
Relationships and Sexuality Education Guidance

An Update for Primary Schools

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INTRO

Relationships and Sexuality Education – Introduction and Context

In 2001, CCEA gave primary schools specific guidance on the provision of Relationships and Sexuality Education. This material was accompanied by the Department of Education Circular 2001/15. At this time, Relationships and Sexuality Education was a statutory component of the Northern Ireland Curriculum through the Cross-Curricular theme of Health Education. Then, the introduction of the (revised) Northern Ireland Curriculum in all grant-aided schools as required under the Education (Northern Ireland) Order 2006 www.deni.gov.uk/circular-2007-06-commencement-order.pdf meant that Relationships and Sexuality Education-related issues resides in a new area of learning: Personal Development and Mutual Understanding (PDMU) in the primary curriculum. The flexibility which the Northern Ireland Curriculum offers also allows schools to teach Relationships and Sexuality Education through other areas of learning.

In 2007, CCEA provided non-statutory guidance for primary schools in delivering Personal Development and Mutual Understanding at Foundation and Key Stages 1 and 2 and produced the teaching resource *Living.Learning.Together*. These materials are available at www.ccea.org.uk.



Rationale for Issuing Additional Relationships and Sexuality Education Guidance

CCEA has issued this guidance for a number of reasons:

- All children have the right to high-quality Relationships and Sexuality Education that is relevant to their lives today. The aim of this guidance is to prompt schools to:
 - reflect on their existing Relationships and Sexuality Education provision; and
 - update their provision, if and where appropriate, to ensure that it is relevant to their pupils' lives today.

Schools should take care to ensure that their provision addresses the pressures and dangers to which children may be exposed: in particular technology, the integral role it plays, and how it impacts on their lives.

- The Department of Education Circular 2013/16 requires every school to have an up-to-date written policy on how it will address the delivery of Relationships and Sexuality Education. This guidance offers advice for schools on how to develop and review their policy.
- The Department of Education Circular 2010/01 advises schools to take account of guidance issued by the Equality Commission in March 2009 on eliminating sexual orientation discrimination in schools in Northern Ireland. This guidance relates to the Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2006. It is available at www.equalityni.org. It offers advice for schools on providing inclusive Relationships and Sexuality Education.
- Child sexual exploitation has been prioritised within the three year strategic plan of the Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland (SBNI, 2013). The *Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation in Rotherham 1997–2013* highlighted the value of teaching pupils how to stay safe within the context of the Personal Development and Mutual Understanding curriculum and the effective teaching of Relationships and Sexuality Education (Jay, 2014). Locally, the inquiry into *Child Sexual Exploitation in Northern Ireland* highlighted the 'particular role of schools in raising awareness and identifying concerns about child sexual exploitation' as part of a 'regional strategy to prevent, identify, disrupt and tackle child sexual exploitation' (Marshall, 2014, pages 18 and 19). Relationships and Sexuality Education gives schools the opportunity to play a preventative role in child sexual exploitation by raising staff awareness of vulnerability factors and current indicators. This guidance also identifies how effective Relationships and Sexuality Education provision can help pupils to recognise potentially exploitative and dangerous situations, and teach them how to take preventative action.
- The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety's *Stopping Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse in Northern Ireland (2013–2020)* public consultation document recognises that 'schools are in a unique position to promote and safeguard the welfare of all children' (DHSSPS, 2013, page 43). Through the delivery of Relationships and Sexuality Education, children can explore their understanding of 'keeping safe' in an age-appropriate way. It will also help them develop appropriate behaviour to protect themselves (DHSSPS, 2013).

What follows is additional guidance on delivering Relationships and Sexuality Education as part of a school's wider Personal Development and Mutual Understanding provision. We hope that this latest guidance will help Boards of Governors, principals, senior leaders and teachers to ensure that their school provides broad, balanced, coherent and relevant Relationships and Sexuality Education.



The Importance of Relationships and Sexuality Education

Relationships and Sexuality Education in the Northern Ireland Curriculum

The Northern Ireland Curriculum aims to empower young people to achieve their potential and to make informed and responsible decisions throughout their lives. Relationships and Sexuality Education is firmly grounded in Personal Development and Mutual Understanding, where the central focus is on the emotional development of children, health and safety, relationships with others, and the development of moral thinking, values and actions (PMB, page 3).

Defining Relationships and Sexuality Education

Relationships and Sexuality Education is about more than simply educating children about biological sexual reproduction, particularly in primary schools. Although it is often referred to as 'sex education', this terminology is misleading. Relationships and Sexuality Education is a lifelong process, encompassing:

- the acquisition of knowledge, understanding and skills; and
- the development of attitudes, beliefs and values about sexual identity, relationships and intimacy.

For children, the learning process has begun informally, with their parents or carers, long before any education in a formal setting takes place at school. Sexuality includes all aspects of the human person that relate to being male or female: it may be subject to change, and it develops throughout life. Sexuality is an integral part of the human personality and has biological, cultural, psychological, social and spiritual dimensions.

Effective Relationships and Sexuality Education is essential if children are to value themselves as individuals and are to make responsible and well-informed decisions about their lives. Relationships and Sexuality Education in primary schools should provide 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 at puberty; and
- learn about keeping themselves safe and know what to do or who to go to if they feel unsafe.

Relationships and Sexuality Education is most effective when it is taught in a sensitive and inclusive manner, and in a way that is appropriate to the child's emotional and physical age and stage of development. All children have the right to quality teaching and learning across the curriculum; Relationships and Sexuality Education is no exception. An absence of such provision may leave children with a learning and skills deficit, making them more susceptible to inappropriate behaviours, sexual abuse and exploitation.

Why Relationships and Sexuality Education is important:

• Respects the rights of children

The United Kingdom Government, including Northern Ireland, is a signatory to the 1989 *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child* (UNCRC) and has agreed to uphold the rights of children and young people as set out in the Convention. This means that all children and young people in Northern Ireland have a right to a good quality education in accordance with the Convention.



• Promotes a better understanding of diversity and inclusion

Schools are increasingly diverse spaces, reflecting wider societal change. This is acknowledged in the Department of Education's *Community Relations, Equality and Diversity in Education Policy* (2011). A school should provide a safe, welcoming and inclusive environment: it should foster respect for difference, challenge prejudicial attitudes, and promote equality of opportunity for all pupils. If schools are to encourage children to be confident and respectful of themselves and others, and prepare them for life after school, the teaching of Relationships and Sexuality Education should be inclusive of all differences regardless of race, age, disability, ethnicity, religion, culture, gender and sexual orientation. Schools should also recognise the diversity of family life in today's society, particularly the fact that some children may have gay, lesbian or bisexual parents or carers, some of whom may be in a civil partnership. All staff must be sensitive and respectful of difference, ensuring that no pupil ever feels or is excluded, or experiences bullying due to their family or home circumstances.

• Helps children to keep themselves safer in the digital world

Technology plays an integral role in the lives of many children in Northern Ireland today: they use the internet to watch programmes, play games, listen and download music, carry out research for school, chat with their friends, and make new friends. The *2013 Kids' Life and Times (KLT)* survey, which records the attitudes and views of Primary 7 children across Northern Ireland on a range of issues, reported that 90 percent of children have mobile phones; over 80 percent of these are smartphones with internet access (Ark, 2013). About half of all children surveyed said that they had a page or profile on a social media website, with 21 percent of boys and 11 percent of girls reporting they had completely public profiles (Ark, 2013). In addition, 16 percent of KLT respondents said that they have seen something on the internet that upset them, reinforcing the need for schools to continue to educate children (and parents or carers) about using technology and the online world safely and appropriately (Devine and Lloyd, 2014). However, whilst technological advancements provide many opportunities, along with opportunity comes risk, particularly if the children's activity is unsupervised (Devine and Lloyd, 2014). Cyberbullying, the use of chat rooms, online grooming and child exploitation, sexting, access to inappropriate content, the acting out of inappropriate sexualised behaviours, and the sending and receiving of explicit images are just some of the ways in which online and digital technology can negatively affect the lives of children.

Through Relationships and Sexuality Education, children should be taught 'keeping safe' messages about how to behave safely and responsibly in the digital world which plays such an integral role in their lives. Children should be able to identify potential risks to their safety, and be aware of the strategies they can use to protect themselves.

• Provides reliable, accurate and timely age-appropriate information

Although there is great emphasis in primary schools on friendships and healthy relationships in Relationships and Sexuality Education, schools should also give children opportunities to learn and understand how and why the body grows and develops, and know how babies are conceived, grow, and are born. This knowledge forms part of the Personal Development and Mutual Understanding theme of 'Health, Growth and Change' in the latter part of Key Stage 2.



Every child is unique and develops physically and emotionally at his or her own pace. However, as the average age for puberty is 8–12 years old for girls and 9–14 years old for boys, schools must schedule learning about puberty before its onset, during Key Stage 2. If a school does not do this, it runs the risk of leaving some children unprepared to deal with the physical and emotional changes that take place during puberty, which some may already be experiencing. Before puberty is covered in class, the school should consult with parents or carers about how the subject will be delivered. They should discuss the class content, and the methodologies and resources which the teacher will use. It is also good practice for schools to provide parents or carers with the materials for them to read and discuss with their children, as this will help and support their learning in the classroom environment.

On average, most girls begin menstruating when they are 12 years old; however, approximately 10 percent begin menstruating in primary school, some as young as eight years old. Research shows that one third of girls are not told about menstruation by their parents or carers, and 10 percent of girls have no preparation at all before their first period. For any girl, menstruating in school can be distressing, particularly if it happens unexpectedly. However, this distress is magnified for girls of primary school age, particularly if they are not prepared for the physical, emotional and practical consequences. To help ease this distress, schools should put arrangements in place to support girls, for example access to sanitary supplies, sanitary disposal facilities in toilets, and spare underwear. Teachers also need to be aware of and sensitive to the physical, emotional and practical needs of girls during menstruation – these may include asking permission to leave class, not feeling comfortable doing PE lessons, mood changes, irritable behaviour, and lack of concentration. All girls should know which staff members they can go to if they are menstruating in school.

• Promotes the use of appropriate language

Learning and using the correct terminology in Relationships and Sexuality Education is vitally important for children, as it helps them to talk about feelings, sexuality, relationships, growth and development with confidence. In the interests of child safeguarding, it is very important that schools use the proper biological terms for parts of the body with the children from an early age, particularly private body parts and functions. To ensure consistency, all school staff should agree the key terms which they will use at the different key stages with pupils. They should also share this information with parents or carers, so that they can use the same terms at home.

• Helps children to recognise inappropriate behaviour and touch

Despite the fact that Article 34 of the UNCRC enshrines all children's rights to be protected from sexual abuse and exploitation, the reality is that the lives of many children in Northern Ireland are ruined by abuse and exploitation. Police data reveals that in the period 2008–2010, one in five sexual abuse offences reported in Northern Ireland involved children 0–9 years old (Bunting, 2011). This data also tells us that approximately one fifth of all sexual abuse assaults against children in Northern Ireland are committed by a member of the child's immediate family; this is particularly the case for sexual abuse against very young children, with very similar patterns of victimisation for both girls and boys aged 0–11 years old. (Bunting, 2011).

Child sexual exploitation is also becoming increasingly evident in Northern Ireland (Beckett, 2011; Webb and Montgomery-Devlin, 2013). The SBNI has published a leaflet, issued to all schools in Northern Ireland on 5 November 2014 (see Department of Education letter at www.deni.gov.uk/circular_letter_to_schools_-_child_sexual_exploitation.pdf) which defines



child sexual exploitation as ‘a form of sexual abuse in which a person(s) exploits, coerces and/or manipulates a child or young person into engaging in some form of sexual activity in return for something the child needs or desires and/or for the gain of the person(s) perpetrating or facilitating the abuse’ (SBNI, 2014, page 7). Research has shown that it is usually children between the ages of 10–18 years old who are primarily affected and most at risk of child sexual exploitation (Beckett, 2011). Given the nature of the contact time between pupils and their teachers in the primary school setting, teachers are in a good position to observe possible behavioural changes and may be able to identify ‘at risk’ children at an early stage. Staff should be aware of the various factors which can increase the vulnerability of a young person to this form of abuse. These include:

- low self-esteem;
- looked-after children;
- young people living in difficult home circumstances;
- being bullied at school; and
- disengagement with school (SBNI, 2014, page 4).

However, it should be stressed that the majority of child sexual exploitation victims live at home and that all children, both male and female, are at risk.

In 2011, the Department of Education commissioned a research study: *Keeping Safe: the Development of an Effective Preventative Curriculum in Primary Schools in Northern Ireland*. It found that, for the majority of children, a deficit exists in their understanding of the concept of ‘keeping safe’ (McElearney, Stephenson and Adamson, 2011). This was particularly true of young children and children with special educational needs (SEN). The study found that whilst children associated ‘keeping safe’ with physical safety and accident prevention, their understanding did not extend to issues such as bullying and inappropriate sexual touching from someone known to the child and ‘stranger danger’ (McElearney, Stephenson and Adamson, 2011, page 41). The safety and welfare of a child is paramount; therefore, it is with a sense of urgency that schools should address this gap in understanding.

Through Relationships and Sexuality Education, children should develop an understanding of their own uniqueness. It is also vitally important that they know and understand that, even though they are young, their body belongs to them and them alone. Schools can play their part in raising children’s awareness of abuse and exploitation. When children learn about ‘keeping safe’ through boundaries and positive consent, it helps them to recognise what constitutes:

- appropriate and inappropriate behaviour;
- appropriate and inappropriate touch; and
- unwanted attention, or attention that makes them feel uncomfortable in any way.

Children must know what to do or who to go to if they feel unsafe at any time. Good practice includes displaying photos of the key staff children can approach in prominent areas throughout the school, or having a ‘worry box’ in the classroom, school office or at safeguarding display boards.



SECTION
2

Building Partnerships Between Home, School and the Wider Community

Strengthening the partnership between school and home

Relationships and Sexuality Education is a lifelong process which begins in the home. The home exerts a major influence on all aspects of a child's life, particularly in the sphere of Relationships and Sexuality Education. However, in view of the significant amount of time children spend in school, parents or carers entrust teachers to help educate their children in this sensitive and important area of their lives. School-based Relationships and Sexuality Education is also important as parents or carers sometimes feel too embarrassed to talk to their children about sensitive issues such as puberty and conception. However, schools must be mindful of that fact that their role must be considered to be complementary to that of parents or carers.

Engaging with parents or carers

It is understandable that many parents or carers are anxious about when, what and how their children will be taught in Relationships and Sexuality Education. Concerns range from parents or carers thinking that their child is not old enough, or is not physically and emotionally mature enough, to learn about certain issues. As parents or carers play a crucial role in supporting their child's education (DE, 2009; Harris and Goodall, 2007) schools should consult closely with parents or carers to allay these fears. A recent survey conducted by the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) has concluded that schools need to do more to engage parents or carers in this aspect of their child's education. ETI states that 'there is a need for parents to be involved more in developing the Personal Development curriculum in school and for them to be supported so that they can help keep their children safe outside of school hours' (ETI, cited in Marshall, R, 2014, page 105). Schools could employ strategies such as:

- providing up-to-date parent or carer-friendly information leaflets, which would encourage parents or carers to discuss any issues which may arise in the classroom with their children;
- holding awareness-raising workshops; and
- sharing resources to educate parents or carers on, for example, how to ensure that their children are using social media safely and responsibly.

Engagement with parents or carers also gives them the opportunity to reflect on their own experiences of sex education, and to consider issues such as the readiness of their child for aspects of the programme, the appropriateness of resources to be used, the content and methodologies proposed, and how sensitive issues will be addressed. Parents or carers must know that a school's teaching of Relationships and Sexuality Education will be complementary and supportive of their role as lead educators in this sensitive area, and will be delivered in the context of the school's distinctive ethos.

Withdrawal from Relationships and Sexuality Education

In Northern Ireland, parents or carers have the right to have their children educated in accordance with their wishes. Therefore, whilst 'there is no legislative provision permitting parental withdrawal from sex education', schools can grant these requests on an individual basis (Lundy, Emerson, Lloyd, Byrne and Yohanis, 2013, page 25). Schools should consider how they can support parents or carers who choose to withdraw their child from all or part of Relationships and Sexuality Education.

If a parent or carer chooses to withdraw a child from all or part of Relationships and Sexuality Education, they must discuss the potentially detrimental effect that this can have on the child with the school (Lundy et al, 2013, page 25). They should consider the social and emotional effects of being excluded, as well as the likelihood that the child will hear their peers' version of what happened or what was said in the classes, rather than the safe and reliable source of the teacher's. Ultimately, however, the school must respect the wishes of the parent or carer.

Engaging with pupils

Article 12 of the UNCRC 'provides all children with the right to express their views in matters affecting them and for those views to be given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child' (Lundy et al, 2013, page 43). The UNCRC has also identified Article 13, on the right to freedom of expression, and Article 17, on access to information, as prerequisites if a child's right to be heard is to be effective (Lundy et al, 2013, page 43).



Pupils should become involved in the development and review of a school's Relationships and Sexuality Education policy. They should be involved in the school's ongoing evaluation and review of the Relationships and Sexuality Education provision to ensure that it meets the needs of all pupils. Schools can find out pupils' views using questionnaires, pupil focus groups and the Student Council. A programme which goes unaltered year on year is unlikely to reflect the changing needs of pupils and the society in which they live. Moreover, as is the case with all learning, children are more likely to engage with, enjoy and value lessons which they have had an input into.

Strengthening the partnership between school and the wider community

Schools may wish to use the expertise and skills of education and health professionals from outside agencies or from individuals in the wider community. There are many benefits of this, including the following:

- Outside agencies/individuals in the wider community can bring specialist knowledge, expertise and experience into the classroom;
- The novelty of a new visitor coming into the classroom/school is often very welcomed by pupils;
- It can increase the pupils' knowledge of services which can be accessed in the local community, and teach them how to go about accessing these services if and when they need them; and
- It can enhance teachers' capacity by updating their knowledge and/or showing new pedagogy/teaching practices used by the outside agency/individual.

It is vital that any outside agency/individual delivering a support session in a school:

- receives a copy of the school's Relationships and Sexuality Education Policy;
- is made aware of and adheres to the school's Child Protection Policy;
- receives a copy of the school's policy on the use of outside agencies/visitors (if they have one);
- agrees to respect the ethos of the school;
- is made aware of the issues around confidentiality; and
- is vetted as appropriate.

A school may also wish to draw up a brief written agreement/contract between themselves and the external service provider which outlines details of proposed session(s), aims, learning intentions, methodology and evaluation. This will help to clarify the expectations and requirements of both the school and the outside agency.

To maximise learning from the session, schools should thoroughly prepare pupils for the visit. The class teacher should also check that pupils are not uncomfortable or unhappy with either the topics that they are addressing or the teaching methodologies that will be used. During the session, the teacher should be present at all times. Afterwards the teacher should provide pupils with the opportunity to discuss their experience(s) and honestly evaluate the session(s). Schools can use their pupils' feedback to inform their future planning and provision along with any evaluation carried out by the outside agency/individual.



Whilst there are benefits associated with using outside agencies/individuals, schools should not come to over-rely on their use. Teachers should not use outside agencies/individuals as substitutes for aspects of Relationships and Sexuality Education which they do not feel comfortable addressing. Teachers must also ensure that any resources or activities the outside agencies/individuals use are respectful of the school's ethos, and are complementary to and support the ongoing provision of Relationships and Sexuality Education.

If an outside agency/individual is coming into the school to support the Relationships and Sexuality Education programme, parents or carers should be made aware in advance. Schools should explain the type of activities which will take place to parents or carers to ensure that they have the opportunity to raise any concerns they might have before the visit. Doing this will also have the added benefit of letting parents or carers know what is going on, and strengthen ties between home and school.

SECTION
3

Delivering Inclusive Relationships and Sexuality Education

Sexual orientation and gender identity

A young person's sexual orientation and/or gender identity is a central and significant part of who they are and how they see themselves in relation to others. There is some evidence to suggest that children as young as eight years old may begin to question their sexual orientation, and from early adolescence, begin to identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual (McDermott, 2010, page 9). Recent research reveals that transgender young people become self-aware that their assigned birth sex is different from their gender identity between the ages of 3–5 years old. However, it is between the ages of 6–16 years old that transgender young people begin to understand their feelings, and can start to talk about them (McBride, 2013).

Children and young people must feel comfortable and confident in themselves without fear of being bullied or being viewed as different. Uncertainty or discomfort about their sexual orientation and gender identity can also have a negative effect on the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual wellbeing of a young person. Relationships and Sexuality Education in primary schools should focus on appreciating the uniqueness of each individual pupil. It should promote inclusivity, equality and respect for all pupils. Relationships and Sexuality Education can help to promote a positive view of sexual orientation and gender identity, which in turn can help raise the self-esteem of young people who may feel different.

Schools should handle the issue of sexual orientation and gender identity in a sensitive, non-confrontational and reassuring way. In the primary setting, schools can do this very effectively by teaching about difference in Relationships and Sexuality Education and in the wider Personal Development and Mutual Understanding curriculum. However, many lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) pupils feel excluded in Relationships and Sexuality Education classes, claiming that negative stereotypes and prejudicial attitudes often go unchallenged. All pupils, regardless of their sexual orientation, have the right to learn in a safe and secure environment, to be treated with respect and dignity, and not to be treated any less favourably on grounds of their actual or perceived sexual orientation. It is of paramount importance that teachers do not view teenage lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) attraction and gender identity as a passing phase, as this would in effect trivialise an important part in the development of these young people's lives, and potentially have an ongoing negative impact on them (Appleby and Anastas, 1998).

Dealing with homophobic language and bullying

A school should be a happy environment where children feel safe and secure: a place where difference is celebrated and where all children can focus on their learning. Unfortunately, however, anecdotal evidence suggests that homophobic bullying and the use of homophobic language is not being acknowledged or adequately and openly addressed as a problem in some schools across Northern Ireland. Homophobic bullying is 'any language, conduct, or behaviour used to exclude, demean or threaten a person based on their actual or perceived sexual orientation' (The Rainbow Project, 2010). The word 'gay' is often used in a negative and belittling way by many children. This abusive language is often tolerated, the argument being that children are too young to know what they are saying; however, not only is this wrong, but it can have a devastating impact on children who may be questioning their sexual orientation or who may have lesbian, gay or bisexual parents or carers/relatives. Schools should ensure that young people are aware that using this kind of language is not acceptable; it must be challenged in a way that children understand.

Young people with actual or perceived lesbian, gay or bisexual orientations often experience homophobic bullying in schools (Save the Children, The Rainbow Project, Youthnet, 2008, page 8). Homophobic bullying, as with other forms of bullying, must be addressed at whole-school level. Children who are exposed to homophobic bullying often struggle to reach their full potential – academically, socially and emotionally – and have poor attendance rates. Schools must deal with homophobic bullying as robustly as they would with any other form of bullying. The Equality Commission for Northern Ireland (ECNI) has issued 'good practice' measures to help schools to address homophobic bullying. These include:

- updating anti-bullying policies to cover all equality issues including sexual orientation, transgender bullying, sexual harassment and bullying for other reasons relating to sex, gender or relationships;



- ensuring that policies stipulate what behaviour is and is not acceptable, particularly the use of homophobic language by pupils;
- updating anti-bullying policies to include cyberbullying;
- communicating their anti-bullying policy to all staff, governors, pupils, parents and carers;
- raising awareness of what homophobic bullying is and how the school proposes to deal with any reported incidents;
- ensuring that effective reporting systems are in place to enable pupils to report incidents; and
- dealing with all complaints promptly, seriously, sympathetically, confidentially and effectively (ECNI, 2009, pages 11–12).

Young people with special educational needs (SEN)

Schools must ensure children with SEN in mainstream schools have appropriate, accessible and relevant Relationships and Sexuality Education. Schools may need to engage in the careful planning and adapting of resources and teaching activities to ensure that there are no barriers to participation or learning for pupils with SEN compared to their peers. It is particularly important that schools communicate with parents or carers of young people with SEN about the content of lessons and the date when classes will cover certain teaching activities/themes. This communication will allow for parents or carers to reinforce learning at home.

It is widely recognised that pupils with SEN are more vulnerable to all forms of abuse and exploitation. Teachers must try to ensure that they develop the knowledge, understanding and skills of pupils to enable them to:

- identify inappropriate and exploitative behaviour;
- help develop their own prevention strategies to stay safe;
- recognise and build healthy relationships; and
- know who they can talk to.

Working in mixed and single-gender groups

Generally, schools should teach Relationships and Sexuality Education in mixed groups, where boys and girls learn together so as to gain an understanding and appreciation of each other's perspectives. However, there are times that pupils and teachers prefer to work in single-gender groups, particularly when they are exploring 'girl' or 'boy' issues. Whilst this single-gender setting may reduce embarrassment and awkwardness for both teachers and pupils, it may also mean that pupils lose out on the opportunity to learn about the emotional and physical changes that their opposite-gender peers experience. If the school chooses to teach these aspects in single-gender groups it should make parents or carers aware of this so that they can fill in the gaps in their child's knowledge and understanding of what the other gender will experience. When planning, teachers should also ensure that content is relevant for boys as well as girls. They should include activities which encourage boys' participation, develop their confidence to ask questions and, very importantly, talk about their concerns and feelings.



Personal backgrounds and cultural practices

Teachers of Relationships and Sexuality Education must be particularly sensitive to the personal circumstances and cultural background of their pupils. They must recognise how pupils' views and values are influenced by their informal learning experiences and by the views of family, peers, community and the media (DE, 2011). For example, for some pupils it would be inappropriate to address some Relationships and Sexuality Education issues in a mixed gender lesson because of cultural or religious beliefs. Other pupils may have same-sex parents or carers, so teachers need to be mindful of this. Relationships and Sexuality Education also provides a forum in which to explore issues such as how young girls may be victims of cultural practices, including child/forced marriages and female genital mutilation. Schools should, however, handle such issues very sensitively to ensure that some cultures are not viewed negatively due to their practices.

The Classroom Environment

The importance of establishing good relationships in the classroom environment

Good relationships are important in any classroom; however, they are particularly important when teaching Relationships and Sexuality Education. In Relationships and Sexuality Education, learning is most effective when it takes place in a safe, secure, respectful and inclusive space, where pupils can express their feelings and opinions and participate confidently and freely without embarrassment, judgement or ridicule from their peers. Using circle time or creating a classroom charter are effective ways to help to create a positive and safe learning environment.

Approaches to teaching and learning

If teachers wish Relationships and Sexuality Education to be meaningful and engaging for pupils, they need to adopt a learner-centred approach to facilitate and guide their learning. They should employ an enquiry-based approach when exploring sensitive and complex issues, and use participative methodologies. These approaches, which are underpinned by the Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities framework, often lead to children gaining a deeper knowledge and understanding, and really engaging in the learning process.

Connected learning opportunities

There are many opportunities within the Northern Ireland Curriculum for other Areas of Learning to link with Relationships and Sexuality Education, which allows for a more connected learning experience for pupils. This is a particularly effective way for teachers to enable pupils to explore sensitive and complex issues, as it allows them to do so through a variety of different lenses. Through this multi-perspective approach, children will develop an appreciation of the range of different viewpoints and the reasons why people have them. For example, children can explore a range of ways of communicating and expressing feelings and emotions through the Arts, including art and design, music, and drama. Through Language and Literacy, children can develop a vocabulary to discuss emotions and feelings through talking and listening, reading, writing, drama, and role play.

Teaching resources

The CCEA resource *Living.Learning.Together* helps to support the delivery of the Personal Development and Mutual Understanding area of learning. *Living.Learning.Together* covers issues and topics related to Relationships and Sexuality Education, particularly in the yellow units. Teachers need to be cautious about the resources they use, especially those which are freely available on the internet. Teachers must be satisfied that the resources they plan to use:

- reflect the ethos of the school;
- are age-appropriate, inclusive, and sensitive to the pupils' needs and experiences;
- are factually accurate and up-to-date; and
- make clear distinctions between fact and opinion.

Please note that inappropriate/explicit images should not be used under any circumstances. Schools must also ensure that they protect pupils from accessing unsuitable material on the internet. CCEA advises that schools inform parents or carers about any materials that pupils will be exposed to, particularly if these are of a sensitive nature.

Teaching sensitive issues

Sensitive issues are part and parcel of life. Children are aware of them, and want to talk about and understand them, particularly those sensitive issues which are also topical. Pupils should not be denied the opportunity to explore such issues simply because a teacher feels uncomfortable discussing them, and they should not be sheltered from discussing sensitive issues in an age-appropriate way. To do either is to leave children ignorant and unprepared to engage and deal with the diverse and complex range of issues facing them in society today.



When teaching Relationships and Sexuality Education, there will be times when the topics teachers cover may elicit extreme or even 'inappropriate' views from children. This can be down to several factors, including the diversity of the child's personal experiences, and the opinions and values of each child within the classroom. When teaching sensitive issues, teachers must plan for and be prepared to deal with the strong emotional responses which pupils often have. If teachers challenge children's views and assumptions with sensitivity, and in a way which they will understand, they can help them to develop an understanding of their feelings, thinking and behaviour. Pupils should also develop strategies to manage their own emotions, and show sensitivity and respect for the emotions and different views of others.

When each individual school is developing their Relationships and Sexuality Education policy, they must discuss and agree on their own individual approach. They also need to provide teachers with clear guidance in the policy.

Responding to questions in Relationships and Sexuality Education

When teaching Relationships and Sexuality Education, the natural inquisitiveness of children often results in the teachers being asked many questions which they had not planned for. These questions may challenge the teacher's own values system. It is this fear of the unknown which often makes teachers apprehensive and uneasy about delivering Relationships and Sexuality Education.

There will be occasions when teachers will have to use their own discretion and judgement about how to deal with particular questions raised by a pupil or a group of pupils. Teachers should exercise their professional judgement: for example, they may need to decide whether it is appropriate to deal with the question in a whole-class forum, through circle time, or if it may be more appropriate to respond on an individual basis, or to arrange time for group discussion outside class time. The teacher may also wish to discuss the questions the children have asked with the parents or carers and/or a senior member of staff to ascertain how they would like to handle the matter. It is essential that the school leadership team, including the Board of Governors, ensures that teachers are supported and feel equipped to deal with the 'unexpected'. Schools should provide training opportunities for teachers such as in-service training courses, directed time after school, and staff development days. A school's Relationships and Sexuality Education policy should include clear guidance for teachers on how to respond in these circumstances.

Confidentiality and dealing with disclosures

The provision of effective Relationships and Sexuality Education can play a key role in meeting schools' child protection/safeguarding obligations. Schools have the responsibility to develop appropriate policies and practices which safeguard and keep children from harm. They must ensure that they can identify pupils who are 'at risk' so that they can provide the appropriate support. A study revealed that 62 percent of young people who were groomed for child sexual exploitation never told their parents or an adult in a position of authority (Beckett, 2011). This finding is a stark reminder of the significant role teachers play in the early detecting of 'at risk' pupils and why they must always be alert to pupils experiencing distress and/or changes in their behaviour.



The foundation for the effective delivery of Relationships and Sexuality Education is the building of secure, trusting, respectful relationships between the teacher and their pupils. Pupils should feel reassured that their teacher cares about their wellbeing and be aware that there are adults whom they can talk to and confide in. Pupils must also know and understand that the promise of confidentiality is never an option in the classroom or school setting. It must also be clear to pupils that, whilst teachers will offer support, they are obligated to notify the child protection/safeguarding teacher or team if they are concerned that the pupil may be 'at risk'. Teachers must take decisions relating to personal disclosures in accordance with the procedures set out in the Department of Education's booklet *Pastoral Care in Schools: Child Protection* (Circular 1999/10).

In summary these are:

- The staff member should immediately inform the designated child protection teacher/member of the safeguarding team.
- The designated child protection teacher/member of the safeguarding team must inform/consult with Social Services and/or the PSNI.
- No staff member should take on the role of investigator – this is the responsibility of Social Services and the PSNI.
- Staff members should explain their responsibilities to refer cases of alleged abuse to the appropriate authorities, but they also must ensure that the matter will only be disclosed to the people who need to know about it.
- Staff members should give the pupil time to talk without interrupting or probing, recording exactly what the pupil says, whilst not promising confidentiality.

It is very important that any pupil who feels that they cannot talk to or does not wish to talk to their parents or carers has access to other sources of support. Parents or carers should also be made aware of how pupil disclosures are addressed by the school.

SECTION
5

Developing a Relationships and Sexuality Education Policy

The DE Circular 2013/16 states:

‘The Department requires each school to have in place its own written policy on how it will address the delivery of Relationships and Sexuality Education.’ The circular also states that Relationships and Sexuality Education ‘should be taught in harmony with the ethos of the school and reflect the moral and religious principles held by parents and school management authorities’.

Having a Relationships and Sexuality Education policy will help schools to:

- promote a shared vision of Relationships and Sexuality Education across the school;
- show how Relationships and Sexuality Education complements and supports other aspects of school life;
- establish consistent standards and practices in delivering Relationships and Sexuality Education;
- create a framework for wider curriculum development and review;
- provide a foundation for the monitoring and evaluating of Relationships and Sexuality Education provision; and
- prepare for inspection and help to promote school self-evaluation and improvement.

Developing a Relationships and Sexuality Education policy should be a collaborative process involving teachers, parents or carers, pupils, governors and other educational and health professionals. Each of these stakeholders has a valuable contribution to make, so schools must develop a structure which provides genuine opportunities for all stakeholders to contribute to the policy. It is hoped that each school can create a Relationships and Sexuality Education policy which is unique to them through a consultative process. The policy should:

- cater for and meet the needs of all pupils; and
- ensure clarity and consensus on how Relationships and Sexuality Education will be taught.

These two elements should be the driving forces behind the policy.

It is the responsibility of the school's governing body to ratify the Relationships and Sexuality Education Policy. Whilst it is appreciated that every school's Relationship and Sexuality Education Policy will be different, there are some key areas which should appear in all policies, regardless of school type.

The following framework is a starting point to help schools to develop a Relationship and Sexuality Education policy or review their existing policy.

Relationships and Sexuality Education Exemplar Policy Framework

Contextual information

- School details
- Date of policy
- The overall school aims and objectives of the policy
- How the aims of the Relationships and Sexuality Education Policy support the values, ethos, and moral and ethical framework of the school, and how this will inform the teaching of Relationships and Sexuality Education
- How the policy takes account of The Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2006. This is available at www.legislation.gov.uk
- Reference to the relevant sections of UNCRC, available at www.unicef.org.uk/Documents/Publication-pdfs/UNCRC_PRESS200910web.pdf
- How the policy contributes to *Every School a Good School, Together Towards Improvement and Community Relations, Equality and Diversity in Education Policy*. These documents are available at www.deni.gov.uk
- How the policy links to the School Development Plan

Description of policy formation and consultation process

- How the policy was drawn up – who was consulted and how
- How the policy will be disseminated – who will receive it, where it can be accessed
- How and when it will be reviewed
- Contact person for comments/feedback on policy

Aims and objectives of Relationships and Sexuality Education Policy

- The aims of Relationships and Sexuality Education and why it is important in the school
- How the teaching of Relationships and Sexuality Education supports the school's ethos and reflects the moral and religious principles held by parents or carers and school management authorities
- The objectives of Relationships and Sexuality Education within the school – what the school is setting out to achieve through Relationships and Sexuality Education
- How the school will ensure inclusive learning for all pupils through Relationships and Sexuality Education

The management and co-ordination of Relationships and Sexuality Education in the school

- Name of co-ordinator
- Classroom/teaching arrangements, for example single-gender classes, mixed-gender classes, or both



- Approaches to learning and teaching – teaching methodologies that will be used
- Provision for pupils with SEN
- Relationships and Sexuality Education resources used, and criteria for selection (to ensure that they are inclusive and consistent with the school's moral and values framework)
- Strategies for gathering and disseminating the most current and relevant information and research on Relationships and Sexuality Education issues to inform planning and ensure relevance
- How to deal with sensitive issues and respond to pupils' questions
- Monitoring and evaluation of Relationships and Sexuality Education provision, for example tools for gathering data, who will be involved
- Staff development and training

Specific issues statements

- Confidentiality and disclosures (individually and in the classroom setting)
- Procedures for the involvement of outside agencies/individuals in supporting the delivery of Relationships and Sexuality Education

Procedures for involving and consulting with parents or carers

- Parents or carers with learning difficulties
- Parents' or carers' rights and responsibilities
- Engagement with parents or carers – information, support sessions, providing materials/reading for home use
- Withdrawal from Relationships and Sexuality Education – how the school will provide support for pupils who are removed from part or all of the Relationships and Sexuality Education programme

Links across the curriculum and to the wider life of the school

- How the learning and teaching in Relationships and Sexuality Education links across the curriculum to other Areas of Learning in Key Stages 1 and 2
- How elements of the wider pastoral programme support and complement Relationships and Sexuality Education, for example assemblies
- How other school initiatives support and complement Relationships and Sexuality Education, for example Unicef UK Rights Respecting Schools Award

Links to other school policies

- Anti-bullying Policy – specific reference should be made to homophobic bullying, transgender bullying and cyberbullying
- Policy on using outside agencies and vetting arrangements
- Pastoral Care Programme



- Confidentiality Policy
- Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy – how the school will support pupils who are thought to be ‘at risk’, and how the school will assess the ‘at risk’ pupils
- Positive Behaviour Policy
- Internet Safety/E-Safety Policy
- Drugs Education Policy

Possible appendices

- Relevant documentation could be signposted, for example:
 - Parent or carer-friendly summary of the Relationships and Sexuality Education Policy
 - Pupil-friendly summary of the Relationships and Sexuality Education Policy
 - Pupil-friendly list of contacts, websites and organisations related to Relationships and Sexuality Education, for example ChildLine
 - Relevant DE Circulars
 - Outline programme across the key stages
 - Brief details of outside agencies/individuals the school uses to support the delivery of Relationships and Sexuality Education and an outline of the session(s)
 - Northern Ireland Curriculum link

SECTION 6

Support for Schools – A Resource Directory

Selecting appropriate resources

This guidance document has identified some of the Relationships and Sexuality Education related issues which are particularly relevant to young people today. Below is a list of resources which teachers may wish to consult when planning or refreshing their existing provision to ensure that it remains meaningful and relevant to pupils' lives and experiences. As pointed out earlier in this guidance, it is a matter for individual schools to decide on the teaching and learning resources they wish to use. CCEA strongly recommends that schools review and quality-assure all the resources chosen before the pupils use them. The resources below give a flavour of the materials and support that is readily available to help teachers; however, CCEA does not endorse any of the websites listed. Resources have been grouped under key themes for ease of reference.

Keeping children safer in the digital world

www.saferinternet.org.uk

UK Safer Internet Centre have produced a range of resources to help schools teach pupils about staying safe online. These resources include a range of games, films, quizzes and advice and are pitched at children between 3–11 years old.

www.thinkuknow.co.uk

Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) ‘thinkuknow’ website contains advice and resources for teachers exploring the risks which children and young people are exposed to when online. CEOP have produced targeted advice and guidance for parents or carers and teachers, and for children aged 5–7 and 8–10 years old.

www.childnet.com/teachers-and-professionals

Childnet International provides in-depth advice for teachers in their ‘hot topics’ section, covering issues such as sexting, online grooming, cyberbullying and online gaming safety. There is also an online resource bank which contains lesson plans and activity ideas suitable for children of primary school age – this is available at www.childnet.com/resources.

www.kidsmart.org.uk

This website contains useful support for teachers, including resources for teaching children about staying safe online.

Recognising and challenging inappropriate behaviour and touch

www.nspcc.org.uk

www.safertoknow.info

The Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland’s (SBNI) website contains useful information and resources to raise awareness on child sexual exploitation.

Sexual orientation, gender identity and homophobic bullying

www.stonewall.org.uk

This website provides access to many resources on celebrating difference and encouraging respect for one another in the primary classroom setting.

www.the-classroom.org.uk

This website provides detailed advice on many aspects of teaching and learning to make LGBT people visible in education. It includes presentations, detailed lesson plans and a range of inclusive teaching resources celebrating diversity.

www.exceedingexpectations.org.uk

The 'exceeding expectation initiative' is designed to tackle homophobia and address sexuality with young people. This website is divided into three main sections and provides useful background information on what homophobia is, responding to homophobic bullying, and the homophobic bullying experiences of young people.

www.endbullying.org.uk

The Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying Forum includes resources on cyberbullying and homophobic bullying.

Guidance documents

The following guidance documents by CCEA may also be of use to teachers in planning their Relationships and Sexuality Education provision:

- Living.Learning.Together
- Personal Development and Mutual Understanding Guidance Booklet
- Personal Development and Mutual Understanding Progression Grids
- Active Learning and Teaching Methods for Key Stages 1 & 2
- Assessment for Learning: A Practical Guide
- Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities at Key Stages 1 & 2

All documents are available at www.ccea.org.uk

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Appendix

Appendix

Statement of Minimum Requirement: Personal Development and Mutual Understanding

The minimum content is set out below. The statutory requirements are set out in **bold** with the Relationships and Sexuality Education strands highlighted in **yellow**. Additional non-statutory guidance are set out in plain text.

THEME 1: SELF-AWARENESS			
Foundation Stage	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2	Key Stage 3
Teachers should enable pupils to develop knowledge, understanding and skills in developing:			
<p>Strand 1</p> <p>themselves and their personal attributes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore who they are. • Recognise what they can do. • Identify their favourite things. • Recognise what makes them special. 	<p>Strands 1 and 2</p> <p>their self-esteem and self-confidence.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feel positive about themselves, and develop an understanding of their self-esteem and confidence. • Become aware of their strengths, abilities, qualities, achievements, personal preferences and goals. 	<p>Strands 1 and 2</p> <p>their self-esteem, self-confidence and how they develop as individuals.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop self-awareness, self-respect and self-esteem. • Know how to confidently express their own views and opinions in unfamiliar circumstances. • Identify current strengths and weaknesses. • Face problems, trying to resolve and learn from them. • Recognise how responsibilities change as they become older and more independent. • Explore and examine what influences their views, feelings and behaviour. • Develop strategies to resist unwanted peer/sibling pressure and behaviour. 	<p>Personal Development</p> <p>Key Concept:</p> <p>Self-Awareness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore and express a sense of self. • Investigate the influences on a young person. • Explore the different ways to develop self-esteem.

THEME 2: FEELINGS AND EMOTIONS			
Foundation Stage	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2	Key Stage 3
Teachers should enable pupils to develop knowledge, understanding and skills in developing:			
<p>Strand 1</p> <p>their own and others' feelings and emotions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin to recognise how they feel. • Develop ways of expressing how they feel. • Know what to do if they feel sad, lonely, afraid or angry and when it is important to tell others about their feelings. • Realise what makes their friends feel happy or sad. • Recognise how other people feel when they are happy, sad, angry or lonely. 	<p>Strand 1</p> <p>their own and other's feelings and emotions and how their actions affect others.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin to recognise, name and manage their feelings and emotions and realise that they are a natural, important and healthy part of being human. • Begin to recognise and manage the effects of strong feelings such as anger, sadness or loss. 	<p>Strand 1</p> <p>their management of a range of feelings and emotions and the feelings and emotions of others.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examine and explore their own and others' feelings and emotions. • Know how to recognise, express and manage feelings in a positive and safe way. • Recognise that feelings may change at times of change and loss. 	<p>Personal Development Concepts:</p> <p>Self-Awareness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore and express a sense of self. <p>Personal Health</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate the influences on physical and emotional/mental personal health. • Develop understanding about, and strategies to manage, the effects of change on the body, mind and behaviour.

THEME 3: LEARNING TO LEARN			
Foundation Stage	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2	Key Stage 3
Teachers should enable pupils to develop knowledge, understanding and skills in developing:			
<p>Strand 1</p> <p>their dispositions and attitudes to learning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learn to focus attention, concentrate and remember by taking part in a variety of activities that reflect the way they learn. Be encouraged to develop a positive attitude to learning. 	<p>Strand 1</p> <p>positive attitudes to learning and achievement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Become aware of their own strengths, abilities, qualities, achievements, personal preferences and goals. Acknowledge that everyone makes mistakes: that attempts can fail or have disappointing outcomes but that this is a natural and helpful part of learning. Recognise how they can develop and improve their learning. 	<p>Strand 1</p> <p>effective learning strategies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Know how to confidently express their views and opinions in unfamiliar circumstances. Face problems, trying to resolve and learn from them. Identify their current strengths and weaknesses. Develop an insight into their potential and capabilities. Reflect upon their progress and set goals for improvement. Know the ways in which they learn best. Identify and practice effective learning strategies. Be aware of their different learning styles and be able to identify how they learn best. 	<p>Personal Development Concept:</p> <p>Self-Awareness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop skills and strategies to improve their own learning.

THEME 4: HEALTH, GROWTH AND CHANGE			
Foundation Stage	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2	Key Stage 3
Teachers should enable pupils to develop knowledge, understanding and skills in developing:			
<p>Strand 1</p> <p>the importance of keeping healthy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be aware of how to care for their body in order to keep it healthy and well. • Recognise and practise basic hygiene skills. • Realise that growth and change are part of the process of life and are unique to each individual. 	<p>Strand 1</p> <p>strategies and skills for keeping healthy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognise and value the options for a healthy lifestyle including the benefits of exercise, rest, healthy eating and hygiene. • Have respect for their bodies and those of others. • Be aware of the stages of human growth and development. • Recognise how responsibilities and relationships change as people grow and develop. • Understand that medicines are given to make you feel better, but that some drugs are dangerous. • Understand that if not used properly, all products can be harmful. • Be aware that some diseases are infectious and some can be controlled. 	<p>Strand 1</p> <p>how to sustain their health, growth and well-being.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the benefits of a healthy lifestyle, including physical activity, healthy eating, rest and hygiene. • Recognise what shapes positive mental health. • Know about the harmful effects tobacco, alcohol, solvents and other illicit and illegal substances can have on themselves and others. • Understand that bacteria and viruses affect health and that risks can decrease when basic routines are followed. • Know how the body grows and develops. • Be aware of the physical and emotional changes that take place during puberty. • Know how babies are conceived, grow and are born. 	<p>Personal Development Concepts:</p> <p>Personal Health</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore the concept of health as the development of a whole person. • Investigate the influences on physical and emotional/mental/ personal health. • Develop understanding about, and strategies to manage, the effects of change on the body, mind and behaviour. • Investigate the effects on the body of legal and illegal substances and the risks and consequences of their misuse. <p>Relationships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore the implications of sexual maturation. • Explore the emotional, social and moral implications of early sexual activity.

THEME 4: HEALTH, GROWTH AND CHANGE (continued)			
Foundation Stage	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2	Key Stage 3
Teachers should enable pupils to develop knowledge, understanding and skills in developing:			
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be aware of the skills for parenting and the importance of good parenting. • Recognise how responsibilities change as they become older and more independent. • Know that AIDS is a prevalent disease throughout the world and is a major health issue for many countries. 	<p>Home Economics Concept:</p> <p>Independent Living</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop awareness of parenting skills.

THEME 4A: SAFETY			
Foundation Stage	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2	Key Stage 3
Teachers should enable pupils to develop knowledge, understanding and skills in developing:			
<p>Strand 1</p> <p>how to keep safe in familiar and unfamiliar environments.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore appropriate personal safety strategies. • Identify situations that are safe and those where personal safety may be at risk. • Begin to realise the importance of road safety. • Understand that many substances can be dangerous. • Know the safety rules that apply when taking medicines. 	<p>Strand 1</p> <p>strategies and skills for keeping safe.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know what to do or whom to seek help from when feeling unsafe. • Be aware of different forms of bullying and develop personal strategies to resist unwanted behaviour. • Explore the rules for and ways of keeping safe on the roads, cooperating with adults involved in road safety. • Explore how to travel safely in cars and buses. • Know about the potential dangers and threats in the home and environment. • Develop simple safety rules and strategies to protect themselves from potentially dangerous situations. • Identify ways of protecting against extremes of weather, for example being safe in the sun and in freezing conditions. 	<p>Strand 1</p> <p>copng safely and efficiently with their environment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop strategies to resist unwanted peer/sibling pressure and behaviour. • Recognise, discuss and understand the nature of bullying and the harm that can result. • Become aware of the potential danger of relationships with strangers or acquaintances, including good and bad touches. • Become aware of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - appropriate road use; - how to apply the Green Cross Code; - how conspicuity reduces road collisions; - passenger skills including boarding and disembarking from cars and home to school transport; and - how bicycles are best maintained and ridden. • Develop a pro-active and responsible approach to safety. • Know where, when and how to seek help. • Be aware of basic emergency procedures and first aid. 	<p>Personal Development Concepts:</p> <p>Personal Health</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop preventative strategies in relation to accidents in the home, school and on the road. • Develop strategies to promote personal safety.

THEME 5: RELATIONSHIPS			
Foundation Stage	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2	Key Stage 3
Teachers should enable pupils to develop knowledge, understanding and skills in developing:			
<p>Strand 2</p> <p>their relationships with family and friends.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Find out about their own family. • Talk about what families do together. • Begin to recognise how they relate to adults and other children. • Identify who their friends are. • Explore what they do together. • Know how to treat others. 	<p>Strand 2</p> <p>and initiating mutually satisfying relationships.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examine the variety of roles in families and the contribution made by each member. • Be aware of their contribution to home and school life and the responsibilities this can bring. • Know how to be a good friend. • Understand that they can take on some responsibility in their family and friendship groups. 	<p>Strand 2</p> <p>initiating and sustaining mutually satisfying relationships.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examine and explore the different types of families that exist. • Recognise the benefits of friends and families. • Find out about sources of help and support for individuals, families and groups. • Explore and examine what influences their views, feelings and behaviour. • Consider the challenges and issues that can arise: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – at home; – at school; and – between friends and how they can be avoided, lessened or resolved. 	<p>Personal Development Concepts:</p> <p>Relationships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore the qualities of relationships, including friendships. • Explore the qualities of a loving, respectful relationship. <p>Self-Awareness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore personal morals, values and beliefs. • Investigate the influences on a young person. <p>Home Economics Concept:</p> <p>Family Life</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore the roles and responsibilities of individuals within a variety of home and family structures. • Explore strategies to manage family scenarios.

THEME 6: RULES, RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES			
Foundation Stage	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2	Key Stage 3
Teachers should enable pupils to develop knowledge, understanding and skills in developing:			
<p>Strand 2</p> <p>their responsibilities for self and others.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Realise why it is necessary to have rules in the classroom and the school. • Develop a sense of what is fair. 	<p>Strand 2</p> <p>responsibility and respect, honesty and fairness.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify members of their school community and the roles and responsibilities they have. • Recognise the interdependence of members in the school community. • Be aware of how the school community interacts. • Begin to understand why and how rules are made in class, in the playground and at school. • Identify the people, jobs and workplaces in the community. • Realise that money can buy goods and services and is earned through work. • Understand that rules are essential in an ordered community. 	<p>Strand 2</p> <p>human rights and social responsibility.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore and examine the rules within their families, friendship groups, and at school. • Understand the need for rules and that they are necessary for harmony at home and at school. • Identify the variety of groups that exist within the community and their roles and responsibilities. • Consider the rights and responsibilities of members of the community. • Understand that rules are essential in an ordered community and the need for different rules in different contexts. • Examine the effects of anti-social behaviour. • Appreciate how and why rules and laws are created and implemented. 	<p>Personal Development Concepts:</p> <p>Self-Awareness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore personal morals, values and beliefs. <p>Human Rights and Social Responsibility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate why it is important to uphold human rights standards in democratic societies. • Investigate the basic characteristics of democracy. • Investigate key human rights principles. • Investigate why different rights must be limited or balanced in our society. • Investigate local and global scenarios where human rights have been seriously infringed. • Investigate the principles of social responsibility and the role of individuals, society and government in promoting these.

THEME 6: RULES, RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES			
Foundation Stage	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2	Key Stage 3
Teachers should enable pupils to develop knowledge, understanding and skills in developing:			
			<p>Democracy and Active Participation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate why rules and laws are needed, how they are enforced and how breaches of the law affect the community. <p>Equality and Social Justice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore how inequalities can arise in society, including how and why some people may experience inequality or discrimination on the basis of their group identity. Investigate how and why some people may experience inequality/social exclusion on the basis of their material circumstances in local and global contexts. Explore the work of inter-governmental, governmental and non-governmental organisations (NGO) that aim to promote equality and social justice.

THEME 7: MANAGING CONFLICT			
Foundation Stage	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2	Key Stage 3
Teachers should enable pupils to develop knowledge, understanding and skills in developing:			
<p>Strand 2</p> <p>how to respond appropriately in conflict situations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin to take responsibility for what they say and do. 	<p>Strand 2</p> <p>constructive approaches to conflict.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify ways in which conflict may arise at home, and explore ways in which it could be lessened, avoided or resolved. • Identify ways in which conflict may arise at school, and explore ways in which it could be lessened, avoided or resolved. 	<p>Strand 2</p> <p>causes of conflict and appropriate responses.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examine ways in which conflict can be caused by words, gestures, symbols or actions. 	<p>Personal Development Concepts:</p> <p>Relationships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop coping strategies to deal with challenging relationship scenarios. • Develop strategies to avoid and resolve conflict. <p>Diversity and Inclusion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate how and why conflict, including prejudice, stereotyping, sectarianism and racism, may arise in the community. • Investigate ways of managing conflict and promoting community relations and reconciliation.

THEME 8: SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES			
Foundation Stage	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2	Key Stage 3
Teachers should enable pupils to develop knowledge, understanding and skills in developing:			
<p>Strand 2</p> <p>similarities and differences.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin to recognise the similarities and differences in families and the wider community. • Understand that everyone is of equal worth and that it is acceptable to be different. • Celebrate special occasions. 	<p>Strand 2</p> <p>similarities and differences between people.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appreciate ways we are similar and different, for example age, culture, disability, gender, hobbies, race, religion, sporting interests, abilities and work. • Be aware of their own cultural heritage, its traditions and its celebrations. • Recognise and value the culture and traditions of another group in the community. • Discuss the causes of conflict in their community and how they feel about it. • Be aware of the diversity of people around the world. 	<p>Strand 2</p> <p>valuing and celebrating cultural differences and diversity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examine and explore the different types of families that exist, the roles within them, and the different responsibilities. • Know about aspects of their cultural heritage, including the diversity of cultures that contribute to Northern Ireland. • Recognise the similarities and differences between cultures in Northern Ireland, for example food, clothes, symbols and celebrations. • Acknowledge that people differ in what they believe is right or wrong. • Recognise that people have different beliefs that shape the way they live. • Develop an awareness of the experiences, lives and cultures of people in the wider world. • Recognise how injustice and inequality affect people's lives. 	<p>Personal Development Concepts:</p> <p>Diversity and Inclusion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate factors including religious and political factors that influence individual and group identity. • Investigate ways in which individuals and groups express their identity. • Investigate the opportunities arising from diversity and multiculturalism and possible ways of promoting inclusion.

THEME 8: SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES			
Foundation Stage	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2	Key Stage 3
Teachers should enable pupils to develop knowledge, understanding and skills in developing:			
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognise the similarities and differences between different cultures of the wider world, for example food, clothes, symbols and celebrations. • Understand that differences and similarities between people arise from a number of factors, including cultural, ethnic, racial and religious diversity, gender and disability. 	

THEME 9: LEARNING TO LIVE AS MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY			
Foundation Stage	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2	Key Stage 3
Teachers should enable pupils to develop knowledge, understanding and skills in developing:			
<p>Strand 2</p> <p>learning to live as a member of a community.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin to understand the interdependent nature of the class/ community and themselves as participant members. • Raise awareness of their attitudes to others in the school community. • Celebrate a special occasion. 	<p>Strand 2</p> <p>themselves as members of a community.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognise the interdependence of members in the school community. • Be aware of how the school community interacts, how they listen and respond to each other and how they treat each other. • Be aware of who and what influences their views, feelings and behaviour at home. • Be aware of who and what influences their views, feelings and behaviour at school. • Understand how their environment could be made better or worse to live in and what contribution they can make. 	<p>Strand 2</p> <p>playing an active and meaningful part in the life of the community and be concerned about the wider environment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore and examine what influences their views, feelings and behaviour. • Recognise the importance of democratic decision-making and active participation at home and in the classroom. • Appreciate the interdependence of people within the community. • Know about the importance of democratic decision-making and involvement and the institutions that support it at a local level. • Develop an understanding of their role and responsibility as consumers in society. • Know about the range of jobs and work carried out by different people. • Know about the process and people involved in the production, distribution and selling of goods. 	<p>Personal Development Concepts:</p> <p>Self-Awareness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate the influences on a young person. <p>Diversity and Inclusion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate factors, including religious and political factors, that influence individual and group identity. <p>Democracy and Active Participation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate the basic characteristics of democracy. • Investigate various ways to participate in schools and society. • Investigate an issue from a range of viewpoints and suggest action that might be taken to improve or resolve the situation. <p>Home Economics Key Concept:</p> <p>Independent Living</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate a range of factors that influence consumer choices and decisions.



THEME 9: LEARNING TO LIVE AS MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY			
Foundation Stage	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2	Key Stage 3
Teachers should enable pupils to develop knowledge, understanding and skills in developing:			
		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Examine the role of advertising at a local and/or global level.• Explore how the media presents information.	



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