

Fairview Primary School



Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) Policy

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RELATIONSHIPS AND SEXUALITY EDUCATION (RSE) POLICY

INTRODUCTION

It is a statutory requirement that all schools in Northern Ireland have a 'Relationships and Sexuality Education' (RSE) Policy. 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
- Learn about keeping themselves safe and know what to do or who to go to if they feel unsafe
- Be treated with respect and dignity and not treated as any less favourably on grounds of their actual or perceived sexual orientation

Our policy has been written in line with Department of Education requirements and in consultation with parents/carers, staff and governors.

Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) aims to promote the development of all aspects of the individual for their personal and family life, for working life, for living in the community and for leisure. It must be delivered in an age appropriate way which supports the ethos of the school.

It can have a positive effect on self-esteem. Schools can help to develop their pupils' self-esteem by creating a climate of trust and acceptance in which each person is valued and respected and encouraged to feel good about themselves. Pupils are encouraged to recognise their individual needs, to respect the needs and wants of others, and to develop the skills and self-esteem to become confident adolescents.

RSE in schools can increase informed choice by providing opportunities for pupils to examine their own values and beliefs in the light of those held by others. Deeper understanding of the values and beliefs that they hold can help pupils to clarify why they think and behave as they do, to separate fact from fiction, to recognise prejudice and to respect the views, emotions and feelings of others.

As the department's Relationship and Sexuality Guidance states:

RSE "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.

Sexuality includes all aspects of the human person that relate to being male or female and is subject to change and development throughout life. Sexuality is an integral part of the human personality and has biological, cultural, psychological, social and spiritual dimensions. It especially concerns affectivity, the capacity to give and receive love; procreation and, in a more general way, the aptitude for forming relationships with others. It is a complex dimension of human life and relationships.

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."

THE IMPORTANCE OF RELATIONSHIPS AND SEXUALITY EDUCATION

- Respects the rights of children
- Promotes a better understanding of diversity and inclusion
- Helps children to keep themselves safer in the digital world
- Provides reliable, accurate and timely age-appropriate information i.e. linked to their development
- Promotes the use of appropriate language
- Helps children to recognise inappropriate behaviour and touch
- Provides judicious and appropriate use of internal personnel, external agencies and guest speakers, to handle topics which may include sexual orientation, aspects of sexual health, suicide and self-harm.

THE SCHOOL ETHOS

The ethos of our school is founded on principles where tolerance and respect for others is paramount. It is our intention that everyone feels valued and our pupils are encouraged to develop their full potential in a caring and supportive environment.

'We believe our school will nurture all individuals in their journey to achieve their full and unique potential. We are committed to developing an inclusive, welcoming, safe and stimulating learning environment that will enable all our pupils to be happy and become responsible citizens and lifelong learners. We are aware that our pupils bring different experiences, interests and strengths, which will influence the way they learn and develop their independence'

Teaching RSE should provide opportunities which enable pupils to:

- Form values and establish behaviour within a moral, spiritual and social framework
- Examine and explore the various relationships in their personal lives
- Learn how to develop and enjoy personal relationships and friendships which are based on responsibility and mutual respect
- Build the foundations for developing more personal relationships in later life
- 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 (as appropriate to age and understanding) 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 the family unit and marriage
- 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 (at an age appropriate level):

- 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.

Our pupils need opportunities to develop:

Practical skills for:

- everyday living
- supporting others
- future parenting

Communication skills:

- learning to listen
- listening to others' points of view
- putting their 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

MORALS AND VALUES

RSE should enable our 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.

Our pupils are 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 reflective self-awareness for themselves and others
- An exploration of the rights, duties and responsibilities involved in relationships

- Compassion, forgiveness, mercy and care when people do not conform to their way of life
- Self-discipline

CURRICULUM ORGANISATION AND DELIVERY

The following outline teaching programme illustrates the topics covered through the delivery of the Northern Ireland Curriculum in Fairview Primary School. Many of the aspects included below are also part of PDMU (Personal Development and Mutual Understanding), RE (Religious Education), the World Around Us (WAU), PE, Drama or in reaction to specific situations. All teachers will deliver the RSE programme at an age appropriate level. Before teaching any of these areas teaching staff will be aware of children's personal experiences that have been shared with them and the situations of the pupils will be taken into account prior to introducing sensitive topics.

A range of resources are used to deliver the programme across the key stages. These include:

- Out and about with Hilda
- Living Learning Together
- Emotion books e.g. Frightened Fred, Moppy Feels
- NSPCC resources / PANTS
- Medical services i.e. school nurse
- NIABF (Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying Forum) resources
- Helping Hands Resource (Women's Aid)
- Women's Aid programme – developing self-esteem and resilience
- Bee Safe
- Personal Development and Mutual Understanding Guidance Booklet / Progression Grids
- Active Learning and Teaching Method for KS1 and KS2
- Assessment for Learning: A Practical Guide
- Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities at KS1 and KS2
- Operation Encompass

The teaching of Relationships and Sexuality Education mainly falls under the teaching of Personal Development and Mutual Understanding. Our PDMU scheme of work details the content taught under the statutory requirements.

The statutory requirements fall under the following themes within the PDMU strands:

THEME 1: SELF-AWARENESS		
Foundation Stage	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2
Themselves and their personal attributes	Their self-esteem and self-confidence	Their self-esteem, self-confidence and how they develop as individuals
THEME 2: FEELINGS AND EMOTIONS		
Their own and others' feelings and emotions	Their own and others' feelings and emotions and how their actions affect others	Their management of a range of feelings and emotions and the feelings and emotions of others
THEME 4: HEALTH, GROWTH AND CHANGE		
The importance of keeping healthy	Strategies and skills for keeping healthy	How to sustain their health, growth and well-being
THEME 4A: SAFETY		
How to keep safe in familiar and unfamiliar environments	Strategies and skills for keeping safe	Coping safely and efficiently with their environment
THEME 5: RELATIONSHIPS		
Their relationships with family and friends	Their relationships with family and friends and initiating mutually satisfying relationships	Initiating and sustaining mutually satisfying relationships
THEME 8: SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES		
Similarities and differences	Similarities and differences between people	Valuing and celebrating cultural differences and diversity

FOUNDATION STAGE AND KEY STAGE 1

Myself

- How I grow, feed, move and use my senses
- Caring for myself, for example, hygiene, sleep, exercise
- Naming parts of the body (basic) - developing an agreed language for our bodies
- Being myself - I am unique, my self-esteem, self-confidence, independence, respect and caring for myself
- Similarities and differences between myself and others, for example, uniqueness, fingerprints, gender differences, different rates of growth
- An introduction to the stages of human development - changes as we grow, for example, baby, child, teenager, adult, mother/father, grandparents
- Recognising moods, feelings and concerns and developing a language and an appropriate manner of expressing them e.g. what do I do if I feel sad or angry?
- Personal likes and dislikes.

My Relationships

- My family, special people in my life - what they do for me and what I do for them
- Friendships, getting on with each other e.g. communicating, playing together, listening, co-operating and sharing
- Ageing - how do we know that things are alive, dead, young and old
- Loss and mourning - death of a person or a pet
- Respect and caring for family members and friends, for example, caring for a new baby
- How to address bullying behaviours
- Personal safety - simple skills and practices to maintain personal safety
- The difference between good and bad touches
- Realise that adults and older children are not always friends; the potential danger of relationships with strangers or acquaintances
- Strategies which pupils might use to protect themselves from potentially dangerous situations

My Community/Environment

- Awareness of different types of families and the roles of individuals within families
- Keeping safe, for example, dangerous places, dangerous situations, the adults who will help, how to get help from others
- Rules at home, at school and in the community
- Respect and caring for people in the community, e.g. elderly people

KEY STAGE 2

Myself

- My body, how it works and how to keep it healthy
- The physical, social and emotional changes that occur during puberty (girls and boys)
- Myself and my peers - different rates of growth and physical development, maturity
- Valuing and respecting myself, identifying personal strengths and weaknesses.
- Feelings, for example, things that make me happy, sad, excited, embarrassed, angry, scared; expressing our feelings, showing love and affection
- Gender roles
- Making choices - the influences on me and the consequences of actions for oneself and others
- Distinguishing between right and wrong
- Secrets - knowing the difference between good and bad secrets, what to do about secrets shared
- Recognising uniqueness
- Awareness of impact of what we put into our bodies

My Relationships

- Identifying the positive traits of friendship and their corresponding values
- Differences and similarities in people; the need to respect other people's views, emotions and feelings
- Families and how they behave - what family members expect of each other
- The meaning of friendship and loyalty; making and maintaining friendships and social relationships, for example, identifying and understanding pressures and influences, taking account of other people's point of view
- Handling difficult situations, for example, teasing, bullying, death of a family member
- The meaning of relationships within families, between friends and in the community
- Behaviour - what constitutes appropriate and non-appropriate physical contact
- Identifying dangers and risks within relationships
- Being assertive in defending individual rights and beliefs
- People who can help pupils when they have anxieties, concerns or questions

My Community/Environment

- Appreciation of the family in relation to the school and the wider community
- Cultural differences in families and family relationships
- Helping agencies which can support families and individuals in different circumstances
- Messages and images about health, gender roles and sexuality from the media, family and peers
- Understanding role of range of family settings e.g. being a young carer

TEACHING RSE - THE CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT

In Fairview Primary School we aim to 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 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. Our classes are mixed-gender classes with a range of ability and needs.

Consideration needs to be given to:

- 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

As a school we aim to ensure we use strategies that deliver the most current information on Relationships and Sexuality Education and use resources that are in line with our school's morals and values.

TERMINOLOGY

In teaching issues related to RSE, teachers will use the correct biological terms for parts of the body where appropriate and at an age appropriate level.

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.

Pupils will be encouraged to appreciate the value of family life. We acknowledge the different family units that are represented in school and will endeavour to treat all situations sensitively.

Keeping parents/carers informed about the school's provision for health education is a vital element of RSE. 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.

MEETING THE NEEDS OF PUPILS

To ensure that the learning experiences are effective, positive and relevant to all our pupils, the RSE programme will be developmental, accessible and be appropriate to the age and maturity of the pupils. It should meet the needs of both genders and be a positive experience for all participants. Teaching will be adapted to suit the needs of all pupils, including children with special educational needs and Looked After/adopted/fostered children.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Board of Governors examines and ratifies the school's RSE Policy.

The Principal and Senior Leadership Team co-ordinates 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.

SELECTION OF TEACHING RESOURCES

Our teaching resources are:

- Consistent with our RSE policy and the aims and objectives of the RSE programme
- Consistent with our school's morals and values framework
- Appropriate to our pupils' age, level of understanding and maturity
- Factually correct and respectful of its audience
- Likely to appeal to pupils in terms of appropriate language level, images, attitudes and values, maturity, contexts and situations, and the knowledge required
- Complementary to the existing programmes which the school offers
- Encouraging consideration of a range of issues, attitudes and beliefs pertinent to the topics covered

CONFIDENTIALITY AND CHILD PROTECTION/SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN

Confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. Where there is disclosure by a child of abuse, Child Protection/Safeguarding Children procedures will be implemented. The classroom is an open environment and confidentiality cannot be maintained.

The child's right to privacy must be respected at all times by both the teacher and all other pupils in the class. However, a child does not have the right to expect that incidents in the classroom or in the wider context of the school will not be reported, as appropriate, to his or her parents/carers and/or the principal. Teachers are not medical professionals and will not give detailed personal medical advice to any pupil. Only doctors and health professionals should give medical advice to pupils. Teachers encourage young people, where possible, to discuss their concerns with parents/carers.

The principal or designated teacher (Mrs Norris) for Child Protection/Safeguarding Children Policy must be informed of any disclosures which might suggest that a pupil is at risk or any form of abuse is suspected. If a child confides in a member of staff and requests that the information is kept secret, the child must be told, sensitively, that the matter must be reported to the appropriate agencies. Decisions can then be taken in accordance with the procedures detailed in the Child Protection Policy. **(Refer to our Child Protection/Safeguarding Children Policy).**

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.

USE OF VISITORS

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.

RSE will include the physical and emotional changes that occur at puberty but will not include sex education. However, the Primary 6 and 7 children of Fairview Primary School receive a 'Puberty Talk' in the summer term. Only children with written parental / carer consent receive this talk. The school nurse delivers the talks with a member of teaching staff present in each case. All children are encouraged to take part.

STAFF TRAINING

Training needs will be considered and will be accessed using the Education Authority, Public Health Agency and/or other appropriate health agencies. Where outside Agencies are used for training purposes, their remit will be clear and will reflect the ethos of the school.

SACREDNESS OF LIFE

The value of human life and the uniqueness of each individual will be at the heart of RSE teaching.

SPECIFIC ISSUES

When areas such as homosexuality, AIDS, contraception etc. are raised, our teaching will address these in a sensitive and appropriate manner.

Family Status – Pupils will be encouraged to appreciate the value of family life. We acknowledge the different family units that are represented in school and will endeavor to treat all situations sensitively.

RACE EQUALITY AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

All children have equal access to the curriculum regardless of their race, gender, disability or ability. Teachers plan work that is differentiated so that all groups and individuals can achieve their potential and are committed to creating a positive climate that will enable everyone to work free from racial intimidation, harassment or other form of bullying. In this school everyone has a right to be safe and a responsibility to keep others safe.

CONSULTATION

This policy was drawn up in consultation with staff, pupils and parents. A focus group of parents provided feedback on the policy during the consultation period. It is available on the school website for all parents to access.

Comments/feedback can be provided to Mrs Norris (Designated Teacher) or Mr McAllister (Principal).

REVIEW OF THE RSE POLICY

This policy has been written in line with the Department of Education advice on developing or reviewing a RSE policy:

- Circular 2001/15 Relationships and Sexuality Education
- Circular 2015/22
- Relationships and Sexuality Education in Primary and Special Schools – July 2016 – Report of an evaluation by the Education and Training Inspectorate.
- The Equality Act (sexual orientation) Regulations (NI) 2006
- UNCRC
- Every School a Good School

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis and will take account of new legislation.

LINKS TO OTHER POLICIES

- Child Protection/Safeguarding Children policy/procedures
- Pastoral Care policy
- Drugs Education policy
- PDMU policy
- Health and well-being policy
- Internet safety/ Online Safety policy
- Positive Behaviour / Anti Bullying Policy
- Safe Handling / Use of Reasonable Force
- SEN Policy
- First Aid and the Administration of Medication
- Use of Mobile Phones / Cameras
- Intimate Care Policy
- Period Dignity Ambassador Policy
- Critical Incident/Bereavement Policy