

Donaghmore Primary School Relationships and Sexuality Education Policy

The School Ethos

In Donaghmore Primary School we aspire for all our children to become confident, secure, caring individuals, who achieve personal success, and develop a love of learning.

We work together as a community to promote the full potential of all by empowering children to develop unique talents and skills, through a broad and balanced curriculum within a caring Christian environment, where everyone is respected and valued.

We are committed to the education of children regardless of race, religion, gender or status. All pupils have a right to an education which adequately prepares them for adult life, and RSE plays an integral part.

In the Northern Ireland Primary School Curriculum, one of the areas of learning is Personal Development and Mutual Understanding (PDMU). An integral part of the PDMU curriculum is the provision of RSE. The central focus of PDMU is on the emotional development of children; health and safety; relationships with others; and the development of moral thinking, values and actions. Sexuality includes all aspects of the human person that relate to being male or female and is subject to change and development throughout life.

Children in our care 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. Pupils are encouraged to recognise their individual needs while respecting the needs and wants of others. RSE is a lifelong process that involves the acquisition of knowledge, understanding and skills and the development of attitudes, beliefs, morals and values.

Teaching RSE should provide opportunities which enable pupils 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;
- build the foundations for developing more personal relationships in later life;
- make positive, responsible choices about themselves and others and the way they live their lives.

AIMS

In Donaghmore Primary School we aim 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;
- promote an appreciation of the importance of the family unit (regardless of structure/composition);
- promote an appreciation of the value of human life.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The RSE curriculum should enable pupils to:

- Develop a positive sense of self awareness, self-esteem and self-worth.
- Develop an appreciation of the dignity, uniqueness and wellbeing of others.
- Develop personal skills which help to establish and sustain healthy, personal relationships.
- Acquire and improve skills of communication and social interaction.
- Acquire and use an appropriate vocabulary to discuss feelings, growth and development.
- Become aware of the variety of ways in which individuals grow and change.
- Develop a critical understanding of external influences on lifestyles and decision making.

SKILLS

The RSE curriculum should enable pupils to develop:

- **Communication skills** – putting one's own views clearly and appropriately; listening to others' points of view; handling and resolving conflict peacefully.
- **Decision making and problem solving skills** – for sensible and responsible choices; making moral judgements about what to do in actual situations.

- **Interpersonal skills** - for managing relationships confidently and effectively; for developing as an effective group member or leader.
- **Practical skills** – for everyday living; for supporting others; for future parenting.

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 affect them, and others.

Children should be taught RSE within a framework which models and encourages the following values:

- a respect for self;
- a respect for others;
- non-exploitation in relationships;
- commitment, trust and bonding within relationships;
- mutuality in relationships;
- honesty with self and others;
- a development of critical self-awareness for themselves and others;
- an exploration of the rights, duties and responsibilities involved in relationships;
- compassion, forgiveness, mercy and care when people do not conform to their way of life;
- self-discipline.

HOW WILL WE ACHIEVE OUR AIMS?

Children will learn on a day-to-day basis from the example set by adults:

- At home:
 - As first educators, parents lay the foundations for all acceptable patterns of behaviour, leading by example, and sharing with school the joint task of bringing the child through to the age of eleven with a balanced understanding of life and a healthy appreciation of the human relationships they will form in years to come.
- At school:
 - The friendly, positive and safe learning environment created by staff.
 - The messages given to children through religious celebrations, assemblies, discussions, workshops etc.
 - The encouragement given and the standards upheld in terms of sportsmanship, fair play, accepting decisions and taking both winning and losing in the same spirit.
 - The respect held for and shown to all members of our community.
 - Planned curriculum areas such as PDMU. Topics covered include Personal safety, Healthy Eating, Keeping Fit, Rules, Friendship. Aspects of RSE are intrinsic in other areas of the curriculum including World Around Us, RE, PE and are dealt with in reaction to many everyday situations which arise.
 - Partnerships between school and outside agencies e.g. NSPCC, PSNI, Internet Safety workshop providers

If a disclosure is made during any of the RSE sessions, the school's Child Protection procedures will be followed.

SELECTION OF TEACHING RESOURCES

The selection of teaching resources should be:

- consistent with the school's RSE policy and the aims and objectives of the RSE programme;
- appropriate to pupils' age, level of understanding and maturity;
- factually correct and respectful of its audience;
- likely to appeal to pupils in terms of appropriate language level, images, attitudes and values, maturity, contexts and situations, and the knowledge required;
- complementary to the existing programmes which the school offers;
- encouraging consideration of a range of issues, attitudes and beliefs pertinent to the topics covered;

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.

STAFF TRAINING AND REVIEW

Training needs will be considered and will be accessed when applicable. Where outside Agencies are used for training purposes, their remit will be clear and will reflect the ethos of the school. This policy will be under periodic review and updated in light of further guidance and legislation.

Links to other school policies;

Child Protection
Anti-bullying
Pastoral Care

This policy will be reviewed triennially or sooner if required.