



HOLY TRINITY ENNISKILLEN

Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) Policy

Signature of the Chair of the Board of Governors: _____

Signature of the Principal: _____

Date: _____

Review Date: _____

The School Ethos

'Holy Trinity is an inclusive learning community striving to meet the needs of everyone.'

Holy Trinity Primary is a Catholic school which aims to provide a happy, safe and secure teaching and learning environment in which the needs of pupils and staff are met with support and understanding.

As a Catholic School we try to do this in a way that reflects the individual talents, gifts and experiences of each person. In this, we actively seek the support of parents and the wider community. We strive to work together in a unified manner and our work reflects ideals such as mutual respect, trust and honesty. We care for others, particularly those in need. We aspire to develop each individual to their full potential by providing a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum. We are proud of our school and wish to share this pride with all who come into contact with us.

Rationale

Holy Trinity Primary School is committed to the education of all children. All pupils have a right to an education which adequately prepares them for adult life, and RSE plays an integral part in this. In the Northern Ireland Primary School Curriculum, one of the areas of learning is Personal Development and Mutual Understanding (PDMU). An integral part of the PDMU curriculum is the provision of RSE. As a Catholic school, Holy Trinity Primary School advocates the promotion of a 'Personal Development' approach to RSE whereby children in our care are given the skills to help them resist peer and media pressure and make informed decisions based on their own internal self-respect and self-esteem. Pupils are encouraged to recognise their individual needs while respecting the needs and wants of others. RSE is a lifelong process that involves the acquisition of knowledge, understanding and skills and the development of attitudes, beliefs morals and values.

Teaching at all times will be appropriate to the maturity and level of understanding of the pupils concerned. Teachers will be aware of, and take into account, the variety of existing pupil knowledge, the different attitudes and beliefs and the pupil's capacity to understand the issues.

The foundation of RSE in Holy Trinity is healthy relationships.

Teaching RSE should provide opportunities which enable pupils:

- to form good relationships and values and establish behaviour within a moral, spiritual and social framework.
- to examine and explore the various relationships in their personal lives;
- to learn how to develop and enjoy personal relationships and friendships which are based on responsibility and mutual respect;
- to build the foundations for developing more personal relationships in later life;
- to make positive, responsible choices about themselves and others and the way they live their lives.

AIMS

The aims of RSE are to:

- enhance the personal development, self-esteem and well-being of the child;
- help the child develop healthy and respectful friendships and relationships;
- foster an understanding of, and a healthy attitude to human sexuality and relationships in a moral, social and spiritual framework;
- promote responsible behaviour and the ability to make informed decisions;
- help the child come to value family life
- appreciate the responsibilities of parenthood;
- promote an appreciation of the value of human life and the wonder of birth.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The RSE curriculum should enable pupils to:

- acquire and develop knowledge and understanding of self;
- develop a positive sense of self-awareness, self-esteem and self-worth;
- develop an appreciation of the dignity, uniqueness and well-being of others;
- understand the nature, growth and development of relationships within families, in friendships and in wider contexts;
- develop an awareness of differing family patterns;
- develop strategies to make decisions, solve problems, and implement actions in various personal, social and health contexts;
- become aware of the variety of ways in which individuals grow and change and understand that their developing sexuality is an important aspect of self-identity;
- develop personal skills which will help to establish and sustain healthy personal relationships;
- develop some coping strategies to protect self and others from various forms of abuse;
- acquire and improve skills of communication and social interaction;
- acquire and use an appropriate vocabulary to discuss feelings, sexuality, growth and development;
- develop a critical understanding of external influences on lifestyles and

decision making.

SKILLS

The RSE curriculum should enable pupils to develop the skills necessary to form and maintain relationships and to make informed choices and decisions regarding health and well-being.

Pupils should also be helped to develop skills to critically evaluate the wide range of information, opinions, attitudes and values. They need opportunities to develop:

- **practical skills** for everyday living, for supporting others, for future parenting.
- **communication skills** learning to listen, listening to others' points of view, putting one's own view forward clearly and appropriately, giving and receiving feedback, handling and resolving conflict peacefully, being assertive.
- **decision-making and problem-solving skills** for sensible choices made in the light of relevant information, making moral judgements about what to do in actual situations and putting these judgements into practice, acting responsibly and with initiative as an individual or as a member of a variety of groups.
- **inter-personal skills** for managing relationships confidently and effectively, for developing as an effective group member or leader.

Inclusion and Special Educational Needs (SEN)

We will ensure RSE is sensitive to the different needs of individual pupils in respect to pupils' different abilities, levels of maturity and personal circumstances; for example, their own faith, culture or sexual orientation and is taught in a way that does not subject pupils to discrimination. Lessons will also help children to realise the nature and consequences of discrimination, teasing, bullying and aggressive behaviours (including cyber-bullying), use of prejudice-based language and how to respond and ask for help. It is particularly important for teaching staff to be aware of the fact that physical development may outstrip emotional maturity in the case of pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN) and to accommodate this disparity in class lessons and experiences.

Children are exposed to information and messages from phones, television, Internet, film, music, videos, books and magazines. They are influenced by family and friends and significant adults. Part of our role is to ensure that children are able to understand and not misinterpret the information they acquire and to provide contexts where they are able to consider and evaluate the information they receive.

To ensure that the learning experiences are effective, positive and relevant to all pupils, our RSE programme will be developmental, accessible and be appropriate to the age and maturity of the pupils. It should meet the needs of everyone and be a positive experience for all participants.

MORALS AND VALUES

RSE should enable pupils to clarify what they believe and why they believe it and develop a respect for and interest in the beliefs of others. Pupils need opportunities to explore values and attitudes and to consider how they affect them and others. Children should be taught RSE within a framework which models and encourages the following values:

- a respect for self;
- a respect for others;
- non-exploitation in relationships;
- commitment, trust and bonding within relationships;
- mutuality in relationships;
- honesty with self and others;
- a development of critical self-awareness for themselves and others;
- an exploration of the rights, duties and responsibilities involved in relationships;
- compassion, understanding and care when people do not conform to their way of life;
- self-discipline.

The importance of a moral framework is emphasised in the DfEE Circular no 5/1994 Education Act 1993: Sex Education in Schools:

“Sex education... must be value-free; it should also be tailored not only to the age but also to the understanding of pupils. School’s programmes of sex education should therefore aim to present facts in an objective, balanced and sensitive manner, set within a clear framework of values and an awareness of the law on sexual behaviour. Pupils should accordingly be encouraged to appreciate the value of stable family life, marriage and the responsibilities of parenthood. They should be helped to consider the importance of self-restraint, dignity, respect for themselves and others, acceptance of responsibility, sensitivity towards the needs and views of others, loyalty and fidelity. And they should be enabled to recognise the physical, emotional and moral implications, and risks, of certain types of behaviour, and to and to accept that both sexes must behave responsibly in sexual matters”.

Teachers are reminded: *“to acknowledge that many children come from backgrounds that do not reflect such values and experiences. Sensitivity is therefore needed to avoid causing hurt and offence to them and their families, and to allow such children a sense of worth”.* (Paragraph 8)

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN HOME, SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY

The effectiveness of this policy and its implementation is dependent on a collaborative process involving teachers, parents/carers, governors and other educational and health professionals. Each of the partners has distinctive contributions to make.

Keeping parents/carers informed about the school's provision for Health Education is a vital element of RSE. A parent's guide about the Flourish programme will be issued so that parents/carers can be informed of the RSE programme, the appropriateness of resources, the content and methodologies proposed and the handling of sensitive topics. 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.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES within our school.

- The Board of Governors examines and ratifies the school's RSE Policy.
- The Principal and Senior Leadership Team co-ordinate the school's approach to RSE and consults with the Board of Governors, staff, pupils, parents/carers, and health professionals.
- The staff provide a link and have a complementary role with parents/carers and deliver the school's RSE programme within the context of the Northern Ireland Curriculum.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES of Parents and Carers

RSE is a lifelong process which begins in the home. The home exerts a major influence on all aspects of a child's life. We are mindful of the fact that our role must be considered to be complementary to that of parents/carers through the teaching of RSE.

In building partnerships we will:

- engage with parents/carers, keeping them up-to-date with information which would encourage them to discuss any issues which may arise in the classroom with their children
- provide suitable information for parents/carers with learning difficulties.
- understand that parents/carers have the right to have their children educated in accordance with their wishes.

The NI Curriculum Relationships and Sexuality Guidance 2015 states that, 'whilst relationships and Sexuality Education is a statutory component of the Northern Ireland Curriculum, parents or carers have a 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. Holy Trinity PS will take account of parental or carers concerns and treat issues on an individual basis to support and allay concerns.

CONTENT

RSE will be delivered in a holistic, cross curricular way, ensuring that teaching is at all times appropriate to the maturity, culture and understanding of the pupils. Teachers will endeavour to be aware of the personal and emotional circumstances of the pupils.

RSE is included on a statutory basis within the NI curriculum through PDMU, Health Education, The World Around Us and Religious Education. Health Education is taught mainly through the medium of PDMU in the Personal Understanding and Health strand as detailed later.

RSE teaching will be delivered primarily through the 'Flourish' programme and includes the physical and emotional changes that occur at puberty.

In the 2nd term of Primary 6/ 7, the children receive a talk on puberty delivered by the 'Love for Life' team. Only children with written parental/carer consent receive this talk.

As a follow up to 'Love for Life' our girls will receive further teaching on Period Wellness through the Period Dignity scheme, delivered by the period dignity and menstrual wellbeing education coordinators.

RSE Curriculum

RSE in Holy Trinity will be taught in mixed groups, where boys and girls learn together in order to gain an understanding and appreciation of each other's perspective.

However, there may be times that pupils and teachers prefer to work in single-gender groups, particularly when they are exploring issues such as puberty.

Teachers will use their own discretion when planning RSE lessons to decide upon the best way of delivering the lesson. However, they will plan in year groups and consult with the coordinator/principal if they have any concerns about the delivery of the lessons.

The selection of teaching resources will:

- be consistent with the school's RSE policy and the aims and objectives of the RSE Programme
- be consistent with Holy Trinity Primary School's mission statement
- be appropriate to pupils' age, level of understanding and maturity
- be factually correct and respectful of its audience
- be appropriate in terms of language level, images, attitudes, values, maturity, contexts and situations and the knowledge required
- encourage consideration of a range of issues, attitudes and beliefs pertinent to the topics covered

In Holy Trinity Primary School, we believe it is essential that teachers create a classroom environment which is supportive, where self-esteem is fostered and where the pupils feel valued and affirmed. The climate of the classroom needs to promote mutual respect and to respect the dignity of each individual. It is important to create an atmosphere in the classroom which allows all pupils to feel comfortable to express opinions and feelings in a secure and safe manner and to explore issues which may be sensitive and personal. Every effort should be made to ensure that the whole group is at ease, with pupils showing respect for each other and realising their responsibilities to each other. Ground rules should be agreed to help to minimise embarrassment and encourage the respect of each other's opinions.

Realistic scenarios, case studies, role-play, drama, videos and stories will be used to enable pupils to discuss issues without personal disclosure. Important considerations are:

- the degree of trust, respect and positive regard for pupils
- relationships between the teacher and pupils, and between the pupils themselves
- the need for clear expectations, goals and learning objectives
- the use of teaching and learning methods which involve pupils actively in their own learning and encourage the consideration of attitudes and values and the ability to make informed and healthy decisions
- the need to be aware and take account of the current youth culture
- teachers will encourage pupils, where possible, to discuss their concerns with parents/carers
- the child's right to privacy, which must be respected by the teacher and other pupils. Children will not be expected to answer any personal questions
- the principal or designated teacher must be informed of any disclosure which might suggest a child is at risk from abuse

We in Holy Trinity PS view the development and implementation of a policy in Relationships and Sexuality (RSE) as an important step towards achieving our aim to develop all aspects of a young person's personality and growth. The framework for sex education was initially established by the Department of Education for Northern Ireland (DENI) in a *Guidance Circular 1987/45*. The main recommendation of this Circular was that each school should have a written policy on sex education which is endorsed by staff and governors and communicated to parents. It also stated, "*sex education should be taught in a sensitive manner which is in harmony with the ethos of the school and in conformity with the moral and religious principles held by parents and school management authorities*".

The Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 1989 further set out the legislative basis, requiring all grant aided schools to offer a curriculum which:

- promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, intellectual and physical development of pupils
- prepares such pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.

The general principles which underpin our work are those set out in Departmental guidance and the following Circulars:

[Circular 2001/15: Relationships and Sexuality Education \(RSE\)](#)

[Circular 2001/15-2: Guidance for Primary Schools - Relationships and Sexuality Education \(RSE\)](#)

[Circular 2010/01: Guidance on Relationships and Sexuality Education \(RSE\)](#)

[Circular 2013/16: Relationships and Sexuality Education Policy in Schools](#)

[Circular 2015/22: Relationships and Sexuality Education \(RSE\) Guidance](#)

Our policy reflects the CCEA, 'Relationships and Sexuality Education Guidance: An Update for Primary Schools' (2015) and the Catholic Schools' Trustee's Service, 'Relationships and Sexuality Education – Guidance document for Primary Schools: NI 2021'

OTHER RELEVANT POLICIES

This policy complements and supports a range of other school policies including:

- Positive Behaviour/Anti-Bullying Policy
- Child Protection Policy/Safeguarding
- Pastoral Care Policy
- Use of Reasonable Force/Safe Handling
- Special Educational Needs
- First Aid and the Administration of Medicines
- Health and Safety Policy
- ICT policy
- Intimate Care
- Inclusion Policy

OTHER RELEVANT AGENCIES

Where appropriate, we may use the skills and expertise of outside agencies and professionals. Where this occurs, the school will be satisfied that contributions from informed outsiders are an integral part of the whole programme and in harmony with the aims and ethos of the school.

(NSPCC - PANTS, Love for Life, Women's Aid and School Nursing Service, School counsellor, Play Therapist).

CURRICULUM ORGANISATION and DELIVERY

**NOTE : ANY VIDEOS TO SUPPLEMENT LESSONS IN HOLY TRINITY PS
WILL BE HIGHLIGHTED IN RED.**

Foundation Stage

Year Group: Primary 1

RSE Flourish Programme

Lesson 1: I am Me	Myself I am Me – God loves me.
Lesson 2: My Body	Myself I have a wonderful body. My body is a gift from God. I must look after it.
Lesson 3: I have a family	Myself and Others I have a family. We love each other. Jesus had a family too.
Lesson 4: I have friends	Myself and the Wider World I have friends. Jesus is my friend.

Foundation Stage

Year Group: Primary 2

RSE Flourish Programme

Lesson 1: Growing and Changing	Myself I am growing, my body is changing. God loves us as we grown and change.
Lesson 2: Keeping Safe *Safe code Dance Video*	Myself I keep myself safe. I look out for other people. Jesus asked us to take care of each other.
Lesson 3: My Family	Myself and Others I have feelings. Others have feelings too. I want to be a good friend.
Lesson 4: I can make choices	Myself and the Wider World Sometimes I need help. I ask for help. I can always ask for God's help.

Key Stage One

Year Group: Primary 3

RSE Flourish Programme

Lesson 1: I am Unique	Myself I am unique. God loves me as I am.
Lesson 2: My Body	
Lesson 3: My Family Loves Me	Myself and Others <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Other people are special too. I respect other people. Jesus wants us to respect everyone.• My space, your space. I am gentle and understanding as Jesus asked me to be.
Lesson 4: My Neighbourhood	Myself and the Wider World Some people are not as lucky as I am. I care about them too. Jesus cared for others.

Key Stage One

Year Group: Primary 4

RSE Flourish Programme

Lesson 1: The Wonder of New Life	Myself <ul style="list-style-type: none">• My body is amazing. I am grateful to God for all that I can do.
Lesson 2: We Have Feelings	
Lesson 3: Friendship and Fairness	Myself and Others <ul style="list-style-type: none">• I am loyal to my friends. I don't let them down. Jesus asked us to be loyal.
Lesson 4: Decisions and consequences	Myself and the Wider World <ul style="list-style-type: none">• People I admire. There are lots of good people. Jesus was a role-model.• Dangerous situations. What should I do? Who can help?

Key Stage 2
Year Group: Primary 5
RSE Flourish Programme

Lesson 1: Growing and Changing - *Lesson adapted <i>*Best animal Moms ever Video</i>	Myself My gender is part of who I am. God loves me as I am.
Lesson 2: Making the Right Choices	Myself Everyday we are called to make choices. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good choices, bad choices.
Lesson 3: Positive Role Models	Myself and Others <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Different types of friendships. Jesus had many friends. • I support my friends.
Lesson 4: Why Have Rules?	Myself and the Wider World <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My neighbourhood – showing love to everyone. God wants us to show love in many different ways.

Key Stage 2
Year Group: Primary 6
RSE Flourish Programme

Lesson 1: Feelings	Myself <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am growing into my adult body. God designed me perfectly. • Good choices, bad choices. The choice is mine. My conscience will guide me.
Lesson 2: Bullying	Myself and Others <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My words and actions can hurt others. Jesus asks us to use words and actions carefully.
Lesson 3: Environmental Care	Myself and the Wider World <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We need to look after the earth. The environment is God's creation. He asked us to look after it.
Lesson 4: Puberty – covered within 'Love for life Programme' <i>*Love for life TEAM – Term 2</i> Follow-up Lesson to "Love For Life" programme - girls only. Period Facts/Period Wellness	Myself <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Puberty – welcome changes. I am perfectly designed by God.

Key Stage 2
Year Group: Primary 7
RSE Flourish Programme

<p>Lesson 1: Puberty lesson covered within “Love for Life programme’ *Love for life TEAM – Term 2 Follow-up Lesson to “Love For Life” programme - girls only. Period / Period situations</p>	<p>Myself • Puberty – welcome changes. I am perfectly designed by God.</p>
<p>Lesson 2: Emotions and Relationships <i>*Vicky’s party video</i></p>	<p>Myself and Others • I am attracted to other people. I respect them. God made us to be compatible with each other.</p>
<p>Lesson 3: Safe Internet</p>	<p>Myself and the Wider World • Social media can be good and bad. Respect is the key. God wants us to respect each other.</p>
<p>Lesson 4: It’s Ok to Say No</p>	<p>Myself and Others Peer Pressure – Respect The decisions of others.</p>

WITHDRAWAL FROM RSE

Since RSE is a statutory requirement, it should be inclusive. As a school we actively promote the implementation of RSE and strongly discourage withdrawal. The school will, however, take account of parent/carer concerns.

Monitoring, evaluating and reviewing the RSE Policy:

Holy Trinity Primary School staff are committed to monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of this policy. Specifically important to the RSE Programme are:

- pupil feedback
- staff review and feedback
- parental feedback
- further Departmental guidance and legislative changes

Monitoring and evaluating the RSE Policy

The RSE policy will be reviewed annually. It will be amended as appropriate in light of changes in legislation or practice following targeted consultation with all staff members, parents, and external agencies. This policy will be brought to the Board of Governors for final approval.

Policy Date:

Signature of Principal:.....

Signature of Chairperson of Board of Governors:
.....

Review Date: _ / _ / _ _ _

Appendices

[Appendix 1 : A yearly overview of PDMU and Flourish lessons and activities taught from P1 – P7.](#)

[Flourish parents guide](#)

[Love for Life parental consent](#)

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