

Carr's Glen Primary and Nursery School



RSE Policy

August 2019

INTRODUCTION

At Carr's Glen Primary School we value the uniqueness of each and every child. We strive to develop our children intellectually, emotionally, physically and spiritually working in partnership with home and other relevant agencies so they realise their full potential, becoming effective contributors to society.

Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) seeks to provide young people with formal opportunities to acquire knowledge and understanding of human sexuality and how to develop the skills and values needed to maintain and sustain healthy relationships.

Sexuality includes all aspects of the human person 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 the ability to form relationships with others generally, the capacity to be affectionate, give and receive love, and reproduce.

RSE is a lifelong process where there is a need to acquire information and develop attitudes, beliefs and values about personal and social relationships and gender issues. The learning process begins informally with parents/carers, and continues throughout school and adult life.

RSE plays an integral part of a child's education in preparation for adult life.

CONTEXT

An ETI report into the provision of RSE in Post Primary schools published in 2011 highlighted the need for revised RSE guidance. In response to this report the Department of Education commissioned CCEA to provide revised guidance for both post primary and primary schools. The Department of Education through Circular 2013/16 requires that all grant aided schools have a policy setting out how the school will address RSE within the curriculum and it is against this backdrop that the RSE policy has been written.

This policy has been written in consideration of the following :

The Equality Act (sexual orientation)

A person should not be discriminated against on the grounds of sexual orientation

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

Including articles:

2 - Non – discrimination

3 - Best interest of the child

4 – Convention implementation

5 - Parental guidance and a child's evolving capacities

12 – Respect for the views of the child

13 – Freedom of expression

14 – Freedom of thought, belief and religion

17 – Access to information from the media

19 – Protection from violence, abuse and neglect

23 – Children with a disability

28 - The right to
education

29 – Goals of education

30 – Children from minority or indigenous groups

34 – The right to be protected from sexual abuse and exploitation

Every School A Good School – Together Towards Improvement

This document sets out the importance of school improvement and the role schools themselves have in creating and sustaining their own improvement. At CGPS we aim

to ensure every learner reaches his or her potential at each stage of his or her development through child centred provision, high quality learning and teaching, effective leadership and connections to the community as stated in this document.

Community Relations, Equality and Diversity in Education Policy

Equality and diversity are valued irrespective of religion, political views, race, marital status, sexual orientation, gender, disability and whether a person has dependents or not.

The School Development Plan

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POLICY FORMULATION AND CONSULTATION

The RSE co-ordinator drafted the RSE policy using the DENI circular 2015/22 and the revised CCEA guidelines for primary schools. Governors, The Senior Leadership Team, The Pastoral Care Team, members of staff and parents were consulted and invited to respond to the draft policy. All responses were discussed and any appropriate amendments were made to the policy document.

The policy closely links with the School Pastoral Care Policy and the DENI Circular 1999/10 Pastoral Care in Schools: Child Protection.

The contents of this policy will be made available to all members of the Board of Governors, teaching staff, and those providing sub cover. It will also be available to all parents on request, and can be found on the school website. All health or educational visitors discussing issues related to RSE, specifically the school nurse, will be provided with a copy of the school policy and will be encouraged to adhere to and follow its aims and objectives.

Comments/Feedback on this policy should be made to Mr Todd or Mrs Fulton.

POLICY AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 1989 requires all grant aided schools to offer a curriculum which:

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

Aims of RSE education

- To enhance the personal development, self-esteem and well-being of the young person.
- To develop self-respect and self confidence
- To help the young person learn how to develop and enjoy healthy and respectful friendships and relationships which are based on responsibility and mutual respect.
- To foster an understanding of and a healthy attitude to human sexuality and relationships in a moral, social and spiritual framework.
- To promote responsible behaviour and the ability to make informed decisions.
- To help the young person value family life and marriage and the responsibilities of parenthood.
- To promote an appreciation of the value and uniqueness of human life and the wonder of birth.

Objectives of RSE

The RSE curriculum as part of the statutory minimum entitlement for personal development teachers should ensure that pupils are given worthwhile experiences which enable them to explore:

- self-esteem, self-confidence, and how they develop as individuals
- their own and others feelings and emotions
- strategies to promote personal safety and health and resist various forms of abuse
- relationships with friends and families, valuing them as a source of love and mutual support
- similarities and differences between people
- dignity, uniqueness, wellbeing and sense of responsibility for themselves and others
- differing family structures and patterns
- strategies to make decisions, solve problems and implement actions
- growth and change and understand that their developing sexuality is an important aspect of self-identity
- the development of personal and inter-personal skills including communication and social interaction, in order to help establish and sustain healthy relationships
- the use of appropriate vocabulary to discuss feelings, sexuality, growth and development
- the impact of internal influences and external influences (such as peer pressure and conflict) on lifestyle and decision making
- identity including aspects of sexuality such as gender roles, stereotyping and cultural influences
- the physical, social and emotional changes which occur during puberty

A Framework for 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. There should be an appreciation that friendships and relationships should be based on self and mutual respect, non-exploitation, honesty, trust and commitment.

Within relationships there should be recognition that rights, duties and responsibilities are involved.

Relationships and Sexuality Education is not intended to be value free. It should be tailored to the age, maturity and understanding of pupils. The programme therefore aims to present facts in an objective, balanced and sensitive manner, set within a clear framework of values and an awareness of the law. Pupils should be encouraged to appreciate the value of family, marriage, and permanent loving relationships, 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 and loyalty.

They should be enabled to recognise the physical, emotional and moral implications and risks of certain types of behaviour and to accept that they must behave responsibly. Teachers should however 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 encourage the development of their sense of worth.

(adapted from DfEE Circular No 5/1994 Education Act 1993: Sex Education in Schools (Paragraph 8)).

The following key messages will be promoted throughout the school:

- An appreciation of the value of family life, marriage, permanent loving relationships, and the responsibilities of parenthood.
- A recognition that all people regardless of gender are to be appreciated, respected, valued and seen as equal, different and complimentary.
- An appreciation that friendships and relationships should be based on self and mutual respect, empathy, non-exploitation, honesty, trust and commitment.

- Compassion, forgiveness, mercy, tolerance and care are essential skills and dispositions to develop in relationships.
- Within relationships there should be recognition that rights, duties and responsibilities are involved.

In line with our school this is a list of the values in RSE which we wish to endorse.

- *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.*

All pupils have the right to an education which prepares them adequately for adult life regardless of their age, gender, culture, disability, religion or socio-economic status. Good RSE plays an integral part.

MANAGEMENT AND CO-ORDINATION

Mrs Fulton is the member of staff responsible for co-ordinating all issues related to RSE policy and programme development. Her role includes:

- Ensuring that the programme is taught effectively and is appropriate to the age and maturity of the pupils.

- Liaising with the principal, deputy designated teacher for child protection, Board of Governors, all staff, parents and health and educational visitors on RSE matters.
- Attending in-service training and disseminating appropriate information to other members of staff.
- Organising training for staff as and when appropriate.
- Liaising with outside agencies for curriculum purposes.

Generally, RSE will be taught in mixed groups, so that boys and girls are encouraged to work with each other and gain an understanding of each other's perspectives. However, in certain circumstances, normal mixed gender classroom arrangements may be changed when it appears more appropriate to teaching gender specific issues to single sex groupings.

All teachers are responsible for teaching aspects of RSE, appropriate to the age, maturity, stage of development, and family background of their pupils. It will be delivered primarily through the personal development curriculum but also through additional programmes covering aspects of the RSE programme. For example The Benview Community Centre work with Year 7 to provide support on the topic of puberty.

An RSE programme is about more than imparting factual information, it also aims to develop personal and social skills, and clarify attitudes and values within a moral framework. RSE seeks to promote behaviour which will allow pupils to take increasing responsibility for themselves as they grow and develop. Teaching methods which involve pupils actively in the process of their own learning is most beneficial. (CCEA Guidance for Primary/Post-primary schools).

SEN Provision

The RSE programme aims to be a positive experience for all participants. It is developmental, accessible and appropriate to the age and maturity of the pupils. As maturity is not always determined by chronological age, teachers need to be aware of this and take it into account. This will be particularly important in relation to children with SEN.

Resources

All resources (books, videos, TV programmes, internet sites, CD roms etc) are vetted by the person responsible for their use to ensure they are consistent with the school's policy and ethos.

Keeping informed

The RSE Co-ordinator keeps informed through DENI and EA websites and in her role as DT and NSPCC Keeping Safe Programme Co-ordinator. Relevant information will be disseminated and any updates to policy and/or programmes made in light of revised/new advice, guidance and/or information.

Specific issues

The status of the family

The school supports the institutions of marriage and the family, while being sensitive to those with different family circumstances. Permanent loving relationships will be presented as the ideal to which most aspire, being achieved for many through hard work and commitment.

Equality

Respect for all people regardless of religion, political views, race, marital status, sexual orientation, gender, disability and whether a person has dependents or not

will be promoted in line with the school ethos. People should have the right to hold different views/ lifestyles in a peaceful manner.

Confidentiality and Child Protection

Staff cannot give a guarantee of confidentiality to pupils around issues relating to child protection. If details are revealed that would lead staff to suspect that abuse is involved, the teacher must follow the child protection procedures outlined in that policy.

Outside Agencies

When education and/or health professionals from statutory or voluntary organisations are invited into the school, the activities which the agency or individual undertake will complement the ongoing programmes within the school. Care will be taken to ascertain that they have read and are willing to comply with the school policy, and that they know what has been taught in preparation for their visit and what will be done as follow-up. The teacher will always be present when an individual or a representative from an agency is taking a class. Such a visit is not be seen as the RSE programme, but as an integral part of it.

Pupils' Questions

If pupils raise issues that are offensive to some or beyond the maturity level of the majority of the pupils, staff should not answer in class. If the teacher feels the question was a genuine one, he/she may suggest that the pupil ask his/her parents or if this is an inappropriate option, the teacher may decide to answer the question in a sensitive manner, which may require the presence of another colleague. If the question asked raises child protection issues, this should be referred to the designated teacher for child protection.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Pastoral Care Team at Carr's Glen Primary School will review this policy bi-annually, or in the event of a change of legislation, or following an incident when the

policy will be evaluated as to its effectiveness. Any necessary changes will be made in light of any lessons learnt.

Additionally feedback in the form of evaluations will be sought from pupils, parents and teachers. Information gained will then be correlated by the RSE co-ordinator and used to adapt the programme for the future.

Staff development and training

This will be organised by the RSE co-ordinator in consultation with the Principal. Where it is deemed necessary RSE Advisors from the EA will be consulted and/or involved.

INVOLVING AND CONSULTING PARENTS

We believe the responsibility for relationships and sexuality education should be appropriately shared between teachers, parents and the school community as a whole including the school nurse. Its effectiveness depends on a collaborative process involving teachers, parents, governors and other educational and health professionals. Each of the partners has distinctive contributions to make and the school will endeavour to define and fulfil its responsibility, providing an opportunity for teachers, governors and parents to raise any issues and concerns they might have about the RSE policy and programme.

There is no statutory parental right to withdraw a child from classes in RSE. We will consider any parental concerns expressed, attempt to deal with any misunderstandings, identify the specific issues and lessons which are problematic and explain the implications for the pupils in terms of the parts of the statutory programmes of study which will be missed. The social and emotional effects of exclusion should be considered as well as the likelihood that pupils will discuss the content of the RSE lesson outside the classroom. However, the school will as far as possible try to arrive at a mutually acceptable resolution.

CURRICULUM AND WIDER LINKS

RSE forms part of the PDMU curriculum but links with other areas specifically Language and Literacy, The Arts, Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities and RE.

RSE is supported through the in school counselling service which is available to all children.

CGPS is involved in the NSPCC Keeping Safe Programme. The Keeping Safe Education Programme is a preventative whole school education programme to teach children messages to keep them safe. CGPS has been allocated a place in the Waitlist Control Group which means we will teach the Keeping Safe Programme from September 2018.

LINKS WITH OTHER POLICIES

The RSE policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies: Pastoral Care, Child Protection, Anti-bullying, Promoting Positive Behaviour, E-Safety, Learning and Teaching and SEN and Inclusion.

Member of staff responsible: Mrs M. Turner

Date policy written: June 2016

Policy review: August 2019

Date approved by the full Governing body :

Date to be reviewed: August 2021