King's Park Primary and Nursery School

RELATIONSHIPS AND SEXUALITY EDUCATION (RSE) POLICY

'…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 general aim of education is to contribute towards the development of all aspects of the individual, including the aesthetic, creative, critical, cultural, emotional, intellectual, moral, physical, political, social and spiritual development for personal and family life, for working life, for living in the community and for leisure. Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) is clearly a part of this general aim. (RSE Guidance for Primary Schools)

INTRODUCTION

It is a statutory requirement that all schools in Northern Ireland have a Relationships and Sexuality Policy (RSE)

This Policy has been written in line with Department of Education Requirements.

The School Ethos

In School, our Ethos is founded on Christian principles. In accordance with our values and aims, we help the children to develop the moral qualities of self-discipline, perseverance, determination, patience, fair play and consideration for others.

Rationale

King's Park Primary and Nursery School is committed to the education of children regardless of race, religion, gender or status. All pupils have a right to an education which adequately prepares them for adult life, and RSE plays an integral part. In the Northern Ireland 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. King's Park Primary and Nursery 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 to 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 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 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
- 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 about individual growth and development.

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 in a non-threatening manner.

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

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.
This policy reflects the Christian ethos of our school.

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.
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.

Department of Education Circulars providing advice on developing or reviewing their RSE policy is provided in:

- Circular 2001/15 Relationships and Sexuality Education;
- Circulars 2001/15a and 2001/15b)
- Circular 2013/16
- Circular 2015/22 Relationships and Sexuality Education

These circulars are available on the Department's website: www.deni.gov.uk. Guidance and resources on RSE are also provided on the NI Curriculum website at www.nicurriculum.org.uk

LINKS TO OTHER POLICIES
Child Protection/Safeguarding Children
Pastoral Care
PDMU
Positive Behaviour
Anti-Bullying
Health Education
Anti-Bullying
Drugs
Special Educational Needs

RSE builds, in a developmentally appropriate way, on children's existing knowledge and experience of their bodies, relationships and the world around them. RSE and Health Education are complementary since both emphasise the development of a positive self-image, and a respect for self and for others, as well as the provision of appropriate and accurate information.
An RSE programme for schools should provide structured opportunities for pupils to learn about:

- themselves as unique human beings
- their spiritual, social, emotional and physical growth
- their friendships and relationships with others and the various changes that occur as they progress towards adolescence and adulthood, particularly the emotional and physical changes which occur at puberty.

Meeting the needs of pupils
To ensure that the learning experiences are effective, positive and relevant to all pupils, the RSE programme should 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.

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

The Principal and Senior Management Group 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.

Content / detail
RSE will be delivered in a holistic, cross curricular way, ensuring that teaching is at all times appropriate to the maturity and understanding of the pupils. Teachers will be ever alert to the personal and emotional circumstances of the pupils. RSE will include the physical and emotional changes that occur at puberty but will not include sex education.
Our Primary Seven pupils will have the opportunity to cover many of these areas through the Love for Life, I Am Special, programme that is delivered in the third term.
Only children with written parental/carer consent receive this talk on changes that occur at puberty.

Curriculum organisation and delivery
The following outline of the teaching programme illustrates the topics covered through the delivery of the Northern Ireland Curriculum in Primary School. Many of the aspects included below are also part of the Health Education curriculum, PDMU, RE, the World Around Us, PE, Drama or in reaction to specific situations.
Topics and themes are often repeated at regular intervals. The sequence in which ideas are presented below is not intended to imply a teaching order

Foundation Stage 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 and 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, for example, 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, 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 from potentially dangerous situations. E.g. Internet use.

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. Many roles within society can be performed by all genders.
- 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 feeling
- 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 circumstance

SELECTION OF TEACHING RESOURCES

The selection of teaching resources should be:

- consistent with the school's RSE policy and the aims and objectives of the RSE programme
- consistent with the school's Christian morals and values framework
- appropriate to 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;

CLASSROOM/SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

In King's Park Primary and Nursery 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 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 opinion. Realistic scenarios, case studies, role-play, drama, videos and stories can 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
- need for clear expectations, goals and learning objectives
- 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
- need to be aware and take account of the current youth culture

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. Therefore, staff and pupils are not encouraged to talk about their personal relationships or experiences during class discussions.

The child's right to privacy must be respected at all times by both the teacher and all other pupils in the class. A key rule to agree in advance of any discussion is that no one will be expected to ask or answer any personal questions. It is equally important that the teacher shares this right and never feels obliged to impart information about his/her own personal life.

However:

- teachers cannot promise confidentiality. 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. **(Refer to our Child Protection/Safeguarding Children Policy.)**
- the principal or designated teachers for Child Protection/Safeguarding Children must be informed of any disclosures which might suggest that a pupil is at risk or that

physical or sexual 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 school's Child Protection/Safeguarding Children Policy

- teachers can provide general educational advice to all pupils as part of the curriculum. This general advice can be given to pupils individually or within group situations. It is important that the type of advice and the manner in which it is given is supportive of the role of the parents/carers

- there will be occasions when teachers will have to exercise their discretion and judgement about how to deal with particular issues raised by an individual or by a group of pupils. An initial judgement will need to be made about whether or not it is appropriate to deal with the issues with the whole class. The teacher may wish to discuss the issues with the parents/carers to see how they would like the matter to be handled. Teacher colleagues or a member of the school's Safeguarding Team might also provide useful guidance. It may be appropriate to respond to the issues with individual pupils or to arrange time for group discussion outside class time. In all cases, teachers should encourage pupils to discuss any issues and concerns they might have with their parents/carers;

- 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

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.

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

SPECIFIC ISSUES
There will be no direct teaching of issues such as homosexuality, AIDS, contraception etc. However, if these issues are raised by pupils, the teachers will address them sensitively, seeking advice from the appropriate co-ordinator or senior teacher.

USE OF VISITORS
Where appropriate, we may use the skills and expertise of outside agencies and professionals, such as the I am Special programme delivered to the P7 year group from Love For Life. 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 Christian ethos of the school.

STAFF TRAINING
Training needs will be considered and will be accessed using the appropriate agencies. Where outside Agencies are used for training purposes, their remit will be clear and will reflect the Christian ethos of the school.