

Greenhaw Primary and Nursery School

A Policy for Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) 2019



Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE)

Relationships and Sexuality Education in the N.I. context

RSE is not a new area of the curriculum. 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 at the school and thereby of society ...and...
- 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

At Greenhaw Primary and Nursery School, we further recognise the importance of working in partnership with parents/carers in this area of personal development and acknowledge the contribution that can be made by outside agencies with skill and expertise in particular areas of the curriculum (NSPCC, Women's Aid and School Nursing Service).

INTRODUCTION

Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) is a lifelong process which encompasses the acquisition of knowledge, understanding and skills, and the development of attitudes, beliefs and values about personal and social relationships and gender issues. The learning process begins informally with our parents (or those holding parental responsibility) long before any formal education takes place at school.

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.

In RSE all pupils will be taught in an atmosphere of mutual respect. The value of a stable family life, marriage and the responsibilities of parenthood will be presented. As they mature, pupils will be encouraged to appreciate the importance of self-discipline, dignity, respect for themselves and others. Through PDMU and the World Around Us, children will learn about changes in their bodies as they grow older and, in Y7, will be given the opportunity for a talk with the Pastoral Care Vice-Principal in order to prepare them fully for post-primary schools and the emotional and physical changes they may expect to experience over the next few years.

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.

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.

Teaching RSE should provide opportunities which enable pupils:

- to form 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.

Consent of parents will be sought for inclusion in RSE lessons. Parents have the right to withdraw their child from RSE lessons.

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 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:

- 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.

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, and others, are affected by them.

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 not 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 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)

CRED

Links with Community Relations Equality and Diversity (CRED) Policy

The CRED policy complements what Greenhaw Primary and Nursery School is striving to achieve for children. It aims to improve outcomes for children by ‘educating children to develop self- respect and respect for others, promote equality and work to eliminate discrimination, and by providing formal and non-formal education opportunities for them to build relationships with those of different backgrounds and traditions within the resources available.’

CRED aims and principles are very much the same as the aims of the NI Curriculum, namely the Curriculum aims to empower young people to achieve their potential and to make informed and responsible decisions throughout their lives.

In Greenhaw Primary and Nursery School, we are sensitive to and welcoming of the diverse identities of all members of the school community. Within the school ethos it is obvious that there is an acceptance of difference and a valuing of diversity.

The school's approach to CRED implementation is similar to that of RSE in that it reflects the needs of all children. Topics that lend themselves to exploring issues of diversity, equality, different cultures and conflict would meet the needs of both CRED and the curriculum.

NURTURE

The nurturing approach offers a range of opportunities for children and young people to engage with missing early nurturing experiences, giving them the social and emotional skills to do well at school and with peers, develop their resilience and their capacity to deal more confidently with the trials and tribulations of life, for life.

The Six Principles of Nurture also underpin our work in Child Protection and Safeguarding.

1. Children's learning is understood developmentally
2. The classroom offers a safe base
3. The importance of nurture for the development of wellbeing
4. Language is a vital means of communication
5. All behaviour is communication
6. The importance of transition in children's lives.

OTHER RELEVANT POLICIES

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

- Personal Development and Mutual Understanding
- Nurture
- The World Around Us
- Religious Education
- Positive Behaviour/Anti-Bullying
- Child Protection
- Pastoral Care
- Use of Reasonable Force/Safe Handling
- Special Educational Needs
- First Aid and the Administration of Medicines
- Health and Safety
- Use of Mobile Phones/Cameras
- ICT and access to the internet
- E-Safety
- Intimate Care
- Critical Incident(s)

- Acceptable Use of the Internet
- EA Social Media

Special Needs

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 Needs and to accommodate this disparity in class lessons and experiences.

DELIVERING THE RSE PROGRAMME

The Programme “In The Beginning” will be the Primary Resource.
The following includes extracts from the N.I. Primary Curriculum - Personal Development and Mutual Understanding will support this with a focus on Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities.
Strand - Personal Understanding and Health

Foundation Stage

Self-Awareness - Exploring who they are, what they can do, identifying favourite things, what makes them special

Feelings and Emotions

- beginning to recognise how they feel
- knowing what to do if sad or lonely, afraid or angry
- telling others about feelings
- realising what makes people sad or unhappy, recognising how people feel.

Health and Safety

- Being aware of caring for his/her own body
- recognising good hygiene practices
- understanding growth and change
- exploring appropriate personal safety strategies, road safety, medicines and drugs -safety rules.

Religious Education

- Life is a gift from God
- Stories which help children distinguish right from wrong and help children to make moral judgements about situations.
- Moral values such as sharing, caring, love, forgiveness and friendship.
- The importance of family and care of the earth.

Key Stage 1

Self-Awareness

- Feeling positive about oneself
- awareness of own strengths, abilities, qualities, personal preferences
- recognising own feelings and emotions

- recognising and managing the effects of strong feelings – anger, sadness, loss
- acknowledging that everyone makes mistakes
- recognising how they can develop and improve learning.

Health, Growth and Change

- Recognising and valuing the options for a healthy lifestyle
- having respect for their bodies and those of others
- being aware of the stages of human growth and development
- recognising how responsibilities and relationships change as you grow older
- understanding medicines and drugs
- understanding that, if not used properly, all products can be dangerous
- being aware that some diseases are infectious and some can be controlled.

Religious Education

- My family is a gift from God
- Christians respect their bodies and the bodies of others because they were created by God
- The importance of looking after ourselves physically, emotionally and spiritually.

Key Stage 2

Self-Awareness

- developing self-awareness, self-respect and self-esteem
- confidently express own views and opinions
- identify current strengths and weaknesses
- face problems and try to resolve them
- examine and explore own and others' feelings and emotions
- recognise, express and manage feelings in a positive and safe way
- develop insight into potential and capabilities
- reflect on progress and set goals
- identify and practise effective learning strategies be aware of different learning styles.

Health, Growth and Change

- understand the benefits of a healthy lifestyle
- recognise what shapes positive mental health
- know about the harmful effects of tobacco, alcohol and other illicit and illegal substances
- understand that bacteria and viruses affect health and know that basic routines can be followed to minimise risks
- know how the body grows and develops
- be aware of physical and emotional changes that take place during puberty (Y7 only)
- be aware of the skills and importance of good parenting

- recognise how responsibilities change as they become older and more independent.

Keeping Safe

- develop strategies to resist peer pressure
- recognise the nature of bullying and the harm which can result
- become aware of the potential danger from strangers and how their attention can make you uncomfortable
- recognise appropriate road use
- develop a pro-active and responsible approach to safety – at home, near water, on the internet, social media, TV etc.
- know where, when and how to seek help
- being aware of basic emergency procedures and first aid.

Religious Education

- The importance of looking after ourselves physically, emotionally and spiritually.
- Life is precious and God-given.
- The human body is sacred – the visible image of God.

All of the above are supported in the school curriculum through:

PDMU Programme

Religious Education Programme

Heartstart Programme

Puberty talks given to year 7 pupils by the Pastoral Care Vice-Principal

Alcohol and Drugs awareness programme Your Life

Big Fish, Little Fish Transition Programme

Fruity Friday (Healthy Eating Programme) Road

Safety Programme

Visits from dentists, school nurse etc.

Nurture programme

School Counsellor

House System

Circle Time

Buddy System

In The Beginning (R S E programme)

Dangerous Fireworks

Yes Project

Various sports skills

Young Enterprise Programme

Home safety (N.Ireland Fire Service)

Pride in our Community Project (Triax)

Helping Hands Project

Fair Trade

School Council

Shared Education Signature Project.

Monitoring, Evaluating and Reviewing the RSE Policy:

The staff of Greenhaw Primary and Nursery School are committed to monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of this policy. Specifically, important to the RSE Programme are:

- Religious sensitivity within our School
- Pupil Feedback
- Staff Review and Feedback
- Parental Feedback
- Feedback from Community Services.
- Further Departmental guidance and legislative changes.

Signed: _____

Mr Alastair Rosborough
(Chairperson of the Board of Governors)

Date: _____

(Ratified at Board of Governors' meeting)