

# Birches Primary School



## Relationships and Sexuality Education Policy

Date ratified by Board of Governors: 20 November 2018





# BIRCHES PRIMARY SCHOOL



## Relationships and Sexuality Education Policy

**Date Ratified by BOG: 20 November, 2018**

**Review Date: 2020/2021**

### **Contextual Information**

Birches Primary School currently have 179 pupils aged 4-11 (During 2018/19). The school is located in a rural setting close to the M1.

**Date of Policy:** November 2018

### **Description of policy formation and consultation process**

The RSE Policy has been drawn up using the guidance provided in the RSE Guidance for Primary Schools August 2015. Governors, Staff, Parents and Pupils have been consulted regarding the formation of this policy. The policy was published on our school website and a paper copy made available upon request from our school office, responses were to be put in writing to the Principal and a time was set for all replies to be submitted. A meeting of the BoG followed the deadline for responses, these were discussed and the final policy was then ratified.

The policy will be reviewed on a bi-annual basis: Next review will be in 2020/2021. The school principal will be the point of contact for feedback/comments on the RSE Policy.

### **School Ethos**

At Birches Primary School, we believe in nurturing the abilities and talents of every child, fostering respect, confidence and creativity in an environment which is welcoming, attractive and stimulating. We aim for every child to achieve their full potential in becoming confident, successful young people equipped for a multi-cultural and technological society. We are committed to inspiring a love of learning through stimulating and engaging opportunities which supports pupils' learning and which celebrates their academic and non-academic achievements. We aim to empower our pupils to make informed and responsible decisions throughout their lives and to show respect and concern for others.

### **Moral and Values Framework**

The Department of Education requires each school to have in place its own written policy on how it will address the delivery of Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE). The circular also states that Relationships and Sexuality Education should be taught in harmony with the ethos of the school and reflect the moral and religious principles held by parents and school management authorities. As a controlled school, based on Christian principles and values, RSE will be taught through Personal Development and Mutual Understanding under the themes of:



- Self-awareness
- Feelings and Emotions
- Health, Growth and Change
- Safety
- Relationships
- Similarities and Differences

Where age and topic appropriate the policy takes account of the Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2006

The policy also takes account of the relevant sections of the UNCRC and also how RSE contributes to ESAGS and Equality and Diversity in Education Policy.

The policy links with our Child Centred Provision section of our School Development Plan and related Action Plan.

### **Rationale**

Birches Primary School firmly advocates the Personal Development approach where young people are given the skills to help them resist peer and media pressure, and make informed decisions based on their own internal self-respect and self-esteem. Schools are important centres of education that play a huge role in the personal development of all pupils and take this responsibility very seriously. The school is sensitive to the 'age specific' nature of many RSE topics and deliver these with the knowledge and support of parents and Governors. This policy reflects the ethos of our controlled school.

### **Equal Opportunities**

Birches Primary School is committed to the education of children regardless of culture, disability, gender, religion, social class or sexual orientation. All pupils have a right to an education which adequately prepares them for adult life, and RSE plays an integral part.

### **Aims**

- To enhance the personal development, self-esteem and well-being of each child.
- To provide opportunity to understand and manage their feelings and emotions.
- To provide opportunity to learn how to sustain health, growth and well-being.
- To provide opportunity to develop the skills to make sensible decisions around their own safety.
- To provide opportunity to develop healthy and respectful friendships and relationships.
- To provide opportunity to value and celebrate cultural differences and diversity.

### **Objectives**

Through the delivery of RSE our young people should be able to:

- Form values and establish behaviour within a moral, spiritual and social framework.
- Examine and explore the various relationships in their personal lives.
- Learn how to develop and enjoy personal relationships and friendships which are based on responsibility and mutual respect.
- Lay foundations for developing more personal relationships in later life.



- Make positive, responsible choices about themselves, others and the way they live their lives.

### **The RSE Curriculum at Birches Primary School**

RSE is a statutory element of the Northern Ireland Curriculum. It supports the curriculum aim which is 'to empower young people to achieve their potential and to make informed and responsible decision throughout their lives'. Teachers will endeavour to ensure that pupils are enabled to develop knowledge, understanding and skills in accordance with CEA Relationships and Sexuality Education Guidance 2015. The RSE curriculum in Birches Primary School should enable pupils to develop knowledge, understanding and skills in:

- Developing knowledge and understanding of self, their personal attributes, their self-esteem and self-confidence and how they develop as individuals.
- Developing their own and other's feelings and emotions and how their actions affect others.
- Developing their management of a range of feelings and emotions and the feelings and emotions of others.
- Knowing the importance of keeping healthy, the strategies and skills for keeping healthy and knowing how to sustain their health, growth and well-being.
- Knowing how to keep safe in familiar and unfamiliar environments, knowing the strategies and skills for keeping safe, coping safely and efficiently with their environment.
- Developing, initiating and sustaining mutually satisfying relationships with family and friends.
- Recognising similarities and differences between people and valuing and celebrating cultural differences and diversity.

### **Skills**

The RSE curriculum should enable pupils to develop the skills necessary to form and maintain relationships and to make informed choices and decisions regarding health and well-being. Pupils should also be helped to develop skills to critically evaluate a wide range of information, opinions, attitudes and values.

Pupils need opportunities to develop:

- **Practical skills** for everyday living; for supporting others.
- **Communication skills** – learning to listen, listening to others points of view; putting one's own views forward clearly and appropriately; giving and receiving feedback; handling and resolving conflict peacefully; being assertive.
- **Decision-making and problem-solving skills** for sensible choices made in the light of relevant information; making moral judgements about what to do in actual situations and putting these judgements into practice; acting responsibly and with initiative as an individual or as a member of a variety of groups.
- **Inter-personal skills** for managing relationships confidently and effectively; for developing as an effective group member or leader.

### **The Management and co-ordination of Relationships and Sexuality Education in the school**

**Name of the Coordinator:** The PDMU / RE co-ordinator

### **Curriculum Organisation and Delivery**



The teaching programme includes topics covered through the delivery of the Northern Ireland Curriculum in Birches Primary School.

Many of the aspects included below are also part of Personal Development and Mutual Understanding(PDMU), Religious Education (RE), The World Around Us (WAU), Physical Education (PE), Drama, Assemblies or when being proactive or reactive to specific situations and events. All teachers will deliver the RSE programme in a sensitive manner which is appropriate to the age and understanding of pupils and is reflective of the ethos of the school.

The Northern Ireland Curriculum offers opportunities to develop an RSE programme in a holistic and cross-curricular way. Issues can be integrated within specific topics, discussed in subject-related contexts, addressed through health education, pastoral work, visits from school nurses or other agencies.

School staff will take opportunity where appropriate to integrate subject matter that addresses RSE issues in a whole school assembly, for example: During Anti-Bullying Week, Hope North West Drugs and Alcohol Awareness Classes.

RSE will be delivered in a holistic, cross-curricular way, ensuring that teaching is at all times appropriate to the maturity and understanding of the pupils. Reasonable adjustments will be made for children with SEN where appropriate. Teachers will be alert to the personal and emotional circumstances of the pupils.

### **Relationships between Home, School and community**

The effectiveness of this RSE policy and programme is dependent on a collaborative process involving teachers, parents, governors and other educational and health professionals. Each of the partners has distinctive contributions to make. Keeping parents/carers informed about the school's provision for health education is a vital element of RSE. A child's readiness for aspects of the RSE programme, the appropriateness of resources and the handling of sensitive topics will be discussed with parents. The delivery of RSE must prepare pupils to view relationships in a responsible and healthy manner.

### **Involving Parents**

Our aim is to develop a structure which enables both parents and teachers to work together. The home exerts a major influence on all aspects of a child's life, and especially so in the domain of relationships and sexuality. Parents are often concerned about the information their children are receiving from their peers, the media and social media. We will attempt to provide opportunities for pupils to consider this information and endeavour to ensure they receive accurate information.

The school will never attempt to assume the cloak of parental responsibility. Rather, we view parents as having prime decision making responsibilities. It is paramount that we work in partnership with parents, particularly in relation to these sensitive issues. Information sessions will be offered to all children in Key Stage Groups through the 'Stay Safe, Speak Out' Campaign organised by the NSPCC. Workshops will also be held for P6 and P7 children. Details of the course contents will be provided to all parents and parental permission sought for pupil participation.



### **Links to other Policies**

- Teaching and Learning
- Safeguarding and Child Protection
- Pastoral Care
- Personal Development Curriculum
- E-Safety and Acceptable Use Agreement
- Promoting Positive Behaviour
- First Aid
- Health and Safety
- Misuse of Substances/Drugs Education
- Anti-Bullying
- Storage and Administration of Medication
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

### **Issues to be considered**

#### **Family Status**

We acknowledge the different family units that are represented in school and will endeavour to treat all situations sensitively.

#### **Confidentiality and Child Protection**

Confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. Where there is disclosure by a child, child protection / safeguarding procedures will be implemented.

#### **Withdrawal from RSE**

Since RSE is a statutory requirement, it should be inclusive. As a school we actively promote the implementation of RSE and strongly discourage withdrawal. The school will, however, take account of parent/carer concerns.

#### **Specific Items**

There will be no direct teaching of issues such as AIDS, contraception, LGBS etc... However, if these issues are raised by pupils, teachers will address them sensitively.

#### **Use of Visitors**

Where appropriate, we may use the skills and expertise of outside agencies and professionals. Where this occurs, the school will be satisfied that contributions from informed outsiders are an integral part of the whole programme and in harmony with the aims and ethos of the school

#### **Staff development and training**

Training needs will be considered and will be provided by the EA, Health Education Specialists and School Health Teams.

Where outside Agencies are used for training purposes, their remit will be clear and will reflect the ethos of the school.

#### **Mixed Groups**

The delivery of the RSE programme will be mainly co-educational, however, in certain circumstances it may be appropriate to speak to the pupils in single sex groups in P7.



### **Roles and Responsibilities**

- **The Board of Governors**

Examines, approves and ratifies the Policy

- **The Principal**

Ensures a co-ordinated approach to RSE and consults with the Board of Governors, Staff, Parents, health Professionals and others.

- **Staff**

Provide a link and have a complementary role with parents.

Will be provided with and will undertake appropriate training.

Plan for and implement RSE. All material used will reflect the ethos of the school.

### **Guidance documents** - All documents are available at [www.ccea.org.uk](http://www.ccea.org.uk)

The following guidance documents by CCEA may also be of use to teachers in planning their Relationships and Sexuality Education Provision:

- Living, Learning, Together.
- Personal Development and Mutual Understanding (PDMU) Guidance Booklet
- PDMU Progression Grid
- Active Learning and Teaching Methods for Key Stage 1 and 2
- Assessment for Learning: A Practical Guide
- Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities at Key Stage 1 and 2.

### **Monitoring and evaluation of RSE provision**

Reviewed by Staff	-	October 2018-11-07
Reviewed by new term of Governors	-	November 2018
Parental Consultation	-	November 2018
Adopted by Board of Governors	-	November 2018

