

St. Malachy's Primary School Armagh



Relationships and Sexuality Education Policy

We in St. Malachy's Primary School view the development and implementation of a policy in Relationships and Sexuality (RSE) as an important step towards achieving our school aims of developing in our children.

The morals and values of our Catholic Faith are the core principles that underpin the teaching of RSE. It is increasingly evident that 21st century children, even primary school aged children, are exposed to a highly sexualised world via the media. We feel as a school working closely with our parents that we have a role to play in redressing the balance and showing our children sensitively and supportively that sexuality includes all aspects of the human person that relate to being male or female and is subject to change and development throughout life. It is a complex dimension of human life and relationships. As the learning process begins informally in the home we will endeavour to engage in full consultation with parents regarding the aims, objectives and teaching programme of this policy and their views will be considered when implementing and reviewing the policy.

Teaching RSE should provide opportunities that enable pupils to:

- Form values and establish behaviour within a moral, spiritual and social framework
- Learn how to develop and enjoy personal relationships and friendships which are based on responsibility and mutual respect
- Build the foundations for developing more positive personal relationships in later life
- Make positive, responsible choices about themselves and others and the way they live their lives.

Policy context:

This policy was drawn up with the help of the Child Protection Team, Pastoral care co-ordinator, in consultation with parents.

The following circulars/ websites were used to inform our policy making:

- www.barnardos.org.ukwww.nspcc.org.uk
- www.deni.gov.uk: Circulars 2013/16 RSE & 2001 15A & B RSE
- www.ark.ac.uk
- www.etini.gov.uk
- Equality Act (Sexual Discrimination) regulations NI 2006

Aims of this policy:

In St Malachy's Primary School we aim to:

- Promote an appreciation of the importance of the family unit (regardless of its make up).

- Encourage the development of a pride in one's family and an active association within the community and parish.
- Enhance the personal development, self-esteem and well-being of each child
- Help the children to develop healthy and respectful friendships within the school and at home
- Develop an understanding of how human relationships grow and deepen through friendship, love and affection
- Promote an appreciation of the value of all human life
- Promote inclusion and diversity within our school community

Learning outcomes:

The RSE curriculum should enable pupils to:

- Develop a positive sense of self awareness, self-esteem and self-worth
- Develop an appreciation of the dignity, uniqueness and well-being of others
- Develop personal skills which help to establish and sustain healthy personal relationships
- Acquire and improve skills of communication and social interaction
- Acquire and use an appropriate vocabulary to discuss feelings, sexuality, growth and development
- Become aware of the variety of ways in which individuals grow and change
- Develop a critical understanding of external influences on lifestyles and decision making

Skills:

The RSE curriculum should enable pupils to develop

- Communication skills - expressing one's own views clearly and appropriately; listening to others' points of view; handling and resolving conflict peacefully
- Decision making and problem solving skills - for sensible and responsible choices; making moral judgements about what to do in actual situations
- Inter - personal skills for managing relationships confidently and effectively; for developing as an effective group member or leader
- Practical skills - for everyday living; for supporting others; for future parenting

Morals and values:

The RSE curriculum promotes the moral values of our Catholic faith and enables the children to begin to develop:

- A respect for self

- A respect for others
- Honesty with self and others
- Self-discipline
- The difference between right and wrong
- The responsibility for ones' own actions
- The recognition of the moral dimension to situations
- An understanding of the long term and short term consequences of their actions

How will we achieve our aims?

Children will learn on a day-to-day basis from the Christian example set: adults:

At home:

As first educators, parents are expected to lay the foundations for all acceptable patterns of behaviour, leading by example, and sharing with school the joint task of bringing the child through to the age of eleven with a balanced understanding of life and a healthy appreciation of the human relationships they form in years to come.

At school:

- The friendly school environment created by staff who work in the building
- The messages we give out to children through religious celebrations, assemblies, discussions, workshops etc.
- The encouragement we give and the standards we uphold in terms of sportsmanship, fair play, accepting decisions
- The respect we have for and show to all members of our community
- The development of home school links where we can play an active role in supporting the family
- The programme we may organise with appropriate external partners.

Equal opportunities:

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.

RSE will be accessible to all pupils regardless of age, culture, disability, sexual orientation, gender or social class.

Monitoring review and evaluation of this policy:

This policy will be under annual review. Any changes in provision or policy will be relayed appropriately. The review process will be assisted by the information from teachers, which will have been gained through the teaching situation. Feedback from parents, governors, outside agencies and pupils will also impinge on the process. Necessary changes in policy will be implemented.

See appendix 1 below, the circular on RSE upon which this policy is based.

**RELATIONSHIPS AND SEXUALITY
EDUCATION
POLICY IN SCHOOLS**

Target Audience:

Principals and Boards of Governors of all grant-aided schools;
Education and Library Boards;
Council for Catholic Maintained Schools;
Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment;
Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta; and
Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education.

Summary of Contents:

This Circular is to remind schools of the need to have a policy on Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) in place.

Enquiries:

Any enquiries about the contents of this Circular should be addressed to:
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Governor Awareness:

Essential

Status of Contents:

Advice

Related Documents:

DE Circular 2001/15

DE Circular 2010/01

CCEA Guidance Material (DE Circulars 2001/15a and 2001/15b)

Superseded Documents:

None

Expiry Date:

Not applicable

DE Website:

<http://www.deni.gov.uk>

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RELATIONSHIPS AND SEXUALITY EDUCATION

Introduction

1. The revised curriculum aims to prepare young people for all aspects of life and the Department of Education recognises the importance of delivering appropriate age – related relationship and sexuality education within a clear values framework as a means of developing the child as a whole.

2. RSE is an integral part of the revised curriculum in both primary and post-primary schools and must be delivered in a sensitive manner which is appropriate to the age and understanding of pupils and the ethos of the school.

Department of Education's Policy on Relationships and Sexuality Education

3. The Department requires each school to have in place its own written policy on how it will address the delivery of RSE. A school's RSE policy should be subject to consultation with parents and endorsed by a school's Board of Governors.

4. The delivery of RSE must prepare pupils to view relationships in a responsible and healthy manner and 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.

5. Advice for schools on developing or reviewing their RSE policy is provided in DE Circular 2001/15 "Relationships and Sexuality Education" and the accompanying guidance for primary and post-primary schools (DE Circulars 2001/15a and 2001/15b)

which are available on the Department's website: <http://www.deni.gov.uk/> Guidance and resources on RSE are also provided on the NI Curriculum website at <http://www.nicurriculum.org.uk/> In addition, pupils should also have the opportunity to provide feedback about the content of the programme of RSE delivered by the school so that it can be responsive to their needs.

6. The Department is currently liaising with the Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA) to commission a review of existing guidance and develop resources to address any identified gaps in provision. Schools will be notified of any new guidance/resources as soon as it is available.

7. All pupils have the right to learn in a safe 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. Schools are therefore also reminded of the need to take account of guidance produced by the Equality Commission on eliminating sexual orientation discrimination. This guidance relates to the Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2006 and is available on the Equality Commission's website

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