



The Lumen Fidei Institute

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“Promoting, Defending, Teaching Catholicism”
“Helping Catholics to live out their great calling as Children of God”

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Feast of St John Bosco

Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) Review

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This submission is made on behalf of: The Lumen Fidei Institute

This submission is related to **both** primary and post-primary education.

We consent to this submission being posted online including my name and organisation.

Please provide some brief background information on your organisation (if applicable).

The Lumen Fidei Institute was founded to promote the teachings of the Catholic Church. We have a particular emphasis on Marriage & Family which includes Catholic teaching on Human Sexuality.

What are your experiences of Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE)?

I am the father of eight children, two girls and six boys. My wife and I have given all of them a comprehensive education in human sexuality according to the teachings of the Catholic Church.

I was involved in protests opposing the implementation of the RSE programme in Catholic Schools in the 1990s, (which protests I note are not mentioned in the research paper, even though these protests were countrywide). A part of our protest centred on the lack of consultation with parents. The RSE programme was designed and printed, the teachers were given training days, and it was only after this happened that parents were consulted.

I have delivered RSE in one school in Northern Ireland as part of an external group that was brought in to teach a group of students Catholic teaching on human sexuality.

Consent:

As regards the term consent, the meaning is obvious. It means to agree to do something by a free act of the will. One can consent to kill an innocent human being in its mother's womb; governments can make it legal to do so, however that does not make it right. Human beings are moral beings governed by absolute moral norms which cannot and do not change. To try to teach children about human sexuality using a curriculum which seeks to avoid absolute moral norms is not only futile, it also represents a danger to those children. To teach children that consensual sexual activity is permissible so long as both parties consent to the act constitutes an abuse of children.

Developments in Contraception:

Once again, we enter an ideological minefield. Children, to which our human sexuality is ordered by its very nature, are proclaimed as a great good. Contraception acts against this good so that people can bypass the natural and sexually healthy outcome of human sexual intercourse. Contraception is therefore intrinsically evil, because it acts against a known and great good.

There is also the scientifically unsound problem of describing chemicals which have an abortifacient nature as contraceptives. Once fertilisation has occurred it is not possible to contracept because conception has already occurred. Again, the ideologists, in an unscientific way, try to use the terms conception and implantation interchangeably in order to foster their unscientific agenda which is clearly shown on page 43 of the research paper where it states that certain Catholic schools "refuse to give science-based sexuality education and instead adopt a morally based abstinence-only sexuality education approach."

The implication here, without a shred of scientific evidence being presented to support the case, is that Catholic teaching on human sexuality which promotes a moral and abstinence-based approach to human sexuality is unscientific. But there are no contradictions between Catholic Church teachings on human sexuality and science.

Healthy, positive sexual expression and relationships:

The way this area of interest of the Minister for Education and Skills is expressed shows up another problem in how the whole matter of human sexuality is dealt with by the Irish state. There is a consistent use of different terms without any definition of what those terms mean. What is meant by 'positive sexual expression'? How is it determined if that expression is healthy?

The healthiest use of human sexual expression, that is, human sexuality expressed in a way that benefits both the man and the woman, comes from following the teachings of the Catholic Church on human sexuality. These teachings are both scientifically observable to benefit all of humanity and to respect the rights and duties of all men. Sexual intercourse is the preserve of marriage which can only occur between one man and one woman. There should be no sexual activity outside of marriage. The purpose of marriage and indeed of our human sexuality is the procreation of children and their subsequent education. Interestingly, those who follow these teachings faithfully, will never have to worry about sexually transmitted diseases or unwanted pregnancy.

Undoubtedly the standards set in this area by the Catholic Church are very high, but we should want only the very best for our children. Many people, including those Catholics who are trying to live up to these high demands, will fail at times. But the Catholic Church also provides the graces necessary to recover from our sins in this area through her sacraments. One should not fail to teach the truth, even to children, just because living according to the truth is difficult and challenging.

We should have more faith in our children's God given natural instincts and their desire to live good lives rather than teach them a compromised view of human sexuality based on a morally bankrupt ideology which supports the killing of the innocent human beings that are conceived as a result of the promotion of these falsehoods regarding our human sexuality. But this 'legalised killing of innocents', shows just how far these ideologues are prepared to go to further their agenda.

Safe Use of the Internet:

One of the greatest scourges in modern society is the plague of internet pornography. The solution to this problem is quite simple, if only the government wasn't so heavily invested in false ideologies. The government should make it illegal to broadcast pornography on the internet and should pass legislation with very stiff penalties for the Internet Service Providers (ISPs) who permit access to pornography on their networks. If China can block access in their country to 'google', then Ireland can block access to pornography, but there must be both an incentive and a strong deterrent in order to force compliance. If the Irish government really cares about the damaging effects of pornography on children, then one can only wonder why this solution has not already been considered.

Social media and its effects on relationships and self-esteem:

The use of social media can be very beneficial however it tends to become addictive and a replacement for normal interpersonal relationships. Recent suggestions from elected representatives that seek to suppress certain viewpoints on social media platforms, especially those that contradict the government's ideological narrative, are dangerous and worrying and, when taken with the ideological direction of proposed changes in the RSE curriculum, represent a growing totalitarian threat to our society and to our children.

LGBTQ+ matters:

The uncritical acceptance of the LGBTQ+ movement is going to lead to huge problems for our children in the future. Unscientific theories are being promoted as fact. For example, there is no scientific evidence to support the existence of transgender people. The only genders that can be determined in a scientific manner are male and female. Why is it, that when the government call for RSE that is factual, they ignore this 'fact'? Once again this suggests that the government is acting out of an unscientific ideology that has gained prominence in the western world and is being promoted by vested interests.

That some people who are male believe or 'feel' that they are in the wrong body or are of the 'wrong' gender or that they are female, can be scientifically shown to be false. This does not mean that this person does not need help, but their problem is psychological in nature and pretending that they really are of a different gender to their scientifically provable gender will not help them in the long run. There are very dangerous developments occurring in this area especially in the prescribing of puberty blockers and cross-sex hormones to pre-pubescent children which renders them infertile for life.

It is also an abuse to encourage the classification of children by their sexual preferences and then to tell them that they can never change those preferences, that they were born that way. Once again, an unscientific agenda driven ideology is being foisted on children, often without the parent's full knowledge of what is going on, in state funded schools.

If you have any further comments or observations, please respond here.

Our submission wishes to focus on several areas especially on the role of parents in the education of their children. In section 5 of the research paper produced by Dr. Seline Keating, Professor Mark Morgan, and Dr. Bernie Collins titled 'Student and Parent Voice', it says.

"Parents and Sexuality Education: It is generally accepted that parents are the first and primary educators of their children in all matters, including sexuality education.

Yet the research paper also indicates a dismissive attitude to parents who hold traditional Catholic beliefs. On page 38 of the research paper it notes, quoting Flores and Barroso (2017) that, "In addition, their review of research in the area of parents and sex communication provides evidence of a traditional, heteronormative and stereotypical approach in the home context."

This is seen as a problem because the paper also notes that, from the '*Growing Up in Ireland*' survey of 2012, young people expressed a preference for parents to provide sexuality-based information. If young people

expressed such a preference, why has the Irish government concentrated all of its efforts on school based RSE? Is it because the state wants to control what is taught to our children?

This small snippet from the research paper highlights the major problem with the paper. The paper is based on an ideological interpretation of human sexuality that is at odds with scientifically observable facts. In the quotation above, it almost seems to be too obvious to have to state it, but the reason that the parents are parents is because they are 'heteronormative'.

The term 'heteronormative' is itself an ideological term and not a scientific or factual term. Normal human sexual relations are heterosexual, and any objective scientific study will clearly demonstrate that human sexuality is ordered towards procreation. The term 'heteronormative' is an ideological linguistic construction to facilitate the use of the word 'homonormative', thereby implying that homosexual acts can somehow be normal. But it is obvious what the different parts of the body are for, and it is equally obvious, as in the case for example of anal intercourse, what the parts of the body are not for.

That the anus is not ordered towards human sexuality is a scientific fact regardless of whether or not certain people engage in such practices, and the well documented increased sexual disease rate amongst the population of men who have sex with men compared to other sectors of the population, clearly demonstrates the fact that this behaviour is disordered, that is, it is not in accordance with the observable order contained within our human body as it relates to sexuality. Unfortunately, in a society which prizes feelings over science, such a comment will be construed by some as 'homophobic', another ideological linguistic construction. You are not helping those with same-sex attraction by pretending that their abnormal behaviour is normal.

To ignore these facts when doing research on what to teach children concerning human sexuality in Irish schools, poses a danger to the very children the NCCA claims it seeks to help because it leaves them ignorant of these dangers on account of the ideological desire to present homosexual relationships as normal.

This is not to advocate teaching RSE in schools, it is to point out the dangers to children of the current government favoured sexual ideology that forms the basis of this research paper and its recommendations to promote the amoral 'holistic sexuality education'.

In summary, Catholic Schools must teach about RSE according to and in full conformity with the magisterial teachings of the Catholic Church on human sexuality. To do otherwise would be to abuse the rights of Catholic parents and their children. Catholic parents send their children to Catholic schools in order for them to get a Catholic education and this right is constitutionally protected.

May God bless you in the most Sacred Heart of Jesus

John Lacken
Secretary