



RSE POLICY

April 2019

Review Date: April 2021

Chair of Board of Governors	Date
Principal	Date

We care ~ We share ~ We learn

We care – We share – We learn

Our vision is to enable independent and happy pupils to acquire a capacity for lifelong learning

in

a Christian atmosphere that translates into daily life

by

promoting a learning environment which motivates creativity and achievement in an atmosphere of respect and responsibility

while

highlighting and nurturing strengths and celebrating successes

through

fostering successful, productive and enjoyable partnerships:

within school,

between home and school,

and

with the community in which our school belongs

Relationships and Sexuality Education in the N.I. context

RSE is not a new area of the curriculum. The framework for sex education was initially established by the Department of Education for Northern Ireland (DENI) in a Guidance Circular 1987/45. The main recommendation of this Circular was that each school should have a written policy on sex education

This is endorsed by staff and governors and communicated to parents. It also stated “sex education should be taught in a sensitive manner which is in harmony with the ethos of the school and in conformity with the moral and religious principles held by parents and school management Authorities”

The Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 1989 further set out the legislative basis, requiring all grant aided schools to offer a curriculum which:

- Promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, intellectual and physical development of pupils at the school and thereby of society ...and...
- prepares such pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life

The general principles which underpin our work are those set out in Departmental guidance and the following Circulars:

Circular 2001/15: Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE)

Circular 2001/15-2: Guidance for Primary Schools - Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE)

Circular 2010/01: Guidance on Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE)

Circular 2013/16: Relationships and Sexuality Education Policy in Schools

Circular 2015/22: Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) Guidance

We further recognise the importance of working in partnership with parents/carers in this area of personal development and acknowledge the contribution that can be made by outside agencies with skill and expertise in particular areas of the curriculum (NSPCC, Women’s Aid and School Nursing Service).

INTRODUCTION

Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) is a lifelong process which encompasses the acquisition of knowledge, understanding and skills, and the development of attitudes, beliefs and values about personal and social relationships and gender issues. The learning process begins informally with our parents (or those holding parental responsibility) long before any formal education takes place at school.

The Northern Ireland Curriculum aims to empower young people to achieve their potential and to make informed and responsible decisions throughout their lives. Relationships and Sexuality Education is firmly grounded in Personal Development and Mutual Understanding element of the school curriculum, where the central focus is on the emotional development of children, health and safety, relationships with others, and the development of moral thinking, values and actions

RSE is included on a statutory basis within the NI curriculum through Religious Education, PDMU, Health Education and World around Us. The Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 1989 set out the legislative basis, requiring all grant aided schools to offer a curriculum which promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, intellectual and physical development of pupils at the school and thereby of society and prepares such pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. New Row is a Catholic Primary School and in RSE all pupils will be taught in an atmosphere of mutual respect within our Catholic ethos. The value of a stable family life, marriage and the responsibilities of parenthood will be presented. As they mature, pupils will be encouraged to appreciate the importance of self-discipline, dignity, respect for themselves and others. We look at how pupils interact with each other, focussing on the need to make pupils feel safe and confident. Through PDMU and World Around Us children will learn about changes in their bodies as they grow older.

Teaching at all times will be appropriate to the maturity and level of understanding of the pupils concerned. Teachers will be aware of, and take into account, the variety of existing pupil knowledge, the different attitudes and beliefs and the pupil's capacity to understand the issues.

Sexuality includes all aspects of the human person that relate to being male or female and is subject to change and development throughout life. Sexuality is an integral part of the human personality and has biological, cultural, psychological, social and spiritual dimensions. It especially concerns affectivity, the capacity to give and receive love; procreation and, in a more general way, the aptitude for forming relationships with others. It is a complex dimension of human life and relationships.

Teaching RSE should provide opportunities which enable pupils:

- to form values and establish behaviour within a moral, spiritual and social framework;
- to examine and explore the various relationships in their personal lives;
- to learn how to develop and enjoy personal relationships and friendships which are based on responsibility and mutual respect;
- to build the foundations for developing more personal relationships in later life;
- to make positive, responsible choices about themselves and others and the way they live their lives.

AIMS

The aims of RSE are to:

- enhance the personal development, self-esteem and well-being of the child;
- help the child develop healthy and respectful friendships and relationships;
- foster an understanding of, and a healthy attitude to, human sexuality and relationships in a moral, social and spiritual framework;
- promote responsible behaviour and the ability to make informed decisions;
- help the child come to value family life and marriage;
- appreciate the responsibilities of parenthood;
- promote an appreciation of the value of human life and the wonder of birth.
- promote a better understanding of diversity and inclusion;
- help children keep themselves safe in a digital world

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The RSE curriculum should enable pupils to:

- acquire and develop knowledge and understanding of self;
- develop a positive sense of self-awareness, self-esteem and self-worth;
- develop an appreciation of the dignity, uniqueness and well-being of others;
- understand the nature, growth and development of relationships within families, in friendships and

in wider contexts;

- develop an awareness of differing family patterns;
- develop strategies to make decisions, solve problems, and implement actions in various personal, social and health contexts;
- become aware of the variety of ways in which individuals grow and change

and understand that their developing sexuality is an important aspect of self-identity;

- develop personal skills which will help to establish and sustain healthy personal relationships;
- develop some coping strategies to protect self and others from various forms of abuse;
- acquire and improve skills of communication and social interaction;
- acquire and use an appropriate vocabulary to discuss feelings, sexuality, growth and development;
- develop a critical understanding of external influences on lifestyles and decision making.

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 the wide range of information, opinions, attitudes and values. They need opportunities to develop:

practical skills for everyday living; for supporting others; for future parenting; communication skills learning to listen, listening to others' points of view; putting one's own view 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.

MORALS AND VALUES

RSE should enable pupils to clarify what they believe and why they believe it and develop a respect for and interest in the beliefs of others. Pupils need opportunities to explore values and attitudes and to consider how they, and others, are affected by them.

The importance of a moral framework is emphasised in the DfEE Circular No 5/1994

Education Act 1993: Sex Education in Schools: “Sex education . . . must not be value-free; it should also be tailored not only to the age but also to the understanding of pupils. School’s programmes of sex education should therefore aim to present facts in an objective, balanced and sensitive manner, set within a clear framework of values and an awareness of the law on sexual behaviour. Pupils should accordingly be encouraged to appreciate the value of stable family life, marriage and the responsibilities of parenthood. They should be helped to consider the importance of self-restraint, dignity, respect for themselves and others, acceptance of responsibility, sensitivity towards the needs and views of others, loyalty and fidelity. And they should be enabled to recognise the physical, emotional and moral implications, and risks, of certain types of behaviour, and to accept that both sexes must behave responsibly in sexual matters”. Teachers are reminded: “to acknowledge that many children come from backgrounds that do not reflect such values and experiences. Sensitivity is therefore needed to avoid causing hurt and offence to them and their families and to allow such children a sense of worth”. (Paragraph 8)

Special Needs

It is particularly important for teaching staff to be aware of the fact that physical development may outstrip emotional maturity in the case of pupils with Special Needs and to accommodate this disparity in class lessons and experiences.

Dealing with homophobic language and bullying

A school should be a happy environment where children feel safe and secure: a place where difference is celebrated and where all children can focus on their learning. Homophobic bullying is ‘any language, conduct, or behaviour used to exclude, demean or threaten a person based on their actual or perceived sexual orientation’ (The Rainbow Project, 2010). The word ‘gay’ is often used in a negative and belittling way by many children. In New Row the staff will ensure that young people are aware that using this kind of language is not acceptable.

OTHER RELEVANT POLICIES

This policy complements and supports a range of other school policies including:

Positive Behaviour/Anti-Bullying Policy

Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

Physical restraint and safe handling

Special Educational Needs

First Aid and the Administration of Medicines

Health and Safety Policy

Digital images

eSafety

Social Media

Intimate Care

Curriculum

Below you will find in detail the RSE curriculum children have followed in school since the introduction of the new curriculum. It is an age appropriate curriculum laid out by CCEA

Strand - Personal Understanding and Health

Foundation Stage P 1 and P2

Self-Awareness

- Exploring who they are, what they can do, identifying favourite things, what makes them special

Feelings and Emotions

- beginning to recognise how they feel
- knowing what to do if sad or lonely, afraid or angry
- telling others about feelings
- realising what makes people sad or unhappy, recognising how people feel

Health and Safety

- Being aware of caring for his/her own body
- recognising good hygiene practices
- understanding growth and change
- exploring appropriate personal safety strategies, road safety,
- medicines and drugs -safety rules

Religious Education

- Life is a gift from God (Catechism of the Catholic Church CC 2260).
- Stories which help children distinguish right from wrong and help children to make moral judgements about situations.
- Moral values such as sharing, caring, love, forgiveness and friendship.
- The importance of family and care of the earth.

Key Stage 1 P3 and P4

Self-Awareness

- Feeling positive about oneself
- awareness of own strengths, abilities, qualities, personal preferences
- recognising own feelings and emotions
- recognising and managing the effects of strong feelings – anger, sadness, loss

- acknowledging that everyone makes mistakes
- recognising how they can develop and improve learning

Health, Growth and Change

- Recognising and valuing the options for a healthy lifestyle
- having respect for their bodies and those of others
- being aware of the stages of human growth and development
- recognising how responsibilities and relationships change as you grow older
- understanding medicines and drugs
- understanding that, if not used properly, all products can be dangerous
- being aware that some diseases are infectious and some can be controlled

Religious Education

- My family is a gift from God.
- Christians respect their bodies and the bodies of others because they were created by God (CCC 364; CSRE 3a).
- The importance of looking after ourselves physically, emotionally and spiritually.

Key Stage 2 P5-P7

Self-Awareness

- developing self-awareness, self-respect and self-esteem
- confidently express own views and opinions
- identify current strengths and weaknesses
- face problems and try to resolve them
- examine and explore own and others' feelings and emotions
- recognise, express and manage feelings in a positive and safe way
- develop insight into potential and capabilities
- reflect on progress and set goals
- identify and practise effective learning strategies
- be aware of different learning styles

Health, Growth and Change

- understand the benefits of a healthy lifestyle
- recognise what shapes positive mental health
- know about the harmful effects of tobacco, alcohol and other illicit and illegal substances
- understand that bacteria and viruses affect health and know that basic

routines can be followed to minimise risks

- know how the body grows and develops
- be aware of physical and emotional changes that take place during puberty (Y7 only)
- be aware of the skills and importance of good parenting
- recognise how responsibilities change as they become older and more independent

Keeping Safe

- develop strategies to resist peer pressure
- recognise the nature of bullying and the harm which can result
- become aware of the potential danger from strangers and how their attention can make you uncomfortable
- recognise appropriate road use
- develop a pro-active and responsible approach to safety – at home, near water, on the internet, TV etc.
- know where, when and how to seek help
- being aware of basic emergency procedures and first aid (including Heartstart programme)

Religious Education

- The importance of looking after ourselves physically, emotionally and spiritually.
- Life is precious and God-given.

Teaching Resources

The CCEA resource Living Learning Together helps to support the delivery of the Personal Development and Mutual Understanding area of learning. Living Learning Together covers issues and topics related to Relationships and Sexuality Education, particularly in the yellow units.

Withdrawal from R.S.E

In Northern Ireland, parents or carers have the right to have their children educated in accordance with their wishes. Therefore, whilst ‘there is no legislative provision permitting parental withdrawal from RSE’ the Board of Governors of New Row PS can grant withdrawal requests on an individual basis.

Monitoring and Evaluating

Policy will be disseminated to parents and staff following adoption and biennial reviews. New Row Primary School staff are committed to monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of this policy. Specifically important to the RSE Programme are:

- Religious sensitivity within our Catholic School Ethos in New Row Primary School
- pupil feedback
- staff review and feedback
- parental feedback
- further Departmental guidance and legislative changes

Appendix 1

Below is a list of resources which teachers may wish to consult when planning or refreshing their existing provision to ensure that it remains meaningful and relevant to pupils' lives and experiences.

Keeping children safer in the digital world

www.saferinternet.org.uk

UK Safer Internet Centre has produced a range of resources to help schools teach pupils about staying safe online. These resources include a range of games, films, quizzes and advice and are pitched at children between 3–11 years old.

www.thinkuknow.co.uk

Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) 'thinkuknow' website contains advice and resources for teachers exploring the risks which children and young people are exposed to when online. CEOP have produced targeted advice and guidance for parents or carers and teachers and for children aged 5–7 and 8–10 years old.

www.childnet.com/teachers-and-professionals

Childnet International provides in-depth advice for teachers in their 'hot topics' section, covering issues such as sexting, online grooming, cyber bullying and online gaming safety. There is also an online resource bank which contains lesson plans and activity ideas suitable for children of primary school age – this is available at www.childnet.com/resources.

www.kidsmart.org.uk

This website contains useful support for teachers, including resources for teaching children about staying safe online. Recognising and challenging inappropriate behaviour and touch

www.nspcc.org.uk

www.safertoknow.info

The Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland's (SBNI) website contains useful information and resources to raise awareness on child sexual exploitation. Sexual orientation, gender identity and homophobic bullying

www.stonewall.org.uk

This website provides access to many resources on celebrating difference and encouraging respect for one another in the primary classroom setting.

www.endbullying.org.uk

The Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying Forum includes resources on cyber bullying and homophobic bullying.

Guidance documents

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 Guidance Booklet
- Personal Development and Mutual Understanding Progression Grids
- Active Learning and Teaching Methods for Key Stages 1 & 2
- Assessment for Learning: A Practical Guide
- Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities at Key Stages 1 & 2

All documents are available at www.ccea.org.uk