



Key  
Stage  
1

# Love & Sex Matters

Relationships & sex education  
in a context of Christian values

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# Introduction

**‘We are all held in a loving, accepting gaze ... what difference will it make to our relationships with others if we believe we are all held in the same loving regard?’<sup>1</sup>**

These materials have been written in the light of appalling statistics for teenage pregnancies and rising rates of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) in young people. At present, Britain has the highest rate of teenage pregnancies in Europe, at 27 per 1,000,<sup>2</sup> occurrences of the most common STI – Chlamydia – have risen 150% over the past ten years.<sup>3</sup>

Under the new coalition Government, the status of sex and relationship education has not changed. Therefore, the most up-to-date legislation relating to sex and relationships education (SRE) are contained within the Education Act (1996) and the Learning and Skills Act (2000). This Government has, however, outlined their commitment to SRE in the Schools’ White Paper ‘The Importance of Teaching’, published in November 2010. The paper states that ‘children need high-quality sex and relationships education so they can make wise and informed choices and the Government promises to work with teachers, parents, faith groups and campaign groups to improve SRE’. The consultation and guidance to ensure this improvement will follow the National Curriculum review as part of a PSHE evaluation. However, the Government has stated that:

Ministers have been clear that they want SRE delivery to have a much stronger focus on relationships. They know that parents are concerned about the way in which the media and commercial sector can sexualize girls at an early age and about the worrying levels of violence in teenage relationships. They have made a specific commitment to ensure all young people are taught about sexual consent.<sup>4</sup>

This emphasis chimes with many concerns that have been raised by other bodies in recent years. The Children’s Society have published *A Good Childhood: Searching for Values in a Competitive Age*, a report about children’s contemporary experiences of growing up that makes strong recommendations about the way sex education should be taught.<sup>5</sup> In early 2011, Reg Bailey, the Chief Executive of the Mothers’ Union, conducted the *Bailey Review*, which called on ‘businesses and media to play their part in ending the drift towards an increasingly sexualised “wallpaper” that surrounds children’. The recommendations included putting age restrictions on music videos and limiting the number of sexually explicit advertisements displayed outdoors, particularly in areas where children are likely to see them, such as near schools.<sup>6</sup> In the same year, the Mothers’ Union also launched the *Bye Buy Childhood* campaign, which aims to empower families to challenge the commercialisation and sexualisation of childhood through positive action.<sup>7</sup>

*Love and Sex Matters* hopes to offer a path that will deliver the recommendations of the DfE’s sex and relationships guidance within a framework of Christian values and is offered as a response to suggestions made in *A Good Childhood*. The emphasis in these materials is on creating dialogue through activity that will help children and young people grow in emotional articulacy and develop the self-esteem to navigate a personal life that honours both themselves and others.

These materials essentially focus on enabling children to build positive self-esteem and realize their own wonder and worth as unique and beautiful people. Thus, good self-esteem is presented as a necessary foundation for building mutually satisfying and beneficial relationships.

beneficial relationships. *Love and Sex Matters* also seeks to question the media representation that teenage sexual activity is, or should be, the norm.

**'As sex can create human beings, sex education should be treated with seriousness and it should centre on love and responsibility within the context of family life.'**<sup>8</sup>

**'There is more involved than the defence of traditional family patterns – unless believers can show all of us ways of handling the education of emotion and of preparing people for adult commitment in relationships, all that will be seen is an agenda of anxiety, censoriousness and repression.'**<sup>9</sup>

It is hoped that through these materials children will be encouraged to ponder the significance and spirituality of relationships. This resource has been written with church schools in mind and upholds Christian values. However, the approach taken throughout means that it can also make a rich contribution to sex and relationships education outside this context.

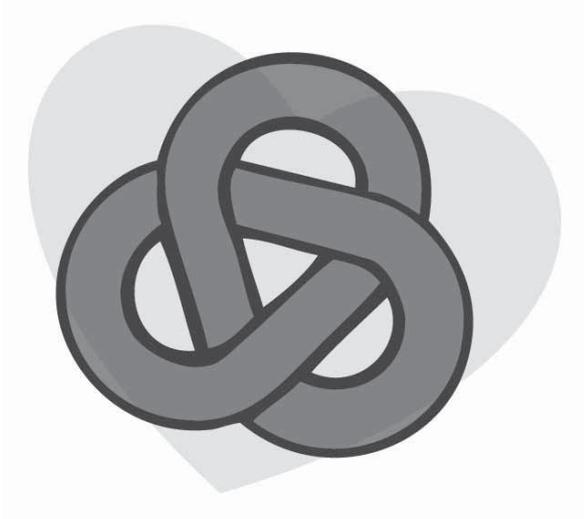
At a time of changing family patterns and parental stress overload, there are many children seeking the love, attention, security and identity that may not have been afforded them as a foundational experience. As a result sexual and emotional needs, love and relationships, often get confused, conflated and entangled. Many children and young people in our schools are not given the opportunity to discuss and formulate a language to articulate their feelings and needs either at home or in other contexts. They are not, therefore, being offered a safe environment in which to decide upon a meaningful sexual ethic for themselves, one that will give them the guidelines for their life. In this way, we are not protecting the young in our care and we are not helping them to live 'life in all its fullness'.<sup>10</sup>

All schools, and in particular church schools, have a responsibility to love, serve and protect the children and young people they are educating. These materials seek to help children in today's world to find their own course through the smorgasbord of modern sexuality. This is offered against the backdrop of a belief in the unconditional love of God for all and the grace of God's forgiveness.

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# In summary



## *Love and Sex Matters* aims to:

- Offer exciting, fun and interactive lessons.
- Give opportunities to rehearse appropriate language and develop articulatory.
- Build self-esteem and high regard for others; in church schools this is rooted in a belief that all are loved by God.
- Uphold the sanctity of marriage, the importance of long-term relationships and stable family life.
- Enable children to develop a healthy body image and sexuality.
- Begin to invite a holistic consideration of sexuality that takes it beyond just the physical and explores the emotional, spiritual and moral aspects of sexuality.
- Acknowledge the complex context of the modern world in which today's children and young people find themselves.
- Be accessible to those of all faiths and none.
- Recognise each person's intrinsic worth and value.
- Allow consideration of human relationships as part of the greater love of God.
- Offer a vision of sacred committed relationships where personal and spiritual growth and mutual support can flourish.

# Using the lessons

Learning activities for each lesson are contained within four sections:

- Gathering - introducing the lesson and topic;
- Engaging - going deeper using activities;
- Responding - opportunities for reflection; and
- Sending - point of action.

Whilst it is desirable that the structure for each lesson is followed, it is nevertheless intended that *Love and Sex Matters* can be used as a flexible and creative resource. The length of lessons are not indicated because the time spent on activities is not 'set in stone'; and, bearing in mind the overall objective of the lesson, the teacher should select from the range of activities those which are most appropriate for her or his class context.

The Bible Link activities are intended to link the activities in the session to relevant stories/passages from the Bible, and Christian attitudes to the topic.

The plenary session, 'Sending', is designed to provide an opportunity for children to interact with their families at home and is also intended to feed into the next session.

## Values

Key values, listed separately below, are intended to be used supportively and flexibly to reinforce the school's values and help children to understand the values that form foundations for healthy relationships. Questions may be used to support the specific lessons but also used at any time within the wider curriculum. Values are principles or convictions that act as a guide to behaviour. All schools promote a core set of values, which are shared and explored within the context of the school community. For church schools these shared values will naturally be rooted in the wisdom and understanding of the Christian faith and particularly in gospel values. As pupils explore, question and experience these values they are able to consider whether Christian values are the same or different from values of a 21st-century secular society. They are also provided with a safe environment within which they can consider the ways in which a particular value might be applied in a range of situations, and also grapple with controversial issues. Whilst the values listed below have been chosen as being distinctively Christian, we recognize that many of these values will also be shared with those of community schools and those of other faiths. For each value a number of questions have been highlighted which relate specifically to relationships and sex education. Therefore, in order to support work undertaken in Sex and Relationships Education (SRE), it is suggested that as each chosen value is explored within your school community these questions are also considered and reflected upon - e.g. in classroom activities; collective worship; in staff discussion and in discussions with key stakeholders. These questions will therefore be explored as a child progresses through the Primary phase in an age-appropriate way.

The values listed include those contained within the *Values for Life* resource (Jumping Fish, Diocese of Gloucester, 2006), which is used currently by many church primary schools. These values are also explored extensively on the Christian Values for Schools website: [www.christianvalues4schools.org.uk](http://www.christianvalues4schools.org.uk).



This lesson will help children lay the foundations for healthy self-esteem.

## Activity Resources

### Gathering

- Powerpoint 1.1: Love between parent and child (on CD at back of resources)
- Focal point such as a statue of family group embracing
- Story: Sam McBratney, *Guess How Much I Love You* (Walker Books, 2007)

### Engaging:

- Blank exercise books and art materials for children to create an 'I'm Special' book each
- Digital camera and printing facility
- Story: David McKee, *Not Now Bernard* (Red Fox, 2008)
- Pat Alexander, *The Lion First Bible* (Lion Hudson, 2011); Bob Hartman, *The Lion Storyteller Bible* (Lion Hudson, 2008)
- Story: Nick Butterworth, *The Lost Sheep* (Candle Books, 2008)
- Margaret Cooling, *Bible Storybags: Reflective Storytelling for Primary RE and Assemblies* (Barnabus, 2008), or Jerome W. Berryman, *Godly Play* series (Living the Good News, 2002), Volume 3
- Song: 'I'm special because God loves me,' Alan Price (ed.), *Kidsource Volume 1: Full music* (Kevin Mayhew, 1999), No. 162

### Responding

- Mirror in a box
- Container containing enough shiny stars for each child to take one.