

St Moninna's Primary School and Nursery Unit



Relationships Sexuality Education (RSE) Policy

Ag foghlaim agus ag fás le grá
Learning and growing with love

Agreed by Governors	May 2017
Review Date	May 2020
Principal	
Chair of Governors	

MISSION STATEMENT

Vision Statement

“Learning and Growing with Love”

Ag foghlaim agus ag fás le grá

Aims

In St. Moninna’s Primary School:

- **We aim to enable LEARNING so that pupils develop to their full potential in all areas of the curriculum and become motivated, independent, life-long learners.**
- **We aim to enable pupils to GROW socially, emotionally, physically, spiritually and academically and to develop the attributes they need to be valuable, responsible, contributing adults.**
- **We aim to do this in an atmosphere of LOVE so that pupils embrace the virtues of respect, kindness, tolerance, compassion and faith while feeling happy, safe and valued as part of the St. Moninna school family.**

Mission

In St. Moninna’s P.S. we believe we can achieve our aims by ensuring we are committed to

- **Promoting the values of Catholic education within our school family**
- **Having high expectations for all pupils and a desire to see them reach their full potential**
- **Having inclusive, stimulating and supportive classrooms**
- **Working together for a common goal**
- **Valuing continuous improvement for all**
- **Investing in people and resources**
- **Working closely with home and the wider community**

Values

- **Kindness**
- **Respect**
- **Family**
- **Growth**
- **Trust**

Rationale

St. Moninna's PS Cloughoge 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 Primary 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. As a Catholic school, St. Moninna's PS Cloughoge 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, 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 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.

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 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
- non-exploitation in relationships
- commitment, trust and bonding within relationships
- mutuality in relationships
- honesty with self and others
- self discipline
- 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

Meeting the needs of pupils

To ensure that the learning experiences are effective, positive and relevant to all pupils, the RSE programme will be developmental, accessible and appropriate to the age and maturity of the pupils.

Community Links

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.

Keeping parents/carers informed about the school's provision for health education is a vital element of RSE. Informal sessions may then be arranged so that interested parents/carers could consider issues such as the readiness of children for aspects of the RSE programme, the appropriateness of resources the content and methodologies proposed, and the handling of sensitive topics.

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

Roles and responsibilities

- The Board of Governors examines and ratifies the school's policy

- The Principal and Senior Leadership Team 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

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 to our bodies but will not include sex education.

However, the children will receive a health talk that will include puberty in Primary 6 or 7. Only children with written parental/carer consent will receive this talk. Pupils should also have the opportunity to provide feedback about the content of the programme of RSE delivered by the school so that it can be responsive to their needs. In Primary School this is done through consultation with the Primary 6 and 7 members of the school Council.

Curriculum organisation and delivery

RSE will be delivered through the full implementation of the Northern Ireland Curriculum. Many of the aspects included are also part of the learning in PDMU, RE, World Around Us, PE, Drama or in reaction to specific situations. Themes will include: Myself, relationships and community.

All teachers will be involved in the delivery of the RSE programme using appropriate language for young children and SEN children. All materials will reflect the ethos of our school and will be factually correct. CCEA NI Relationship and Sexuality Guidance for primary schools will be used as a reference material for our RSE curriculum.

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
- attitudes, values and the ability to make informed and healthy decisions
- need to be aware and take account of the current youth culture

Equal Opportunities

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 other's perspectives. However, there will be times that teachers or health professionals may work with single gender groups e.g. Health Talks, to explore puberty related physical and emotional changes in both boys and girls. The programme of RSE will be accessible to all pupils regardless of age, culture, disability, general identity, sexual orientation, gender, transgender or social class.

Child Protection/Safeguarding

Child Protection/Safeguarding procedures will be implemented if a disclosure is made. **(Refer to Child Protection/Safeguarding 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. A member of the school's Safeguarding Team could 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 will advise children, to discuss their concerns with parents/carers and liaise with them.

Withdrawal from RSE

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 etc. However, if specific issues are raised by pupils, the teachers will address them sensitively.

Use of Visitors

Where appropriate, we may use the skills and expertise of outside agencies and professionals. 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 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 ethos of the school.

LINKS TO OTHER POLICIES

- Child Protection/Safeguarding
- Acceptable Use of the Internet and E-Safety
- Pastoral Care
- Positive Behaviour
- Anti-Bullying

Monitoring, Review and Evaluation of this Policy

This policy will be reviewed in line with our 3 year cycle of policy reviews / when changes in policy are required. Any changes in provision or policy will be relayed appropriately. The review process will be assisted by feedback from teachers, parents, governors, outside agencies and pupils.