

Agreed by SMT/BOG	
Review Date	June 2017
Person/s Responsible	S. Patterson



Abbey Primary School

# RELATIONSHIPS & SEXUALITY EDUCATION

“The aim of the school is to provide a disciplined yet caring and supportive environment in which each pupil is encouraged to attain his/her true potential.” (Ref Vision Statement)

The RSE Policy has been drafted using the revised DENI circular 2015 and supporting CCEA circulars – Guidance for Primary Schools. Circular 2015/22 – Relationships and Sexuality Education Guidance.

The policy forms part of the school Pastoral Care Policy and closely links with the school’s Child Protection Policy and PDMU Policy.

This aim is expedited by:-

- (a) the curriculum of the school which encompasses that which is laid down by the N.I. Curriculum and includes those additional experiences offered by the school, in school time or as extra-curricular activities.
- (b) the climate of relationships, attitudes and styles of behaviour established in the school community.

## **A Definition**

“Relationship & Sexuality Education (RSE) is a life-long 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”

## **Values promoted through RSE**

- Appreciation of the value of a stable family life
- Acceptance of different types of family units and that these can also offer stable, loving and committed environments for bringing up children.
- Respect for self and others.
- Commitment, trust and responsibilities in relationships.
- Understand diversity regarding religion, gender, culture and sexual orientation.
- Working to reduce intolerance and discrimination based on sexual orientation, disability, ethnicity, religion and gender.
- Acceptance of difference and diversity.

## **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.
- Promote responsible behaviour and the ability to make informed decisions.
- Promote a knowledge of and respect for themselves and others.
- Help the child to value family life and understand there is diversity in family life.
- Promote an appreciation of the value of human life.

- Promote a healthy attitude to sexuality and relationships.
- Enable them to make informed choices around relationship and sexuality issues.
- Develop the confidence to talk, listen and think about feelings and relationships.
- Challenge and prevent discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender.
- Know and understand about emotional, social and physical change in puberty.
- Keep safe online and offline.
- Recognise when something is risky or unsafe.
- Know where and how to seek information and advice.

### Learning Objectives

- Acquire and develop knowledge and understanding of self
- Develop a positive sense of self-awareness, self-esteem and self-worth
- Develop an awareness of differing family patterns
- Develop coping strategies to protect self and others from various forms of abuse
- Acquire and improve skills of communications and social interaction
- Develop a critical understanding of external influences on lifestyles and decision making
- Develop strategies to make decisions, solve problems and to implement actions in various personal, social and health contexts
- Acquire and use an appropriate vocabulary to discuss feelings, sexuality, growth and development

### **Equality of Opportunity**

The provision of RSE is an equal opportunity issue. All pupils in Abbey Primary School will receive adequate preparation for the emotional and physical changes at puberty and beyond. They have a right to an education which adequately prepares them for adult life, regardless of their age, gender, culture, sexual orientation, disability status, religion or social class and RSE plays an integral part in doing so.

The RSE programme will meet the needs of both genders; it is developmental and appropriate to the age and maturity of the pupils. As maturity is not always determined by chronological age, teachers are sympathetic to the personal and emotional circumstances of each individual pupil. They are aware of, and take into account, the variety of existing pupil knowledge, differing attitudes and beliefs and the pupil's capacity to understand issues. This is particularly important in relation to children with special educational needs where physical development may outstrip emotional maturity.

Children with special educational needs have the same rights and needs as all other children, but the content and delivery of the RSE programme will be tailored to their needs.

## **Implementation of the RSE Programme**

All teachers are responsible for teaching aspects of RSE appropriate to the age of their pupils. It will be delivered through a range of subjects, each covering aspects of the RSE programme whilst delivering the programme of study in the NI curriculum.

Senior Management has been involved in drafting up the policy and the need for further training in delivery of certain aspects of the programme has been identified. This will be addressed within the School Development Plan.

Generally 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 others' perspectives. However, in certain circumstances, normal mixed gender classroom arrangements may be changed when it appears more appropriate to teaching gender-specific issues to single sex groupings during years 6 and 7.

## **Specific Issues**

- Confidentiality and child protection.

Staff cannot give any guarantee of confidentiality to pupils. If details are revealed which could lead staff to suspect that sexual, physical or emotional abuse is involved, the teacher must follow the procedures outlined in the child protection policy.

- Withdrawal from class/exclusion from RSE classes.

Since RSE is a statutory requirement, it should be inclusive. Abbey Primary School actively promotes the implementation of RSE and strongly discourages withdrawal. However, the school is willing to discuss with concerned parents, their expressed desire for their son/daughter to be excluded from aspects or all of the RSE programme.

- How much detail do we teach?

The RSE will be delivered in a holistic, cross-curricular way ensuring that teaching is, at all times appropriate to the age and maturity of the pupils.

Teachers will be aware of an understanding of personal and emotional circumstances of the pupils. RSE will include the physical and emotional changes that occur at puberty.

- Terminology

All staff teaching RSE related issues should always use proper biological names for body parts.

- Use of Visitors and other Resources

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

Parents must be informed of all sensitive information given to their child and their input and evaluation given consideration.

## **Sharing responsibility for Relationships and Sexuality Education**

The effectiveness of this RSE policy and programme is dependent on a collaborative process involving teachers, parents, governors and other educational and health professionals. Each of the partners has a distinctive contribution to make. Teachers, governors and parents can raise any concerns they might have about RSE issues and the Senior Management Team will address these.

### **The role of Senior Management**

A planned, structured and coherent approach to RSE will be sought throughout the school. Implementing this and other related policies will be managed by the member of staff with responsibility for PDMU and overseen by Senior Management. Consultation will need to be initiated with governors, staff, parents, health professionals and other community representatives as necessary.

### **The role of Governors**

The governors will try to foster and support the development of the RSE policy and similar related policies by collaborating with teachers and parents. They will facilitate the consultative process whereby the school community can respond and contribute on relevant issues. The governors will seek to accommodate, and be sensitive to, the religious and cultural beliefs of both teachers and parents while fulfilling their responsibility to ensure the availability of adequate RSE teaching for all children.

### **The role of teachers**

The classroom teacher has a significant and diverse role to play in the planning and implementation of RSE in the school. At all times, the role must be considered to be complementary to that of parents, taking cognisance of the individual needs, age, maturity, stage of development and family background of the child. The class teacher will strive to promote the aims of this policy and other related policies and deliver the requirements of RSE at the level appropriate to their particular class.

### **The role of parents**

Our aim is to develop a structure which enables both parents and teachers to work together. The home exerts a major influence on all aspects of a child's life, and especially so in the domain of relationships and sexuality. Parents are often concerned about the information their children are receiving from their peers and from television, electronic devices, newspapers and magazines. We will attempt to provide opportunities for pupils to consider this input and ensure that they receive accurate information. Where puberty related changes are being covered in upper Key Stage 2 classes, parents will be informed when these talks will take place, the content to be covered and the activities that pupils will undertake. These talks will be delivered through the Love for Life Programme. Parents will attend an evening where a Love for Life representative will outline the programme to be delivered to children.

There is no statutory parental right to withdraw a child from classes in RSE. The school will consider any parental concerns expressed, attempt to deal with any misunderstandings, identify the specific issues and lessons which are problematic and try to resolve the concerns in a positive manner, leading to a mutually acceptable resolution. Although full consultation may have been undertaken, a parent may still request that their child is excused from participating in some or all of the RSE lessons. In this circumstance, the school will explain the implications for the pupil in terms

of the parts of the statutory programmes of study which will be missed. The social and emotional effects of exclusion should be considered, as well as the likelihood that pupils will discuss the content of RSE lessons outside the classroom.

## **RSE Curriculum in Abbey Primary School**

RSE is a statutory element of the Northern Ireland Curriculum and forms part of Personal Development and Mutual Understanding. It supports the curriculum aim 'to empower young people to achieve their potential and to make informed and responsible decisions throughout their lives'.

Teachers will endeavour to ensure that pupils are enabled to extend knowledge, understanding and skills in developing:

- Self-awareness
- Feelings and emotions
- Learning to learn
- Health, growth and change
- Safety
- Relationships
- Rules, rights and responsibilities
- Managing conflict
- Similarities and differences
- Learning to live as members of the community

The following key messages will be promoted throughout the school.

- An appreciation of the value of family life, marriage, permanent loving relationships, and the responsibilities of parenthood.
- A recognition that both genders, male and female, are to be appreciated, respected, valued and seen as equal, different and complementary.
- An appreciation that friendships and relationships should be based on self and mutual respect, empathy, no-exploitation, honesty, trust and commitment.
- Compassion, forgiveness, mercy, tolerance and care are essential skills and dispositions to develop in relationships.
- Within relationships there should be recognition that rights, duties and responsibilities are involved.

## **Curriculum Organisation**

The primary curriculum offers opportunities to develop an RSE programme in a holistic and cross-curricular way. Issues can be integrated within specific topics, discussed in subject related contexts, addressed through health education, pastoral work and at Assembly time as well as during visits from agency representatives. It is important therefore that we consider the links that exist between RSE and the other curricular areas at each key stage. RSE shares content with The World Around Us, Religious Education, Physical Education and Literacy as well as PDMU.

## **Monitoring and Evaluating**

The policy will be monitored by the PDMU Co-ordinator and the Senior Management Team. This policy will be reviewed in June 2017. The SMT and PDMU Co-ordinator will evaluate to ensure the aims of the policy have been met. Pupils and parents will be given opportunities to evaluate. Any updates will be ratified by the Board of Governors.

## **Staff Training**

PDMU Co-Ordinator will disseminate information on RSE to staff members. Where outside agencies are used, their remit will be clear and will reflect the ethos of the school.

## **Resources**

All resources (books, DVDs, TV programmes, internet sites, CD Roms, etc) are vetted before use to ensure they are consistent with School's policy and ethos.

The PDMU and RSE Schemes have been compiled using the following resources:

- Living, Learning Together (CCEA)
- Bee Safe (PSNI)
- Kidscape
- Internet Safety
- 2013/16 DENI directive

## **Dissemination of the Policy**

The contents of this policy will be made available to all members of the Board of Governors, teaching staff and those providing sub-cover. It will be made available to parents on request. Content and sensitive issues will be made clear to parents BEFORE teaching.

All health or educational visitors discussing issues relating to RSE will be provided with a copy of the school policy and be encouraged to adhere to and follow its aims and objectives, in keeping with the ethos of Abbey Primary School.

## **AN OUTLINE OF A PROGRAMME FOR KEY STAGES 1 AND 2**

The following outline teaching programme illustrates the topics that might be covered in an RSE programme at Key stages 1 and 2 as a starting point for teachers' own thinking. The outline is not intended to be definitive or prescriptive and there is an overlap of content between the key stages. Topics and themes may need to be repeated at regular intervals. The sequence in which ideas are presented is not intended to imply a teaching order, that is a matter for teachers to determine.

### ***Foundation and Key Stage 1***

#### **Myself**

- 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 issues, different rates of growth.
- An introduction to the stages of human development – changes as we grow, for example, baby, child, teenage, adult, mother/father, grandparents.

- Recognising moods, feelings and concerns and developing a language and an appropriate manner of expressing them, for example, What do I do if I feel sad or angry?
- Personal likes and dislikes.

### **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, for example, 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. (Note: the situations of the pupils should be taken into account prior to introducing this topic.)
- Respect and caring for family members and friends, for example, caring for a new baby.
- Bullies and what to do about them.
- 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 in 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, eg elderly people.

### ***Key Stage 2***

### **Myself**

- My body, how it works and how to keep it healthy.
- The physical, social and emotional changes which occur during puberty (girls and boys)
- Myself and my peers – different rate 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 bad secrets.

### **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

TOPICS/THEMES	CROSS CURRICULAR LINKS	P1	P2	P3	P4
		YEAR			
<b>Myself</b>					
Parts of the body.	Science.	X	X	X	X
Being myself.	Kidscape. Health Education. Circle Time.	X	X		X
Similarities and differences between myself and others.	Science.	X	X		X
The stages of human development.	Science.		X	X	X
Recognising moods, feelings and concerns and developing a language for expressing moods, feelings and concerns.	Role Play. Circle Time.	X	X		X
Personal likes and dislikes.	Circle Time. Class discussion. Story writing. Art	X	X	X	X
<b>My relationships</b>					
My family, special people in my life.	English	X	X	X	
Friendships.	Discussion. Circle Time. R.E. ICT. PE. Opportunities for co-operating in classroom activities.	X	X		
Ageing.	Science. History			X	X
Loss and mourning.	This would be dealt with as it arises and would usually be in discussion on an individual basis.	X	X	X	
Respect and caring for family members and friends.	Discussion. English. RE. Health Education.	X	X	X	X
Bullies.	School Policy on Bullying. Could be dealt with individually or during class discussion. Circle Time.	X	X		
Personal safety – simple skills and practices.	Science. Health Education. Road Safety.	X	X	X	X
Good and bad touches.	Health Education. Kidscape.		X		



<b>TOPICS/THEMES</b>	<b>CROSS CURRICULAR LINKS</b>	<b>P1</b>	<b>P2</b>	<b>P3</b>	<b>P4</b>
<b>YEAR</b>					
Adults and older children are not always “friends”.	Class discussion. Circle Time. “We Can Say No” stories.	X	X	X	X
The potential danger of relationships with strangers or acquaintances.	Class discussion. Circle Time. “We Can Say No” stories. Police visit.	X	X		X
Strategies for dealing with potentially dangerous situations.	Health Education. Kidscape.		X	X	X
<b>My Community Environment</b>					
Different types of families.	Class discussion. English.			X	
Roles of individuals within families.	Class discussion. English.	X		X	
Keeping safe.	Class discussion. Health Education. Road Safety Calendar. Kidscape.	X	X	X	X
Rules at home, at school and in the community.	Class discussion. Assemblies. Road Safety Calendar.	X	X	X	X
Respect and caring for people in the community.	Class discussion. Circle Time. Choir performances for Community groups.	X	X	X	
Helping Agencies which can support families and individuals in different circumstances	Charity Collections; History; R.E.; Talking & Listening; Assemblies	X	X	X	X

<b>TOPICS/THEMES</b>	<b>CROSS CURRICULAR LINKS</b>	<b>P5</b>	<b>P6</b>	<b>P7</b>
<b>YEAR</b>				
<b>Myself</b>				
My body – how it works.	Science. Health Education. PE.		X	X
My body – how to keep it healthy.	Science. Health Education. PE. PDMU.	X	X	X
Physical, social and emotional changes which occur during puberty (girls & boys). Love for Life	Science. Health Education. PE. PDMU			X
Myself and my peers – different rates of growth and physical development.	Science. Maths.	X	X	X
Valuing and respecting myself.	Class discussion. Circle Time. Records of Achievement. PDMU.	X	X	X
Identifying personal strengths and weaknesses.	Class discussion. Circle Time. Records of Achievements. PDMU.	X	X	X
Identifying feelings; expressing feelings.	Class discussion. Circle Time. Role Play. Drama. English. Art. PDMU.	X	X	X
Gender roles.	Class discussion. English. Circle Time. Role Play. Drama.	X	X	X
Making choices.	Class discussion. Circle Time. Role Play. Drama. RE. PDMU.	X	X	X
The consequences of actions.	Class discussion. Circle Time. Role Play. Drama. RE.	X	X	X
Distinguishing between right and wrong.	Class discussion. Circle Time. English. RE. PDMU	X	X	X
Secrets.	Class discussion. Circle Time. Role Play. Drama.		X	X

<b>TOPICS/THEMES</b>				
<b>YEAR</b>	<b>CROSS CURRICULAR LINKS</b>	<b>P5</b>	<b>P6</b>	<b>P7</b>
<b>My relationships</b>				
The positive traits of friendship.	Class discussion. Circle Time. RE. Role Play. Drama. PDMU.	X	X	X
Differences and similarities in people.	Science. Class discussion. Circle Time. RE. PDMU	X	X	X
Respecting other people's views, emotions and feelings.	Class discussion. Circle Time. RE. PDMU.	X	X	X
Families and how they behave.	Class discussion. Circle Time. RE. English. Task surveys.	X	X	X
The meaning of friendship and loyalty.	Class discussion. Circle Time. RE. English. Task surveys. PDMU	X	X	X
Making and maintaining friendships and social relationships.	Class discussion. Circle Time. RE. English. PDMU	X	X	X
Handling difficult situations.	Individual and class discussion. PDMU.	X	X	X
Relationships within families, friends and in the community.	Individual and class discussion. RE. Circle Time. Drama. PDMU.	X	X	X
Appropriate and non-appropriate physical contact.	Discussion. As part of playground rules. Not hitting etc./bullying. PDMU. Kidscape.	X	X	X
Identifying dangers and risks within relationships.	Class and individual discussion. Circle Time.		X	X
Being assertive.	Discussion. PDMU. Kidscape		X	
People who can help pupils.	Discussion. Health Education.	X	X	X
<b>My Community/Environment</b>				
The family in relation to the school and the wider community.	Class discussion. Role Play.		X	X
Messages and images about health and gender roles.	Class discussion. Health Education. Role Play. PDMU.		X	X
Cultural Differences in families and family relationships.	Class Discussions; Role Play; Geography; English. RE.	X	X	X
Helping Agencies which can support families and individuals in different circumstances.	Charity Collections; History; R.E.; Talking & Listening; Assemblies	X	X	X

### School Policies relevant to RSE

PDMU  
Health Education Policy  
Pastoral Care Policy  
Child Protection Policy  
Drugs and Education Policy  
Home-School Liaison Policy  
Acceptable Use of Internet Policy  
Special Needs Policy  
Anti-Bullying Policy