

Queen Elizabeth II Primary School

Relationships and Sexuality Education Policy

The School Ethos

In Queen Elizabeth II 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 Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) plays an important part.

What is RSE?

RSE helps children acquire age-appropriate knowledge, understanding and skills, and develop attitudes, beliefs and values about relationships. It is about helping children to value themselves and others, appreciating their uniqueness and making well informed decisions about their lives. It provides children with opportunities to:

- Value themselves as unique individuals,
- Respect themselves and others,
- Begin to develop their own moral thinking and value systems,
- Learn about friendships, healthy relationships, and behaviours with others,
- Recognise and communicate their feelings and emotions and those of others,
- Learn about the changes that occur as they progress towards adolescence, particularly the emotional and physical changes that occur at puberty, and
- Learn about keeping themselves safe and know what to do or who to go to if they feel unsafe.

Aims

In Queen Elizabeth II Primary School we aim to:

- Enhance the personal development, self-esteem, and well-being of each child,
- Enable children to identify and manage a range of feelings,
- Help children 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 life (regardless of structure/composition),
- Promote an appreciation of the value of human life.

Learning Outcomes

The RSE curriculum will 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 and inter-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 will enable pupils to develop:

- **Communication skills** – putting one's own views forward 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.

Morals and Values

RSE enables 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 will be taught RSE within a framework which models and encourages the following values:

- A respect for self,
- A respect for others,
- Equal opportunities for all,
- 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,
- A sensitive caring attitude towards the needs of others,
- 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 joined 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.
 - ✓ The constructive everyday interactions between pupils and 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.

RSE is delivered in a holistic, cross curricular way, ensuring that teaching is appropriate to the maturity and understanding of the pupils. Teachers will be alert to the personal and emotional circumstances of the pupils.

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. Topics covered include:

- Self-awareness,
- Feelings and emotions,
- Health, growth and change including hygiene, healthy eating, keeping fit, safe use of medicine, harmful, effects of tobacco etc,
- Safety including staying safe on roads and in the sun, good and bad touches, bullying issues,
- Relationships including family roles and friendships.

See Appendix 1, Overview of RSE within the PDMU Curriculum.

Aspects of RSE are intrinsic in other areas of the curriculum including Literacy, World Around Us, RE, PE and are dealt with in reaction to many everyday situations which arise.

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 will include physical and emotional changes which occur at puberty but will not include sex education. Correct biological terms will be used for parts of the body.

Some aspects of the RSE curriculum are taught through partnerships with other schools, local churches, charities, and outside agencies e.g., NSPCC, PSNI, Love for Life, Internet Safety workshop providers.

The selection of teaching resources will 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.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The classroom is an open environment and confidentiality cannot be maintained.

Any disclosures that might suggest a pupil is at risk will be reported as outlined in the Child Protection Policy.

WITHDRAWAL FROM RSE

RSE is a statutory requirement of the NI Curriculum with many elements inherent in daily school life. When sessions tackling issues such as 'puberty' and 'good and bad touches' are planned, parents will be notified in advance. Although we discourage withdrawal from these sessions, we understand pupils' levels of maturity differ. Parents wishing to withdraw their child should consult with the Principal.

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.