

St Patrick's
Primary School

Relationships and Sexuality Education
(RSE) Policy



March 2026

School Ethos

In St Patrick's Primary 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.

This policy reflects the ethos of our school.

Our Shared Vision

To create a learning environment where we celebrate the achievements of every child and encourage all to reach their full potential.

To live out the Gospel values and foster a community inspired by our Catholic faith.

Rationale

RSE is a lifelong process that involves the acquisition of knowledge, understanding and skills and the development of attitudes, beliefs, morals and values regarding personal and social relationships. Sexuality is an integral part of the human personality and affects our capacity to give and receive love. It is a complex dimension of human life and relationships.

As a Catholic school we advocate the promotion of a 'Personal Development' approach to RSE whereby children in our care are given the skills to help them make informed decisions based on their own internal self-respect and self-esteem.

Aims

The aims of RSE are to:

- help children to appreciate their worth, dignity and uniqueness as children of God.
- enable children to appreciate that sexuality is a gift from God
- enhance the personal development, self-esteem and well-being of each child
- help each 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 each 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.
- To foster tolerance and respect for diversity and inclusion foster and develop mutual respect and understanding.
- develop a respect for difference, gender and race within the school and community.

Objectives

The RSE curriculum will 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, growth and development.

Skills

The RSE curriculum will 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 will also be helped to develop skills to critically evaluate a wide range of information, opinions, attitudes and values.

They will be given 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 will 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 will 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
- 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
- distinguish between what is right and wrong

Relationships between Home, School and Community

The effectiveness of our policy and programme depends upon the involvement of teachers, parents, governors and other education and health professionals. Each of these has distinctive contributions to make to our policy. It is our role to assist the work of parents and to teach RSE in a manner appropriate to the emotional and psychological development of the child.

In developing our policy we have consulted parents. A copy of our policy is readily available for parents to consult at any time. We will have regular review of our policy and on-going communication with parents.

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
- Addressing-bullying Policy
- Positive Behaviour Policy
- Drugs Education Policy
- Internet Safety/E-Safety Policy

Roles and responsibilities

- The Board of Governors examines and ratifies the school's RSE Policy
- It is reviewed during the cycle of each three-year School Development Plan

- 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 as appropriate
- 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

Grow in Love is at the centre of our RSE programme and 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 for children in Primary 7.

Course content will be shared in advance with parents via the school website and on request during one-to-one meetings.

Parents can request for children to be withdrawn from any part of the programme.

Curriculum organisation and delivery

The following outline 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. All teachers will deliver the RSE programme.

Teaching Resources

The selection of teaching resources is consistent with the school's RSE policy and the aims and objectives of the RSE programme

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.

WITHDRAWAL FROM RSE

The school will seek to ensure that the RSE programme is relevant and accessible to pupils, regardless of age, culture, disability, gender, religion or social class. However, the school is sensitive to the views of the parents and will make suitable arrangements, should a parent wish to withdraw a child from a particular aspect of RSE.

- The school will not tolerate homophobic language or bullying. Negative stereotypes and prejudicial attitudes will be challenged.
- Any issue of sexual orientation and gender identity will be managed in a sensitive, non-confrontational and reassuring way.

Since RSE is a statutory requirement, it is part of our school curriculum. As a school we actively promote the implementation of RSE and strongly discourage withdrawal. The school will, however, take account of parent/carer concerns.

Parents will be provided with teaching materials for home use on request.

Sacredness of Life

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

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. Parents will be informed when visitors are to be used.

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.

Monitoring and Evaluating

The SLT and class teachers will monitor and evaluate the programme, which might include feedback from:

- pupils
- teachers
- parents and
- any outside agencies used

Ratified on _____

Date of Review: March 2028

Chair of Board of Governors _____

The Wonder of My Being Programme Overview

<p>Year One</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To appreciate that I am a boy/girl. 2. To appreciate that I am part of a family. 3. 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.
<p>Year Two</p>	<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 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.
<p>Year Three</p>	<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 appreciate that family is a gift from God. 6. To appreciate how we can help at home.

<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. 3/4. 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.
<p>Year Seven</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To appreciate that we are 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 others. 8. To help make informed decision about their lives. 9. To enable the children to face future changes with optimism. 10. To learn the vocabulary associated with pregnancy and birth. 11. To appreciate the importance of preparing responsibly for new life. 12. To appreciate the importance of preparing responsibly for new life. 13. To appreciate the need for good hygiene. 14. Puberty talk – presented separately for girls and boys

