

Statement from Ten Ten Resources

By Rod Isaacs, Director of Ethos

A recent negative assessment of our Life to the Full programme by the organisation Voice of the Family has prompted us to reflect again on our vision and mission.

As a result of the assessment, priests, parents and others may bring into question why schools have opted to choose Life to the Full for their RSHE resource provision. We have produced this statement and an accompanying report so that those involved in Catholic education will have the tools to respond with confidence and clarity.

- In the statement below, we offer a rationale for Life to the Full that shows how we understand the task we have taken on in service to the Church.
 - For those who are interested, we have also produced a more in-depth report. This looks in detail at the criticisms levelled against us, explains why we think they are very largely unjustified and offers our response.
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Our **Life to the Full** programme is always a work in progress and we welcome comments and criticism. But a recent report (not from a subscriber, but from an independent body) has suggested that our content is not fully Catholic, that we are undermining parents, and that, by sharing inappropriate content, we are putting children in spiritual danger.

The report, published by Voice of the Family, has been sent far and wide, including to many Catholic priests and those involved in Catholic education. If you have read it or heard about it, you may have been alarmed, as we were, by the intensity of the criticism and the specific accusations made.

Criticisms

1. The report calls into question the presentation of Catholic teaching within the Life to the Full programme, stating that it is 'abandoned, subverted and contradicted'.
2. The report states that Ten Ten Resources 'undermines the role of parents as primary educators' by pointing children to harmful content.

3. Finally, it implies that Life to the Full promotes ‘an atmosphere of sexual freedom’ thus endangering children by introducing them to ‘occasions of sin’.

Having read the report in great detail, I can see the value of a small number of comments, but very often a combination of rhetoric and selective details give a totally false impression of our work.

The Mission and Aims of Life to the Full

Life to the Full is not a catechetical or sacramental programme aimed purely at Catholic children. If it were that, we would definitely have a completely different approach.

Instead, our mission is to be in service to the Catholic Church and to all the children within Catholic schools across the UK by providing a fully-resourced RSHE programme that achieves three key aims:

1. To inform and educate children and young people so they can develop in a healthy way - physically, morally, emotionally and spiritually - and to help them recognise the dangers to that integral development.
2. To share from the wisdom of the Catholic Church on all aspects of relationships, sex, health and wellbeing in a way that is faithful, accessible and age-appropriate, following the guidance of the CES and the Bishop’s Conference.
3. To provide a programme that conforms with the statutory requirements provided by the DoF and the Welsh Government for relationships, sex and health education.

Quality digital content is provided across our Life to the Full Primary and Life to the Full Secondary programmes. This includes not just the obvious relationship issues, but also sessions about health and well-being - for example, online safety, body image and illegal drugs.

Life to the Full, Contemporary Culture and Catholic Teaching

In terms of education about sex and relationships, we know that there are particular challenges. In creating all our resources, we try to be cognisant of who we are communicating with. A great number of pupils and students in our Catholic schools will not be Catholic. Many of those that are will not be from practising Catholic families. All will be in some way shaped and influenced by the broader culture.

As [Saint John Paul II says](#) we cannot ignore the culture:

“The Gospel lives in conversation with culture, and if the Church holds back from the culture, the Gospel itself falls silent.”

Sometimes our content references that broader culture in order to connect with the experience of pupils and students. We also know this same culture is often indifferent to the key principles on which Catholic teaching about relationships and sexuality is based, namely:

- that we are made in the image of God
- that we are a unity of body and soul
- that every human life is of infinite value, to be treasured and protected from conception to natural death
- that in all circumstances people should be loved, not used
- that sex is by its very nature ordered to both union and procreation
- that sex belongs within marriage between a man and a woman

Our Life to the Full programme is fully committed to sharing these beautiful truths and to explaining them in a compelling way. But the journey does not happen in a day. It happens progressively over many different sessions and many years. It takes time and needs to be unfolded step by step, beginning from the common ground of experience and reason. That is why we have developed a spiral curriculum that returns to similar topics and themes, year on year, slowly moving towards a clearer, deeper and more sophisticated understanding in an age-appropriate way.

Our Ongoing Mission

We believe our presentation of Catholic teaching around sex and relationships is not about simply stating Church teaching about which acts are right or wrong but should instead seek to change hearts and minds.

In order to do this, we need to recognise that the truth and meaning of human sexuality, as understood by the Catholic Church, is deeply counter-cultural. For many young people, it is hard to understand, let alone accept. We are convinced that the path of reason and dialogue, rooted in our human nature and experience, is one important way to find common ground.

What we offer within the Life to the Full programme is only one part of the picture, one part of the endeavour within Catholic schools to proclaim the Good News of God's love and the truths of His Church.

We appreciate the difficult balance between pastoral sensitivity and the proclamation of moral teaching of which the Church is the guardian and guarantee. We know we have yet to get that balance perfectly right.

Life to the Full and Parents

We have also put collaboration with parents at the heart of our programme - with parent sessions to introduce them to the programme and an Online Parent Portal that we have built into our website

from the beginning. This allows parents to see the outline of the curriculum and sample lessons (and for parents of primary pupils, they can watch in full the videos that touch upon more sensitive issues that are often part of the non-statutory offering we provide). We have developed a number of special sessions for parents to promote discussion around subjects like pornography or smartphones and have the possibility for all parents to be granted full access to the programme content should they wish.

In addition to the irreplaceable role of parents, we fully recognise that in schools it is most often teachers, parish priests and school chaplains who play a decisive role in the process of dialogue and accompaniment that can allow the truth of the Catholic vision to take root. It requires patience and trust and it cannot be accomplished without love.

To quote from [a recent document](#) by the Bishop's Conference of England and Wales:

'As Christ consistently demonstrated in his teaching ministry, and taking him as the only sure model of authentic pastoral accompaniment, we must first listen to and understand the situations of all those we meet, and then slowly and patiently invite them, as he did, to embrace a wider horizon, the horizon of God's love for each person.'

CES Endorsement

The Voice of the Family report incorrectly claims that Life to the Full has been 'adopted' by the Catholic Education Service. This is not the case because the CES never endorse or approve externally-produced resources; rather they leave such discernment to individual dioceses.

Nevertheless, the CES are aware of the important role that Ten Ten Resources plays in serving Catholic education and have previously commissioned Ten Ten Resources to produce an [online learning platform](#) to provide training to teachers in the delivery of Catholic RSHE.

Having read this statement laying out our vision for the Life to the Full programme, you may want to read our in-depth and robust response to the Voice of the Family report. This includes a point by point analysis of specific comments and extensive use of clips from different sessions.

Our response demonstrates how the three overall criticisms which Voice of the Family has levelled against us are not just misleading, they are entirely unjustified. Read here: www.tentenresources.co.uk/report

On Tuesday 21 January 2025 at 3.30pm, we are hosting a live Zoom Q&A for teachers, priests and governors. This is an opportunity to ask questions of the Ten Ten team regarding this report. If you are unable to attend but would like access to the discussion, please sign up using the link below and we will send you a link to the recording.

www.tentenresources.co.uk/discussion