

# **Relationships and Sexuality Education Policy** **The Royal School, Dungannon**

## **Introduction**

This policy aims to show how the school will address Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) within the curriculum and the moral and values framework within which it will be set.

## **Definition**

“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.”

(CCEA guidance for Post primary schools: Relationships and Sexuality Education)

## **Moral and Values framework**

The RSE programme at The Royal School, Dungannon aims to present information in an objective, balanced and sensitive manner, set within a clear framework of values and an awareness of the Northern Ireland legislation on sexual behaviour.

The moral and values framework for RSE is influenced by the overall aim of the school and its ethos and values.

“The aim of the School is to provide pupils with an opportunity to study a broad curriculum and to develop a life-long love of learning; and to foster an environment within which pupils may seek and fulfil their personal development. There is an expectation that every pupil will always give of his or her best and seek excellence. There is an equal expectation that in seeking excellence each pupil will do so with integrity. The School has a broad Christian ethos and this provides a moral compass for our work but no denomination is favoured and all pupils, from whatever background, are warmly welcomed.” (SDP 2013-16)

“We aim to create a caring community providing a safe and happy environment where each pupil has the opportunity to develop their self-confidence and reach their academic potential in an atmosphere of mutual respect and integrity. We aim to provide an environment where excellent rapport between pupils and staff exists so that each pupil is able to feel valued and their welfare is safeguarded and promoted.” (Pastoral Care policy)

RSE is therefore approached in a setting of a broad Christian ethos and with expectations that each pupil will act with integrity and show mutual respect towards others. This approach encourages:

- A respect for self and a development of critical self-awareness for him/herself and others
- An appreciation that friendships and relationships should be based on honesty, mutual respect, non exploitation, trust and commitment
- An exploration of the rights, duties and responsibilities involved in relationships
- An appreciation of the value of stable family life, marriage, permanent loving relationships and the responsibilities of parenthood
- An acknowledgement and understanding of diversity regarding religion, culture and sexual orientation

## **Parents/Guardians**

The role of the school in RSE is ideally additional and complementary to the role of Parents/Guardians who have a major influence on all aspects of their children’s lives and particularly their approach to Relationships and Sexuality issues.

There is no statutory parental right to withdraw a child from classes in RSE but the school will consider any parental concerns expressed and discuss the issues raised so that as far as possible a mutually acceptable resolution can be found.

### **The RSE Curriculum**

#### **AIMS OF RELATIONSHIPS AND SEXUALITY EDUCATION**

The RSE programme seeks to:

1. Enhance the personal development, self-esteem and well-being of the young person.
2. Develop self respect and self confidence.
3. Help the young person learn how to develop and enjoy healthy and respectful friendships and relationships which are based on responsibility and mutual respect.
4. Foster an understanding of and a healthy attitude to human sexuality and relationships in a moral, social and spiritual framework.
5. Promote responsible behaviour and the ability to make informed decisions.
6. Help the young person value family life, marriage and permanent and loving relationships and the responsibilities of parenthood.

#### **OBJECTIVES OF RELATIONSHIPS AND SEXUALITY EDUCATION**

The RSE programme gives to pupils valuable experiences that will enable them to:

- explore their own and others' feelings and emotions
- develop an awareness of morals and values
- explore the nature and development of relationships within families and friendships
- develop personal and interpersonal skills which will help to establish and sustain healthy relationships
- develop personal skills to cope and protect oneself from peer pressure and threats to personal safety
- develop a critical understanding of external influences on decision making re: lifestyle choices
- develop an awareness of the rights and responsibilities involved in relationships
- understand human physiology in relation to puberty, fertility, sexual intercourse and reproduction
- understand contraception, abortion and sexually transmitted diseases
- acquire and develop appropriate vocabulary to discuss sexual feelings
- develop strategies to make decisions, solve problems and implement actions in various personal, social and health contexts
- acquire knowledge of the services and support available from relevant agencies
- understand family issues re parenting, childcare and lifelong responsibility

The RSE curriculum forms part of the statutory statements of requirement for Personal Development within Learning for Life and Work (LLW). The RSE Programme is delivered primarily through the Personal Development strand of LLW lessons at Key Stage 3 and 4.

(See Appendix 1: RSE programme of study within Personal Development)

Opportunities for RSE also occur across the curriculum where a range of subjects such as English, Science, Food Technology, Physical Education and Religious Education explore issues from a variety of perspectives. (See Appendix 2: RSE content in Programmes of Study)

Aspects of the RSE programme are delivered by external agencies. These programmes supplement and complement internal provision. The objectives and skills of the RSE programme are also reinforced in the daily interaction between pupils and staff, both inside and outside the classroom.

### **Responsibilities**

The school believes that responsibility for RSE should be appropriately shared between parents, teachers, male and female; non teaching staff e.g. the school Matron; and external agencies. Each of the partners has a distinctive contribution to make. Within the school:

## **Principal**

It is the responsibility of the Principal to ensure the development and implementation of an RSE Policy and a planned, coherent and progressive programme that meets the needs of all pupils. The Principal consults with Governors, staff, parents, pupils and relevant professionals to ensure the implementation of the programme.

## **Senior Teacher Pastoral**

The Senior Teacher Pastoral is responsible for coordinating all issues related to RSE – its policy and development within the school. The Deputy Head is also the Designated teacher for Child Protection.

## **Learning for Life and Work (LLW) Coordinator**

The role of the LLW coordinator is to:

- plan and coordinate the curricular provision of RSE
- liaise with external agencies re: curricular provision
- liaise with the Principal and Senior Teacher Pastoral re: RSE
- attend in service training, disseminate information to relevant staff, organise training for staff as appropriate
- liaise with Deputy Head regarding RSE as part of Personal Development (Key Stage 3 and 4)

## **Members of staff (teaching and non teaching)**

Teaching and relevant non-teaching staff should be familiar with the RSE policy.

All members of staff should be familiar with procedures regarding pupil confidentiality and disclosure.

## **External Agencies**

Liaison should take place to ensure that the aims and objectives, content and approach used by an external agency will complement the school's internal curricular provision and that they are appropriate and in support of the ethos of the school. External agencies will be given a copy of the school's RSE policy and informed of key Child Protection procedures. In the latter case it is made clear to the representatives of the External Agency that confidentiality cannot be maintained and that the Designated Teacher must be informed of any disclosures which might suggest that a pupil is at risk. At least one member of the teaching staff is always present when an external agency is delivering an aspect of the RSE programme.

## **Within the Classroom**

- The RSE curriculum is considered to be relevant and important for the personal and social development of all pupils and will therefore be made accessible to all. The curriculum will be age appropriate, and set in a moral framework that is inclusive with respect to culture, disability, gender, religion, sexual orientation or social background.
- Information given will be accurate and objective with the use of proper biological terminology for parts of the body and body functions.
- As classrooms are open environments no pupil will be expected to ask or answer any personal questions in an RSE lesson, nor should staff or pupils talk about their personal relationships or experiences during class discussions.
- Teachers will encourage young people, where possible, to discuss their concerns with parents or guardians
- Teachers can provide all pupils with information about where and from whom, they can receive confidential advice and support.
- Only appropriate medical professionals should give medical advice to pupils.
- **Child Protection:** Staff cannot give a guarantee of confidentiality to pupils around issues relating to child protection. If details are revealed that would lead staff to suspect that sexual abuse is involved, the member of staff must follow the procedures outlined in the RSD Safeguarding and Child Protection policy.

## **Monitoring and Evaluation**

This policy will be reviewed regularly to incorporate any relevant changes in DE/CCEA circulars and guidance and as part of the monitoring and evaluation of the RSE programme within RSD.

Appendix 1: RSE Programme of study within Personal Development

## Statutory Requirements

### **Key Concept - Relationships**

Exploring Relationships provides opportunities to understand the importance of forming and maintaining relationships to physical and emotional/mental health throughout life.

**Young people should have opportunities to:**

**Explore the qualities of relationships including friendship**, for example, *conditions for healthy relationships, types of relationships, healthy boundaries, gender issues in relationships, etc.*

**Explore the qualities of a loving, respectful relationship**, for example, *how choices within a relationship affect both physical and emotional development, friendships etc.*

**Develop coping strategies to deal with challenging relationship scenarios**, for example, *sibling rivalry, caring for relatives, domestic violence, teenage rebellion, child abuse, sexism, change in family circumstances, coping with rejection, loneliness and loss, etc.*

**Develop strategies to avoid and resolve conflict**, for example, *active listening, assertiveness, negotiation, mediation etc.*

**Explore the implications of sexual maturation**, for example, *sexual health, fertility, contraception, conception, teenage pregnancy, childbirth etc.*

**Explore the emotional, social and moral implications of early sexual activity**, for example, *personal values, attitudes and perceptions, the Law, STIs, the impact of underage parenting etc.*

## YEAR 8

**Aim:** To explore and understand the process of developing and maintaining appropriate, healthy relationships.

**I am learning:**

- To develop an understanding of the range of relationships I experience;
- To identify my own web of relationships;
- To identify the difference between boys and girls self-images;
- To develop skills and knowledge to promote personal safety and be aware of various sources of support;
- To understand the main physical and emotional changes that take place during puberty;
- To be aware of the importance of personal hygiene.

## YEAR 9

**Aim:** To explore and understand the process of developing and maintaining appropriate, healthy relationships.

**Learning Intentions:**

Pupils are learning:

- To identify two broad types of relationships
- To identify the qualities and values necessary to sustain a good friendship

- To sequence, order, classify and make comparisons by analysing influences on friendship cards
- To make links between cause and effect by discussing the effects of behaviours on friendships
- To understand the concept of love and romantic relationships
- To understand that conflict can arise within relationships, including friendships, when certain qualities are not present
- To develop strategies to avoid and resolve conflict

## YEAR 10

**Aim:** To explore and understand the process of developing and maintaining appropriate, healthy relationships.

**Learning Intentions:**

Pupils are learning:

- To understand the concept of physical and emotional boundaries;
- To identify and set appropriate boundaries for different relationships;
- To explore their attitudes and beliefs regarding dating;
- To reflect on risks and dangers linked with dating;
- To develop coping strategies for challenging relationships;
- To practice assertiveness skills to reinforce boundaries.
- To explore the emotional, social and moral implications of early sexual intercourse/relationships within both committed and casual relationships;
- To select the most appropriate information for a task;
- To compare their approach with others and in different contexts;
- To be aware of the incidence, types, transmission and consequences of Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs);
- To consider the issues regarding early sexual intercourse/relationships;
- To understand that pregnancy is a real consequence of sexual activity;
- To be aware of the consequences of teenage pregnancy;
- To recognise, and manage, their emotions around rejection;
- To understand ways of ending relationships in a sensitive way and coping with broken relationships.

## YEAR 11

**Statutory Statement Title(s):** Pupils should be enabled to develop their understanding of relationships and sexuality and the responsibilities of healthy relationships.

**Aims:** To understand what the point of relationships is and to identify ingredients that make up a healthy relationship.

**Learning Intentions:**

Pupils are learning:

- To define the characteristics of a supportive and respectful relationship
- To demonstrate understanding of the purpose of relationships
- To be aware of the incidence, types, transmission and consequences of sexually transmitted infections (STIs)
- To consider the issues regarding early sexual intercourse/relationships
- Factual information about abortion
- To explore their attitudes concerning abortion

## YEAR 12

**Statutory Statement Title(s):** Develop an understanding of the roles and responsibilities of parenting

**Aims:**

- To explore the roles played by parents and the challenges that parents may face.
- To explore the role played by teenage parents

**Learning Intentions:**

Pupils are learning:

- To explore the challenges which young parents may have to face
- To explore the emotional issues involved in coping with parenthood
- To be aware of the financial considerations associated with parenting
  - To think about the roles that parents perform
  - To learn about the skills required for good parenting
  - To discuss the personal qualities that parents need to deal effectively with problems involving their children
  - To explore the education and career prospects for young parents

## Appendix 2: RSE content within Programmes of Study

The following is an overview of where aspects of Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) are being delivered across the curriculum in school.

<b>Key Concept – Relationships</b> Pupils should have opportunities to:	<b>Subject Areas</b>	<b>Year Groups</b>
<b>Explore the qualities of relationships including friendship.</b>	Science	Yr 8
	PE	All Yrs
	MFL	Yr 13
<b>Explore the qualities of a loving, respectful relationship.</b>	RE	Yr 8 & 9
	MFL	Yr 13
<b>Develop coping strategies to deal with challenging relationship scenarios.</b>	English	Yr 8
	RE	Yr 10
	MFL	Yr 13 & 14
<b>Develop strategies to avoid and resolve conflict.</b>	English	Yr 10
	Science	All Yrs
	T & D	All Yrs
	PE	All Yrs
<b>Explore the implications of sexual maturation.</b>	Science	Yr 8 & 12
	RE	Yr 11 & 12
	FT	Yr 13
	MFL	Yr 13