

Newcastle Diocesan Education Board

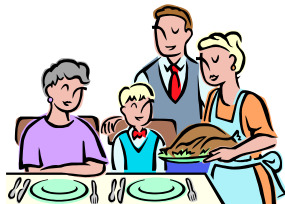
Sex and Relationship Guidance: A Christian Perspective

1 Introduction

This guidance is designed as a working resource for teachers and governors in the Diocese of Newcastle to be used alongside LA guidelines and the National Society resources on “Educating children and young people in school about marriage”.

The DfES guidance (July 2000) states that:

“This is the first time that schools have had a national framework to support work in this area. As part of sex and relationships education, pupils should be taught about the nature and importance of marriage for family life and the bringing up of children. But the government recognises – as in the Home Office Ministerial Group on the Family consultation document “Supporting Families” – that there are strong and mutually supportive relationships outside marriage. Therefore pupils should learn the significance of marriage and stable relationships as the key building blocks of community and society. Care needs to be taken to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstance.



Pupils need also to be given accurate information and helped to develop skills to enable them to understand difference and respect themselves and others and for the purpose of prevent and removing prejudice.”

Most recently the Secretary of State Ed Balls has stated the importance of SRE in reducing teenage pregnancy and its importance in the healthy development of every child. (November 2009)

The Diocese supports these statements unreservedly.

Christians believe that God intended that sex should be enjoyed within a life long marriage relationship: “Sexual intercourse, as an expression of faithful intimacy, properly belongs within marriage exclusively.” (*Marriage – A Teaching document from the House of Bishops of the Church of England*).

Mindful of the Christian foundation of our schools, staff and governors will want to think carefully about how they teach this to their pupils. It is important to be sensitive to the fact that we live in a society that includes an increasing number of cohabiting partners and broken families. Divorce and separation of parents can have a profound effect on young people but ignoring marriage and marriage breakdown for fear of causing pain will not help them to cope with what they are going through. We can help and support our youngsters by providing a ‘safe’ space in which to explore these issues.

2. What is Sex and Relationship Education?

The DfES guidance states that:

“It is lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about the understanding of the importance of marriage for family life, stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care. It is also about the teaching of sex, sexuality and sexual health.

It has three main elements:

Attitudes and Values

- learning the importance of values and individual conscience and moral considerations;
- learning the value of family life, marriage and stable and loving relationships for the nurture of children;
- learning the value of respect, love and care;
- exploring, considering and understanding moral dilemmas; and
- developing critical thinking as part of decision-making.

Personal and Social Skills

- learning to manage emotions and relationships confidently and sensitively;
- developing self-respect and empathy for others;
- learning to make choices based on an understanding of difference and with an absence of prejudice;
- developing an appreciation of the consequences of choices made;
- managing conflict; and

- learning how to recognise and avoid exploitation and abuse.



Knowledge and Understanding

- learning and understanding physical development at appropriate stages;
- understanding human sexuality, reproduction, sexual health, emotions and relationships;
- learning about contraception and the range of local and national sexual health advice, contraception and support services;
- learning the reason for delaying sexual activity, and the benefits to be gained from such delay; and
- the avoidance of unplanned pregnancy.”

3. Christian Beliefs and Values

These will form the foundation for work in this area within Church schools. The following list is taken from Care for Education’s *Sex and Relationship Education* publication (page 5):

- All people are made in the image of God and are valuable in his sight.
- God loves all people.

- God created our sexuality, and he intended it to be celebrated and enjoyed within the framework that he established.
- God created male and female to be of equal worth, and to be complementary.
- God's ideal is for a lifelong marriage commitment.
- Marriage is God's intended context for sex and for the raising of children.
- God was pleased with his creation.
- Everyone makes mistakes, including sexual ones.
- Going against God's ideal has consequences.
- God can forgive all wrongdoing.
- God allows us to start again.
- Forgiveness and reconciliation should characterise all human relationships.

4. **Principles**

Within the church school the Christian ethos will provide the context within which all personal development takes place. This means that Christian values and attitudes with the emphasis on the importance of marriage, the family and stable relationships to build a child's self-esteem, self-awareness and a sense of moral responsibility will permeate the curriculum – both explicit and “hidden”.

- (a) Sex and Relationship Education is part of a child's broad, balanced curriculum, integral to the basic curriculum of the school and part of the child's all-round development.
- (b) There should be a clear policy statement about the content and delivery of sex and relationship education in the school brochure and a fuller syllabus within the school, related to the Key Stage statements to which parents may have access on request. This may form part of the wider Health Education or

Personal and Moral Education Syllabuses of the school. The new regulations are clear that students should be involved in policy formation at secondary level

- (c) Accountability for the implementation of the Sex and Relationship Education Policy lies with the governing body of the school.
- (d) The school must recognise the legal right of withdrawal from sex education, other than that delivered through the science curriculum, and be sensitive to those parents who for religious reasons find the delivery of some explicit teaching in school unacceptable. However schools and parent will be required to follow the new regulations that state that all children must have access to at least one years SRE by the time they are sixteen years old.
- (e) It is essential to regard parents as partners in the delivery of sex and relationship education in the school and affirm their valuable role in the home. To enhance this partnership they should be kept informed of particular curriculum units which may be reinforced in the home or delivered through the home. Pupils learn more about marriage and relationships from their own homes than they do anywhere else. For some this will be predominantly positive. The ordinary, everyday working out of long-term commitment, will give them a sound template to work from. For others, it will be confusing and possibly painful – neglect and abuse will be what they know of relationships.
- (f) As children grow older, their earliest learning is supplemented by a widening circle of acquaintance and by television, film, public lives and literature. Children absorb knowledge that fits

with their early patterning easily. It is vital, therefore, that schools should explicitly participate in this area of children's learning.

- (g) Regardless of background and behaviour pupils are to be caringly accepted within the church.



- (h) The National Curriculum context for understanding reproduction, sexual behaviour and safety should also include the exploration of relationships, values, morals and Christian and other belief in the multi-faith context, so that increasing knowledge is gained alongside the development of communication and decision-making skills and positive attitudes to oneself and others. In this way pupils will become increasingly responsible for their own sexual behaviour.
- (i) It is essential that teachers concerned feel comfortable with this area of the curriculum to foster a spirit of sharing and openness.
- (j) Schools should provide a safe and secure environment in which marriage and other long-term human relationships can be explored. This implies that the teaching is designed to present concepts and ideas the individual pupils may choose to relate to their own experience.

5. **Educational Framework for the Delivery of Sex and Relationship Education: 4 Key Strands**

(a) **Commitment, promise, trust and security**

The school ethos should be such that:-

school policies and reality should show a commitment to building self-esteem, modelling conflict resolution, protection of the weak, justice and compassion. Mutual respect and trust should be central to all relationships within the school.

Foundation Stage

Key curriculum issues

- Myself – recognise and explore their own feelings
- My friends – establish effective relationships with other children and adults
- Special people to me – recognise and respond appropriately to key figures in their lives
- Belonging – understand their important place within their family and class groups
- Our living world – care for and respect living things, plants and animals

Indicative Vocabulary

Happiness, sadness, special, friendship, love, belonging, trust, please, thank you, sharing.

Key Stage 1

Key curriculum issues

- Special people to me – recognise and respond appropriately to people at home and school whom they can trust
- Belonging – understanding their responsibilities within the groups they have joined or belong to, e.g. Rainbows, Beavers, the Church
- My special things – understand why some things are special or precious; how to treat precious things, how to look after things
- Celebrations – baptisms, joy of new baby and its welcome and care
- Weddings, joy of marriage, hopes for the future, lifelong commitment

Indicative Vocabulary

Love, forgiveness, trust, security, friendship, relations, husband, wife, siblings, cousins, etc. promise, honesty, belonging



Key Stage 2

Key curriculum issues

- Commitment and promises – responsibilities and rights within the groups to which they belong, e.g. teams, choirs, group activities
- Ceremonies/commitment – understanding the importance and implications of commitment in baptisms, coming-of-age ceremonies and weddings, and meaning of symbols
- Christian marriage (and any other faith in syllabus)
- Beliefs and practices emphasising the importance of support and witness to friends and community
- Beautiful world, wonderful God – reflections on the natural world and its wonders. How it should be cared for along with its people. The miracle of reproduction and multiplication.
- Faith leaders – the teachings of Jesus (and those prescribed by the syllabus) on relationships, justice, forgiveness and fulfilment.

Indicative Vocabulary

Loyalty, tolerance, hope, commitment, patience, respect, dependability, abuse, compassion, compromise, security, justice, exploitation, perseverance, equality

Key Stage 3

Key curriculum issues

- Marriage and other relationships
- Teaching about marriage
- Marriage ceremonies – legal/contractual relationships, analysis of promises/vows of marriage – civil/religious
- Roles within marriage – who does what? Who pays for what? What do the Christian and other faiths say?
- Why people marry – does it make a difference?
- Different kinds of relationships
- Relationships/family life – coping strategies
- Rights and responsibilities in committed relationships
- Respect for people in various types of relationships
- Conflict and resolution

Indicative Vocabulary

Persistence, endurance, assertiveness, passivity, aggression, despondency, hope, faithfulness, fidelity, respect, equality

Key Stage 4

Key curriculum issues

- Expectations of marriage – dealing with different expectations, questionnaire on roles and responsibilities, compare and contrast, what is needed for a successful relationship?
- How do we learn about marriage and other relationships – using film, soaps, history – how do they survive? Where did they go wrong? Create rules to take into a relationship – different for men and women?

- Equality in relationships – not exploiting each other. Abusive relationships
- Cultural and religious differences in marriage
- Managing conflict/differences
- Assertiveness; vulnerability; managing hurt
- Fidelity/faithfulness
- Persistence – sustaining relationships
- Explicit work on marriage in RE – exploring the marriage service, studying the text of the service, the meaning and implication of prayers, declarations, vows, rings. Proclamation and blessings
- Should society support marriage?
- Pupils' evaluation of marriage

Indicative Vocabulary

Vulnerability, reconciliation, compromise, openness, commitment, faithfulness

Post 16

Key curriculum issues

- When is a relationship committed/long term?
- Marriage and other relationships
- Social policy/legal/institutional commitment
- Theology of marriage – what has God got to do with it? i.e. marriage as a sacrament, as covenant and contract, as gift and blessing
- What happens when problems arise/things go wrong?

(b) Friendship, Companionship, Nurture, Comfort



The school ethos sh

There is an atmosphere where feelings and good and bad experiences are shared and taken seriously; where values such as forgiveness and love are discussed and lived out; where community activities and group activities are pleasurable and rewarding and participants of all ages are able to enjoy each other's company.

Foundation Stage

Key curriculum issues

- Myself – recognise and explore their own feelings
- My friends – establish effective relationships with other children and adults, learn to listen and talk about feelings
- Special people to me – recognise and respond appropriately to key figures in their lives
- My life – appreciate the wonder of birth and development
- Our living world – care for and respect living things, plants and animals

Indicative Vocabulary

Friendship, help, happiness, sadness, laughter, tears, thank you, sorry, kindness, sharing

Key Stage 1

Key curriculum issues

- Belonging – including families, religious groups
- Healthy living – looking after ourselves responsibly;
- Looking after each other – pets, plants, siblings and friends through acts of responsibility
- Special people to me – recognise and respond appropriately to key figures in their lives;
- Language of feelings – learn and use language for emotions
- Citizenship – relationships; charity work; disability awareness; local communities

Indicative Vocabulary

Help, support, responsibility, encouragement, joy, sympathy, forgiveness, helpfulness, patience, sharing, good manners

Key Stage 2

Key curriculum issues

- Belonging/not belonging – choosing allegiances, making friends, what happens when things go wrong, reconciliation
- Care for and respect for living things – plants, animals, siblings, friends
- My senses – listening to each other, exploration of touch
- Belonging – understanding their importance and the importance of others to the groups to which they belong – particularly families
- Special people – recognise and respond appropriately to people who help them in their lives

- Citizenship – relationships; charity work; disability awareness; local communities

Indicative Vocabulary

Forgiveness, companion, neighbour, compromise, joy, allegiances, comfort, discomfort, appropriate behaviour, rights, responsibilities, loneliness, hurt, generosity, sincerity, dependability, humour, loyalty, honesty.

Key Stage 3

Key curriculum issues

- Making new friends – expectations of friendship and the dynamics of friendship
- How relationships work, learning about relationships
- Language of emotions

Indicative Vocabulary

Joy, cherish, dependence, independence, comfort, isolation, despondency, potential, desperation, humour, support, perseverance, gratitude, equality.

Key Stage 4

Key curriculum issues

- Peer group pressures and culture
- Gender issues – boy/girl relationships
- Friendship groups – inclusion/exclusion/solitude
- Moral behaviour and social practice

- Roles and relationships with family
- Conflict resolution, dealing with hurt, when relationships go wrong
- Constancy – faithfulness even through difficulties
- Disability awareness

Indicative Vocabulary

Sexism, feminism, fidelity, faithfulness, constancy, loyalty, compassion, equality, honesty, humility, dignity, selfishness, unselfishness.

Post 16

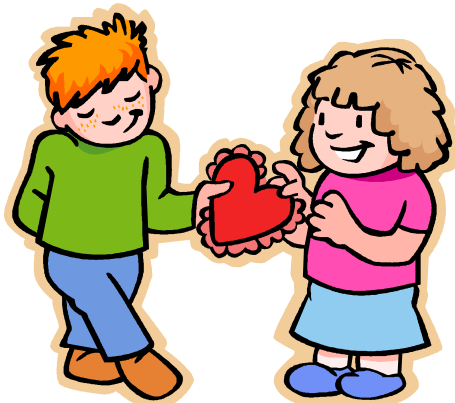
Key curriculum issues

- Analysis of relations in terms of psychology, social and political theory
- Moral theory and ethics

Indicative Vocabulary

Sexism, feminism, fidelity, faithfulness, constancy, loyalty, compassion, equality, honesty, humility, dignity, selfishness, unselfishness

(c) **Children**



The school ethos should be such that:

Their systems encourage older pupils to help with the learning and play of younger pupils. There should be activities that encourage mixed ages to be actively involved together, yet should recognise and affirm the growth and development of pupils and recognise pupil identity and authenticity.

Foundation Stage

Key curriculum issues

- Looking after myself – looking after others
- Recognising and naming my feelings; recognising the feelings of others
- Keeping safe – how do we keep ourselves safe?
- Feeling happy and feeling sad – what makes us feel good?

Indicative Vocabulary

Love, brother, sister, parent, hurt, sharing, honesty.

Key Stage 1

Key curriculum issues

- My life – babies and new life; the wonder of birth and development; the vulnerability of babies
- What do babies and young children need? Love, stability, care, etc.
- Keeping safe, appropriate behaviour
- Recognise – places and people that keep them safe and reflect on how they should respond
- The difference between needing and wanting

Indicative Vocabulary

Parent, love, patience, discipline, care, safety, sharing, helpfulness, joy, good manners, co-operation, honesty

Key Stage 2

Key curriculum issues

- Our living world – care and respect for living things, particularly vulnerable or younger
- Practical experiences of supporting and playing with younger pupils – developing resources and play activities.

Indicative Vocabulary

Care, nurture, safety, role models, guidance, sympathy, generosity, loyalty, consideration, good manners.

Key Stage 3

Key curriculum issues

- Child care – food, shelter, hygiene, clothing, sleep, play, learning, story
- Relationships between parent and child
- Roles of parents and extended families

Indicative Vocabulary

Tolerance, forgiveness, sympathy

Key Stage 4

Key curriculum issues

- Parental/child responsibilities/rights; UN charter
- Other carers – adoption; parenting skills
- Good/bad characteristics of caring
- Dilemmas – freedom v responsibilities

Indicative Vocabulary

Sincerity, sympathy, tolerance, forgiveness, perseverance, gratitude, duty, dependability, cleanliness, consideration, co-operation, honesty.

Post 16

Key curriculum issues

- Expectations of career and children

d. Sex/Physical Relationship

The school ethos should be such that:

The school has clear policies on Equal Opportunities and anti-bullying that are adhered to by all the adults in the school community. Good role models are provided for pupils of respectful, sensitive relationships between adults and the same approach is nurtured amongst pupils. Clear guidance is provided on child protection issues.

Foundation Stage

Key curriculum issues

- The living world – exploration of the wonder of creation
- New life – birth and development, parents and babies
- Ourselves and our bodies – eating, sleeping, breathing, going to the toilet

Indicative Vocabulary

Touch, see, hear, smell, taste

Key Stage 1

Key curriculum issues

- Myself: physical development, what can I do now that I could not do when I was 3, 4, 5?
- Looking after our bodies – how do we use them with care, enjoyment in physical activity, not using strength to hurt others?
- How do we use our bodies to show our feelings?

Indicative Vocabulary

Language of sensory experience and activity and emotional response

Key Stage 2

Key curriculum issues

- Ourselves: physical growth, the importance of food and diet, exercise and activity, sport and challenge
- Genetic influences on physical features: whom am I like? Family characteristics/similarities
- Variety and difference in physical appearance and capability – celebrating a rainbow world
- How we can help ourselves; looking after our bodies, keeping clean and well-groomed, healthy eating, building up strength and fitness. What happens when we get it wrong; eating disorders and obesity
- Sex education: changes at puberty: physical, emotional; awareness of the possibility of pregnancy/paternity
- Adulthood: what is “grown-up”? Changing relationships
- Moral issues and core values
- Sex in loving marriage relationship

Indicative Vocabulary

Vocabulary of sexuality (cf sex education resources)

Abuse, honesty, dignity, self-control, self-discipline, self-respect, consent, coercion

Key Stage 3

Key curriculum issues

- Sex education – exploring the place of physical expression, affection, love, lust
- Different kinds of relationships – harmful relationships
- Sex life – enhancing, life-threatening
- Expectation of relationship: commitment, faithfulness, constancy, marriage
- Physical exploitation in relationships
- Managing sexual feelings
- Managing self-control – what can affect our ability to make wise choices, drink, drugs, peer pressure etc...
- Place of sex in Christian marriage

Indicative Vocabulary

Vocabulary of sexuality

Celibacy, abstinence, contraception, dignity, passions, discipline, self-respect, self-acceptance, self-control, consideration, equality.

Key Stage 4

Key curriculum issues

- Love – sex, casual sex, committed relationships, marriage
- Lifelong partnership; understanding of sex in Christian marriage
- Articulating feelings
- Abstinence, contraception
- Fornication, adultery
- Assertiveness – vulnerability, domestic violence

- Rape and sexual abuse
- How drink and drugs can destroy/ harm relationships

Indicative Vocabulary

Vocabulary of feelings and emotions

Passion, frustration, impotence, fulfilment, self-acceptance

Post 16

Key curriculum areas

- The place of love and sexuality in human relationships
- Sex as a gift from God (Song of Solomon)
- “Forbidden” or taboo sexual relationships or practices – exploring the reasons
- Constructing a rationale for sexual relationships; life-enhancing, liberating, free from exploitation and fear, an expression of commitment and love;
- Feminist theory, gay rights
- Sex as a commodity; value and price, escaping the influence, valuing ourselves
- HIV/Aids

5. Writing a Policy

Suggested headings:

- Policy Formation
- Rationale
- Objectives
- Management
- Delivery



- Working with Parents
- Child Protection
- Difficult Questions
- Use of Visitors
- Equal Opportunities (inclusion)
- Links with other Policies
- Dissemination of Policy
- Monitoring and Evaluation Procedures
- Curriculum Content

6. Issues Arising from Sex and Relationship Education

Schools should be aware that the delivery of PSHE and SRE are to become statutory elements of the curriculum for all children in Primary and Secondary schools up to the end of Key Stage 4. This has implications for staffing and resourcing both financial and physical.

The Board of Education Recommends:

a) Primary schools should teach that

- Christians believe that marriage is a God given institution and that God intended that sex should be enjoyed within a life-long marriage relationship.
- **Sexual relationships should be seen as the fulfilment of a relationship and not as the basis for a relationship.**
- Sexual relationships between those who are not in loving long-term relationships often do not consider the long-term happiness of both those involved (or indeed of either).
- Sexual relationships between those who are in loving long-term relationships can provide a context within which both partners can learn to love, to be loved, to be valued and appreciated, to grow in maturity and learn the basic ground rules of mutual

respect on which to base good relationships within their wider family and beyond.

- (b) Schools should not avoid the issue of sexual orientation in their policy, but should state that this is a controversial issue on which there is no one agreed Christian view. The Church of England's current view on homosexuality is set out in 'Issues of Human Sexuality' (for more information see Appendix 4) The topic should be discussed calmly and objectively as part of the curriculum in secondary schools (and in primary schools if the issue arises). Homophobic name-calling should be dealt with firmly, in the same way as racist name-calling. This should be covered by the school's anti-bullying policy.
- (c) Schools should teach that abortion is an emotive issue where strong arguments are voiced from every side. The abortion law must be covered. It must be dealt with in school calmly and carefully, treated in a Christian caring manner with all the relationships involved explored honestly and meaningfully. The alternatives to abortion, such as adoption or caring for the child yourself should also be explored and all the implications of whichever decision is arrived at examined. Again the responsibility rests on a member of staff who can deal with this in an even-handed way, being able to present all sides of the argument. The decision for abortion rests with the mother-to-be, guided possibly by her family, her doctor and the prospective father. She must be provided with all possible facts so that her decision can be made on the basis of caring knowledge and not on a panic reaction. School has to play a significant part in disseminating this knowledge.
- (d) Schools should ensure that children in both Primary and Secondary schools know that under-age sex is illegal and can also lead to unplanned pregnancy. Schools should support

children in resisting peer pressure to have sex by teaching them that they actually have the right to say "no" to sex.

Children should be helped to understand that saying "no" to sex shows maturity and strength and not inadequacy and weakness.

- e) There should be opportunities for the school's policy on sex and relationship education to be explained to parents. The ministers statement recommends that the compilation of SRE policies should include student input at secondary school level

Having identified which Year Groups will have sex education, parents of those children should be invited to an evening meeting at which the content of the sex education programme is explained and the school's policy on Moral Development is set out. Parents should know when the lessons take place, so that they can provide appropriate support in the home.

- f) Most schools have excellent links with health Care Professions whose expertise they can draw on for help when delivering sex education and formulating school policy. When inviting outside professionals into the school to contribute to the Sex and Relationship Education Programme, church schools should be careful to emphasise the Christian ethos in which this education should take place, and the head and governors should be satisfied that such professionals are sympathetic to this ethos and are able to work within the governors' policy.

APPENDIX 1

1. a) Legal Requirements

The 1986 Education Act (No 2) first gave governors the formal duty to have a sex education policy. Since the 1993 Education Act this responsibility has been clearer. The 1993 Act introduced parental rights of withdrawal from formal sex education. The sex education policy must indicate whether or not sex education is to be offered within the school and, if so, what arrangements are to be made for it and for parents to exercise their rights of withdrawal. The school prospectus must contain a summary of the content and organisation of any sex education offered by the school. Governors are responsible for the implementation of the sex education policy.

Under the new proposed legislation parents have the right to withdraw their child or children from SRE up to and including their fifteen birthday. However after this date children who have previously been withdrawn from SRE must have access to the curriculum delivery. This in turn will ensure that all children have access to at least one years SRE before their sixteenth birthday.

b) Guidance

Sex and Relationships Education Guidance July 2000 (DfES) has been written to take account of the revised National Curriculum, (published September 1999) the need for guidance arising out of the new Personal, Social and Health Education framework and the Social Exclusion Unit report on teenage pregnancy.

Schools should be aware that the content of SRE taught as part of a PSHE programme is being overseen by QCDA and will be

put to formal statutory consultation with a view to conclusion by Autumn 2010.

2. In the primary school Sex Education is not part of the National curriculum. Nevertheless National Curriculum Science includes, in Key Stage 2, the main stages of the human life-cycle, and life processes, including reproduction, that are common to living organisms. Parents have no right of withdrawal from National Curriculum lessons.

Assuming the house accepts the ministers recommendations then SRE will become part of the statutory delivery of PSHE for all key stages and parents will have the right of withdrawal but only up to the child's fifteenth birthday

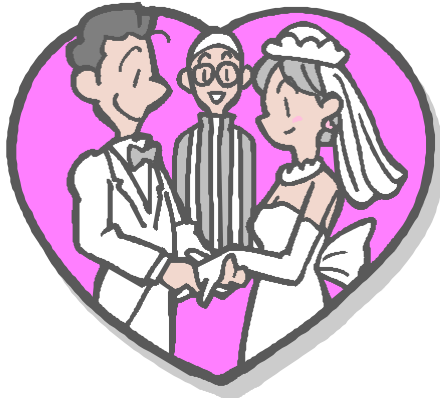
APPENDIX 2

EXTRACT FROM MARRIAGE – A Teaching document from the House of Bishops of the Church of England, pages 7-9

Why is marriage important?

God is love (John 4, 16) and in creating human beings he has called us to love, both himself and one another. The love of God the Father for his Son is the ground of all human love, and through the Holy Spirit we may dwell in that love, which the Son has shown to us (John 15, 9). Marriage is a pattern that God has given in creation, deeply rooted in our social instincts, through which a man and a woman may learn love together over the course of their lives. We marry not only because we love, but to be helped to love. Without practice and disciplines of marriage, our love will be exhausted and fail us, perhaps very harmfully to ourselves and

others. When publicly and lawfully we enter into marriage, we commit ourselves to live and grow together in this love.



Marriage is not, of course, the only pattern that is given for a life of love. Unmarried people, of whom Jesus himself was one, have a different pattern of loving relationships, also to be valued and appreciated. Such people also have a special place in the life of the Church, since they have often made a decisive contribution by being available for initiatives in ministry. Married people too love others apart from their partners: they love their children, friends, strangers, and even their enemies (cf. Mt 5.44). But their marriage is the centre focus of their relationships, around which other relationships grow; their home life together is their primary contribution to society. Sexual intercourse, as an expression of faithful intimacy, properly belongs within marriage exclusively. The three blessings that belong to marriage are traditionally described as the procreation and nurture of children, the hallowing and right direction of natural instincts and affections, and the mutual society, help and comfort which each partner affords the other in prosperity and adversity.

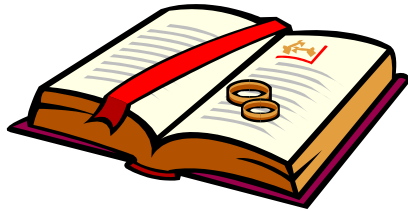
Through marriage each of the partners grows in maturity, and is helped to overcome personal failings and inadequacies. It is a school of patience and forgiveness. By it a new unit of society is created: a couple, stronger than the sum of its members, held together by the bond of domestic friendship. Together the couple can extend love to other people: to their own children, in the first instance, who belong naturally within their domestic circle; and not only them, but to many others who interact with them in a variety of ways. Their love enables them to make a strong contribution to society so that the weakening of marriage has serious implications for the mutual belonging and care that is exercised with the community at large.

Love has many aspects. It includes the fascination that draws us to those with whom we resonate and whom we find exciting. It includes the sense of loyalty we feel to those who are “our own”, members of our family or community. It includes the willingness to sacrifice ourselves for others’ welfare, and it includes the respectful appreciation of another’s qualities and gifts which make close co-operation possible. It is not a mistake that all these different things are summed up by the one word “love”, for a deep and growing love includes them all in different measures at different times. For love in marriage to grow it must develop not along one of these fronts only, but now along one, now along another. The emotional failure of marriage may indicate that one or both partners have not recognised the need for growth, and are looking simply to repeat the same kind of emotional satisfactions with which their love began.



(Marriage – A teaching document from the House of Bishops of the Church of England, Church House Publishing, 1999, pp 7-9)

EXTRACT FROM THE MARRIAGE SERVICE



Common Worship

In the presence of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
we have come together
to witness the marriage of *N* and *N*
to pray for God's blessing on them,
to share their joy
and to celebrate their love.
Marriage is a gift of God in creation
through which husband and wife may know the grace of God.
It is given that as man and woman grow together in love and trust,
they shall be united with one another in heart, body and mind,

as Christ is united with his bride, the Church.

The gift of marriage brings husband and wife together
in the delight and tenderness of sexual union
and joyful commitment to the end of their lives.
It is given as the foundation of family life
in which children are born and nurtured
and in which each member of the family,
in good times and in bad,
may find strength, companionship and comfort,
and grow to maturity in love.

Marriage is a way of life made holy by God,
and blessed by the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ
with those celebrating a wedding at Cana in Galilee.
Marriage is a sign of unity and loyalty
which all should uphold and honour.

It enriches society and strengthens community.
No one should enter into it lightly or selfishly
But reverently and responsibly in the sight of almighty God.

N and *N* are now to enter this way of life.
They will each give their consent to the other
and make solemn vows,
and in token of this they will (each) give and receive a ring.
We pray with them that the Holy Spirit will guide
and strengthen them,
that they may fulfil God's purposes
for the whole of their earthly life together.

Common Worship: Pastoral Services, Church House Publishing, 2000,
p.105. *Common Worship* is copyright © the Archbishops' Council 2000

APPENDIX 4

Issues in Human Sexuality was published as a Statement by the House of Bishops in December 1991.

As its title suggested the bishops sought to place a discussion of the particular issue of homosexuality into the wider context of Christian reflection on human sexuality in general. In his preface, the Archbishop of Canterbury highlighted a paragraph in the statement which said that the purpose had been “to promote an educational process as a result of which Christians may both become more informed about and understanding of certain human realities, and also to enter more deeply into the wisdom of their inheritance of faith in this field.”

The report is divided into five chapters: 1) an introduction which explains the context of the discussion and why it is important; 2) the Bible’s treatment of human sexuality and ways of understanding it; 3) the Christian vision for human sexuality; 4) homosexual love; and 5) the Church’s rules and discipline. The statement treats human sexuality in a very positive way. It recognises that Christians are divided in their view of homosexuality in particular and it emphasise that Christians must reject all forms of hatred of homosexual people and that they should protect those who are victimised.

As the document indicated the House of Bishops hold the view that “there is in scripture an evolving convergence on the ideal of lifelong, monogamous, heterosexual union as the setting intended by God for the proper development of men and women as sexual beings.” [This] “is quite clearly the foundation on which the Church’s traditional teaching is built.”

The House of Bishops is to publish a theological guide to the sexuality debate in November 2003. For the moment the 1991 statement may be

regarded as the most authoritative Church of England position on the subject.

APPENDIX 5

Some resource contacts

(This is not an exhaustive list and not all of the organisations listed are Christian. As with all resources staff and governors will need to exercise discretion.)

Care for Education
53 Romney Street
London
SW1P 3EF

Students Exploring Marriage
The Grubb Institute
Cloudesley Street
London
N1 0HU

Marriage Care
Clitherow House
1 Blythe Mews
Blythe Road
London
W14 0NW

One Plus One
1st Floor
The Wells
7-15 Rosebury Avenue
London
EC1R 4SP

The Sex Education Forum is the national authority on sex and relationships education (SRE) “We believe that good quality SRE is an entitlement for all children and young people.”

Sex Education Forum www.ncb.org.uk/sef
8 Wakeley Street
London
EC1V 7QE

For further details either e-mail info@lovewise.org.uk or phone Dr Chris Richards on 0191 281 2825

Faith, Values and Sex and Relationships Education by Simon Blake & Zarine Katrak Published 2002 by The National Children’s Bureau working with the Sex Education Forum as part of the PSHE & Citizenship Spotlight series. (ISBN 1 900990 32 6)

National Society Websites: www.natsoc.org.uk

Lovewise is a new Christian charitable organisation based in the North of England offering video and powerpoint presentations to classes and assemblies on marriage and sex from a traditional Christian perspective. The presentation team consists of Christian doctors, teachers, parents and young people. A range of presentations have been prepared for pupils aged 11-18 years and cover:

- The nature of marriage
- The nature of sex and the moral, rational and health reasons for keeping sex within marriage
- How the media apply pressure on young people to forego sexual purity
- The consequences of extramarital sex e.g. personal damage, unwanted pregnancies and infections
- Practical advice regarding 'going out'