



**N E W C A S T L E**  
P R I M A R Y S C H O O L  
& N U R S E R Y U N I T

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# **Relationships and Sexuality Education Policy**

**May 2018**

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## **Policy on Relationships and Sexuality Education**

### **Introduction**

As stated in DE circular 2013/16:

*The revised curriculum aims to prepare young people for all aspects of life and the Department of Education recognises the importance of delivering appropriate age-related relationship and sexuality education within a clear values framework as a means of developing the child as a whole. RSE is an integral part of the revised curriculum in both primary and post primary schools and must be delivered in a sensitive manner which is appropriate to the age and understanding of pupils and the ethos of the school.*

The school accepts the Department of Education definitions as set out in DE circular 2001/15a:

*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.*

*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.*

### **School Ethos**

We aim to provide a happy and caring learning environment for each child within a Christian atmosphere. We are concerned with all aspects of the children's development and work hard to ensure the children acquire knowledge, skills, practical abilities and attitudes, which will lay good foundations for their adult life.

### **Relationships**

*"Human relationships are the building blocks of healthy development. From the moment of our conception to the finality of death, intimate and caring relationships are the fundamental mediators of successful human adaptation."*

(National Research Council and Institute of Medicine 2000)

Newcastle Primary School agrees with the Department of Education that 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. The key moral value of Newcastle Primary School is respect for self and others by being, 'The Best You Can Be.'

It is also mindful of the need to take account of guidance produced by the Equality Commission on eliminating sexual orientation discrimination (Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2006). All students/pupils have the right to learn in a safe environment, to be treated with respect and dignity and not be treated any less favourably on grounds of their actual or perceived sexual orientation. This will be set alongside the Christian ethos of the school and the emotional well-being of the majority of our pupils.

The CCEA Guidance document which outlines Relationships and Sexuality Education states:

*Relationships and Sexuality Education is most effective when it is taught;  
In a sensitive and inclusive manner and in a way that is appropriate to the child's emotional and physical age and stage of development.*

As stated in section 2 of DE Circular 2001/15a

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.

### **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 in keeping with the Christian ethos of the school;
- . 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;
- . RSE will include the physical and emotional changes that occur at puberty but will not include sex education.
- . 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.

### **Organisation of the Relationships and Sexuality Education Programme**

Mrs Stewart, Designated Teacher for Child Protection will co-ordinate the planning and delivery of the RSE programme. The delivery of the RSE programme will be carried out in mixed groups as well as single sex groups as appropriate. The RSE programme will form part of the School Development Plan and when appropriate, an action plan for implementation will be drawn up and monitored by the co-ordinator and Board of Governors.

All class teachers will be responsible for the delivery of the programme. The RSE programme will be infused in the R.E., Personal Development and Mutual Understanding and The World Around Us curriculum and will be developmental and appropriate to the age and maturity of the pupils to ensure that the programme is relevant and accessible to all pupils regardless of age, culture, disability, gender, religion or social class. Great care will be taken to ensure that the resources which are used in our school are appropriate for the age of the children and reflect the

aims and objectives of the RSE programme and the school's overarching caring ethos.

### **Related requirements in the key areas of learning:**

#### **The World Around Us**

includes statutory requirements to enable pupils to explore:

- Who am I and what am I?
- Am I the same as everyone else?
- 'Me' in the world;
- How do things change?

#### **Personal Development and Mutual Understanding**

Includes requirements to enable pupils to develop knowledge, understanding and skills in:

- their self esteem and self confidence and how they develop as individuals;
- their own and others' feelings and emotions and how their actions affect others;
- strategies and skills for keeping themselves healthy and safe.
- their management of a range of feelings and emotions and the feelings and emotions of others;
- how to sustain their health, growth and well being and coping safely and efficiently with their environment.
- initiating, developing and sustaining mutually satisfying relationships;

#### **R.E.**

The Religious Education curriculum addresses many aspects of the RSE programme. It provides opportunities for pupils to consider moral issues, relate moral principles to their personal, social life and family life, and identify and explore values and attitudes that influence behaviour.

Specifically learning objective 3: morality states that:

- *Pupils should develop their ability to think and judge about morality, to relate Christian moral principles to personal and social life, and to identify values and attitudes that influence behaviour.*

#### **Puberty**

It is recognised that children are maturing earlier. It is therefore important that, with the agreement of parents, pupils are provided with appropriate factual information and have opportunities to discuss their feelings and concerns to help

pupils to be better able to manage the emotional and physical changes at puberty. Attendance at such workshops is by parental consent.

### **Safeguarding programme**

The school is aware of the abuses that can occur in society and integrates personal safety programmes into the curriculum. Children are made aware of key safeguarding personnel through assemblies, posters and circle time activities. Guest speakers are invited into school e.g. PSNI, Child line, NSPCC.

The Child Centred Approach as to how the programme will be drawn up and delivered will reflect the, 'Every School A Good School,' document from the Department of Education which is recognised as an effective evaluative tool for schools.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

We will monitor and evaluate progress through

- Questionnaire responses
- Reviewing policy regularly in light of guidance from DE, CCEA and available resources.
- Teachers being able to identify RSE related topics in their PDMU overview and World Around Us planners.
- PDMU Co-ordinator and key staff discuss outcomes with Principal
- Principal reports to Board of Governors.

### **Internet Safety**

Due to continuing advances in technology, Relationships and Sexuality Education is very closely aligned to Internet Safety. There will be age-appropriate lessons taught in relation to internet safety and this will be complimented with parental awareness sessions.

## Newcastle Primary School

### Relationships and Sexuality Education Progression

Class	Topics / Lessons Covered
Nursery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Becoming aware of different feelings</li> <li>• Building trust with familiar adults</li> <li>• Personal Hygiene- Washing hands</li> <li>• Healthy Eating/ Dental Hygiene</li> <li>• Friendships- making friends</li> </ul>
P1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feelings / People who are important to me.</li> <li>• Exploring feelings and related behaviours.</li> <li>• Relationships within families / friendships.</li> <li>• Similarities and differences in families and communities.</li> <li>• Responding appropriately to different situations.</li> </ul>
P2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uniqueness and Value - personal qualities and abilities.</li> <li>• Managing a variety of feelings.</li> <li>• Valuing your own feelings and emotions.</li> <li>• Self-awareness.</li> <li>• Knowing what makes others happy and sad - empathy.</li> <li>• Identifying special people in your life.</li> </ul>
P3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthy lifestyle choices - teeth and gums.</li> <li>• Personal Safety.</li> <li>• Rules about medicines.</li> <li>• I grow and I change.</li> <li>• Making choices in friendships.</li> <li>• Becoming an independent thinker.</li> </ul>
P4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing an understanding of self-esteem / confidence.</li> <li>• Becoming aware of your strengths, abilities, qualities, achievements and goals.</li> <li>• Acknowledging that everyone makes mistakes and this helps us learn.</li> <li>• Exploring our bodies and senses.</li> </ul>
P5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keeping healthy - Food, exercise and personal hygiene.</li> <li>• Understanding the benefits of a healthy lifestyle including exercise, a healthy diet, rest and hygiene.</li> <li>• Sun Safety</li> <li>• Changes in responsibility as you get older.</li> <li>• Internet Safety.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respect for others.</li> </ul>
<b>P6</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identity and self-acceptance, uniqueness and talents.</li> <li>• Feelings and others. Dealing with difficult feelings.</li> <li>• Healthy habits - lessons on personal hygiene, bacteria, viruses.</li> <li>• Harmful impact of smoking, alcohol and drugs on our bodies.</li> <li>• Peer pressure.</li> <li>• Growing up. Stages in life - baby, child, teenager, adult, senior citizen. <i>(This does not currently include puberty)</i></li> <li>• Empathy, managing conflict and prejudice.</li> <li>• Internet Safety.</li> <li>• Awareness of the harmful effects to you and others from alcohol and smoking.</li> </ul>
<b>P7</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personal hygiene and health.</li> <li>• Smoking, alcohol, drugs and medicines</li> <li>• Science topic on microorganisms - keeping clean, showering, using deodorant.</li> <li>• Circle time - Looking at how we are unique and special - our talents, abilities, family, friends, relationships.</li> <li>• Puberty for boys and girls.</li> <li>• Internet safety talk to children and parents. This may be outsourced to an outside agency to ensure that all information is current.</li> </ul>



# **SHARING RESPONSIBILITY FOR RELATIONSHIPS AND SEXUALITY EDUCATION**

## **RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN HOME, SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY**

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 distinctive contributions to make. Teachers, governors and parents can raise any concerns they might have about RSE issues and the Senior Leadership Team will address these or refer to the BOG as necessary.

## **THE ROLE OF SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM**

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 Child Protection (Mrs K Stewart) and overseen by Senior management. Consultation will need to be initiated with Governors, staff, parents, health professionals and other relevant community representatives as necessary.

## **THE ROLE OF GOVERNORS**

The Governors will try to foster and support the development of our RSE policy and similar related policies by collaborating with teachers and parents. They shall facilitate the consultative process whereby the school community can respond and contribute on relevant issues. The Governors of the school 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 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 complimentary to that of parents, taking consideration 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 class.

## **INVOLVING 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, social media, newspapers and magazines. We will attempt to provide opportunities for pupils to consider this information and ensure they receive accurate information. Where puberty-related changes are being covered with P6 or P7 classes, parents are informed about when these talks will take place, the content to be covered and the activities that pupils will undertake.

## **THE RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARENTS**

**We will strive to facilitate the following rights of the parents;**

Parents of pupils in grant-aided schools have a right to have their children educated in accordance with their (the parents.) wishes, in so far as this is compatible with the provision of efficient instruction and training and the avoidance of unreasonable public expenditure. Parents also have a duty to cause their child to receive efficient full-time education suitable to his/her age, ability and aptitude and to any special needs he/she may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

Any issues raised regarding the content of an element of RSE or other related programmes will be addressed and resolved in a positive manner as part of the consultation process. Although full consultation may have been undertaken, a parent may still request that their child is excused from participating in some or all the RSE lessons. In this circumstance, the school should discuss the nature of the parent's concerns, attempt to deal with any misunderstandings, identify the specific issues and lessons which are problematic and 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.

## **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 care and at Assembly time as well as during visits from the school nurse, local doctor or other agency. It is important, therefore, for schools to consider the links that exist between RSE and the other curricular areas at each key stage. A review of existing provision will reveal where aspects of their proposed content are being covered already and where there are gaps in provision.

In many instances, RSE shares content Science, Religious Education, Physical Education and English, as well as PDMU. Circle Time may be used as an appropriate tool to engage children in RSE.

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

### **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, 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 pupil should be considered 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.

### ***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 which 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 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

## **CONFIDENTIALITY IN THE CLASSROOM**

At Newcastle Primary School and Nursery Unit, we respect the child's right to privacy. 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, as teachers we should not 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 and/or the principal. Both pupils and parents should be informed that confidentiality cannot be maintained if:

- physical or sexual abuse is suspected.
- 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 the Principal or Designated Teacher must be informed of any disclosures which might suggest that.
- a pupil is at risk or to the appropriate agencies. Decisions can then be taken in accordance with the procedures detailed in the Department's guidelines (circular 2017/04)

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 way it is given is supportive of the role of the parents. There will be occasions when teachers should

exercise their discretion and judgment about how to deal with issues raised by an individual or by a group of pupils. An initial judgment will need to be made about whether it is appropriate to deal with the issues with the whole class. The teacher may wish to discuss the issues with the parents to see how they would like the matter to be handled. Teacher colleagues or a member of the school health 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 if this is appropriate.

The first concern of parents is likely to be for the safety and well-being of their children. It is important that if pupils cannot talk or do not wish to talk to their parents, they have access to support from empathetic teachers at school. The staff will endeavour to answer all questions and queries from children with sensitivity and discretion.