

St. Joseph's
Carryduff



Policy For R.S.E.
(Relationships and Sexuality Education)
(including Schools Personal Safety Programme)

Rationale:

Our Relationship and Sexuality Education (RSE) Programme in St Joseph's seeks to help the children to grow and develop into healthy, mature adults, capable of realising their full potential as human beings, created in the image and likeness of God. It is our primary aim to foster the development of relationships – the love of God and the love of every human being. In St Joseph's we endeavour to equip and prepare our children for life in a moral and spiritual context thus enabling them to make positive responsible choices about themselves and their relationships with others and the way they live their lives. R.S.E. is taught from P1 – P7 through the Alive O Religion Programme and 'The Wonder of My Being Programme. It is also linked to other subjects such as PDMU, Physical Education and World Around Us.

Ethos:

Our school ethos is spiritual and rooted in the teaching of Christ. Our ethos is expressed specifically in and through faith formation. The development of the whole child including their relationship with God, the world, self and others is nurtured in our school. We teach that sexuality is a gift from God and as such is precious. Our Catholic beliefs, values and relationships involve the whole person. Skills, attitudes and especially parental values are crucial in this process.

Relationships and Sexuality is

- A lifelong process, it is an integral part of the learning process beginning in childhood and continuing into adulthood.
- A shared responsibility between school, parish and parents.
- An important part of the overall personal, social and moral development of all children including those with special needs.
- About providing accurate information which is appropriate to the age and maturity of the children.
- About providing opportunities for children to clarify their own and others attitudes and values about personal and social relationships and to consider how these affect behaviour.
- About developing and implementing personal, social, communication and decision making skills.
- About fostering self-esteem and self awareness, a sense of moral responsibility and the skills to make informed choices and decisions, including issues relating to the personal safety of themselves and others.
- About helping children to develop a morals and values framework that is compatible with their gender, culture, race, sexuality, faith and ability.

Wonder of My Being/Grow in Love

Our 'Grow in Love' and 'The Wonder of My Being' Programmes form the basis of the RSE Programme. It provides opportunities for pupils to consider moral issues relate moral principles to their personal, social and family life and identify and explore values and attitudes that influence behaviour. Our children undertake a range of activities which promote self respect and respect for others.

Our RSE Programme, based on our RE Programme and the 'Wonder of My Being' involves parents at each stage and emphasises these three inter-related aims.

- To inspire in pupils an awareness of the marvel of God's gift of sexuality and the goodness of His plan for love and family life.
- To ensure that pupils are introduced to the factual information about human sexuality, love and family life which is appropriate to their age and stage of development.
- To encourage pupils to practise values such as selflessness, compassion and concern for others.

RSE Wonder of My Being Programme Overview

Year One	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. To appreciate that I am a boy/ girl2. To appreciate that I am part of a family3. To understand that I grew in my mother's womb.4. To learn that Jesus was part of a family.5. To appreciate that I am special.
Year Two	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. To understand that I needed help with everything when I was a baby.2. To understand that I have grown and changed since I was a baby.3. To understand some developmental stages of babies e.g. crawling, walking, talking...4. To appreciate that my family loves me and cares for me.5. To appreciate that God chose Mary to be the mother of his Son Jesus.6. To appreciate that Mary and Joseph loved and cared for Jesus.
Year Three	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. To appreciate that people celebrate weddings.2. To appreciate the qualities that are required for friendship.3. To appreciate the qualities necessary for family.4. To appreciate how a mother cares for her new baby.5. To appreciate that Jesus helped Mary and Joseph at home.6. To appreciate how we can help at home.

<p>Year Four</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To appreciate that Mary was told by an Angel that she was to be the mother of Jesus. 2. To appreciate that an Angel appeared to Joseph to tell him he would be the one to care for Mary and Jesus. 3. To appreciate the role of Mary as the mother of God. 4. To appreciate the qualities and values that were part of the Holy Family of Nazareth. 5. To learn the vocabulary associated with pregnancy and birth. 6. To appreciate the preparations that were needed for your birth. 7. To appreciate that family is a gift from God.
<p>Year Five</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To appreciate the uniqueness of each person. 2. To appreciate that we are all created in the image and likeness of God. 3. To appreciate the importance of preparing responsibly for new life. 4. To appreciate the stages of development between birth and two years. 5. To appreciate we change as we grow (2 years – 9/10 years). 6. To be aware of people who help us grow and develop: family, church, medical. 7. To revisit the Sacrament of Baptism so that the children can become aware of their place in God’s family.
<p>Year Six</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To appreciate that we are made in God’s image and likeness. 2. To appreciate the stages of growth before birth. 3. To recognise significant moments in our lives to date. 4. To recognise that we are created by God and that our bodies are sacred. 5. To appreciate that everyone is part of the body of Christ. 6. To appreciate the values of friendship in our lives. 7. To identify negative behaviour and how it can affect other people. 8. To recognise that our bodies change as we grow.
<p>Year Seven</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To appreciate that we are all called by God 2. To appreciate the presence of God in our lives as we grow and change. 3. To appreciate the talents that each of us has and consider how we will use these as we grow and change. 4. To appreciate the qualities and characteristics of friendship. 5. To understand the importance of accepting and respecting each other just as we are. 6. To make pupils aware that they are influenced by many different people and things. 7. To appreciate that I can be a good or bad influence to others. 8. To help make informed decisions about their lives. 9. To enable the children to face future changes with optimism. 10. To recognise that our bodies change as we grow.

Developing a moral and value framework with regard to

- **Morals** linked with behaviour and what we actually do. Morals are directly connected with experience and faith.
- **Values** – the characteristics of good moral behaviour e.g. respect for others and honesty with self and others.
- **Ethics**: linked to the systematic structure of Christian tradition, which provides a particular lifestyle with corresponding and inherent values.
- **Personal**: morality is personal but it is also public and social – Our example is important. The ethos of our school is concerned and caught up in the morality that Christ presents.

Policy Issues:

The Family: the model of family life and marriage remain at the centre of our RSE Programme particularly as it is taught through the Alive O programme while linking with other areas. We are sensitive to the social changes and family make-up, which are current today.

Sacredness of life:

We believe that life is sacred from the moment of conception until natural death. This is reflected in our teaching of RSE and it is based upon moral and spiritual principles. We believe that life can never be compromised in any way.

Confidentiality:

- Pupils will not be encouraged to talk about their personal relationships or experiences during class discussions.
- Pupils should never feel pressured to reveal or discuss private matters, nor to take part in forms of role-play or drama about which he or she feels a distaste or embarrassment.
- Teachers can provide children with information about where and from whom they can receive confidential advice and support.
- Teachers cannot promise confidentiality if the child might be “at risk”.
- Only medical professionals will give medical advice to pupils.
- See also School’s Child Protection Policy for more information on confidentiality.

Management and organisation (within curriculum):

We believe that parents have the right to withdraw children from class during RSE programme. This may mean the child going into another class (where practical) or may involve parents having to take responsibility for their child during RSE lessons. A letter will be given out prior to the final Primary Seven unit. Parents are given the option to withdraw their child in the reply slip of this letter. Children who have not been given permission to complete this session will spend that day in another class completing ‘prefect duties’.

Classroom organisation: During the final session in Primary Seven, when ‘changes in our body’ is covered, teachers work in single gender groups to explore and consider specific gender body changes. For all other work in the RSE programme we teach children in mixed groups.

Teaching strategies: Bodily changes are linked with emotional changes. Our school addresses these issues in a sensitive manner with effective resources and information. A Health Week Programme for P7 children deals with physical changes and puberty in an open manner with which our pupils are comfortable.

Terminology: Use of proper biological terms and language is vital and when these terms are placed in the context of family love, respect and self respect, then their essence is understood.

Involving Others: The School BOG, school staff, parish clergy, Diocesan Advisors and relevant outside agencies e.g. school doctor, nurse are consulted to ensure resources for an RSE Programme are appropriate.

Roles:

Board of Governors:

- The Board of Governors are involved with the Pastoral Care team and have the final input regarding the RSE policy.
- Sensitivity to religious and cultural issues will be of paramount importance.
- The Board will review policy on a three-year cycle.

Principal:

- Sets up the working group
- Ensures co-ordination which is vital for RSE
- Consults with Governors, staff, parents, health professionals and outside agencies.

Staff:

- Play a complementary role with parents.
- Provide training/formation.
- Are involved with planning and implementation
- Will use ‘The Wonder of My Being’ programme
- Will use Alive O series.
- Are involved in consultation with pupils.

Parents:

- Have a right to have children educated.
- Are accommodated in regard to RSE and their wishes respected.
- Will receive material from the 'Wonder of My Being'.
- Are kept fully informed about the school policy and the content of the school's programme.

Pupils:

- Pupils are fully involved
- Circle Time/ oral discussions to ensure the RSE programme meets their needs.

Outside Agencies and Individuals:

In consulting with an outside agency or an individual regarding the RSE programme, St Joseph's P.S. will ensure:

- Agency personnel are vetted to comply with our Child Protection Policy
- Advise all agency speakers of confidentiality regarding sensitive issues.
- All resources such as videos/tapes/role plays will be closely vetted for suitability to age range.
- All visiting personnel are provided with the school's RSE policy and will be made aware of issues relating to the ethos of St. Joseph's Primary School
- Parents will be advised when outside agencies are being used by the school.
- The Pastoral Care Team will monitor and evaluate the success or otherwise of outside agencies/individuals input in order to inform future planning.
- Children will be involved in evaluation of the programme.

Monitoring and Evaluation:

The RE Co-ordinator in conjunction with the Pastoral Care team will be involved in monitoring and evaluating the RSE programmes. He/she will seek staff feedback, pupil feedback and parental views.

Our aims, as listed in the policy, will be at the forefront of any monitoring and evaluation to ascertain if they are being achieved.

Staff Training:

Staff will avail of all relevant in-service training inclusive of Diocesan Advisory Team, School Health team and SEELB programme, when relevant.

Arrangements for Review:

The policy will be revised to take account of the school's ongoing work in developing RSE. Further reviews will be undertaken as required.

Conclusion:

Our school believes that the proper implementation of the RSE Programme should involve the co-operation of pupils, parents, teachers, Parish, BOG and outside agencies. We endeavour to maintain a sensitive and caring approach to the RSE Programme, mindful of our responsibilities in the development of the whole child. At all times we are aware of our responsibilities as Catholic Educators. We appreciate the privilege of being involved with parents in the development of the children entrusted to our care.