



Relationships and Sexuality POLICY

Reviewed: February 2025
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Sean McAuley	04/02/2025
Chair of Board of Governors	Date
Karen McElroy	04/02/2025
Principal	Date

Mission Statement:

In Creggan Primary School, we 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 morals and values of our Catholic ethos are the core principles that underpin the teaching of RSE.

Sexuality includes all aspects of the human person that relate to being male and female and develops throughout life. It is a complex dimension of human life and relationships.

As parents/carers are the primary educators of their children, we will endeavour to engage in full consultation with them regarding aims, objectives and the teaching programme of this policy and their views will be considered when implementing and reviewing this policy.

In line with our school's ethos, RSE should provide opportunities that enable pupils to:

- form values and establish behaviour within a moral, spiritual and social framework consistent with our Catholic ethos
- 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.

Board of Governors

Every School a Good School - The Governors' Role: A Guide for Governors outlines the role and responsibilities of Governors. Section 13.40 states, "Boards of Governors should ensure that their schools have a Relationships and Sexuality Education policy and curriculum linked to their pastoral care/child protection policy. This policy and the associated teaching should be the subject of consultation with staff and parents and endorsed by the Governors.

Northern Ireland RSE Curriculum

In 2015, the Council for Curriculum Examinations and Assessment (CCEA), supporting the delivery of the NI curriculum, provided non-statutory guidance for schools on delivering PDMU which includes information on Relationships and Sexuality Education.

This material is available from their website at www.ccea.org.uk.

In this 2015 'Relationships & Sexuality Education Guidance' CCEA stated that: 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.

Definition

Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) is a complex and vitally important area of our school's curriculum.

Relationships and Sexuality Education is defined as 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.

RSE is life long learning about physical, moral and emotional development. RSE should provide young people with the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not simply intimate relationships. It should enable them to know what a healthy relationship looks like and what makes a good friend.

Rationale

The school is involved in relationships and sexuality education precisely because of our Christian beliefs about God and about the human person. The belief in the unique dignity of the human person made in the image and likeness of God underpins the approach to all education in a Catholic school. Our approach to RSE therefore is rooted in the Catholic Church's teaching of the human person and presented in a positive framework of Christian ideals.

RSE will be firmly embedded in the PDMU and the RE Curriculum as it is concerned with nurturing human wholeness and integral to the physical, spiritual, emotional, moral, social and intellectual development of pupils. It is centred on Christ's vision of being human as good news and will be positive and prudent, showing the potential for development, while enabling the dangers and risks involved to be understood and appreciated. All RSE will be delivered in accordance with the Church's moral teaching. It will emphasise the central importance of marriage and the family whilst acknowledging that all pupils have a fundamental right to have their life respected whatever household they come from.

Our Mission Statement commits us to the education of the whole child (spiritual, physical, intellectual, moral, social, cultural, emotional) and we believe that RSE is an integral part of this education. Furthermore, our school aims state that we will endeavour to raise pupils' self-esteem, help them to grow in knowledge and understanding, recognise the value of all persons and develop caring and sensitive attitudes.

Children will be taught RSE within a framework which models and encourages the following values:

- A respect for God and creation.
- To be able to distinguish between what is right and wrong.
- A respect for self.
- A respect for others.
- Self-discipline.

- A responsibility for one's own actions and an understanding of the long term and short-term consequences of their actions.
- Non-exploitation in relationships.
- Commitment, trust and bonding within relationships.
- A development of critical self-awareness for themselves and others.
- Compassion, forgiveness, mercy and care when people do not conform to their way of life.

RSE Curriculum

In Creggan Primary we use the following programmes to teach the Preventative Curriculum from Foundation Stage to Key Stage2, ensuring progression and age appropriate lessons.

Keeping Safe.

Primary 1	Healthy Relationships	My Body	Being Safe
	Know the names of feelings – worried, excited, confused and scared. Understand that hands are not for hurting others. It's normal to feel angry. Know what to do if someone hurts you. Understand importance of telling someone in school if they are feeling sad, worried, nervous or afraid.	Understand what private means and know the proper names for body parts. Understand why we do not share our private parts. Know how to be body smart. Say No when they get an uneasy feeling.	Understand what Safe means and be able to identify being safe. Identify situations that are safe and unsafe. Language associated with these feelings. How to tell someone if they are not feeling safe.
Primary 2	Understand no one has the right to hurt them. What to do if they are worried about someone else being hurt. Understand that no one has the right to continually say things to make them feel sad.	Know difference between appropriate and inappropriate touch. Understand they have the right to say No if their body gets a feeling they do not like. Understand difference in secrets and surprises.	They should talk about their worries. Identify their Safe Adults. Importance of asking for help from an adult while online.
Primary 3	It is ok to No to a friend. Develop ways of doing this sensitively. It is ok to feel angry but not ok to hurt others physically or emotionally because of this. Know what to do if they feel hurt by anyone, even if it is an adult.	Privates are not for sharing. Their body belongs to them. Talk about a secret which upsets them, even if it involves family or friends.	Signs when their body feels unsafe. Stay with an adult in public places. How to keep safe online.
Primary 4	The right to be in a happy and caring environment. Understand some reasons for anger and how to deal with it. What a real friendship should look like.	It is ok to say No. No one can make you do things you do not want to do. Importance of not keeping secrets. Recognise bribes/threats and know what to do.	Who to go to for help in different situations. It is not safe to share personal information online. Know you can not judge a book by its cover. Anyone can be abusive. Money/power are not important.
Primary 5	What is cruelty? How can we stop it? There are times when you need to be assertive. Importance of having respect for others.	Their body belongs to them and they are entitled to privacy. What is appropriate/inappropriate. Potential dangers with taking/sending photos online.	What is safe to share online/offline? Online there are things they should not accept or open as they are not reliable. Need to tell an adult if they are ever asked for personal information or to meet someone online.

Primary 6	Problems with online friendships and how these differ from personal friendships. Identify all types of bullying and reasons for it. Strategies for dealing with bullying.	Sharing photos online can be dangerous. Private areas should never be shared. Bribes/threats and how to deal with them.	Difference in needs and wants and understand why they have a right to feel safe and secure. How their body reacts when angry or frustrated. Rights of the child – laws to protect children.
Primary 7	Unhealthy relationships and how to deal with them. Domestic abuse and know it is wrong. All relationships and families are different. Entitlement to feel happy, safe and looked after.	4 main types of abuse. Problems faced in telling about abuse. Develop skills in communicating their feelings and discussing problems with adults.	Cyberbullying – how/why it happens and how to deal with it. The work of organisations that help children who have been abused. Educate younger children in school about keeping safe messages.

The Wonder of My Being

Primary 1	To appreciate that I am a boy/girl To appreciate that I am part of a family To understand that I grew in my mother's womb To learn that Jesus was part of a family To appreciate that I am special
Primary 2	To understand that I needed help with everything when I was a baby I have grown and changed since a baby Developmental stages of babies My family loves and cares for me God chose Mary to be the mother of his son Mary and Joseph loved and cared for Jesus
Primary 3	To appreciate: Qualities required for friendships Qualities necessary for a family How a mother cares for her baby Jesus helped Mary and Joseph at home How we can help at home
Primary 4	To appreciate: Mary was told by an angel she was to be the mother of Jesus An angel appeared to Joseph to tell him he would be the one to care for Jesus and Mary Qualities and values that were part of the Holy Family Vocabulary associated with pregnancy and birth Preparations needed for your birth Family is a gift from God
Primary 5	To appreciate: The uniqueness of each person We are all created in the image and likeness of God The stages of development of birth and two years We change as we grow To be aware of people who help us grow and develop To revisit the sacrament of baptism
Primary 6	To appreciate: We are made in God's image and likeness The stages of growth before birth Recognise significant moments in our lives Recognise we are created by God and our bodies are sacred Recognise our bodies change as we grow Everyone is part of the Body of Christ The values of friendship in our lives Identify negative behaviour and its impact on other people

Primary 7	To appreciate: - We are called by God - The talents each of us have and consider how we will use them as we grow and change - The qualities and characteristics of friendship - Accepting and respecting each other just as we are - We are influenced by many different people and things - We can be a good or bad influence on people - To help make informed decisions about our lives - Face future changes with optimism
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The Barnados PATHS Programme

CCEA Digital Life and Work

<https://ccea.org.uk/learning-resources/digital-life-and-work>

Take 5: We are a Take Five School – we use the Take 5 Steps to wellbeing which is an evidence-based public health message. We follow 5 steps to contribute improving wellbeing in its fullest sense.

Teaching Strategies

Specifically, in terms of organising the learning environment, the teacher will be careful to create an atmosphere which respects the privacy of each individual pupil and treats all pupils with due sensitivity and care. It is important to consider:

- the degree of trust, respect and positive regard for pupils;
- the relationship between the teacher and the pupils and among the pupils themselves;
- the need for clear expectations, goals and learning objectives.

In the light of the RSE Policy, and in the context of the ethos of the Catholic school, the statutory requirements for RSE are taught through the religious education programmes Grow in Love, The Wonder of My Being, NSPCC Keeping Safe and Barnardos Paths, while linking with the significant and relevant areas of the curriculum such as PDMU and Online Safety.

Teachers will cover themes in Circle Time, RE and PDMU. We encourage active learning strategies e.g. mind mapping, discussion techniques, reporting back, listening exercises, circle time, role-play, questionnaires and quizzes.

RESPECTING DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

RSE should be delivered in a culturally sensitive manner. This will involve taking account of the cultural and religious background of all pupils in our school and promoting tolerance and mutual hospitality in the expression and exploration of different beliefs and values.

Use of Outside Agencies

Where appropriate, the skills and expertise of outside agencies and professionals may be accessed. Where this occurs, we will ensure that all teaching is rooted in Catholic principles and practice.

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

- receives a copy of the school's Relationships & 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;
- agrees to respect the ethos of the school; • is made aware of the issues around confidentiality;
- is vetted as appropriate

Parents/carers will be made aware in advance of the use of outside agencies.

All staff teaching RSE related issues should use the proper biological names for body parts and sexual acts, where appropriate and relevant to the RSE programme. The use of common slang should be avoided. Teachers should remember that, as they are not medical professionals, they must not give personal medical advice to any pupil. Teachers must advise pupils to seek advice from parents or carers and health professionals. If any question asked raises child protection issues, this should be referred to the designated teacher for child protection.

Digital Safety

The RSE Programme will teach pupils how to safely navigate the digital world. Technology plays an integral role in the lives of pupils which poses both opportunities and risks. The RSE Programme will raise awareness of potential threats or dangers posed by the Internet such as sexting, cyber-bullying, pornography, abuse and exploitation. Pupils will explore the implications of the law, the strategies they can use. (see Online Safety Policy)

Monitoring and Evaluating

The RSE Co-ordinator will monitor the provision of the various dimensions of the programme by examining plans, schemes of work and samples of pupils work at regular intervals. The programme will be evaluated biannually by means of questionnaires / response sheets / needs assessment given to pupils, and / or by discussion with pupils, staff and parents. The results of the evaluation should be reported to these groups of interested parties and their suggestions sought for improvements. Governors will consider all such evaluations and suggestions before amending the policy. Governors remain ultimately responsible for the policy.

