

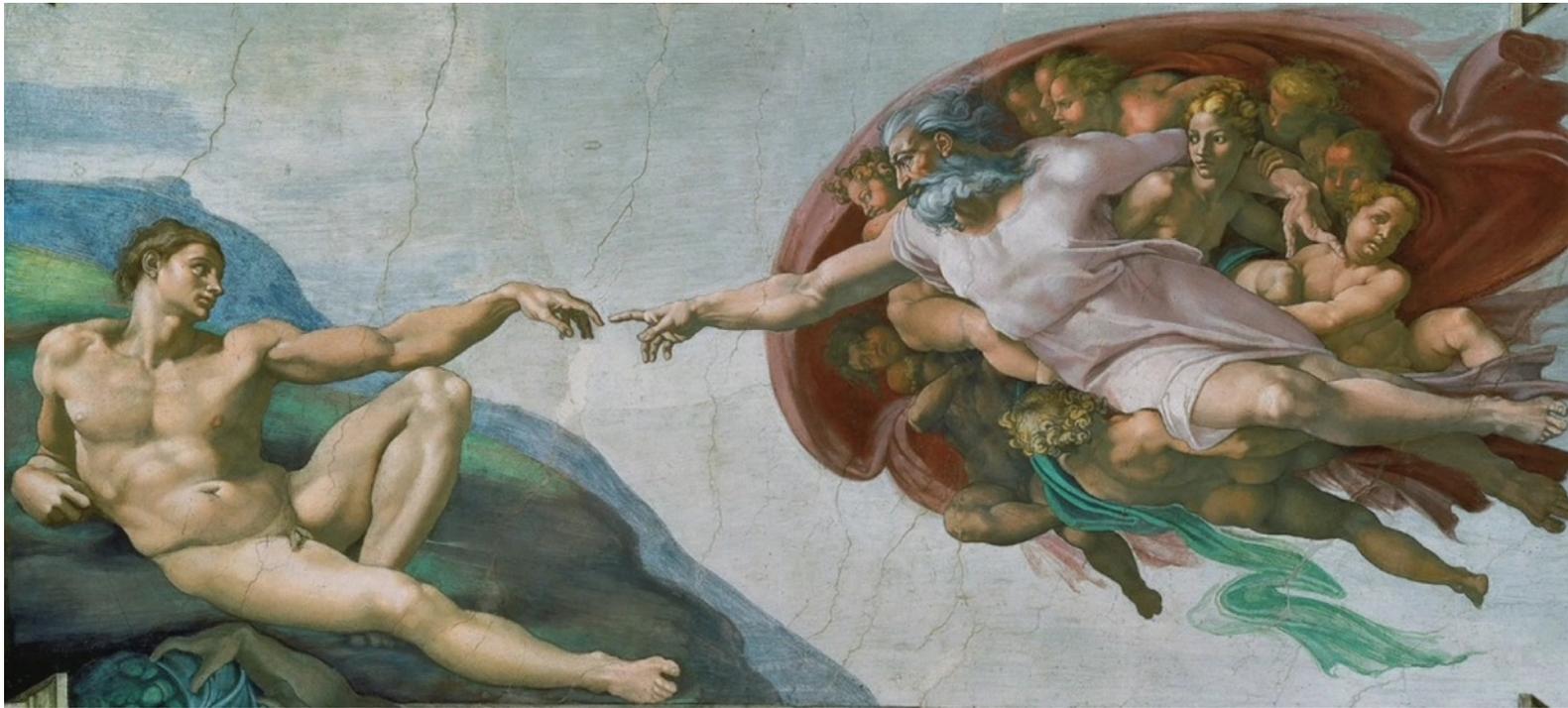
The Second Vatican Council spoke of the need for a 'positive and prudent sex education' to be imparted to children and adolescents 'as they grow older'...We may well ask ourselves if our educational institutions have taken up this challenge.

Pope Francis 'Amores Laetitia' 280

Human Relationships and Sex Education

Teaching about growing up.

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We are not some casual and meaningless product of evolution. Each of us is the result of a thought of God. Each of us is willed, each of us is loved, each of us is necessary.

Pope Benedict XVI Homily 24th April 2005

Growing up.

Introduction.

This booklet is intended to support the teaching of human relationships and sex education in primary schools. It contains the areas that should be part of a child's journey through a Catholic school to enable them to understand growing up in the context of their spiritual life as well as the physical changes that occur. They should begin to develop an understanding that these processes are not separate but part of a complete human formation. Physically growing and changing enables us to grow in love for God, ourselves and our neighbour.

1. Teaching about human dignity.

The first core theme 'Growing in love for myself and God' is where students of all ages learn about the innate dignity of the human person, created and loved by God and how to grow in love for themselves as part of a burgeoning relationship with God. Jesus' great commandment instructs us to love others as we love ourselves. Low self-esteem, a poor body image or believing we are not worthy people not only limits our emotional well-being, but it also limits how we can offer love to others. All people are made in the image and likeness of God. The picture from the Sistine Chapel of God reaching to Adam and Adam reaching to God is a way of illustrating this unique bond. Adam, fully formed, lies back languidly but reaches up to God, seeking something, God leans down to Adam, his arm around Eve, and imparts a vital spark to this creation. It is not the creation of Adam's physical body that Michelangelo depicts, rather the imparting of his soul. Adam is created as someone, not something, a human being, a reflection of God the Creator. The Latin for this is 'Imago Dei', humanity made in the image of God.

"Endowed with a spiritual and immortal soul, the human person is the only creature on earth that God has willed for its own sake. From his conception, he is destined for eternal beatitude." CCC 1703

People are created as thinkers, able to observe themselves with a critical objectivity and make moral judgements about their course of action. St. Thomas Aquinas calls this the 'rational soul'. (Definitions of Soul. On Aristotle's De anima, 2, 1-3 (1268)) Understanding 'Imago Dei' is central to teaching about why caring for our physical and mental well-being is part of relationships and sex education. It underpins virtue teaching in core theme one as being respectful of their bodies, character and giftedness and becomes apparent when we recognise that the body and soul are a reflection of the nature of the Creator.

Children understand dignity when they experience a school climate where they are valued as individuals and where the school's ethos ensures everyone feels loved.

Useful resources:

CAFOD Animation on human dignity <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8zhtPDXRthM>
Story "You are special" Max Lucado <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1q-q2dMipFI>

2. Why do we grow up? Ideas for Year 2.

Children in Key Stage One are acutely aware that they are no longer babies. Though they may not remember learning to walk or feed themselves, their lives are rich with learning experiences such as learning reading, swimming or how to get along with others. They also experience changes in their bodies as they grow physically and things happen to them such as losing their first teeth. In Human Relationships and Sex Education, these changes are part of growing towards a purpose, our adult life. Teaching about growing up begins when children talk about how they are changing and understand that this is a part of life, all things have life cycles in the science curriculum. In a Catholic school, we teach that this growth enables us to grow not just physically but in our relationship with God, our family and friends. We encourage an attitude of curiosity in the child about their purpose and the choices they make regarding the person they want to be and the lifestyle they choose. The following lesson suggestions offer ways in which educating about growing up can be integrated into the HRSE, science and PSHE curriculum. They are basic ideas intended to spark a teacher's creativity around teaching these aspects of a Catholic curriculum. They do not include guidance on health and safety, contacting parents or worksheets.

1. Growing towards our potential

Looking at seeds

NC Science Year 2: observe and describe how seeds and bulbs grow into mature plants.

Notice that animals, including humans, have offspring which grow into adults

Find out about and explain the basic needs of animals, including humans, for survival (water, food and air)

HRSE Core Theme 3: The belief that they have worth as a creation of God. That their life has a purpose and to fulfil this purpose, they must keep themselves safe, physically and through growing self-confidence.

Examine a collection of seeds, berries and bulbs.

On some post-it notes draw pictures of what they think the seeds will grow into when they are fully grown.

Discuss how they can investigate.

Ask if it is possible for a seed to grow into something else, can a daffodil bulb grow into an oak tree or can a conker grow into a dragon?

Take a moment to wonder at how amazing seeds are each seed contains the potential to become a grown plant.

(Science time may be spent investigating what a seed needs to fulfil its potential.)

How are seeds cared for in nature? Where do they get food, water, light etc.? How do they form part of the cycle of life by providing food or habitat for other creatures? Notice how they are beautiful.

Scripture link. Matt. 6: 26-30



*“We must wonder! We must create an environment of wonder! We must create a climate of wonder! This task is closest to the family...Wonder is needed so that beauty might enter into human life, into society and the nation...We need to marvel at everything that is found in man.”
Pope St. John Paul II*

Looking at animals

Look at pictures of baby animals. What will they grow into? What is their potential? (Science time might be spent investigating life cycles of different animals, incubating eggs or inspect pupa.)

Look at pictures of baby animals. How will they grow and what names they have at different stages of life. What is their potential? Is it possible for a tadpole to grow into a hen?

(Science time might be spent investigating life cycles of different animals, incubating eggs or inspect pupa.)

Discuss what is different about some animals and plants.

How are animals cared for as they grow? Why is where an egg is laid important? Do some animals need parents to help them develop? How do the parents help the infants? What happens as babies grow up? How do the labels given to creatures change as things age? Stories: 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar' by Eric Carle (See HRSE & story ideas).

Explore how humans grow in science and understand labels for different stages of life. Children may be able to do this through their own families, knowing how they have grown, who cared for them when they were tiny and what they needed and who cared for them now, how have their needs changed?

In HRSE, discuss how these changes alter their role in the family, from being the baby to being a child. Explore their place in their own family. Look at pictures of new babies.

Spend time appreciating the wonder of a new baby. ('This is my body' models may be useful here).

What potential might a baby contain? (Talents, future roles in life such as parent, jobs etc.) Draw pictures, write captions or make a class wordle about the potential futures a baby might share. Children may think of sad prospects too dependent on their own life experiences. These may offer an opportunity to challenge about personal choices, but sometimes sad things do happen which are beyond human understanding. Read the words of Jeremiah, ask what potential God sees in each human life.

Scripture link: Jeremiah 1:5 'Before I formed you in the womb...'

What do we need to fulfil our potential? In science we learn what is needed to grow physically but what else is needed to make us really happy? Listen to Jesus' recipe for human happiness.

“You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind and with all your strength...you must love your neighbour as you love yourself.” Mark 12:29-31

Write this down and complete three sentences.

I will love God by...

I will love myself when...

I will love my neighbour when...

What is a new baby able to do? What type of clothes do they need? Learning about this will be enhanced if a parent happens to be able to bring a new baby into school, if not a doll with a nappy and baby grow would work as well.

Bearing in mind any sensitivities culturally or around continence, begin to explore why babies are often pictures with no clothes. What changes about keeping parts of our body private as we grow?

PSHE: watch NSPCC Pantosaurus video. <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/underwear-rule/>



N.B. at this point teachers may want to teach about labelling body parts including external genitalia, or they may decide depending on context and the maturity of the cohort to defer to Key Stage 2. What is central is that children understand that they are modest about some part of their bodies, that is they are private to them.

All parts of our bodies are part of God's creation, and we are all made beautiful.

2. Growing towards God

Following on from conversations about how we grow physically and how our relationships with our parents change from total dependence towards eventual independence as adults, begin to explore how our growing up as people enables us to grow towards God who is called 'our Father' by Christians. Understanding the sacramental journey is part of growing up in the Catholic family. A Sacrament is a way in which we open ourselves to God and is part of a child's developing understanding that we choose how to involve God in our lives. As Catholics, we believe God loves all people and baptism is a way in which we promise to love God in return. Understanding a sacrament is a way in which we deepen our relationship with Jesus, is an essential building block in understanding the path to complete happiness through a sacramental relationship. Children from other faith traditions or no religious background can still learn about why sacraments are necessary for Catholic life. Learning about the sacred journey a Catholic makes in life will enable children to contextualise adult sacraments, such as marriage and ordination, as part of an ongoing way in which Catholics seek to deepen their relationship with God.

Lesson ideas

Baptism will primarily be studied in RE. The following is a suggestion of where to highlight aspects of HRSE in an RE lesson on Baptism and connect the sacrament with humanity's potential to grow towards God.

HRSE: Links with the programme of study: Core Theme 1: Know that they are special people made in the image and likeness of God. Know that they are individuals and that they have gifts and abilities. Be curious about themselves and their purpose in the world.

Core Theme 2: Their invitation to be part of a wider family of God.

Baptism of a baby is a choice made by parents. It is more than welcoming a child into the family, it is welcoming the new life into the family of God. Many aspects of baptism are covered in RE. However, a focus on the anointing of the child illustrates how in Catholic baptism, a baby is not just welcomed into the family of God but is called to a Christian life.

Useful resources: Video about Baptism, covering different denominations but explaining the anointing of a child in the Catholic rite. <http://request.org.uk/life/rites-of-passage/baptism/#> RE Quest Click through to the link on infant baptism

Anointing during baptism is like a seal, a special mark placed on the baby that they are part of the Christian family. It is like putting on a uniform or wearing a badge showing that the child belongs to Christ as well as her or his parents. Anointing the baby with the oil of catechumens is a symbol of cleaning and making them secure, anointing with chrism is a sign of blessing, that the child is special and is called to go through the world as a member of the Christian family. St. Paul describes this as like spreading the '*sweet smell*' of Christ.

Thanks be to God who, wherever he goes, makes us, in Christ, partners of his triumph, and through us is spreading the knowledge of himself, like a sweet smell, everywhere. We are Christ's incense to God." 2 Corinthians 2:14-15

What badge could the children design that marks a person as a Christian? What are the symbols of Christianity?

Being part of a group, as in a family has some rules. What are the rules of being a Christian? Write them down, and then compare to Jesus' great commandment.

Resources: YOUCAT 194-202

'For every child' UNICEF (See 'Story in HRSE')



The Sacred Oils are kept on display in a special place in Lancaster Cathedral. Schools who are able to access a Church may be able to request the Priest or Deacon talks about where the sacred oils are kept in Church and how they received the blessed oils at a ceremony each year in Holy Week on Maundy Thursday.

3. Growing and changing: Ideas for upper Key Stage 2.

In Key Stage Two, science explores life cycles. In other species, adulthood is marked by the ability to reproduce and so continue the survival of the species, sometimes with evolutionary adaptations. In HRSE it is important to consider not only how we change with age but why and the purpose of an extended human life. The cycle of our lives is also celebrated throughout the sacramental journey as part of our relationship with God as we seek to lead a complete and happy life. *'Fit for Mission? Schools'* states "our school's teaching of Personal, Social and Health education (PSHE), including sex education, must be within the context of the sacrament of marriage, and the Church's teaching on Christian anthropology and the family."p11. What follows are some ideas about how to achieve this, what resources to use and how the school nurse may support this teaching and learning.

Links with science programme of study: Year 5 (statutory)

Pupils should be taught to:

- describe the differences in the life cycles of a mammal, an amphibian, an insect and a bird
- describe the life process of reproduction in some plants and animals
- describe the changes as humans develop to old age

(non-statutory)

- Pupils should draw a timeline to indicate stages in the growth and development of humans. They should learn about the changes experienced in puberty.
- Pupils could work scientifically by researching the gestation periods of other animals and comparing them with humans; by finding out and recording the length and mass of a baby as it grows.

Growing towards a purpose, growing in love for God.

Core Theme 3: That all people have worth and dignity as creations of God. All lives have purpose and we are all created equal.

That giving time to prayer and reflection is a way of growing in understanding of themselves and their own character, as well as deepening their relationship with God.

Watch CAFOD video on human dignity. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8zhtPDXRthM>

The CAFOD video explains how we see God's image in each other. St. Paul describes how Jesus reveals God and as Christians, we are called to see God in each other.

We are all precious in God's eyes.

*Christ is the head of all creation
He is the image of the unseen God
and the first born of all creation,*

*for in him were created
all things in heaven and on earth:
everything visible and invisible.*

Colossians 1:15-17

Christian lives are a journey towards God. The video talks about how seeing God reflected in others challenges us to change our behaviour. The example given is that a Catholic aid agency works to empower those in need, equipping them with skills to help themselves. How are they challenged as young people growing up to chose to see God in others?

Select an inspirational story of a life changed by listening to God. For example, the call of the Peter (Luke 5:1-11) or the story of the Annunciation¹ (Luke 1:26-38). Alternately, the saint for whom the school is named after may inspire students to begin to ask what is God's purpose for their lives.

How were Peter and Mary's lives changed by saying 'yes' when they were called?
Each child writes a personal mission statement.



Writing a personal mission statement. Things to think about.

*How do you care for yourself?
How do you care for others?
How can you change as you grow up?
Do you make time for God?*

¹ Using the story of the Annunciation could link with using 'This is my body' lesson resources.

Reflect on their mission statements and talk about when they will look at them again.
Sing 'Here I am Lord' or 'Do not be afraid'.
Perhaps read together part of the **Benedictus**.

As for you, little child,
 you shall be called a prophet of God, the Most High.
You shall go ahead of the Lord
 to prepare his ways before him,
To make known to his people their salvation
 through forgiveness of all their sins,
the loving-kindness of the heart of our God
 who visits us like the dawn from on high.
He will give light to those in darkness,
 those who dwell in the shadow of death,
 and guide us into the way of peace.
Glory be to the Father and to the Son
 and to the Holy Spirit,
as it was in the beginning,
 is now, and ever shall be,
 world without end.
Amen.

Blessed be the Lord, our God.

Growing love for others.

HRSE Core Theme 1: Recognise cause and effect in their actions and take personal responsibility. Value themselves as a child of God, believing life is precious and their body is God's gift to them.

Core Theme 2: That being part of a community means understanding the rights and responsibilities in that group and that rules and laws are made to protect. Different rules are needed for situations and being in a group means taking part in making and changing rules. Know the rituals celebrated in Church that mark life, particularly birth, marriage and death and that these are part of Christian beliefs.

Growing towards adulthood means that relationships with other people change. Linking with science, draw a timeline of a human lifespan.

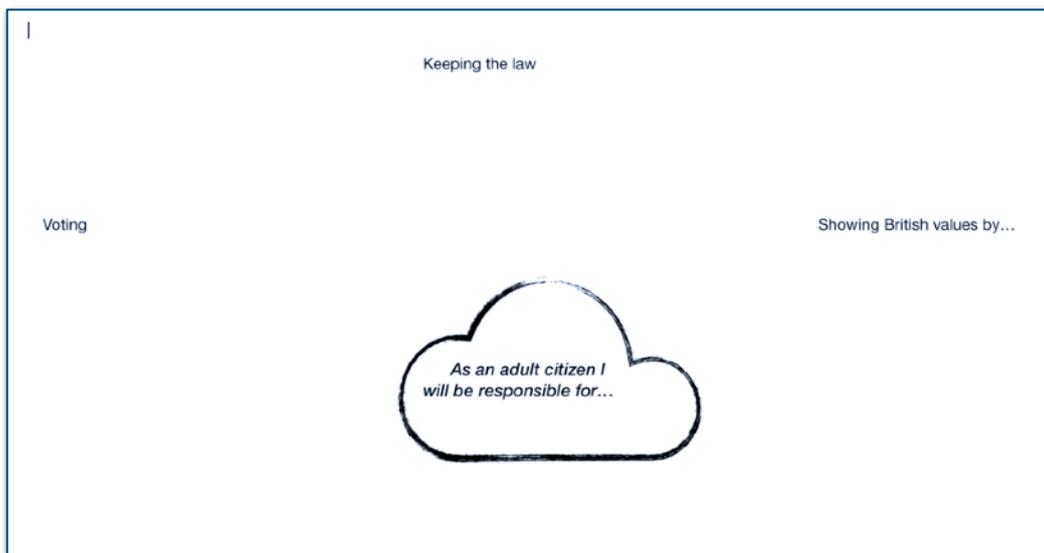
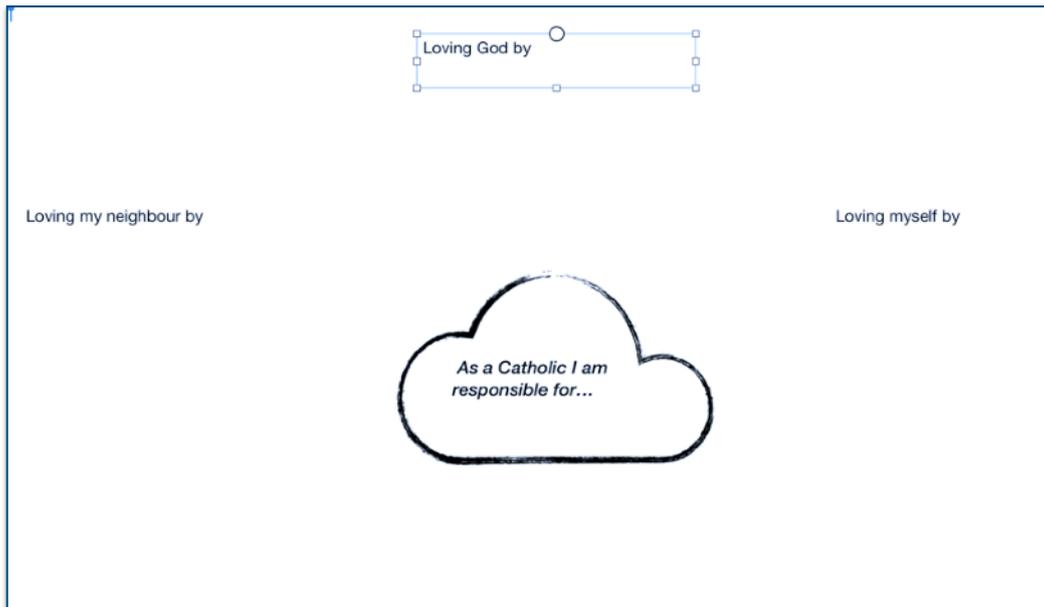
Ask, at what age do we need parenting?

Discuss. As we grow older, the physical care we need from our parents reduces, and we become more independent, what different relationships might we develop as we age?

What are our responsibilities towards others?

Ask the children to generate 'thought clouds' of the responsibilities of different adult roles.

An idea for this is using large sheets of paper and thinking of the responsibilities we have as adults as friends, parents, citizens and people of faith. Children could also complete one about their responsibilities for their physical health as part of showing love for themselves.



Look at the timeline of human life. Which responsibilities happen at a fixed age, such as the right to vote, and which happen at different ages?

Ask the children to have a go at making a sacramental time line. Ask those of them who are baptised at what age this happened? How old were they at first communion and reconciliation. How do these match time lines of life?

Look at the other sacraments, which sacraments can only happen when you are an adult?



‘The purpose of the sacraments is to sanctify, to build up the body of Christ, and, finally, to give worship to God; because they are signs they also instruct. They not only presuppose faith, but by words and objects they also nourish, strengthen, and express it; that is why they are called “sacraments of faith.”

Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy n.59

Teaching about the Sacramental Journey



4. The Sacramental Journey

'Fit for Mission? Schools' states "our school's teaching of Personal, Social and Health education (PSHE), including sex education, must be within the context of the sacrament of marriage, and the Church's teaching on Christian anthropology and the family."p11.

The following is a suggestion about how to talk about marriage and holy orders in the context of growing up and understanding body changes. It is not a compulsory programme to follow.

Through God, our lives should be a journey in love. We are created through the love of God and our parents, we grow in the love of our family as we grow up, we may find someone to love and eventually give ourselves to in marriage so we can have children as part of our love as adults. This is what God calls us to and this is why our bodies are made to reproduce. Teaching the science of our bodies should follow from this type of framework. How this is done is the decision of the school, but it is important that resources used are of high quality and say something of the special nature of our sexuality. The Education Service recommends 'This is my Body' (Philos publishing) and 'Journey in Love' by Sr. Jude Grogan as resources to support this area of the curriculum.

Lesson ideas.

The Sacrament of Marriage.

HRSE: Core Theme 1: Understand that differences and similarities between people arise from a number of factors including family, cultural, ethnic, racial and religious diversity, age, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation and disability (See protected characteristics of the Equality Act 2010)

Core Theme 2: Know the rituals celebrated in Church that mark life, particularly birth, marriage and death and that these are part of Christian beliefs.

That marriage in a Church is a sacrament and involves God in the loving relationship between the couple. It is based on mutual consent.

Marriage can be civil union, a public demonstration of the free commitment made between two people who love and care for each other who want to spend their lives together and are of legal age to make that commitment.

Core Theme 3: About what puberty involves and how their body and emotions will change as they approach and move through puberty, growing into adults.

Look at the seven sacraments. Identify at what age they typically take place.

Research if grown-ups can get baptised. Perhaps invite a member of the local Parish's Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults in to talk to the class about becoming a Catholic as an adult. Alternately, some videos talk about the RCIA on YouTube. This one is from Australia and last for around 3 minutes <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9XzIxmDCG-c>

1. What sacraments are only for grown-ups?
2. What is a sign of growing up and becoming an adult?

Linking with science, one way in which we know we are growing up is that our bodies change to enable us eventually, to become parents too, this change is called puberty.

Talking about puberty: (Please see the following section on using the school nurse service).

'Journey in Love' and 'This is my body' provide useful picture resources to support these lessons.

Teachers need to spend time framing ground rules with children at the beginning of these lessons so that children feel safe to ask questions, knowing that there is no such thing as a silly question, and a clear framework is set for behavioural expectations

Begin the lesson by talking about the names of the different stages of our lives. Children are called girls and boys; adults are called women and men.

Make lists of the physical differences between girls and women, boys and men, then talk about what else changes. In science, teachers may want to link to understanding the work of hormones and how they make our bodies change as we age. How do adults behave differently? For example, adults no longer go to school, children play with toys, adults tend to have toys no longer. Discuss how physical changes match emotional changes called maturity.

Ask if a teenager is completely grown-up or are they something in-between?

Puberty is part of this 'in-between' stage as we grow towards a possible future as parents.

Children will need more scientific information to understand the changes that occur in puberty physically.

What sacrament is usually received in our teenage years?

How does Confirmation show we are becoming adults and choosing a relationship with God?

Watch a short video showing confirmation in the Diocese of Plymouth. Notice the age of the young people involved.

<http://www.mostholyltrinity.co.uk/services/confirmation/>

Confirmation is the next stage of the sacramental journey of Catholics.

As adults, the body has been through the physical changes of puberty and has been through the emotional changes of the teenage years to become an adult. As adults, we have a possible choice to become parents in the future. Catholics make this decision part of their sacramental journey when they take part in the Sacrament of Marriage.

What is marriage? The teacher should show different images of marriage in the various countries and different faiths. Marriage happens in lots of ways in every country in the world. Some marriages are 'civil', that is they take place legally in a town hall, registry office or hotel. The Sacrament of Marriage is different because it is part of a Catholic's journey towards God. As with all other Sacraments, a person wants to deepen their relationship with God through inviting the Holy Spirit into their life as they promise to commit to someone else who they love.



The Sacrament of Marriage

- The sacrament of Marriage is part of the Catholic journey to God.
- It happens in a Church and the priest marries the young couple.
- The bride and groom promise before God that they will love each other and provide a loving family for their children.



Being open to the Holy Spirit.

At the Annunciation, Mary welcomed the Holy Spirit into her life.

With Joseph, she provided a loving home for Jesus as a child.

When a couple enter into the Sacrament of Marriage, they ask the Holy Spirit to bless their marriage. Children are a sign of this blessing.



Marriage is only one future and being open to the Holy Spirit may guide children on many different paths. The local Parish Priest may be happy to talk about his vocation or a member of a religious order. The following prayer from the end of 'Journey in Love' provides a lovely reflection on how the changes experienced in primary school are part of the journey of our lives in God. It could be part of a reflection at the end of lessons on puberty and change. Alternately, Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 "For everything there is a season" reminds us we are all part of God's whole Creation.

Journey of Life

*For each of us. life is like a journey.
Birth is the beginning of this journey.
And death is not the end; but the destination.*

*It is a journey that takes us
From youth to age,
From innocence to awareness,
From ignorance to knowledge,
From foolishness to wisdom,
From weakness to strength and other back again, From offence to forgiveness,
From pain to compassion,
From fear to faith,
From defeat to victory and from victory to defeat,
Until. looking backward or ahead,
We see that victory does not lie
At some high point along the way,
But in having made the journey,
Stage by stage.*

5. Using the school nurse service.

The school nurse service is one amongst a number of organisations that can provide expertise and support to help teachers develop children's understanding of the changes that mark the onset of puberty. It is essential that children get high-quality information within a context of understanding the changes that they are going through are part of growing towards a happy adult life into which they can invite God. When using the school nurse service, consider the following points.

1. The school nurses should enhance curriculum provision, not be its replacement. Any information the school nurse offers should be part of a series of lessons around health or personal growth and change. It is the school's role to place this information in the context of Catholic ethos and life.
2. School nurses and any other visiting professionals should be asked to sign the visitor protocol, templates of which are in the HRSE file. These protocols cover confidentiality, behavioural expectations and information about working with groups and individuals.
3. It is important to talk to the school nurse before they work with the children and preview and material that will be shared to ensure that it is in line with the expectations of the school as a Catholic community.
4. Parents must always be informed of the visit of the school nurse and given a broad outline of the content of the information that will be provided. It is good practice to give a few days notice to parents to allow them to ask questions, find letters in school bags and talk to their children about what the school nurse is going to say. Parents are the first educators of their children. Talking about growing up and the physical and psychological changes it brings are a vital part of maintaining a good relationship with their children as they grow into teenagers. School should not infringe on this bond by giving information without parental consent.

We are blessed to have a team of school nurses who are prepared to help our children grow in health and well-being.

6. Working with parents.

The school's HRSE policy will state how parents are informed about teaching HRSE and kept informed of their rights and responsibilities. The following notes are reflections on how the schools can seek to engage positively with parents while recognising some parents will not want to engage with the school.

The rôle of the school should be that of assisting and completing the work of parents, or those who stand in place of parents, furnishing children and adolescents with an evaluation of "sexuality as value and task of the whole person, created male and female in the image of God" (Educational Guidance in Human Love 1983 n69). The Church has

always seen its work in schools as being part of a partnership in formation. Legally, parents also have the right to be consulted about the content of the relationships and sex education and governing bodies must ask parents as they form a relationships and sex education policy and following curriculum content. Parents should also be informed when HRSE lessons are taking place so that they can exercise their right to withdraw their child.

The Church recognises that this can have unique challenges for schools. *“Educators and parents are often aware of not being sufficiently prepared to impart adequate sex education.”* (Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, Educational Guidance in Human Love 1983 n9) However, this work can be most effective when parents and schools work together for common aims. Parenting adolescents may have challenges and schools should always seek to work in partnership, in a spirit of openness and dialogue with families. As in all areas of relationships and sex education, the Church offers Christ’s teaching as an invitation to build the Kingdom of God. It is important that school policies reflect this message to parents and their children and never appear as judgemental and controlling.

Involving parents in HRSE will offer challenges for schools. Parental views can range from not wanting their children to know anything at all to those who want them to have complete access to sexual health services and for school to do all the teaching. Schools must find a balance and as each school is different what follows are suggestions of how to open channels of communication around relationships education.

At the primary level, begin when children join the school to educate parents about relationships education. In the prospectus and conversations with new parents demonstrate how the school teaches children about relationships, for example,

“As a school, we use the term Human Relationships Education (HRSE) to describe children's learning about their relationship with God, with themselves and with others, as part of developing their understanding of how life in God brings true happiness. Jesus' commandment,

“You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind... You must love your neighbour as yourself.”
(The Gospel of Matthew 22:36-40)

inspires the whole of our teaching about forming friendships and caring for ourselves and each other in school life.

Learning about relationships is part of the life of the school where everyone is encouraged to show respect and kindness towards each other. We teach how everyone must work to form their character. Everyone is created equal, with equal dignity in the eyes of God but how we behave is a matter of choice, which means building habits of happiness, patterns that bring us to a beautiful life as described by Jesus.

Recognising the role of parents and carers.

A child's first experience of love is in the home. Our school knows that in faith, as in all things, parents are the first educators of their children. We always want to work with families in a supportive partnership."

Share information about what you are going to do in school and when it is going to take place. Conversations about how to build friendships and how to treat other people form part of the fabric of primary life. Some parents will want to know when areas that will raise questions from their children are going to take place as then they are ready to answer them. Beginning this early in Key Stage One builds trust between parents and school and avoids the first conversation about growing up happening in Year Six when the puberty talk is going to happen.

Some parents will not want to engage, this is also their right. Schools need to recognise that this may come from fear, misunderstanding or just a lack of confidence, rather than disinterest.

"The strength of the family lies in its capacity to love and to teach how to love.

For all a family's problems, it can always grow, beginning with love."

Pope Francis 'Amoris Laetitia' 53

