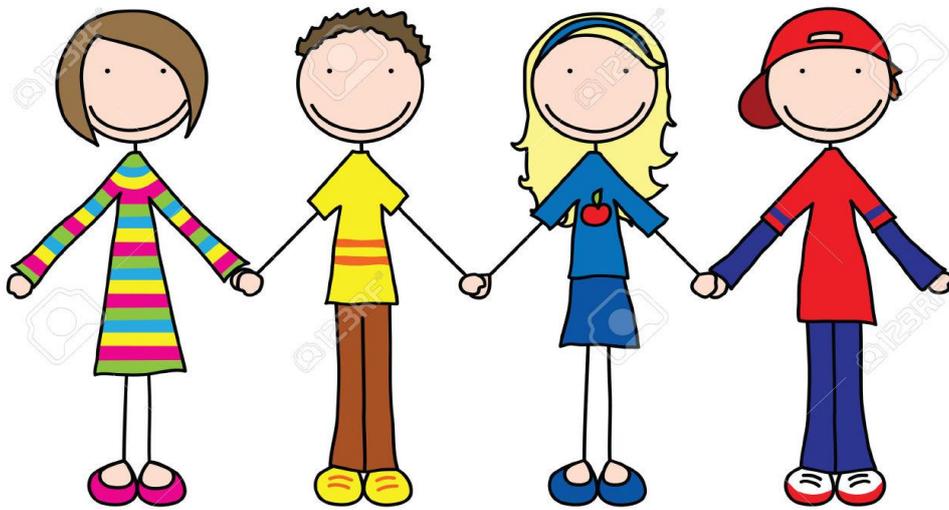


Relationships & Sexuality Education



Ballytober Primary School

Ratified : 28th June 2022

Signed : _____ Chairperson, BoG

It is the policy of the school to establish a friendly and trusting relationship between teachers, pupils and parents and to provide a caring and secure framework for enjoyable and confident learning.

RATIONALE

All pupils have a right to an education which adequately prepares them for adult life and R.S.E. plays an integral part. Many children are maturing earlier and are being constantly exposed to unhelpful and confused messages from the media e.g. magazines, television and popular music. This can lead to early sexual activity, increase in teenage pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases.

R.S.E can provide opportunities for pupils to examine their own values and beliefs and thus equip them to make informed choices. This preparation should help pupils to be better able to manage their emotional and physical changes at puberty.

R.S.E can help to develop each pupil's self-esteem by creating a climate of trust and acceptance in which each person is valued, respected and encouraged to feel good about themselves.

DEFINITIONS - RELATIONSHIPS AND SEXUALITY

R.S.E is a lifelong process which involves the whole person and encompasses beliefs and values. It will always be taught within the context of relationships. Sexuality impacts on our moral behaviour, to ourselves, others and to God. It helps us to distinguish between right and wrong, to take responsibility for our own actions and teaches us a respect for self and others within a Christian framework.

MONITORING AND EVALUATING

This will involve the whole staff and parents and will be evaluated against our aims. The Board of Governors has a pivotal role in forming and approving the R.S.E. Policy and programme. They will work in collaboration with the Principal, staff and parents to review and implement this policy with religious and cultural sensitivity.

STAFF TRAINING

This will be provided to all staff by outside agencies in keeping with the ethos of our school.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Board of Governors have a pivotal role.

1. They will work with teachers and parents.
2. Examine and approve the policy.
3. Review the policy.
4. Ratify the policy and programme.

AIMS

The ethos of Ballytober Primary School is based on Christian values and principles through which R.S. E. will be interpreted and implemented. Our Christian ethos promotes and compliments the requirement of the Department of Education and guidance materials of R.S.E.

Through R.S.E. we aim to:

1. Provide a broad and balanced curriculum which promotes the social, moral, physical, intellectual and spiritual development of the child.
2. Help the child develop healthy and respectful friendships, and relationships.
3. Foster an understanding of and a healthy attitude to, human sexuality and relationships in a moral, social and spiritual framework.
4. Promote responsible behaviour and the ability to make informed decisions.
5. Help the child appreciate and value family life.
6. Promote an appreciation of the value and sacredness of human life.
7. To make informed decisions and choices.

THE STATUS OF THE FAMILY

While we endorse the principles of Christianity and family values, we recognise there are alternative family groupings. Accordingly, our philosophy of education is based on our conviction of the value and equality of all children.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND CARE PROTECTION ISSUES

The child's right to privacy must be respected, however:

1. Teachers cannot promise un-compromised confidentiality.
2. Any instance which indicates abuse must be reported to the Principal or Designated Teacher.
3. All teachers must be aware of their responsibilities regarding confidentiality, which are within the guidelines of the Child Protection Policy.

WITHDRAWAL FROM CLASS AND SUPERVISION

Should a parent request the exclusion of their child/children from the R.S.E. then every attempt will be made to deal with any area of concern. However, the parent's wishes will be respected, and if all else fails, alternative arrangements for supervision will be made.

DETAILS TO BE TAUGHT

The school will teach R.S.E. as detailed in the *Guidance for Primary School in R.S.E.* with some exceptions. The school will continue to teach issues related to "An awareness of puberty-related changes which occur in our bodies". This is currently included in the programme of study for pupils aged 9 - 11.

The topics of conception, pregnancy and abortion will NOT be approached at this stage.

TERMINOLOGY

The appropriate and correct terminology related to sexuality, growing up, physical changes and feelings etc., will be used during class discussions so that this language will become accepted terms in which the children will communicate confidently and respectfully about themselves and others. Slang and swear words will not be tolerated.

THE SACREDNESS OF LIFE

Children will be taught that life is sacred and this tenet of belief is reflected in R.S.E and is based on moral and spiritual principles. All visitors, who are invited, with the parents' knowledge, to deliver elements of the R.S.E. schemes, will be made aware of the school's policies on all issues and will be required to adhere to them. Any teaching resources will be evaluated by the appropriate member of staff before being presented to the children. All visits will be monitored and evaluated.

HOMOSEXUALITY

Within the Primary School context, and given the media influence, children are much more aware of language and terminologies concerning topical issues e.g. gay, lesbian etc. Our policy will be to consider issues related to the improper use of these terms in name calling/bullying situations and to impress upon those involved that labelling, or categorising pupils is inappropriate and will be dealt with according to the school's Positive Behaviour Management Policy.

R.S.E. FOR BOYS

The R.S.E. programmes will in general be delivered to mixed groups, giving opportunities for both sexes to voice their concerns and opinions. However, there will be occasions when it will be necessary to address single gender groups where it would be considered too embarrassing or inhibiting to include both sexes in the lesson/discussion.

SKILLS

The R.S.E. 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 evaluate critically 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 points of view from others: 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

Morally, educated school leavers should be able to :-

- * Distinguish between right and wrong
- * Take responsibility for their own actions
- * Have a respect for self
- * Have a respect for others
- * Be non-exploitative in relationships
- * Be honest with self and others
- * Be compassionate, forgiving and kind
- * Have self-discipline

WHERE WILL R.S.E. BE TAUGHT?

It will be taught through the PDMU curriculum.

WHO WILL TEACH IT?

All teachers will be involved in the teaching of R.S.E. and outside agencies will also be involved. We will try to ensure that the learning experiences are effective, positive and relevant to all pupils, and that the programme is developmental, accessible and appropriate to the age of the pupils.

AN OUTLINE OF A PROGRAMME FOR KEY STAGE 1 & 2

FOUNDATION AND KEY STAGE 1

MYSELF

- * Myself - how I grow, feed, move and use my senses, caring for myself, for example, hygiene, sleep and exercise.
- * Naming parts of the body (basic) - developing an agreed language for our bodies.
- * Being myself - I am unique, my self-esteem, self-confidence, independence, respect and caring for myself.
- * Similarities and differences between myself and others, e.g. uniqueness, fingerprints, gender issues, different rates of growth.
- * An introduction to the stage of human development - changes as we grow, e.g. baby, child, teenager, adult, mother/father, grandparents.
- * Recognising moods, feelings and concerns and developing a language and an appropriate manner of expressing them, e.g. - what do I do if I feel sad or angry?
- * Personal likes and dislikes.

MY RELATIONSHIPS

- * My family, special people in my life - what they do for me and what I do for them.
- * Friendships - getting on with each other e.g. communicating, playing together, listening, co-operation and sharing.
- * Ageing - how do we know that things are alive, dead, young and old?
- * Loss and mourning - death of a person or pet. (Note: the situations of the pupils should be taken into account prior to introducing this topic)
- * Respect and caring for family members and friends, e.g. caring for a new baby.
- * Bullies and what to do about them.
- * Personal safety - simple skills and practices to maintain personal safety.
- * The difference between good and bad touches.
- * Realise that adults and older children are not always friends - the potential danger of relationships with strangers or acquaintances.
- * Strategies which pupils might use to protect themselves from potentially dangerous situations.

MY COMMUNITY/ENVIRONMENT

- * Awareness of different types of families and the roles of individuals within families.
- * Keeping safe, e.g. dangerous places, dangerous situations, the adults who will help and how to get help from others.

- * Rules at home, at school and in the community.
- * Respect and caring for people in the community e.g. elderly people.

KEY STAGE 2

MYSELF

- * My body, how it works and how to keep it healthy.
- * The physical, social and emotional changes which occur during puberty (girls & boys).
- * Myself and my peers - different rates of growth and physical development, maturity.
- * Valuing and respecting myself, identifying personal strengths and weaknesses.
- * Feelings, e.g. things that make me happy, sad, excited, embarrassed, angry, scared, expressing our feelings, showing love and affection.
- * Gender roles.
- * Making choices - the influences on me and the consequences of actions for oneself and others.
- * Distinguishing between right and wrong.
- * Secrets - knowing the difference between good and bad secrets, what to do about bad secrets.

MY RELATIONSHIPS

- * Identifying the positive traits of friendship and their corresponding values.
- * Differences and similarities in people, the need to respect other people's views, emotions and feelings.
- * Families and how they behave.
- * The meaning of friendship and loyalty, making and maintaining friendships and social relationships, e.g. identifying and understanding pressures and influences, taking account of other people's point of view.
- * Handling difficult situations, e.g. teasing, bullying, death of a family member.
- * People who can help pupils when they have anxieties, concerns or questions.

MY COMMUNITY/ENVIRONMENT

- * Appreciation of the family in relation to the school and the wider community.
- * Cultural differences in families and family relationships.
- * Helping agencies which can support families and individuals in different circumstances.
- * Messages and images about health, gender roles and sexuality from the media and family.