

RSE POLICY
FOR
ST. MALACHY'S P.S.
& NURSERY UNIT
CAMLOUGH



Our Relationships and Sexuality Education Policy (RSE) is one of a number of policies which fall under the remit of pastoral care.

It contains advice and guidance on helping staff discharge their primary responsibility for the care, welfare and safety of the pupils in our charge.

This policy was formulated in collaboration with all staff, parents, pupils and Governors. It reflects the Catholic ethos of our school and guidance set out in Department of Education circulars 2001/2015 and 2015/2022.

A moral framework for R.S.E.

The Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (C.C.M.S.) states:

“A Catholic school aims to achieve the integral formation of its pupils. This includes ‘the development of all the human faculties of the students together with the preparation for professional life, formation of ethical and social awareness, becoming aware of the transcendental and religious education’ (Lay Catholics in Schools)”.

This extract is taken from the “Life to the Full” publication.

The Department of Education (Circular 2001/15) states:

“A school’s R.S.E. programme should aim to present facts in an objective, balanced and sensitive manner, set within a clear framework of values and an awareness of the Northern Ireland legislation on sexual behaviour. Pupils should be encouraged to appreciate the value of a stable family life, marriage and the responsibilities of parenthood. As they mature, pupils should come to understand the importance of self-restraint, dignity,

respect for themselves and others - including those of a different sexual orientation, and acceptance of responsibility.”

In this regard, we are fortunate that the Catholic ethos which permeates all aspects of our school life, naturally underpins the guiding moral principles inherent in a programme of R.S.E. or “Education for Love”.

We recognise that the family is the primary socializing unit, and that the school’s role is subsidiary to that of the parents.

The R.S.E. or “Education for Love” programme is therefore subject to the parents’ acceptance of it, although such acceptance should not be seen as a substitute for parental guidance.

Discussion with parents is required so that a consensus is reached about what information is imparted, and how and when that takes place. If parents wish to withdraw pupils from discussion of sensitive issues they may submit a written request to the school.

Parents need to be aware that in the teaching of sensitive issues, there is a possibility that the child will hear their peers’ version of what was said in class rather than the teacher’s. Parents should also be advised that ultimately it is their responsibility to ensure that their child does not feel excluded.

Saint Malachy’s is instrumental in building on the formative work of parents in conjunction with the wider parish community. The programme of religious education and the pervading Catholic ethos are the vehicles by which the child acquires the beliefs and values required for Christian adulthood.

The school also avails of outside agencies to help deliver aspects of RSE. These agencies are required to adhere to our policy on “Using Outside Agencies and Vetting Arrangements” contained in Appendix 1 of this document, prior to gaining admission to the school.

The R.S.E. programme or “Education for Love”

The elements of the R.S.E. programme are interrelated and form an integrated whole.

The core values of it permeate all aspects of school life and the curriculum.

They are delivered through Religious Education, Science and Health Education and P.D.M.U. (Personal Development and Mutual Understanding). The threads of RSE are interwoven within the content of each of these policies in that it is delivered in a holistic way throughout the school.

The R.S.E. or “Education for Love” programme is developmental, progressive, and concerned with building awareness of Self-esteem, Friendship, Family and Community, Human development and growth, Personal Safety – making good choices and Relationships.

These aspects can be referenced in the “Alive-O” programme, Grow in Love programme, the Diocesan “Wonder of My Being” publication and “Living, Learning, together” units (P.D.M.U.).

RSE is taught in mixed gender classes except when discussing sensitive issues where it is more appropriate to have single gender groups. In cases where staff have to respond to sensitive questions they can choose either to answer the question, if they are confident they have

sufficient knowledge and training to do so or they can consult with a member of the school's safeguarding team (Mr Kearns, Miss Frame, Mrs Magee).

Programme Overview

Year 1

- * To appreciate that gender exists.
- * To appreciate the family as a very important unit.
- * To appreciate that their growth and care before birth is linked to their mother.
- * To appreciate that Jesus was a baby, child and part of a family.
- * To appreciate that they are special, have special talents.

Year 2

- * To understand that they needed much care as a baby.
- * To appreciate that they are now able to do so much more.
- * To appreciate the role of their family in caring for them.
- * To appreciate that Jesus' family cared for him in the same way.

Year 3

- * To appreciate the importance of celebrations e.g. Christenings, Birthdays and Weddings.
- * Friendship- what makes someone a good friend.
- * To appreciate how families work together.
How parents especially mothers, look after a new baby.
- * Helping at home, playing their part.
- * Recognising that Jesus would have helped in his family.

Year 4.

- *To appreciate that Mary was chosen to be the mother of God.
- * To appreciate that Joseph was chosen to care for Mary and Jesus.
- * To appreciate the special role of Mary as Mother of God.
- * To relate the Holy Family to their own families.

- * To know the vocabulary associated with pregnancy and birth.
- * To appreciate that their parents would have made preparations for their birth.

Year 5

- * To appreciate the uniqueness of each person.
- * To appreciate the responsibility of caring for new life.
- * To appreciate development from birth to being a toddler, and then up to 9/10 years.
- * To revisit the sacrament of Baptism and become aware of their place in God's family.
- * To appreciate the importance of family, church and society.

Year 6.

- * To appreciate the stages of growth before birth.
- * To detail significant moments in their lives to date.
- * To recognise that their bodies change as they grow, and that they deserve due respect.
- * To appreciate the value of Friendship.
- * To be able to identify negative behaviour and its effects.

Year 7

- * To appreciate the presence of God in their lives.
- * To appreciate their own talents and those of others around them.

- * To appreciate the biological aspects of procreation – responsibility for the gift of life.
- * Qualities of Friendship.
- * Good and bad influences.
- * Making informed decisions – facing the future with optimism.

Policy Updated on 17th November 2017

Appendix 1

Policy on using Outside Agencies and Vetting Arrangements

Before any outside agency/individual is invited into school to deliver a support session, the school will ensure that they:

- receive a copy of the school's Relationships and Sexuality Education Policy;
- are made aware of and adhere to the School's Child Protection Policy;
- agree to respect the ethos of the school;
- are made aware of the issues around confidentiality;

- receive a copy of the school's Policy on the use of outside agencies/visitors;
- are vetted as appropriate.

All visitors to the school must:

- report to reception and sign in/out;
- wear a visitor's badge;
- wait until accompanied throughout the school;
- provide evidence of vetting as appropriate.

All extended service providers must:

- share the content of their session with the school prior to delivering their presentation.

The School will ensure that:

- parental consent will be sought before pupils attend sessions which may be viewed as sensitive or controversial;
- a teacher/member of staff is always present when external agencies etc. are in a classroom.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The RSE Team in St Malachy's Primary school will update this policy and procedures in the light of any further guidance and legislation as necessary and review it triennially.

On-going evaluation will ensure the effectiveness of the policy.

Date policy reviewed: 15/05/2017

Signed:

_____ (Principal)

_____ (Chair of Board of Governors)