



BELIEFS, ATTITUDES AND
EXPERIENCES OF PUPILS,
PARENTS AND TEACHERS
ABOUT RELATIONSHIPS
AND SEXUALITY
EDUCATION
IN POST-PRIMARY
CATHOLIC SCHOOLS IN
NORTHERN IRELAND

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St. Comhgall's School, Lisnaskea
St. Gemma's School, Belfast
St. Joseph's School, Newry
St. Louis' School, Ballymena
St. Mary's School, Limavady
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Executive Summary

The aim of this research is twofold. Firstly to highlight the values, attitudes and views of Teachers, Parents and Pupils about relationships and sexuality. Secondly, to ascertain the attitudes of Teachers, Parents and Pupils about the teaching of RSE in Catholic Post-Primary Schools in Northern Ireland. Within this study, Year 12 Pupils from 17 Post-Primary Schools throughout Northern Ireland were selected to take part in a questionnaire and 43 Year 12 Pupils from 7 schools took part in focus groups. In total 748 Year 12 Pupils completed questionnaires. 143 Teachers from 10 schools completed a Teachers' questionnaire and 261 Parents of children who attended 6 of the 17 selected schools completed a Parents' questionnaire. The following outlines the main findings of the research:

Findings from research with Year 12 Pupils

- Overall the majority of Pupils are positive about themselves, 97% indicated that they have a number of good qualities, 94% feel that they are able to do things as well as others.
- However Pupils identified aspects of themselves that they are not happy with. For instance 44% wish that they had more respect for themselves and 22% feel they are a failure.
- 40% of the Pupils surveyed dislike their bodies of which the majority (57%) were females.
- Males are more likely to hit something, shout at someone or hit someone when angry. Higher proportions of females talk to the person they are angry with. 202 respondents (27%) indicated that at times they do not communicate their anger to anyone.
- 56% of respondents indicated that they cannot talk to anyone about the way they feel and 22% of respondents (N:166) do not **always** have a caring adult to talk to if they are worried about something.
- 95% of Pupils in this survey feel that God loves them and 95% pray to God.
- 60% of Pupils in this survey disagreed with the statement "Catholics should not have sex before marriage", 22% were unsure. There are considerable differences between the attitudes of those living in towns, the countryside, and cities. Respondents living in the countryside tended to reflect the Catholic Church's teachings about sex before marriage more than respondents from the city.
- 76% of Pupils surveyed feel it was important to get married in a church rather than a registry office and 99% of respondents indicated that a happy marriage was the most important element in their lives for the future.
- 99% indicated that they appreciated, respected and are happy with their Parents most, or some of the time.
- 68% of Pupils find it difficult to talk to their Parents about sex and sexuality and only 16% would like to talk more to their Parents about these issues.
- Young people within focus groups suggested that Parents should talk to their child about sex and sexual orientation at age 11 so that both Parents and children, as they get older, are not embarrassed and can discuss issues openly.



- The difficulties experienced by Parents in discussing sex is evident by the fact that 78% of Pupils indicated that they had not discussed the Catholic Church's teaching about sex and sexuality with their Parents and 45% were unsure whether their Parents believed sex before marriage is wrong for them.
- 83% of Pupils indicated that at least one of their Parents is a practising Catholic.
- 24% felt that their chaplain should contribute more to RSE
- Over 90% of Pupils indicated that they had positive friendships, however 38% felt pressurized into dating and 8% (N:63) experienced pressure from their friends to have sex with someone.
- Pupils indicated that they would like more confidence to ask people on dates (53%).
- 83% of Pupils had dated and 36% were unsure of 'how far to go' physically when dating, of which the majority (64%) were males.
- 29% of the Pupils surveyed had experienced sexual intercourse. Higher proportions (42%) of those Pupils living in cities had sex, compared to town respondents (31%) and the countryside (17%).
- A high proportion (91%) feel that one should care for the person they are going out with and trust and honesty were important aspects of relationships for young people. However 48% feel that relationships for them now are just for fun.
- The majority of Pupils appreciate and respect their Teachers, however 61% could not indicate more than 3 Teachers from the whole school who are good at talking about sex and sexuality. A further 22% could only identify between 4 and 7 Teachers.
- 66% of Pupils acknowledged that they had been taught communication skills, but fewer (24%) had been taught anger management and 30% coping skills thus highlighting a need to focus on these areas within RSE.
- The majority of Pupils feel that they are not given enough time to discuss relationships and sexuality at school.
- A high proportion (46%) of Pupils indicated in the questionnaire that they enjoyed discussions with class Teachers, secondly guest speakers (33%) and thirdly videos (29%). 44% of Grammar School students indicated that they enjoyed Retreats.
- It appears that in the majority of schools, information relating to STI's and contraception is already being covered in current programmes.
- Some Pupils did not readily acknowledge the terms homosexuality (16%), heterosexuality (46%) and bisexuality (21%) and are unclear and confused about what the terms mean. A large proportion of Pupils also did not acknowledge that they had been taught about types of sexual orientation.
- Higher proportions (76%) of Pupils from cities agreed with the statement; 'Direct abortion is always wrong', this compares to 66% of town respondents and 66% of respondents from the countryside.
- Respondents illustrated knowledge of basic biological facts, for example 86% agreed with the statement: 'A woman is more likely to get pregnant at certain times during the month'. However, 45% of lower ability Pupils were unsure when responding to this statement.



Findings from Research with Parents

- 94% of Parents who completed the survey indicated that they are practising Catholics.
- 99% feel that RSE is important.
- 95% feel that their child's school should teach RSE. A minority disagreed, feeling it is a private and sensitive issue, which should be taught at home and is the sole responsibility of the Parent.
- 51% of the Parents surveyed indicated that they had discussed the Catholic Church's teaching about sex before marriage.
- Parents suggested a number of wide-ranging benefits to their child if RSE is taught in school. These included an increase in their child's knowledge, openness, communication and comfort in talking about relationships and sexuality.
- Parents in this survey also indicated that they would like to talk more to their child about relationships and sex and would like information / training on the subject (78%).
- Parents suggested that Teachers are ideally placed to teach RSE because they are trained and have more knowledge of the subject.
- 40% of Parents surveyed believe sex before marriage is wrong for their child, 36% were unsure.
- The majority of Parents (87%) feel that marriage is a lifetime commitment.

Findings from Research with Teachers

- 18% of Teachers surveyed are reluctant to teach RSE
- 23% of the Teachers surveyed are not confident to teach RSE. Much of this lack of confidence is related to a lack of training, experience or personal skills.
- Confidence, good communication, empathy, openness, and listening skills are indicated as being important qualities for an effective RSE Teacher.
- Teachers feel most discomfort when teaching about bisexual relationships (50%) and homosexual relationships (41%).
- 70% highlighted that there is very little guidance relating to what should be taught in RSE and 66% feel that videos used in school tend to be out-of-date.
- 77% of Teachers indicated that they would like new resources to support the teaching of RSE, the most preferred resource is videos, closely followed by workbooks or worksheets and pamphlets.
- 79% of Teachers indicated that RSE should be delivered by a core-team, 15% suggested by all Form Teachers as part of P.H.S.E. and 6% by R.E. and Science Departments only.
- 77% of Teachers surveyed are willing to take part in RSE training.
- A considerable proportion of Teachers illustrated uncertainty regarding a number of moral statements included in the questionnaire: Homosexual acts are wrong (27%), Couples should live together before they get married (38%) and Sex before marriage is always wrong (17%).
- A high proportion (77%) of Teachers did not concur with **all** of the Catholic Church's teachings.

This research has highlighted the areas that Year 12 Pupils would require RSE to focus on. These include: self-respect, feelings of failure, confidence, anger management, assessing and communicating feelings. Other issues that need to be tackled include consequences of casual sex and peer pressure with regards to relationships.

The development of a core-team approach to deliver RSE, could be an option. However given that the majority of Pupils could only name a limited number of Teachers they would like to teach RSE, it is imperative that a core team within a school should contain these preferred Teachers. Alternatively a wider range of staff could be trained and their skills enhanced in order to teach RSE. Given the contrasting views of particular Pupils to some of the Catholic Church's teaching about sex, it is important to remember that in essence, the development and maintenance of happy and life-long marriages is deemed important by Pupils, Parents and Teachers.

Any approach adopted should closely involve Parents. The effectiveness of an approach to R.S.E. should be evaluated by consulting Pupils, Parents and Teachers.



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Introduction

ACCORD Catholic Marriage Care Service is an agency of the Catholic Church providing various services to assist couples preparing for marriage or those seeking a deeper commitment within the sacrament of marriage. ACCORD recently appointed an Education Officer to develop a Relationship and Sexuality Education (RSE) Programme for Post-Primary Schools. In order to assist the development of an appropriate RSE Programme that will respond to the attitudes and needs of Pupils, Parents and Teachers, the Bishops of the 5 Dioceses in Northern Ireland (Armagh, Clogher, Derry, Down and Connor and Dromore) commissioned this research. The primary aim, therefore, of this research is to highlight the values, attitudes and views about relationships and sexuality and the teaching of relationship and sexuality education (R.S.E.) in Post-Primary Catholic Schools in Northern Ireland.

Previous Research

A small number of local and regional pieces of research have been conducted primarily in the area of sex and sexuality. Research conducted by the Health Promotion Agency (1996) examined the views of Parents and Teachers with regard to sex education. In that study, 98% of Parents/Teachers said that school/home should deliver sex education and Parents should have equal responsibility for sex education. However many Parents had indicated that they had not discussed any sexual issues with their children (HPA, 1996). The same study suggested that Teachers require training to deliver effective sex education (HPA, 1996).

The Health Behaviour of School Children Study (H.P.A, 1998) surveyed 3,450 young people from Years 9-12 (aged between 13-15) of which 655 (14.9%) reported at the time of the survey that they had experienced sexual intercourse.

Currently the Family Planning Association is completing research about sex and sexuality and preliminary findings indicate that 46% of respondents in the survey had sex when they were between 10 and 15 years old. A more localised but yet substantial survey commissioned by 'Love for Life' (2001) highlighted that of the 1,241, pupils 16 years and over who completed the survey, 30.9% had experienced sexual intercourse (Cairns, 2001). Therefore, following from these studies, it could be expected in this research that a substantial proportion of young people (between 30% and 46%) could have experienced sexual intercourse.

Previous research indicates a need for support and training for Teachers and Parents in the delivery of sex education. In this study it is intended that needs relating to relationships and Pupils' views and experiences of RSE will be fully investigated.

All of the previous studies have been conducted with young people from various denominations. This study is unique in Northern Ireland as it solely represents views of Pupils who attend Catholic Schools, of Teachers who teach there and of Parents whose children attend Catholic Schools. In the findings the actual number of practising Catholics will be indicated.

Methodology



The fieldwork was conducted between January 2002 and April 2002. In total 17 Post-Primary Catholic Schools were selected to take part in the survey and the schools were asked for approximately 50 Pupils of their upper stream classes. As the questionnaire is completed by the respondents themselves (self-completed) and, because of its length and detail, upper stream Pupils were selected in order to ensure that the questions were understood and completed as accurately as possible. 140 Pupils of lower ability completed a shorter questionnaire, so as comparisons on certain

key questions could be made to see if there were significant differences between experiences or attitudes of Pupils of different academic abilities (See Appendix A). The types of Post-Primary Schools sampled are as follows: 1 Girls Secondary School, 9 Co-ed Secondary Schools, 3 Boys Secondary Schools and 2 Boys Grammar Schools, 1 Girls Grammar School and 1 Comprehensive School.

In total, the sample in this survey constitutes 5.99% (N: 748) of the total of 12,483 Pupils enrolled in Year 12 (October 2000) in Post-Primary Catholic Secondary and Grammar Schools. In 2000, 33% of Pupils were enrolled in Grammar Schools and 67% in Secondary Schools (CCMS, 2002). Of the Pupils surveyed in this research, 75% were from Secondary schools, 19% were from Grammar School and 6% were from a Comprehensive School. As the Comprehensive sample is small, for the purposes of this study, responses from this school will be treated as Secondary School responses. In order to ensure that there was sufficient representation throughout Northern Ireland, 4 schools were selected from the Derry Diocese, 1 from the Dromore Diocese, 5 from the Down and Connor Diocese, 5 from the Armagh Diocese and 2 from the Clogher Diocese.

The Education Officer for ACCORD administered the questionnaires in the individual school, and he was present throughout to answer any questions (See Appendix B). The questionnaire was self-completed by Pupils. On one occasion a Pupil with a physical disability required assistance to complete the questionnaire.

Focus group interviews took place in 7 of the 17 schools that were involved in the questionnaire with the Pupils. In total 43 of Year 12 students were involved in focus groups, 18 of whom were Grammar School Pupils and 25 were Secondary school Pupils, 24 were boys and 19 were girls. All of those involved had completed the questionnaire prior to the focus group so that they could reflect on some of the questions and early findings. As always, limits to confidentiality were outlined at the beginning of the interview and it was felt that focus group participants offered their opinions openly and honestly.

Teachers and Parents questionnaires were also self-completed and were administered by the Education Officer from ACCORD. 143 Teachers took part in the research from 10 of the 17 schools involved in the Pupils research. Information gained from a workshop with Teachers (N:17) was also used as a method to extrapolate ideas and confirm issues raised within questionnaires. The main thoughts of groups within the workshop are referred to within this report. 261 Parents whose children attend 6 of the 17 schools that took part in the Pupils research completed questionnaires. Anonymity and confidentiality were always stressed to all respondents throughout the data collection. It is hoped that as a result of the Education Officer being seen to administer and collect the questionnaires, that this would assure respondents that their answers would remain anonymous and so enhance the validity of answers.

Limitations

Survey findings are always dependent upon the honesty of the respondents completing the questionnaires. The use of a larger sample size would have been ideal. However, it may not have yielded different results. Focus groups were a useful tool in checking the validity of answers via the perception of respondents. Throughout the report focus group comments are added to statistical findings so that meaning and depth are added.

The findings presented below are pertinent to Catholic Pupils, their Parents and Teachers attitudes, beliefs and experiences.



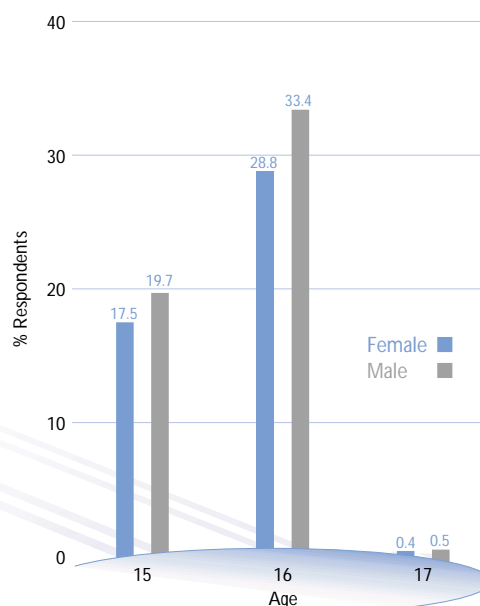
FINDINGS WITH PUPILS



Profile of Respondents

In total 748, Year 12 Pupils in Catholic Post Primary Schools completed the survey. At the time of the survey, the majority (62%) were aged 16, 37% were 15 and 1% were 17. There were slightly more males (54%) than females (46%) in this sample. The age and gender profile of the respondents is illustrated below;

Age and Gender profile



19% of the sample were Grammar School Pupils, 75% attended Secondary School and 6% attended a Comprehensive School. As only one Comprehensive School was included in the survey, findings could be attributed to that school if broken down by school type. Therefore because of the small number of respondents attending a Comprehensive School, the results from these respondents are treated as Secondary School respondents throughout this report. On this basis, 19% of the sample are Grammar School respondents and 81% of the sample are Secondary School respondents.

84% of the sample mainly lived with both Parents, 13% mainly lived with their mother only, 2% mainly lived with their father and a small number lived with grandparents, Foster Parents or guardians. Of those who did not have both Parents living with them most of the time 17% are Grammar School Pupils and 83% are Secondary School respondents, similar to the overall sample.



A relatively even proportion of respondents came from the countryside (27%), the town, (35%), and the city (28%). There were also high numbers of young people who lived in houses that were owner occupied (72%). 20% of young people lived in rented housing and 8% were unsure whether their house was rented or owned by the adults that they mainly live with.

Statements and Expressions about Self

Questions were posed to Pupils in order to gauge their self-esteem. Overall, the findings suggest that young people have mixed feelings about themselves. For instance 97% felt that they have a number of good qualities and 94% indicated that they felt that they are able to do most things as well as others. However, less Pupils (69%) indicated that they have a positive attitude towards themselves and (44%) highlight that they wished that they had more respect for themselves. Although fewer Pupils, (22%) agreed with the statement 'I am inclined to feel that I am failure'. No considerable differences between those and Pupils with lower academic abilities were highlighted. For example of lower ability Pupils 80% indicated that they like themselves and 92% indicated that they felt most people who know them like them.

On reviewing these issues on the basis of whether the respondents were Grammar or Secondary School Pupils, whether they lived in rented accommodation or were not living with both their Parents, results varied only slightly as the following table highlights;

	I wish I had more respect for myself. % AGREE	I am inclined to feel like a failure. % AGREE
Sample overall	44%	22%
Grammar	45%	26%
Secondary	44%	21%
Not living with both Parents	40%	24%
Living in rented accommodation	42%	16%

Therefore, on the basis of the above findings, a slightly higher proportion of Grammar School Pupils tended to feel like a failure.

Pupils were asked to rate how embarrassed they are when given a compliment. In this survey 11% indicated that they are very embarrassed when they are given a compliment, 49% stated that they are embarrassed and 40% are not embarrassed. The following table details male and female differences in the level of embarrassment experienced;

	Very Embarrassed	Embarrassed	Not Embarrassed
FEMALES	6%	28%	12%
MALES	4%	22%	28%
TOTALS	11%	49%	40%

As the above table illustrates, males tended to be less embarrassed than females. When comparing these results between Secondary and Grammar School Pupils, a higher proportion of Secondary School Pupils (61%) tended to experience embarrassment than Grammar School Pupils of which 55% experienced embarrassment. With regards to those of lower academic abilities, 54% indicated that they get embarrassed when someone praises them. Therefore this is lower than 60% of Pupils from the overall sample indicating some level of embarrassment.

Therefore a higher proportion of Secondary School Pupils display a lack of confidence to accept

compliments. A higher proportion of Grammar School Pupils appear to be more dissatisfied with themselves i.e. they feel like a failure but are, however, more confident in accepting praise or compliments. The Grammar School respondents may have associated the statement about being a failure with academic work.

Respondents' views about their bodies were analysed. 40% (N:299) of the sample indicated that they disliked their bodies, of which a higher proportion were females (57%). Fewer (23%) disliked the way their bodies have changed.

Anger Management

The way in which Pupils communicate and resolve anger was suggested as an area that could be addressed within an RSE programme. The most common way that respondents indicated that they express anger is by shouting at the person that they are angry with (70%), this is followed by talking (56%). The table below shows how males and females communicate anger. As every incident is different, it was possible for respondents to indicate a number of ways they deal with anger:

Male/Female Responses to Managing Anger

When I am angry I usually:	MALES	FEMALES	TOTALS
Shout at the person I am angry with	37%	33%	70%
Talk to someone	26%	30%	56%
Hit something	33%	18%	51%
Say nothing to anyone	15%	12%	27%
Hit someone	14%	6%	20%

Over half (51%) express anger by hitting something. Higher proportions of males 'shout at the person', 'hit something' or 'hit someone' than females. Higher proportions of females tended to talk to someone. Over a quarter (27%) (N=202) indicated that at times they did not say anything and did not communicate their anger.

Beliefs and Values

Respondents were asked a number of questions so as to highlight their beliefs about God and their faith. The majority of respondents displayed a faith in God, illustrated by 92% believing God gave them talents, 87% agreed that God made them unique, and 95% indicated that they feel God loves them. 95% of respondents indicated that they prayed, of which 47% indicated that they prayed regularly. Similar proportions of Secondary School respondents and Grammar School respondents (5%) never prayed. Overall, the respondents displayed considerable faith and acknowledged that God is very much in their lives. However, a large proportion of respondents' views about sex and marriage are contrary to the Catholic Church's teachings.



When asked to agree or disagree with the statement: "Catholics should not have sex before marriage", 18% agreed, 60% disagreed and 22% were unsure. 31% felt that one did not need to be married before having children, and 12% were unsure. There were considerable differences in the

responses to these moral questions between those respondents who lived in the town, city and countryside as highlighted below;

Table illustrating % of those who Agreed

Statement	Of all City Pupils	Of all Town Pupils	Of all Country-side Pupils
I think couples should live together before they get married	70%	59%	46%
Couples can live together - there is no need to get married	56%	38%	39%

Respondents were asked if they thought that they would have sex before they are married. Although it is a hypothetical question, 68% felt that they would have sex before they are married, 10% disagreed and 22% were unsure. A slightly higher proportion of lower ability Pupils (75%) felt that they would have sex before marriage, 5% disagreed and 20% were unsure.

Conventional attitudes to living together before marriage were also explored in the survey. 56% agreed with the statement 'I think couples should live together before they get married'. Again a higher percentage (70%) of lower ability Pupils felt that couples should live together before they get married. Overall, 43% agreed with the statement; 'Couples can live together - there is no need to get married.'

However, young people in the survey did acknowledge the importance of marriage as being a sacrament and being important in their lives. 76% of respondents felt it was important to get married in a church rather than a registry office, the reasons given in focus groups were varied;

"It's more memorable, it's a big day and it just would feel right." (FG182)

"Well, you get married by church and by law." (FG183)

"You get a blessing from God when you get married in a Catholic Church." (FG184)

"It's class, it's a party." (FG287)

"It's traditional, white wedding." (FG388)

"It's the biggest day in a woman's life." (FG492) (M)

Many respondents felt that it was traditional and they received a blessing from God. Having a white wedding, in a church was the perceived way of 'doing things right'.

Respondents were asked to rate the importance of money, health, career, etc. to them. Having a happy marriage was rated as being most important by 87% of the 745 who answered the question, above money, career, health and practising their faith.

Following that was health, rated as being very important by 69% of respondents. The following table illustrates how respondents rated the importance of elements of life;

	Not Important	Important	Very Important
Happy marriage	1%	12%	87%
Good health	3%	28%	69%
Good career	12%	52%	37%
Practising faith	19%	51%	30%
A nice house	25%	59%	16%
Plenty of money	42%	49%	9%

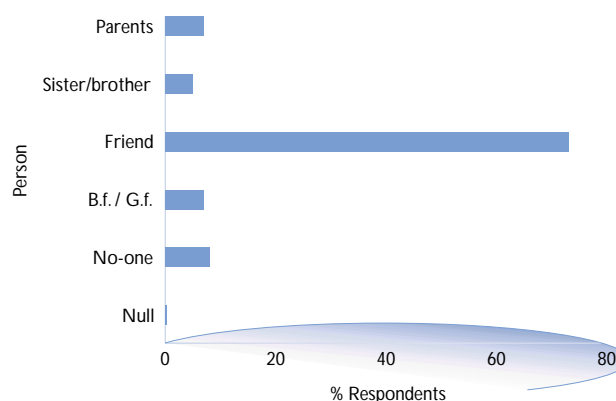
There was relatively little difference between male and female responses to the above questions. Thus young people in this survey believed that a happy marriage was the most important aspect of life in comparison to health, careers and material possessions.

Communication and Relationships

Communication with Others

Almost all respondents (92%) indicated that they talk to someone about sexuality and relationships. As could be expected, most respondents (73%) talk to their friends about these issues. However a small number, 8%, indicated that they do not talk to anyone about sexuality and relationships. The following graph illustrates the people respondents talk to about sexuality and relationships;

Confidants of Young People about Relationships and Sexuality



Importantly respondents were asked have they **always** a caring adult to talk to if they are worried about something. 22% (N:166) of young people indicated that they do not **always** have a caring adult to talk to (There was little difference in the above figure when socio-economic groups, Grammar / Secondary , academic ability and family make-up was examined.)



Although the majority of Pupils in this survey **always** have a caring adult to talk to, over half (56%) of all respondents felt that sometimes they could not talk to anyone about the way they feel.

Of the 78% that stated that they had a caring adult to talk to, 85% indicated

that it was a Parent, 5% indicated that this person was a sister, 4% a friend and 3% an aunt. Other 'caring adults' named were cousins, or other family members, Teachers (N:4), a priest (N:1) and a counsellor (N:1).

Relationship with Family

Overall very few young people expressed any indication that they were unhappy with their family, irrespective of the make-up of their family. Almost 81% of all Pupils indicated that they were happy with their family most of the time and 18% indicated that they were happy with their family sometimes. Only 1% indicated that they were never happy with their family. A high number of respondents (99%) respect (most or some of the time) their Parents, appreciate (99.7%) their Parents and recognise their Parents love for them (99%). 83% indicated that they regularly help with chores, and of the 17% respondents, who do not regularly help with chores, 5% were females and 12% were males. Lower ability students concurred with the above findings as 97.7% indicated that they are happy with their family most, or some, of the time.

Although respondents displayed positive feelings towards their Parents, many (68%) found it difficult to talk to their Parents about sex and relationships. Of the 68% who found it difficult to discuss sex and relationships with their Parents, 60% were males and 40% were females. 16% of all those surveyed indicated that they would like to talk more to their Parents about sex. Within focus group discussions it was clear that for many respondents, the experience of discussion with Parents about sex was disconcerting:

"I think it is stupid, because your friends have already talked about it, and sure at school they do it so what is the point in your Parents talking about it." (FG730) (M)

"There is always a certain amount of awkwardness." (FG731) (F)

"I find it harder to talk to Daddy especially when you're the youngest!" (FG132) (F)

"If you asked your Parents, it's a bit embarrassing..." (FG133) (F)

As a result of strained conversations with Parents, respondents indicated that 'now it's too late'. Many of the respondents in focus groups suggested that conversations of this nature should begin at an earlier age (such as 11) and contributes to communication at later stages of adulthood between Parents and children:

"My Ma gave me a book and we talked about it because I was always close to her and I would be open." (FG546) (M/F)

"My mother is great, I can talk to her and my Godfather about anything, it wasn't a sit down talk, it was over a period of time." (FG236) (M)

Communication problems about sex and relationships is evidenced by the findings that 78% have not discussed the Catholic Church's teaching about sex and sexuality with their Parents even though 83% indicated that at least **one** of their Parents or guardians is a practising Catholic.

When respondents were asked, "My Parent(s)/Guardian(s) believe sex before marriage is wrong for me", 38% indicated yes, 17% indicated no and 45% were unsure. Therefore, it appears that the issue of sex is not been discussed by Parents with their children and the Catholic Church's teaching (doctrine) prohibiting sex before marriage is either not concurred with, or not being clearly discussed by a large majority of Parents.

Only 17% of Pupils not living with both Parents indicated that their Parent/Guardian believes sex before marriage is wrong for them, 24% disagreed and 59% were unsure, thus highlighting that this group may need further guidance.

The table below clearly illustrates the differences in the level of practising Catholic Parents or guardians in towns, the countryside and city areas and the impact this has on young peoples' perception of their Parents' wishes for them:

Questions	Of all City Pupils YES	Of all Town Pupils YES	Of all Country Side Pupils YES
My Parent/Guardian(s) believe sex before marriage is wrong for me	28%	31%	52%
I have talked to my Parents about the Catholic Church's teaching about sex and /or sexuality	24%	20%	21%
At least one of my Parent(s)/guardian(s) is a practising Catholic	69%	82%	94%

The above table suggests that even though the majority of Parents are practising Catholics this alone does not result in them discussing the Catholic Church's teaching about sex and /or sexuality with their child. However a higher proportion of their children perceive that their Parents believe sex before marriage is wrong for them.

During focus groups attitudes to sex before marriage were discussed. Some suggested that the Catholic Church's teachings relating to this issue are important but are not adhered to:

"Parents have talked about things, but it is more like do what I say not do what I do." (FG172)

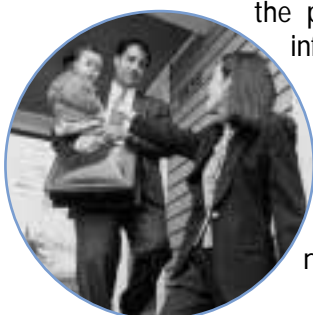
"It's your business, it doesn't matter." (Child before marriage) (FG175)

"The Catholic Church's teaching is important, and not important, because people will do it anyway!" (FG778)

"As long as you are in love, there should be no problem and some people don't agree. I don't know anyone who would like the Catholic Church's teaching about sex before marriage." (FG579)

Relationships with Brothers and Sisters

In order to gauge if respondents talked to their brothers or sisters about sex, sexuality or relationships, respondents with older brothers or sisters were focussed on. Of those who had older brothers or sisters, 24% indicated that they talked to them about sexual intercourse, 51% about relationships and 15% about their sexual orientation. A quarter of respondents discussed the physicality of relationships, hence siblings can be seen as a source of information for young people.



Relationship with Chaplain

12% of Pupils indicated that they had no Chaplain. Of those who have a Chaplain, 99% of Grammar School Pupils and 85% of Secondary School respondents have met their Chaplain.

Although 65% of respondents indicated that they could trust their School Chaplain, only 11% would go and see him or her if they were worried about something. With regards to contributing to R.S.E., nearly a quarter (24%) felt that their Chaplains should contribute to RSE.

Relationships with Friends

Young people in this survey were asked a number of questions about their friends. The majority of respondents suggested that they have positive relationships with their friends. For instance, 93% indicated that their friends are kind, 87% indicated that they can trust their friends, 82% feel that they can receive comfort from their friends. Importantly, 93% indicated that they are confident to express a different opinion from their friends. And in support of their previous answers, 95% of the respondents indicated that they tell their friends most things about their relationships.

However smaller proportions indicated that friends tended to pressurise them into dating (38%) or doing something that they knew was wrong (36%). 63 respondents (8%), of whom 56 are males and 7 are females indicated that they experienced pressure from their friends to have sex with someone. Therefore, although most of the respondents highlighted that they had good friendships, a significant proportion, as illustrated above, experienced pressure to 'fit in' or 'conform'. The influence of friends was also discussed within Pupils focus groups. Respondents were quick to point out that one 'needed to be strong' and it was acknowledged that friends can, and do, pressurise:

"A lot of ones would say there is no point in having a relationship after months whenever they haven't had sex." (FG1107) (F)

"Boys would say that they had when they hadn't." (FG1116) (F)

"Girls also pressurise you, some ask you are you a virgin." (FG1117) (M)

However some respondents believe that girls were not as blatant about their sexual behaviour:

"Girls would try and cover it up." (FG1114) (F)

Experience and Attitudes about Romantic Relationships

80% of respondents disagreed with the following statement: 'If I were drunk I would not go out with someone', thus questioning young people's knowledge and attitudes towards their own safety when drinking alcohol.

Confidence to 'ask people on dates' was questioned in the survey. 53% wished that they had more confidence to ask someone on a date, of this figure there were relatively equal proportions of females and males. When respondents were asked do they normally take a drug before asking someone on a date, 12% (of which 8% males) indicated that they do.

85% of the sample had dated and there were relatively little differences between males and females. Uncertainty about how far to advance physically was evident in the sample: 36% were unsure 'how far to go physically when dating someone' of which 64% were males.

Respondents were asked whether they had sexual intercourse. Of the 746 who answered this question, 29% indicated that they had sex, 12% were females and 17% were males. Findings from lower ability students indicated that 30% had sexual intercourse.

2% (N:16) were not sure whether they had sex or not. Their uncertainty could have been because of a lack of knowledge or because they had been drunk or drugged at the time.

Strikingly, 10% of lower ability students indicated that they were unsure of whether they had sex.

Some young people within focus groups suggested that there is pressure if you do not have sex:

"There is pressure from girls to have sex, never mind boys." (FG5104)

"you can get pressurized into having sex and you might be afraid he is going to leave you, and you might be really in love." (FG1106)

When reviewing the findings of this question in relation to where the respondents lived, it is apparent that higher proportion (42%) of Pupils living in cities have had sexual intercourse compared to 31% of those respondents who live in towns and 17% of those living in the countryside. The following quotation from a Pupil highlights one reason why lower proportions of young people from the countryside do not have sexual intercourse:

"More people from the town would have sex because they are about more, those from rural areas have nowhere to go and have to get lifts everywhere." (FG4123)

The proportion of those who have experienced sexual intercourse in this sample increased when examined in the light of family make-up i.e. of the 118 respondents who do not normally live with both Parents, 46% have had sexual intercourse.

Within focus groups the perception young people have about unprotected sex was explored. Some suggested that over 60% of young people would have unprotected sex as stated:

"60 –70% unprotected – would chance it." (FG6137)

"80% would go on ahead and use nothing." (FG1135)

Reasons given why young people would have unprotected sex are as follows:

"Boys believed that a girl wouldn't get pregnant if you withdrew." (FG5138)

"People take more of a risk with a drink". (FG5139)

"Pressure, and they know that they have had sex before and that is not going to happen to me." (FG5141)

"When you drink and that is about 90% of people and by that stage you just don't care." (FG5142)

A large proportion (51%) had talked to their boyfriend or girlfriend about sex but fewer (27%) had talked about their attitudes to sex before marriage.

Most of the respondents' experiences of relationships were short-term as the chart following illustrates.

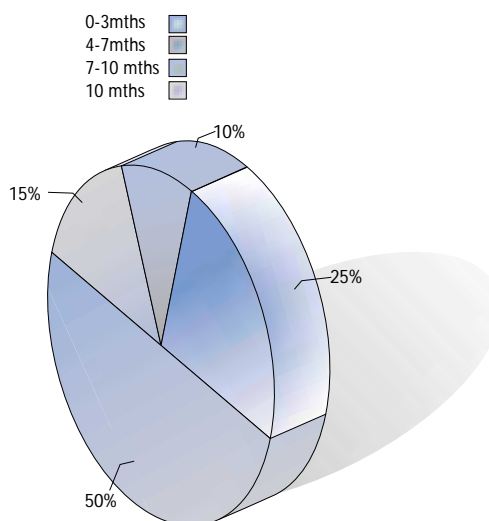
In total 25% of respondents had dated longer than 7 months. There were relatively few differences in the responses of males or females living in various areas.



Most of the respondents (56%) had dated less than 6 people, 20% had dated less than 11 and 10% had dated less than 16 people.

When the respondents were asked why they had dated someone on more than two occasions, the majority (95%) stated that they liked the other person. One notable finding was that 34% of respondents' reasons for dating someone was because they loved that person. The importance of boyfriend and girlfriend relationships is further highlighted when only 14% felt that they were too young to be 'going out with

Length of Longest Relationships of Respondents



someone steady'. In terms of the qualities the Pupils surveyed feel are important in long term relationships, the following table summarises findings;

	Important	Not Important	Unsure
Trust	93%	4%	3%
Caring	91%	5%	4%
Honesty	90%	5%	5%
Sensitivity	77%	13%	11%
Generosity	45%	39%	16%

The table above illustrates that in 'the longest relationship' they have ever had, trust, caring and honesty were important to those surveyed. The importance of honesty to the respondents is also illustrated by the finding that 87% feel that it is wrong to 'two-time' (date two people at the one time). 91% also feel that one should care about the person you are dating. This suggests that the respondents have certain principles within boyfriend and girlfriend relationships. This sense of responsibility was also supported with findings that indicated that when 'finishing with someone' i.e. ending a relationship, of the 550 respondents who answered this question, 45% told that individual in person. However a large number (21%) asked a friend to tell them. Only a small number (N:35) (6%) start dating others as a way of ending a current relationship.

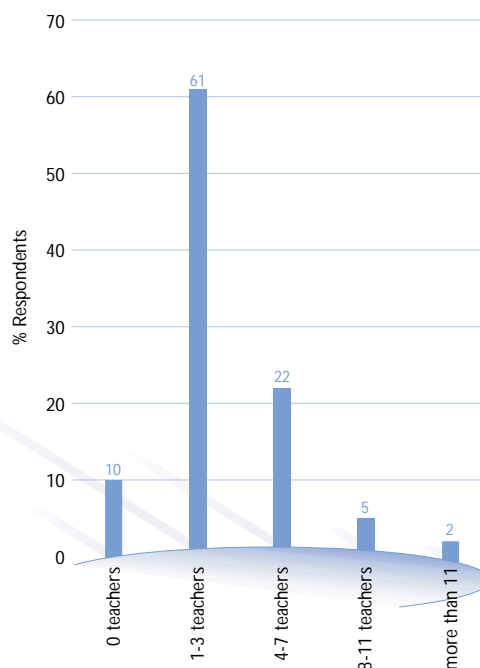
Contradictions between principles required by the respondents and the meaning of boyfriend and girlfriend relationships are highlighted in this survey. For instance, 48% of respondents agreed with the statement 'I feel that relationships now are just for fun', yet a large proportion of these respondents suggested that trust, caring and honesty are important in their relationships.

Relationship with Teachers and views about RSE

High numbers of respondents (89%) reported that they appreciated what their Teachers do for them, and 87% indicated that they respect most of their Teachers. However fewer (58%) felt that their Teachers cared about them.

Slightly higher proportions of Secondary School Pupils (90%) appreciated their Teachers, compared to 83% of Grammar School respondents. Interestingly, when lower ability Pupils were asked, "Do you like most of your Teachers", 74% indicated no.

Number of Teachers recognised as good at talking about relationships and sexuality



When respondents were asked to suggest the number of Teachers in the whole school who would be good at talking about relationships and sexuality, the graph above indicates that most Pupils (61%) could not identify more than 3 Teachers and 22% could not identify more than 7 Teachers.

Slightly higher proportions (76%) of Grammar School students indicated that less than 3 Teachers in their school were good at talking about sexuality and relationships compared to 69% of Secondary School Pupils.

Respondents were asked had they been taught about communication skills, anger management and coping skills. A high proportion (66%) indicated that they had discussed communication skills in school, however 24% were unsure. Anger management and coping skills were not readily recognised as being taught in school as 24% indicated that they had discussed anger management and only 30% had recognised being taught about coping skills.



Respondents were asked had they been given enough time to talk about relationships and sexuality in school. 57% of Grammar School respondents and 48% of Secondary School respondents indicated that they had not been given enough time to talk about sexuality and relationships in school. Young people's experience of RSE was discussed in focus groups. Most young people felt that sex education should be introduced earlier because it overcomes embarrassment and a young person needs to know basic facts:

"P7 / 1st year need to start it, because you need it before you start big school, you need a little know how." (FG438) (M)

"Parents can give the best advice because they know you best. If they give a talk at an early age then you can talk about relationships properly and about other issues." (FG239) (M)

"My Da started at 10, 11 discussing facts about sex and could have explained it a bit better, but there was no embarrassment." (FG5420) (M)

It was suggested that it would be important to discuss everything relating to sex, sexuality and relationships;

"If they are going to tell you how to do it, then you need to know about how to be safe." (FG522)

"Safe sex, don't go on about it, but how a child can change your life, and sexually transmitted diseases." (FG625)

"They don't talk about the emotional side of things." (FG55)

"Sexually transmitted diseases, teenage pregnancies, relationship builders." (FG56)

"The whole thing about relationship failure, we need to do stuff on that because I have a friend and she is very cut up about stuff." (FG114)

Interviewees mentioned good RSE experiences. The qualities they said were important for those who delivered RSE were:

"Just able to ask questions, ... opportunity to talk." (FG527)

"She can be very cross, you know you wouldn't be cheeky with her or test her (Childcare course Teacher)... she likes to get people involved." (FG256)

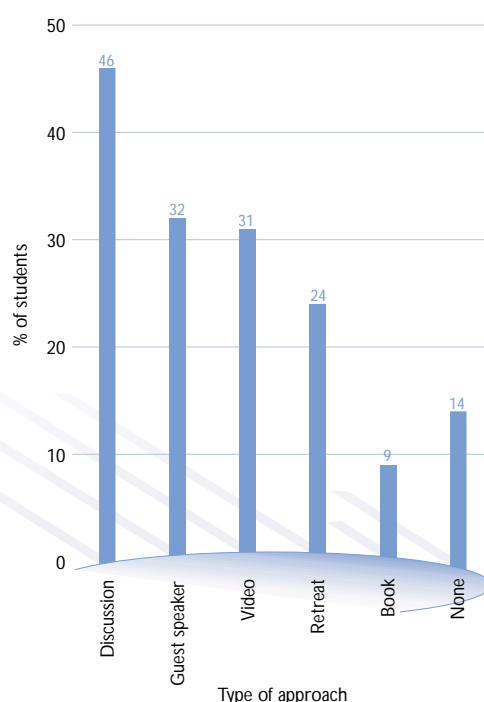
"Need someone who doesn't talk down to you." (FG565)

"Younger, need to be a good listener, and someone you could trust." (FG147)

The problems as young people pointed them out were too much focus on discipline in form class (50), little detail, (52, 56, 61, 62, 69) embarrassment of the Teacher (59,67, 68), personal opinions not taken on board (66) and bias (70, 71).

The following graph illustrates the type of resources and methods of delivering RSE that they had enjoyed.

Resources / Teaching methods enjoyed by Students



Of those (59%) who had been shown a video related to sexuality and relationships, 47% rated the video as 'ok', 33% rated the video shown as good to very good, 20% rated them as poor to very poor. Therefore it is apparent that Pupils prefer discussions or guest speakers, and it appears that most young people feel that the videos they are shown are average.

When the responses relating to Grammar and Secondary School Pupils are reviewed, both Grammar and Secondary School Pupils in this research preferred discussions. The following table outlines the percentage of Pupils who enjoyed the following resources:

	Grammar	Secondary
Discussion with Teacher	46%	46%
Video	36%	30%
Guest Speaker	25%	33%
Book	15%	10%
Retreat	44%	20%
None	12%	14%

A larger proportion (44%) of Grammar School respondents enjoyed retreats and a higher proportion (33%) of Secondary School respondents enjoyed guest speakers. Pupils therefore preferred discussions, rather than a didactic approach. It must be noted that each respondent's experience of a resource is dependent on environmental factors and the calibre of the person delivering or facilitating discussions or retreats.

Respondents were asked had they been taught in school about a number of subjects as outlined in the table following;

TOPIC	Yes	No	Unsure
Natural Family planning	54%	30%	16%
The Pill	68%	27%	5%
Using condoms	73%	23%	4%
Abstinence	27%	37%	36%
Sexually Transmitted Diseases	89%	8%	3%

It appears that most schools have discussed the above topics. The term abstinence was not readily recognised by respondents and it is probable that many of them have been taught about this in school. When asked would they like to discuss issues regarding sex and sexuality in school just over a fifth (28%) would like to discuss more issues.



Knowledge of and Attitudes about Sex and Sexuality

Respondents' knowledge of and attitudes about sex and sexuality were explored in the survey. 16% did not know, or were unsure of the meaning of the term homosexuality. 46% did not know, or were unsure of, the meaning of the term heterosexuality and 21% were unsure, or did not know the meaning of, the term bisexuality.

Respondents were asked to explain the differences between bisexual, heterosexual and homosexual. It is clear from extracts from the questionnaires that respondents are ambiguous about the different types of sexuality and the meaning of the terms.

In focus groups females tended to be more tolerant and understanding of homosexuals than males. When asked whether the respondents had discussed the different types of sexual orientation in school, 68% were unsure or had not discussed homosexuality, 77% were unsure or had not discussed heterosexuality and 83% were unsure or had not discussed bisexuality. It is probable that the respondents were taught about heterosexuality but did not recognise the term. It is impossible to conclude whether respondents were taught about bisexuality or homosexuality because their interpretations of the terms were unclear in the questionnaires. When asked about their own sexual orientation, 5% indicated that they were not clear about their own sexual orientation. 34% had discussed their sexual orientation with someone, the majority 27% had discussed their sexual orientation with a friend. Only 1% (N:8) had discussed their sexuality with a Parent.

The following table outlines responses given by Pupils surveyed about a range of moral statements.

	Agree	Disagree	Not Sure
Married couples should not use artificial contraception	17%	67%	16%
Masturbation is a sin	7%	71%	22%
Homosexual acts are wrong	35%	43%	22%
Direct abortion is always wrong	69%	19%	12%

Of those who disagreed with the statement, "direct abortion is always wrong," 58% were males, thus highlighting there were no huge gender differences in attitudes about abortion. There is little difference in attitudes to abortion between Secondary and Grammar Pupils or those from lower academic abilities. However there are some differences in attitudes to abortion among Pupils living in the countryside, town or city, as shown below:

	Agree	Disagree	Unsure
Direct abortion is always wrong (Overall)	69%	19%	12%
Direct abortion is always wrong (City)	76%	16%	8%
Direct abortion is always wrong (Town)	63%	20%	17%
Direct abortion is always wrong (Countryside)	66%	21%	13%

As the table above indicates, approximately 1/5 of respondents from the countryside disagree that direct abortion is wrong. The highest level of uncertainty was by respondents who lived in towns. The reasons given by young people why they feel abortion is wrong were discussed in focus groups:

"It's a waste of life." (FG6127)

"No child should be killed, you're killing something precious." (FG1128)

However not all respondents were certain and the reasons for their uncertainty are as follows:

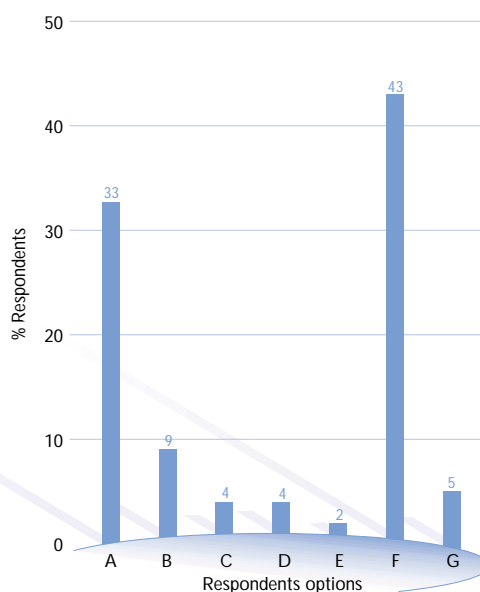
"But I don't know how I would feel or how they feel, I'm against it but I don't know how they feel." (FG1129)

"If you are raped there might be a case." (FG5129)

Respondents were asked a hypothetical question about abortion. They were asked;

"If a friend of yours, aged 15, became pregnant and wanted to have an abortion, would you?"
The following graph highlights how the respondents perceive how they would react.

Prompted Options When a Friend Wants to Have an Abortion



A high percentage of respondents indicated that they would advise their friend to see a professional (43%). Other than that, 33% indicated that they would try and talk her out of it.

In order to gauge respondents' knowledge, they were asked " Are there certain times of the month when a woman is more likely to get pregnant?" 86% agreed that there were times of the month that a woman was more likely to get pregnant, 7% disagreed and 7% were unsure. There were no notable differences in responses from genders or from school types. However lower ability Pupils illustrated the greatest level of uncertainty, as 45% were unsure whether there are certain times in the month when a woman is likely to get pregnant.

With regards to the statement ' Men change only in physical ways during puberty', 72% disagreed with this statement. However, there are notable differences between Grammar and Secondary School responses to this question:

Men change only in physical ways during puberty:

	Agree	Disagree	Not sure
Grammar	15%	79%	6%
Secondary	20%	70%	10%

Respondents were asked were they worried about the changes in their bodies during puberty. A high proportion (48%) indicated that they were worried, thus highlighting the need for more knowledge and confidence to communicate their worries.

FINDINGS WITH PARENTS



Profile of Respondents

A total of 261 Parents whose children attend a range of Grammar, and Secondary, co-ed and single sex schools completed a short questionnaire about their attitudes to RSE. The questionnaire also asked questions about their own beliefs and values (Appendix C).

67 Parents did not indicate whether they were male or female: 140 mothers and 54 fathers completed the survey. Therefore it is difficult to make conclusive remarks about the differences between fathers or mothers attitudes.

Attitudes about the Provision of Relationship And Sexuality Education in School

69% of the 258 Parents who answered the question, felt RSE is very important, 30% felt it is important and only one Parent indicated that it was not important.

The majority (95%) of Parents in this survey indicated that their child's school should teach their child about relationships, sexuality and sexual intercourse. Many indicated that information from school supports Parents and prepares their children for life;

"It supports the viewpoints and arguments given by Parents." (0401) & (1035).

It was suggested that young people will *"benefit from a combined effort from school and home"* (1301) and it is important that Pupils are given facts and not solely *'street talk'* (1328). It was generally indicated that the more information given, the better for the young people (1005), (0425), (1308), (A0332), (1631) & (0423).

Parents also pointed out that their children benefit from debating these issues in a classroom situation, because they may be less embarrassed and more willing to ask questions;

"A mature and open peer group discussion is essential for their well-being." (A312)

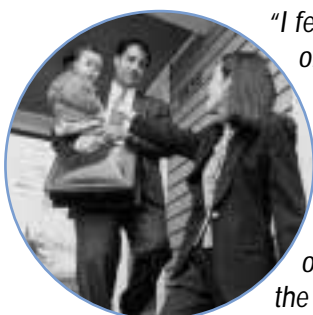
"Pupils may find it easier to talk in a group situation" (0101) and "less embarrassing." (1032).

"It's good to receive this information in their peer group.. puts it in context." (0122)

"More open and confident when in a classroom situation than on 1 to 1 at home. May ask questions would not ask at home." (1603)

Other Parents (0135), (0160) and (1611) shared the above perspectives.

Parents indicated that they felt that their children would be more comfortable at school discussing the subject (0124) (0125) (0156) (0157) (A309) and less embarrassed:



"I feel it would be beneficial for her sex education as my daughter would 'shrug me off' and would seem embarrassed, whereas in the class she would maybe feel at ease more." (0104) & (0102).

"I feel that it would be very beneficial from the point of view that some Parents do find it difficult to talk to their children about sex. Sometimes it is hard to face the fact that a son or daughter is growing up, but I think that the number of teenage pregnancies is in itself proof that children need to be taught about the subject at school." (1027)

Parents suggested that Teachers are better at providing RSE because they are trained (1010), (1003), more capable of answering awkward questions and because young people listen to them:

"I feel that Teachers are able to handle awkward questions easier and there is less embarrassment." (0410) (A303)

"I think a Pupil may listen to a Teacher better than a Parent." (0416) (0150) (0148) (A320)

"joint effort, a teenager may talk to a Teacher more easily than a Parent." (0106)

Areas that Parents felt should be covered in R.S.E. at school are outlined below:

"Issues like sex before marriage, teenage pregnancies, STD's could be usefully debated in group situations." (0430)

"Emphasis should be put on relationships and possibly the risks of casual sex." (0432), (1039), (1040), (0433, (1004), (1030), and (1005).

When respondents were asked did they get enough information about what is taught in R.S.E. lessons from their child's school, 70% indicated that they did not. Parents stated that they would like to be consulted about the development and the content of R.S.E. programmes in schools (1640), (0137), (0142) and (1643).

One Parent highlighted that it would be important to teach RSE in an appropriate and sensitive way;

"As long as it was dealt with sensitively offering lots of opportunity to discuss/argue etc." (A322)

A minority of Parents indicated that Parents only should teach R.S.E.;

"It should be left to Parents to explain it their own way." (1016)

"It should be confidential." (1024)

"Role of Parent." (0130)

Therefore, the benefits of schools offering RSE would be that Parents feel it offers teenagers an opportunity to discuss issues with their peers, ask questions and talk as opposed to home where they may be too embarrassed. The provision of correct information in school was seen as a benefit as it will have a positive impact on young people.

The majority of Parents (94%) indicated that they also would like their child's school to teach about safe sex.

Those Parents who did not think that RSE should be taught in school stated that it was solely the role of the Parents.

Relationship with their child

When asked which Parent talks to their children about sex and relationships, it was indicated that 70% of solely mothers talk to their child, 16% of fathers and mothers, 6% of solely fathers, 3% others and 5% no-one. In terms of how often sex and sexuality is discussed, 46% stated often and 54% seldom.

78% of Parents stated that they would like to talk more to their son / daughter about sex, sexuality and relationships and the same number would be interested in attending at least one information session about how to talk to their children about sex, sexuality and relationships.

When asked do they feel that their child respects them, 87% feel that they did most of the time, and 13% feel that they respect them sometimes. No one indicated that they feel their child never respects them. This concurs with findings from the Pupils' research.

77% feel that their child appreciates the things that they do for them most of the time and 23% felt that it was some of the time. None of the Parents surveyed indicated that they feel that their child never appreciates them.

When Parents were asked how often they tell their child that they love them, of the 255 who answered the question, 61% indicated most of the time, 36% sometimes, and 3% never.

The majority (94%) of Parents in the survey indicated that they are practising Catholics. However 51% had not discussed the Catholic Church's teaching about sex and marriage. The reason why there may be little discussion about the Catholic Church's teaching could be linked to their knowledge of the area or difficulty encountered in talking to their child about sex and relationships.

Parents' morals and values

It was important to gauge adult attitudes about a range of moral issues. Parents were asked to indicate whether they agreed, disagreed, or were unsure about the following:

	Agree	Disagree	Not sure
Sex before marriage is wrong	38%	35%	27%
Marriage is a lifetime commitment	87%	7%	6%
Homosexual acts are wrong	49%	22%	29%
Direct abortion is always wrong	72%	13%	15%
Married couples should not use artificial contraception	11%	72%	17%
I think couples should live together before they get married	24%	37%	39%
I believe sex before marriage is wrong for my son or daughter	40%	24%	36%

From the above findings it is apparent that there is uncertainty about whether sex before marriage is appropriate for their child, or that couples should live together before marriage. The perception that marriage is for a lifetime remains important among Parents. Within marriage most (72%) of the Parents surveyed felt that artificial contraception could be used.



FINDINGS WITH TEACHERS



PROFILE OF TEACHERS

151 Teachers from 8 Secondary and 2 Grammar Schools completed a questionnaire to assess their attitudes, and values about relationship and sexuality education (See Appendix D). 35% were males and 65% females. 50% taught in co-ed schools, 36% in all girl schools and 14% in all boy schools. The whole staff of one all girl school took part in the survey as compared to smaller numbers of Teachers in other schools, thus explaining the higher numbers of Teachers teaching in all girl schools. The majority N=40 taught science or a science subject and 22 taught R.E. In total 35% had taught R.S.E. in science, 47% had taught R.S.E. in R.E. and 35% had taught R.S.E. in P.H.S.E. / form class. The majority of Teachers (67%) had been teaching for over 15 years.

Attitudes About Teaching R.S.E.

Teachers were asked as a starting point whether they felt R.S.E. is important. Only one Teacher indicated that they felt it was not important. The majority, 84% felt that it was very important and the same number of Teachers felt that they could make a positive contribution to Pupils' R.S.E. 27 Teachers were reluctant to teach R.S.E., of which 22% had taught RSE in PHSE, 41% in Science and 37% in RE. The confidence of Teachers who taught R.S.E. in P.H.S.E, in R.E. and /or in science, is illustrated in the tables below:

RSE in:	Not Confident	Confident	Very Confident	TOTAL
P.H.S.E.	20%	61%	19%	100%
Science	22%	62%	16%	100%
R.E.	26%	48%	25%	100%

Overall 80% of Teachers who taught RSE in P.H.S.E. were confident, compared to 78% of science Teachers and 73% of RE Teachers.

Reasons given for lack of confidence are indicated below;

"No training." (1003) (1006) (0203)

"As I am a young newly qualified Teacher I find it difficult to decide what approach to use at times." (1703)

"I feel necessary skills need to be developed." (1710)

"I have had very little experience in this subject and would not be confident." (0809)

"I taught it once and realised I was not the right person so I asked to be excused from this." (0129)

In summary, the above Teachers suggest that the reason for a lack of confidence is because of youth, lack of experience or in some cases a personal disposition to teach the subject. However having a youthful outlook and being open were identified as being a positive quality:



"I feel my youth has an advantage. The Pupils tend to open up to me if they sense that I am comfortable and confident (mature) about sexual issues." (0203)

The following quotation from a Teacher indicates that a great deal of confidence is a necessity:

"A Teacher must have a greater degree of this to put students at ease, make **them** (Pupils) less embarrassed." (1007)

Teachers were asked whether they were very uncomfortable, uncomfortable or comfortable talking about various aspects related to R.S.E. The following table illustrates the results.

How you feel when:	Comfortable	Uncomfortable	Very Uncomfortable
Teaching about heterosexual relationships	85%	10%	5%
Using sexual terms	79%	19%	2%
Teaching about natural family planning	76%	17%	7%
Teaching about artificial contraception	75%	18%	7%
Teaching about sexual intercourse	74%	19%	7%
Teaching about homosexual relationships	59%	33%	8%
Teaching about bisexual relationships	50%	40%	10%

The above table illustrates that Teachers find it easier to teach about heterosexual relationships (85%), natural family planning (76%) and artificial contraception (75%). However there is apparent discomfort in teaching about bisexual relationships (50%) and homosexual relationships (41%). 79% are also comfortable when using sexual terms and 74% are comfortable when teaching about sexual intercourse.

The following table illustrates the difference between P.H.S.E., R.E. and Science Teachers' level of comfort when using sexual terms:

RSE in:	Not Comfortable	Comfortable	Very Comfortable	TOTAL
P.H.S.E.	87%	11%	2%	100%
Science	85%	13%	2%	100%
R.E.	78%	19%	3%	100%

R.E. Teachers tended to show more discomfort when using sexual terms and P.H.S.E. Teachers indicated that they were the most comfortable.

The survey findings suggest that a substantial percentage of Teachers experience anxiety when delivering RSE. For instance, 28% indicated that they are afraid that Pupils would ask them personal questions and 44% are concerned about Parents' criticisms when teaching RSE. 41% feel that there is a personal cost to them when teaching RSE and it was acknowledged by Teachers' comments in the RE workshop that this was an essential part of effective delivery of RSE:

"There is an investment in self, however that investment is invaluable to the relationship between Pupil and Teacher." (Group3)

The workshop also pointed out that there should be greater co-operation between Parents and Teachers. In this survey Teachers supported these statements when 93% agreed that there should be greater co-operation:

"Parents should be involved in planning an RSE Programme from Year 8." (Group 1)

When asked about the qualities a Teacher needs in order to teach RSE effectively, many respondents suggested clear guidelines: training, communication, empathy, openness, confidence and listening skills (their comments are summarised below):

"More knowledge on young peoples' attitudes, specific training on presenting information, ways of dealing with Pupils' variety of experiences of life." (0131)

"Genuine desire to help/care for students." (1001)

"Communication i.e. terminology, dealing with Pupils/Parents who refuse to take part." (1002) (1704) (0807)

"Sensitivity of needs and children/Pupils' starting point." (1004)

"Dealing with group activities, communicating choice and exercises about improving self-esteem." (1005) (1003)

"Self confident, knowledgeable about the subject, a good listener." (1706) (0806)

"Know the topic and have the confidence not to be too embarrassed." (1709)

"Approach matters delicately." (0201)

"More guidelines of what should be taught and knowledge about the most effective delivery to Pupils." (0209) (1010) (0814)

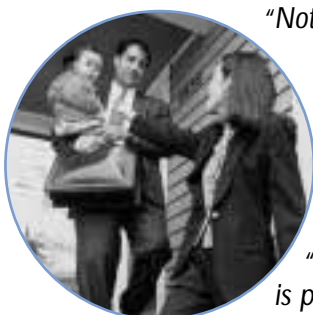
"Sensitive, awareness that the subject causes embarrassment and use rules when teaching topic using correct scientific names and encourage Pupils to take the subject seriously." (0210)

"Standard facts so that I am teaching exactly the same as my colleagues are teaching." (0817)

"Honesty and openness and ability to listen." (0818) (1701)

Teaching Needs

70% of Teachers surveyed felt that there was very little guidance relating to what is taught in R.S.E. The majority (66%) felt that resources currently used in the subject were out-of-date, in particular visual resources (75%). Overall resources in particular schools were deemed by 62% as being inappropriate. Reasons for current resources inappropriateness were given as follows;



"Not enough up-to-date resources (1003) (0205) or age specific." (1702)

"Room for expansion in some multi-media format." (1006)

"In video material there is too much talking direct to the camera. More varied material would help maintain student interest." (1009)

"The text book in science demonstrates the physical act but no moral discussion is promoted or relationships issues discussed." (1010)

“Current teenage television programmes do not support the Catholic Church’s teaching. Therefore to counteract this we should produce interesting relevant resources.” (1701).

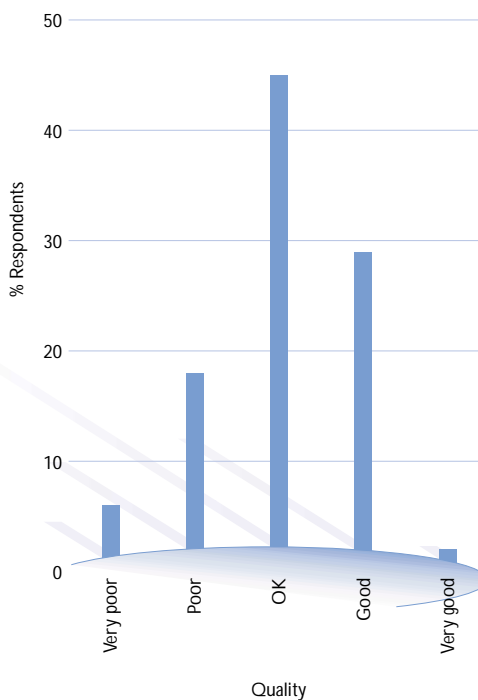
“Videos are boring although they should not be explicit.” (1709)

“Relying on outdated text books from the South.” (0203)

“They tend to be focussed on heterosexual issues.” (0203)

In summary it was commented that they were out-of-date, not always applicable to the age group and not comprehensive in terms of discussing a range of issues such as homosexual relationships or not relevant in terms of being supportive of the Catholic Church’s teaching. However when asked how they viewed the quality of R.S.E. as is currently being taught in their own school, 29% indicated that it was good and 2% indicated it was very good, the following diagram illustrates the results;

Perceived Quality of RSE being taught in schools



As the above diagram illustrates, most Teachers felt that the quality of RSE delivered in their own schools was average to good. With regards to the approach taken to teach RSE, 79% indicated that it should be taught by a core-team, 15% by all form Teachers as part of P.S.H.E. and just 6% indicated that R.E. and Science departments only should teach RSE. Some respondents highlighted the benefits and draw-backs of using outside speakers for delivery of RSE;

“I do think outside speakers need to be used more often rather than subject Teachers. However Pupils need to become familiar with such people so that they feel comfortable and can trust such people.” (1002)

“Outside guest speakers and specialists in the field of RSE.” (1007)

The following comment made by a Teacher states that the most important part about the person delivering RSE is that:

"Only those who are most comfortable with it and those who relate best to Pupils." (0206)

When Teachers were asked would they be willing to take part in training, of the 147 Teachers who answered the question, 113 (77%) indicated that they would be willing to take part in RSE training. The following table outlines the type of training respondents would be willing to commit to:

Type of Training	% of Respondent
1-day in-service training delivered by RSE specialist (annually)	34%
8-10 (2 hourly) sessions delivered as part of an accredited course over 8-10 weeks	31%
2 half day in-service training delivered by RSE specialist (annually)	15%
6 (2 hourly) sessions delivered over 6 weeks	12%

In the survey different issues were proposed as possible training topics. The following table illustrates the percentage of respondents interested in these topics:

Training Topic	% interested Teachers
In-depth information about psycho-sexual development	57%
Teaching Pupils about creating and sustaining healthy relationships	89%
Teaching Pupils how to cope with difficulties like loss, disappointment, betrayal	85%
How best to talk to Pupils about sex and sexual issues	87%
Information about Sexually Transmitted Diseases	75%
Best use of R.S.E. resources	48%
Strategies for teaching R.S.E.	77%
Establishing boundaries and dealing with personal/ sensitive issues when teaching R.S.E	70%
Strategies and resources for teaching Pupils about communication skills	64%
Strategies and resources for teaching Pupils about conflict resolution	64%
Strategies to help Pupils grow in Self-awareness	79%
Strategies to help Pupils grow in Self-esteem	93%
Effective strategies and resources for teaching Pupils about the moral aspects of R.S.E	81%
Introducing Pupils to the Spiritual dimension of Sexuality and Relationships	64%
Information about the effects media has on Pupils' knowledge and values regarding R.S.E.	74%
Other training needs	6%

Other training needs are stated below;

“How the Catholic Church’s teaching on moral issues can be related to their daily lives today.” (1007)

“Female Pupils must be taught some superiority or ‘control’ in the field of relationships as they tend to want to remain dependent on the male species.” (1008)

“Dealing with issues like abortion and contraception.” (0811)

83% of respondents indicated that they would like Pupils’ workshops and 77% would like the provision of resources from ACCORD. 15% indicated that they would like other services as stated;

“Need more training regarding delivery of relationship topic – my main field is more biological at the moment.” (0156)

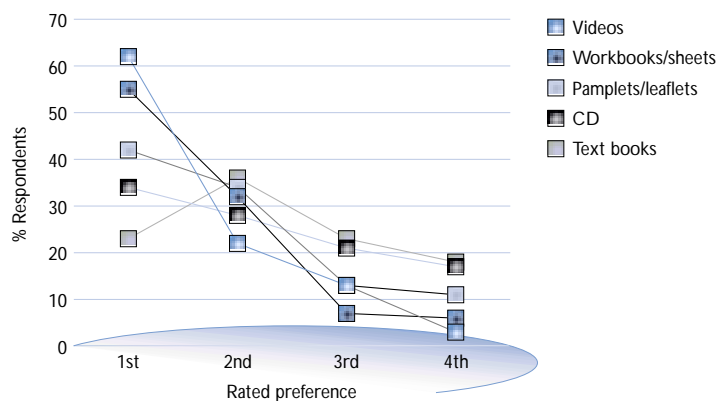
“In the area of being responsible for their own actions.” (0210)

“How to evaluate the work being done on RSE.” (1009)

“Teacher training on all specified training topics given.” (0617)

In order to establish the kind of resources required, respondents were asked to rate their preference of videos, text books, workbooks / work sheets, pamphlets / leaflets and CD roms. The following graph illustrates the results.

Preference of Respondents of Resource Types



Most of those surveyed preferred videos as the first choice, followed by worksheets and workbooks. Text books were the least preferred choice.

Respondents’ Attitudes and Values

94% (N:142) of those Teachers surveyed indicated that they were practising Catholics. In order to gauge current attitudes and perceptions of the Catholic Church’s teachings, Teachers were asked whether or not they concurred with all teachings. 71% indicated that they did not concur with some teachings. Some of these mentioned are as follows:

"I would not condemn people who live their own lifestyle." (1001) (1709)

"Priests marrying, living together before marriage." (1703)

"Cases for abortion." (1003)

"Homosexuality – leads to discrimination." (1005) (1705)

"Women should be allowed to become priests." (1007)

"Mass on Sunday / Saturday night which is the Sabbath? If it can change to Saturday why not Monday, Tuesday etc."

"Sex before marriage." (1010) (1703) (0201) (0205)

"Separation (1010) or Divorce." (1705)

"Contraception." (1707) (0201) (0205) (1509) (1009)

"Abortion / trial marriages." (1708)

Only 33% of those Teachers surveyed indicated that sex before marriage was wrong, 50% disagreed and 17% were unsure. However when asked to respond to the following statement; "I think couples should live together before they get married" 16% agreed, 38% were unsure and 46% disagreed with this statement. A high proportion of Teachers (88%) surveyed feel that marriage is a lifetime commitment. 11% indicated that married couples should not use artificial contraception.

With regards to homosexuality and abortion, 40% agreed that homosexual acts are wrong, 27% were unsure, and 33% disagreed. 74% agreed that direct abortion is always wrong, 15% are unsure and 11% disagreed.

It was interesting to note levels of uncertainty about these moral issues as it is possible that Pupils would question Teachers about their attitudes about homosexuality or abortion for instance. The following table illustrates the percentage of Teachers who were unsure whether they agreed or disagreed about the moral statements posed in the survey:

Statement	Unsure Responses
I think couples should live together before they get married	38%
Homosexual acts are wrong	27%
Sex before marriage is always wrong	17%
Direct abortion is always wrong	15%
Married couples should not use artificial contraception	14%



DISCUSSION



Throughout this research, Parents, Teachers and Pupils have consistently viewed RSE as being important. In the following section a number of issues and attitudes will be discussed so as to inform the development of a suitable RSE Programme.

Self Esteem, Coping and Communication

Young people illustrated contradictory images of themselves. For instance a high proportion (97%) indicated that they have a number of good qualities. However 44% wish that they had more respect for themselves. When reviewing results on the basis of where Pupils lived, where they attended schools and family make-up, no one distinguishable group could be highlighted as having low self-esteem. However, specific areas such as maintaining self-respect and addressing feelings of failure need to be focussed on in RSE. Respondents also indicated that they were worried about changes in their body during puberty thus suggesting a need for these changes to be discussed either within class or with a caring adult.

Possible contradictions exist in how Pupils view the meaning of relationships, i.e. that relationships are just for fun but yet value the qualities that are needed in relationships i.e. trust and caring.

Males were more likely to hit something, shout at someone or hit someone when angry. A higher proportion of females talked to the person they were angry with. 202 respondents indicated that at times they did not communicate their anger to anyone. The ability to communicate and deal with anger is an area that should be addressed within RSE Programmes and currently only 24% acknowledged that they were taught this within school. Although 66% were taught about communication skills, there appears to be a need for further work on developing young people's skills of understanding and communicating their feelings as 56% of respondents in this survey indicated that sometimes they cannot talk to anyone about the way they feel.

Almost ¼ indicated that they do not **always** have a caring adult to talk to about the way they feel. Would it be possible within a school environment to make available a caring adult, whom they can trust? Talking about feelings is an area that could be developed.

Morals and Belief in God

Belief in God and prayer is commonplace among Teachers, Parents and Pupils surveyed. However, not all of the Catholic Church's doctrines were agreed with. For instance 60% of respondents disagreed with the statement "Catholics should not have sex before marriage", 22% were unsure. 35% of Parents disagreed with the statement 'Sex before marriage is wrong' and 27% were unsure and 50% of Teachers disagreed with the statement and 17% were unsure. Alternatively, Pupils regarded marriage as being very important and the majority of Teachers and Parents agreed that it is a lifetime commitment. These illustrations highlight many of the findings that suggest that attitudes about sex and sexuality are changing, but the ethos of having and building stable and happy relationships within marriage have remained. Different attitudes and beliefs should be acknowledged so that healthy discussions could take place. The importance of discussion in school on these subjects is vital, given that there is little discussion about the Catholic Church's teaching and little discussion at home about current attitudes towards sex and sexuality.



Sexual intercourse

Overall nearly a third of the young people surveyed had experienced sexual intercourse. Higher proportions of those living in cities (42%) had sex, compared to town respondents (31%) and the countryside (17%). There is a need to inform young people about sex, STI's and contraception

before young people engage in sexual intercourse and, for over a third, especially in city areas this is before Year 12. This research has also shown Pupils' ambiguity about the meaning of the terms homosexual, heterosexual and bisexual. It is imperative that young people's knowledge is accurate and correct.

Within focus groups it was suggested that it is necessary to receive sex education in Year 8 or Year 9 as young people are informed about sex from other sources, like friends or the media.

Parents

Discussion between young people and their Parents appeared to be strained as 68% found it difficult to talk to their Parents about sex and sexuality. The difficulties experienced by Parents in discussing sex is evidenced in the findings that 78% of Pupils had not discussed the Catholic Church's teaching about sex and sexuality with their Parents and 78% of Parents would like to talk more to their son/daughter about sex and sexuality. The barriers to greater communication about sex and sexuality are Parents and young people's uneasiness and embarrassment when discussing the subject.

Young people within focus groups suggested that Parents should talk to their child about sex and sexual orientation at around 11 so that both Parents and children are not embarrassed and can discuss issues openly as the children get older. Overcoming embarrassment will be an important part of any programme designed for Parents.

Parents need clear guidance and information so that they can talk to their children about sex and sexuality and the Catholic Church's teaching on these issues, so that communication about these subjects can begin at an early age thus addressing embarrassment and uneasiness. Parents would also welcome consultation and involvement through the RSE programme delivered in schools and this could provide a stimulus for discussion and debate at home.

Friendships

Peer pressure is something that hasn't stopped and some respondents had actually experienced pressure from their friends to date someone. Pupils' personal strengths should be acknowledged and supported within RSE. Peer pressure is still prevalent and has influenced up to 38% of the sample. It is an issue that requires constant attention.

Teachers and teaching RSE

95% of Parents feel that RSE should be taught in school as it would be less embarrassing for their child, peer group input and healthy discussion could be fostered and they would receive correct information. Teachers agreed that it was important and that greater co-operation between Parents should take place. However the majority of Pupils felt that they had not been given enough time to discuss relationships and sexuality at school.

Although the work of Teachers is appreciated and Teachers are respected most, or some, of the time by 99% of respondents, the majority of respondents (61%) could not indicate more than 3 Teachers from the whole school who are good at talking about sex and sexuality. A further 22% could only identify between 4 and 7 Teachers.

Of those Teachers surveyed a small percentage indicated a lack of confidence and a reluctance to teach RSE. Confidence in teaching RSE with no embarrassment on behalf of the Teacher was indicated as being a prerequisite to teaching RSE effectively. Teachers stated that personal qualities such as empathy, genuine interest in Pupils' well-being and openness are important

qualities required of effective RSE Teachers, along with confidence, listening skills and knowledge which are all aspects that can be developed further.

Over 75% of Teachers would welcome training, and their need for training is exemplified by the fact that 41% of the Teachers surveyed indicated that they were uncomfortable or very uncomfortable about talking about homosexual relationships and 50% about bisexual relationships. 71% did not concur with all of the Catholic Church's teaching relating to sex, sexuality and relationships and a considerable proportion are unsure about their views on, for example, homosexuality, or sex before marriage. Thus, Teacher training should focus on confidence-building among Teachers so that they are equipped to answer a range of topic related questions, including questions about their own beliefs and values.

Therefore, Teachers and schools may need to re-examine how RSE is delivered and by whom but it must be noted that of all the resources used within RSE, Pupils enjoyed a discussion with their Teachers the most.

In summary, the survey has highlighted many needs of Pupils regarding their sexuality and relationships that can be addressed through an appropriate RSE Programme. However, as this study has pointed out, a programme in itself is not effective unless the person delivering it is equipped with adequate time, knowledge, professional and personal skills, so that RSE can make an important difference to young people's lives.



CONCLUSION



CONCLUSION

Most Parents believe that RSE in school can provide their children with a forum in which they can learn from others and express themselves within a safe and educational environment. In order for future RSE Programmes to be effective, it is necessary that current attitudes of Pupils to sex, sexuality and relationships are acknowledged and respected, so that young people can openly debate and communicate their views or, at times, their worries.

Therefore the challenge for RSE providers is not what to teach but how to deal with the diversity of attitudes and beliefs held by Parents, Teachers and Pupils about the Catholic Church's doctrines related to sex and sexuality. It is imperative that the diversity of attitudes and beliefs should not become a barrier.

Within this research it has been highlighted that young people believe in God and aspire to having a happy marriage. These fundamental beliefs provide a vantage starting point from which knowledge, attitudes and beliefs can be nurtured and built.



APPENDICES



APPENDIX A

Questionnaire for Lower Ability Pupils

1. Do you like yourself? (a) Yes
(b) No
-
2. Do most people who know you, like you? a) Yes
b) No
-
3. When someone praises you do you get embarrassed? (a) Yes
(b) No
-
4. If you are worried about something, do you always have a caring adult to talk to? (a) Yes
(b) No
-
5. Have you ever had sex? (a) Yes
(b) No
(c) Not sure
-
6. Do you like most of your Teachers? (a) Yes
(b) No
-
7. I am happy with my family (a) Most of the time
(b) Sometimes
(c) Never
-
8. Do you think that you will have sex before you are married? (a) Yes
(b) No
(c) Not sure

9. Do you think a couple should live together before they get married?
- (a) Yes
- (b) No
- (c) Not sure
-
10. Do you think abortion is always wrong?
- (a) Yes
- (b) No
- (c) Not sure
-
11. Are there certain times of the month when a woman is more likely to get pregnant?
- (a) Yes
- (b) No
- (c) Not sure
-
12. A condom will always stop a girl from getting pregnant?
- (a) True
- (b) False
- (c) Not Sure
-

APPENDIX B

Pupils' Questionnaire

Catholic Pupils' Attitudes and Beliefs About Relationship and Sexuality Education in Northern Ireland

DO NOT PUT YOUR NAME OR ANY OTHER IDENTIFYING MARK ON THIS SURVEY

IF YOU HAVE ANY FURTHER QUESTIONS PLEASE CONTACT THE
ACCORD EDUCATION OFFICER:

Michael Mc Gowan
Accord Office
Pastoral Centre
Brook Street
Omagh
TEL: 028 82251714
EMAIL: mj.mcgowan@bopenworld.com

BE HONEST – THIS RESEARCH IS BEING DEVELOPED SO THAT RELATIONSHIPS AND
SEXUALITY EDUCATION IS TAUGHT IN THE BEST POSSIBLE WAY SO THAT IT
BENEFITS YOU.

IF YOU DECIDE NOT TO ANSWER THE QUESTIONS TRUTHFULLY DO NOT ANSWER
THEM AT ALL. **YOUR PARTICIPATION IS VOLUNTARY.**

If you make a mistake cross out the wrong response and write the right answer eg. agree, yes,
etc.

SCHOOL CODE

--	--

14. Who do you **mainly** talk to about sexuality and relationships? (**tick ONE only**)

Parent(s) / Guardian(s)

Sister(s) / Brother(s)

Friends

Boyfriend /Girlfriend

No-one

15. If you are worried about something, do you always have a caring adult to talk to?

yes/no

↓
If yes, please indicate if the caring adult is a Parent, a Teacher, a Priest etc. (DO NOT NAME HIM / HER)

16. When I am angry, I usually;

a) Talk to someone agree / disagree

b) Shout at the person I am angry with agree / disagree

c) Hit someone agree / disagree

d) Hit something agree / disagree

e) Say nothing to anyone agree / disagree

17. If I was drunk I would never go out with someone agree / disagree

18. I believe that God made me unique agree / disagree

19. I believe that God has given me talents agree / disagree

20. I believe that God loves me agree / disagree

21. I pray:
a) never b) an odd time c) regularly

22. I believe Catholics should not have sex before they are married agree

disagree

don't know

SECTION B

QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR FRIENDS

23. I can easily get comfort from my friends agree / disagree
24. I feel that I can trust my friends about most things agree / disagree
25. I feel that I am confident enough to express a different opinion from my friends agree / disagree
26. My friends are kind agree / disagree
27. I can tell at least one friend most things about my relationships agree / disagree
28. I have experienced pressure from my friends to date someone agree / disagree
29. I have experienced pressure from my friends to have sex with someone agree / disagree
30. I have experienced pressure from my friends to do something that I knew was wrong agree / disagree

SECTION C

QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH BOYS / GIRLS

31. Before I would ask someone on a date I would **usually** take a drink or take some other drug agree / disagree
32. I would like to ask someone out on a date but I do not have the confidence agree / disagree
33. I am uncertain about how far I should go (physically) when dating agree / disagree
34. Have you ever had sexual intercourse? yes no not sure
35. Have you ever been on a date (**went out with someone**) ? yes / no
- ↓
If no, go to SECTION D page 7
36. Before I go out on a date I would **usually** take a drink or use some other drugs agree / disagree
37. I have talked to my girlfriend / boyfriend about sex agree / disagree
38. I have talked to my girlfriend / boyfriend about my attitude to sex before marriage agree / disagree
39. Please indicate the length of time of your longest relationship? (**Tick ONE only**)
 0 – 3 months 4 – 7 months 7 – 10 months over 10 months
40. How many people have you dated within the last 12 months:
 0 – 5 6 – 10 11 – 15 16 – 20 more than 20
41. Have you **dated someone on more than 2 occasions**? No → **Go to section D, page 7**
 Yes → indicate **why**:
- Because I really fancied him / her agree / disagree
- Because I really liked him / her as a person agree / disagree
- Because I had a bond with that person agree / disagree
- Because I was in love agree / disagree
- Other: (Please explain) _____

Thinking back to the **LONGEST** relationship you have had, indicate how important the following were in that relationships;

42. Honesty Important Not important Not Sure
 Caring for one another Important Not important Not Sure
 Trust Important Not important Not Sure
 Generosity Important Not important Not Sure
 Sensitivity Important Not important Not Sure
43. I feel that there is nothing wrong with going out with 2 people at the one time i.e. two-timing. agree / disagree
44. I feel that I am too young to go out with someone steady agree / disagree
45. I feel that the relationships I have now are just for fun agree / disagree
46. I feel that I do not need to really care about the person I am going out with agree / disagree
47. Have you ever finished with someone yes / no

↓
If Yes, did you

- a] get a friend to tell them?
- b] start going out with someone else?
- c] phone them?
- c] tell them in person?
- d] write them a note?
- e] tell them in some other way?

Please explain _____

SECTION D

QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH TEACHERS AND YOUR VIEWS ON RELATIONSHIPS AND SEXUALITY EDUCATION

52. I appreciate most of the work my Teachers do for me agree / disagree

54. I respect most of my Teachers agree / disagree

54. I feel most of my Teachers care about me agree / disagree

55. Can you indicate how many Teachers in your school are good at talking to Pupils about sexuality and relationships? (**Tick ONE only**)

0 1 – 3 4 –7 8 – 11 more than 11

56. In school have you ever discussed or been taught about communication skills? yes no not sure

57. In school have you ever had the opportunity to discuss how to manage anger ? yes no not sure

58. In school have you ever had the opportunity to discuss how you cope when someone hurts you? yes no not sure

59. Have you been given enough time to talk about relationships and sexuality in school? yes no not sure

60. When you were being taught sexuality and relationship education please indicate if you enjoyed **any** of the following:

Guest Speaker (s) Discussion with a Teacher

Book that you were advised to read Video

A day/s retreat None of the above

Other (**please explain**) _____

61. Have you ever been shown any videos about relationships or sexuality? yes / no

↓
If Yes, please rate the video (s) that you were shown. Were they?

Very Good Good OK Poor Very Poor

SECTION E

QUESTIONS ABOUT YOU AND YOUR FAMILY

Please tick **ONLY ONE** of the following:

62. I mainly live with both my Parents
- I mainly live with my father only
- I mainly live with foster Parents
- I mainly live with my mother only
- I mainly live with guardians.
- I mainly live with my grandparent(s)

The following questions apply to those adults whom you continuously live with.

63. I am happy with my family Most of the time Sometimes Never
64. I respect my Parent(s) / guardian(s) Most of the time Sometimes Never
65. I appreciate how much my Parent(s) / guardian(s) have done for me Most of the time Sometimes Never
66. I am always honest with my Parent(s) / guardian(s) Most of the time Sometimes Never
67. I know my Parent(s) / guardian(s) love me Most of the time Sometimes Never
68. I find it difficult to talk to my Parents / guardian(s) about sex and relationships yes no not sure
69. I would like my Parent(s) / guardian(s) to talk more to me about my relationships and my sexuality yes no not sure
70. I would like to talk more to my Parent(s) / guardian(s) about sex yes no not sure
71. My Parent(s) / guardian(s) believe sex before marriage is wrong for me yes no not sure
72. I have talked to my Parent(s) / guardian(s) about the Catholic Church's teaching about sex and / or sexuality yes / no
73. At least one of my Parent(s) / guardian(s) is a practising Catholic? yes no not sure
74. I regularly help my Parent(s) / guardian(s) with chores or housework etc yes / no

SECTION F

QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR BROTHER(S) AND / OR SISTER(S)

75. Do you have brother(s) or sister(s)? yes / no
- If No, Go to Section G**
(next page)
76. Are your brother(s) or sister(s) around the same age as you ? yes / no
77. Are any of your brother(s) or sister(s) older than you? yes / no
78. Do you love your brother(s) or sister(s)? yes / no
79. Do you ever socialise with your brother(s) or sister(s)? yes / no
80. Do you talk to your brother(s) or sister(s) about sexual intercourse? yes / no
81. Do you talk to your brother(s) or sister(s) about your relationships? yes / no
82. Do you talk to your brother(s) or sister(s) about your sexual orientation? yes / no

SECTION G

QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR SCHOOL CHAPLAIN

83. Does your school have a chaplain/chaplain(s)? yes / no
- If no, go to Section H**
(next page)
84. Have you met your school chaplain(s)? yes / no
- If no, go to Section H**
(next page)
85. Do you think you can trust your school chaplain(s)? yes no not sure
86. If you were worried about something, would you go and see your school chaplain(s)? yes no not sure
87. Does your chaplain contribute to relationship and sexuality education? yes no not sure
88. Would you like your school chaplain to contribute to relationship and sexuality education? yes no not sure

SECTION H

QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR ATTITUDES TO MARRIAGE AND PARENTHOOD

89. Do you think it is important to get married in a church rather than a register office? yes no not sure

→ Please explain your answer

90. Do you think that you should be married before having children? yes no not sure

91. Do you think that you would like to marry some time in the future? yes no not sure

92. If you think that you will get married some time in the future, do you think that you will have sex before you are married? yes no not sure

93. I think couples should live together before they get married agree disagree not sure

94. "Couples can live together, there is no need to get married." yes no not sure

95. I would like the person that I am going to marry to be a virgin yes no not sure

96. Rank the following in terms of their importance to you:

a] Plenty of money Not important Important Very important

b] Good health Not important Important Very important

c] Good career Not important Important Very important

d] A nice house Not important Important Very important

e] A happy marriage Not important Important Very important

f] Practising my faith Not important Important Very important

SECTION I

QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR KNOWLEDGE AND ATTITUDES TO SEX, SEXUALITY AND RELATIONSHIPS

97. Do you know what homosexuality is? yes no not sure

↓
If yes, please explain _____

98. Do you know what heterosexuality is? yes no not sure

↓
If yes, please explain _____

99. Do you know what bisexuality is? yes no not sure

↓
If yes, please explain _____

100. Are you clear about your own sexual orientation? yes no not sure

101. In school have you discussed heterosexuality? yes no not sure

102. In school have you discussed homosexuality? yes no not sure

103. In school have you discussed bisexuality? yes no not sure

104. Have you discussed your own sexual orientation with anyone? yes no

↓
If yes, please indicate was this discussion with a Friend, a Priest, a Teacher, a Professional adult, etc. (Please do not name them)

105. Homosexual acts are wrong agree disagree not sure

106. Married couples should not use artificial contraception agree disagree not sure

107. Masturbation is a sin agree disagree not sure

108. Direct abortion is always wrong agree disagree not sure

109. You don't have to love someone to have sex with them agree disagree not sure
110. If a friend of yours, aged 15, became pregnant and wanted to have an abortion, would you: (Please tick only **ONE** answer)
- a] try and talk her out of it?
- b] just let her make her own mind up?
- c] tell a member of her family?
- d] help her to get an abortion even though you disagreed?
- e] agree with her?
- f] advise her to talk to a professional adult?
- g] other? (**Please explain**) _____

111. Are there certain times of the month when a woman is more likely to get pregnant? yes no not sure
112. Men change only in physical ways during puberty agree disagree not sure
113. Women change only in physical ways during puberty agree disagree not sure
114. Were there times when you were worried about the changes in your body during puberty? yes / no
115. Did you ever worry about masturbation? yes / no
116. Have you been taught about the following in school:
- | | | | |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Natural family planning | <input type="checkbox"/> yes | <input type="checkbox"/> no | <input type="checkbox"/> not sure |
| The Pill | <input type="checkbox"/> yes | <input type="checkbox"/> no | <input type="checkbox"/> not sure |
| Using condoms | <input type="checkbox"/> yes | <input type="checkbox"/> no | <input type="checkbox"/> not sure |
| Abstinence | <input type="checkbox"/> yes | <input type="checkbox"/> no | <input type="checkbox"/> not sure |
| Sexually Transmitted Diseases | <input type="checkbox"/> yes | <input type="checkbox"/> no | <input type="checkbox"/> not sure |

APPENDIX C

Parents' Questionnaire

Parents' Attitudes and Needs Regarding Relationship and Sexuality Education (RSE) in Northern Ireland

CONFIDENTIAL AND ANONYMOUS

DO NOT PUT YOUR NAME OR ANY OTHER IDENTIFYING MARK ON THIS SURVEY

IF YOU HAVE ANY FURTHER QUESTIONS PLEASE CONTACT THE
ACCORD EDUCATION OFFICER:

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THIS RESEARCH IS BEING CONDUCTED IN ORDER TO DEVELOP A
RSE PROGRAMME SUITABLE FOR CATHOLIC SCHOOLS.

Please answer all questions. If you are unsure of an answer please leave blank.

YOUR PARTICPATION IS VOLUNTARY.

If you make a mistake cross out the wrong response and write the right answer eg. agree, yes, etc.

SCHOOL CODE

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1. Are you: Male Female

SECTION A

The following questions are about your child's Relationship and Sexuality Education. Throughout, the questions refer to a son or daughter, the child who is currently attending this school and about whom you are here tonight.

2. Is the young person who attends this school: male female
3. What age is the son / daughter who attends this school?
4. Do you think R.S.E (Relationship and Sexuality Education) is:
 important not important not sure
5. Do you get enough information from your son /daughter's school about what is taught in R.S.E. lessons? yes / no

6. Do you think that your son /daughter's school should teach Pupils about relationships, sexuality and sexual intercourse?

Yes (Please explain) _____

No (Please explain) _____

7. Do you think that your son / daughter's school should teach Pupils about safe sex? yes / no
8. At home, who talks to your daughter / son about sex and relationships?
 mother
 father
 other (please specify) _____

(DO NOT NAME THEM e.g. daughter's aunt/ uncle/ sister)

no-one

Go to Question 9

9. How often would you or another talk to your son / daughter about sex and relationships? often seldom
10. I would like to talk more to my son /daughter about sex, sexuality and relationships. agree / disagree
11. Would you be willing to attend **at least 1** information evening about how to talk to your son / daughter about relationships, sex and sexuality? yes / no

SECTION B

The following questions are about your relationship with your child

12. I feel that my son /daughter respects me most of the time sometimes never
13. I feel that my son /daughter appreciates the things I do for him / her. most of the time sometimes never
14. I feel that my son /daughter is honest with me. most of the time sometimes never
15. I **tell** my son / daughter that I love him /her most of the time sometimes never
16. Have you talked to your son/daughter about the Catholic Church's teaching relating to sex and/or sexuality? yes / no

SECTION C

The following questions are about your attitudes, values and beliefs

17. Sex before marriage is always wrong. agree disagree not sure
18. Marriage is a lifetime commitment. agree disagree not sure
19. Homosexual acts are wrong. agree disagree not sure
20. Direct abortion is always wrong. agree disagree not sure
21. Married couples should not use artificial contraception. agree disagree not sure
22. "I think couples should live together before they get married". agree disagree not sure
23. I believe sex before marriage is wrong for my son / daughter. agree disagree not sure
24. Would you like your son / daughter's school to teach them about safe sex? yes / no

APPENDIX D

Teachers' Questionnaires

Teachers in Catholic Schools Attitudes and Needs Regarding Relationship and Sexuality Education (RSE) in Northern Ireland

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Please answer all questions. If you are unsure of an answer please leave blank.

YOUR PARTICPATION IS VOLUNTARY.

If you make a mistake cross out the wrong response and write the right answer eg. agree, yes,
etc.

SCHOOL CODE

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SECTION A

1. Are you: Male Female
2. Is the school where you currently teach a:
 - Co-ed school
 - All Girls school
 - All Boys school
3. How long have you been teaching?
 - 0-5 years
 - 6-10 years
 - 11 – 15years
 - over 15 years
4. What is the **main** subject you currently teach in school?

5. Do you teach (or have you taught) R.S.E. in any of the following:
 - Science
 - R.E.
 - P.H.S.E. (in a form class)
6. Do you think RSE is: not important important very important

SECTION B

The following questions are about your attitudes and feelings when teaching R.S.E.

7. I am reluctant to teach RSE. agree disagree
8. I feel that I can make a positive contribution to Pupils' RSE. agree disagree
9. Please indicate how you feel when teaching the following subjects in RSE;
 - a] Heterosexual relationships comfortable uncomfortable very uncomfortable
 - b] Bisexual relationships comfortable uncomfortable very uncomfortable

- c] Homosexual relationships comfortable uncomfortable very uncomfortable
- d] Sexual intercourse comfortable uncomfortable very uncomfortable
- e] Artificial contraception comfortable uncomfortable very uncomfortable
- f] Natural family planning comfortable uncomfortable very uncomfortable
10. How do you feel when using sexual terms? comfortable uncomfortable very uncomfortable
11. How do you feel when teaching RSE;
- a] Not confident
- b] Confident
- c] Very confident
- Please explain your answer**
-
-
-
12. What skills do you feel you need to develop in order to effectively teach R.S.E?
-
-
-
13. During R.S.E. I am afraid that Pupils will ask me personal questions. agree / disagree
14. I feel that there is a personal cost to me when teaching R.S.E. agree / disagree
15. I feel that there needs to be greater co-operation between Teachers and Parents when R.S.E. is being taught. agree / disagree
16. I am concerned about Parents criticising me when teaching R.S.E agree / disagree

The following questions are about your values

17. Sex before marriage is always wrong. agree disagree not sure
18. Marriage is a lifetime commitment. agree disagree not sure
19. Homosexual acts are wrong. agree disagree not sure
20. Direct abortion is always wrong. agree disagree not sure
21. Married couples should not use artificial contraception. agree disagree not sure
22. "I think couples should live together before they get married". agree disagree not sure
23. I do not believe in some of the Catholic Church's teachings? agree disagree

Please specify _____

24. I am a practising Catholic. agree disagree

SECTION C**The following questions are about your needs when teaching RSE**

25. 'There is very little guidance about what should be taught in RSE' agree disagree not sure
26. Do you think that current written resources (text books/work sheets) in use in your school are out of date? yes / no
27. Do you think that current visual resources (videos) in use in your school are out of date? yes / no
28. Do you think that current resources in use in your school are inappropriate? (eg. not targeting ages / gender / too technical / simplified) yes / no

Can you specify in what ways current resources are inappropriate?

29. Would you welcome new resources specifically designed for RSE? yes / no

↓
If yes, please rank the types of resources you would most welcome (1= most preferred to 4 = least preferred);

a]	Videos	1	2	3	4
b]	Text books	1	2	3	4
c]	Workbooks/work sheets	1	2	3	4
d]	Pamphlets/Leaflets	1	2	3	4

30. How would you rate the quality of RSE as is currently being taught in your school?

very poor poor ok good very good

SECTION D

31. Should RSE be taught: **(tick one only)**
- a] By a trained core team.
- b] By all Form Teachers as part of P.H.S.E. lessons.
- c] Between the R.E. and Science Departments only.
- d] Other (Please state) _____

32. Would you be willing to take part in RSE training? yes / no

↓
If Yes, please indicate the type of training you could commit to:

- a] 1-day in-service training delivered by R.S.E. specialists (annually).
- b] 2 half-day in-service training delivered by R.S.E. specialists (annually).
- c] 6 (2-hour) sessions delivered over 6 weeks
- d] 8–10 (2-hour) sessions delivered as part of an accredited course over 8-10 weeks.

33. Please indicate whether you would require any of the following training sessions **(tick box)**:

- a] In-depth information about psycho-sexual development
- b] Teaching Pupils about creating and sustaining healthy relationships
- c] Teaching Pupils about dealing with difficult relationships (eg. disappointment, loss)
- d] How best to talk to Pupils about sex and sexual issues
- e] Information about Sexually Transmitted Diseases
- f] Best use of R.S.E. resources
- g] Strategies for teaching R.S.E.
- i] Establishing boundaries and dealing with personal/ sensitive issues when teaching R.S.E
- j] Strategies and resources for teaching Pupils about communication skills
- k] Strategies and resources for teaching Pupils about conflict resolution
- l] Strategies to help Pupils grow in Self-awareness
- m] Strategies to help Pupils grow in Self-esteem
- n] Effective strategies and resources for teaching Pupils about the moral aspects of R.S.E
- o] Introducing Pupils to the Spiritual dimension of Sexuality and Relationships
- p] Other training needs (please specify) _____

REFERENCES

Cairns, E. (2001) *Love For Life Survey, Risk Behaviour In Post-Primary School Children*, Craigavon, Co. Down.

Health Promotion Agency, (1996) *Sex Education in Northern Ireland, Views from Parents and Schools*, Belfast, H.P.A.

Health Promotion Agency, (1998) *Health Behaviour in School Children Study*, Belfast, H.P.A.