statutory, includes basic information about puberty and conception. Our concern is that if only the biological facts ('sperm and egg') are presented to children, they are not being made aware of the importance of a loving relationship in creating new life.

In response to requests from a number of dioceses, to provide resources which deal with this topic in a way which fits with the church's teachings, **Life to the Full** includes lessons which we recommend are used as part of the programme in our school. We believe they fit appropriately within the series of lessons and their inclusion would give the best outcome for children's learning and development.

Legislation brought in under the Children and Social Work Act 2017 means that parents do not have the right to withdraw their children from the relationship elements of RHSE, nor the elements of sex education taught through National Curriculum science. However, because they come within the non-statutory Sex Education Curriculum, parents do have the right to withdraw their child from these particular lessons only.

The first is a lesson about puberty and changing bodies, which develops children's understanding of life before birth. Our recommendation is that it is taught at the end of Year 4 and revisited in Years 5 and 6. The second is a lesson about conception, called 'How babies are made,' which would be delivered in the Year 6 programme. TenTen have created this session with delicacy and care and we believe that it provides powerful teaching- in an age appropriate way- on love, intimacy and marriage. Our recommendation is that it is delivered as part of the programme in school. Parents could choose to watch it with their child prior to the lesson being delivered in school - or to watch it again at home after the lesson, giving the children an opportunity to ask questions.

The third is a lesson in Year 6 about pornography which deals with images children may see online and helps them to understand how to respond.

The Governors, who endorse these lessons, hope that you will trust our judgement so that your child participates in the lessons in school, learning about these important aspects of life with their peers, in a safe and sensitive environment where they know their teachers well, and above all, under the auspices of the Catholic Church. These lessons are compulsory in Year 7, and if your child goes to a non-Catholic secondary school bear in mind they will not be receiving information in the light of the teachings of the Catholic faith.

There is also a decision to be made about when to introduce the proper names for genitalia. It is recommended that this happens in Year 2, when body parts are first introduced. The ultimate decisions must be made by Governors, who have discretion as to where and when these lessons should be included. The working party will make their recommendations to governors once they have considered parents views. We will gather these through an online survey, details of how you can access this can be found at the end of this letter. There is also a presentation for parents on our school website, explaining why this needs to be put in place and the consultation process.

Please take the time to have a look at the TenTen resources and the materials used in Life to the Full. To access the online parent platform please visit: www.tentenresources.co.uk/parent-portal

When you have done so please spend a few minutes to complete the online survey.

There is space on the questionnaire for you to ask any questions and if you give your name we will respond. If you would like to speak to someone in the working group about any questions that you have please indicate that and we will get in touch. We would also appreciate it if you would indicate whether you are happy for your child to participate in the complete programme or intend to remove them from the three lessons.

Should you wish to do so you can read the full government guidance here:

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