



St. Michaels Primary School.

Relationships and Sexual Education Policy.

(March 2022)

Mission Statement

At St Michael's we learn, grow and look after each other as part of God's family.

This policy is informed by the guidance and procedures set out by;

Relationships and sexuality Education

Catholic Schools Trustee Service Guidance Document for Primary schools: Northern Ireland 2021

The guidance document states that;

Relationships and Sexuality education (RSE) is a complex and vitally important area of a schools' curriculum. Relationships and sexuality Education is defined as a lifelong process encompassing:

- *The acquisition of knowledge, understanding and skills; and*
- *The development of attitudes, beliefs and values about sexual identity, relationships and intimacy.*

A DENI Guidance circular 2013/2016 states that;

In a Catholic school, RSE provision should primarily be understood and delivered within the wider context of the characteristic spirit or ethos of the school

Relationships and Sexuality Education

In St. Michael's Primary School, we define RSE as life-long learning about physical, moral and emotional development. We believe RSE needs to be addressed in order to provide young people with the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not simply intimate relationships. It should enable them to know what a healthy relationship looks like and what makes a good friend.

Rationale:

In St. Michael's Primary School, we aim for a balanced education which includes Relationships and Sexuality Education. The morals and values of our Catholic ethos are the core principles that underpin the teaching of RSE. We aim to promote a gradual understanding and a healthy appreciation of self, of growth, of relationships with others, of love, marriage and family life, as well as a growing awareness of the facts of human

reproduction. The sacredness of human life and the uniqueness of each human being is constantly at the heart of the teaching of RSE. Sexuality is an integral part of the human person and affects our capacity to give and receive love.

We are statutory required to teach RSE as a component of Personal Development and Mutual Understanding. (**Appendix 1**) In 2015, the Council for Curriculum Examinations and Assessment (CCEA), supporting the delivery of the NI curriculum, provided non-statutory guidance for schools on delivering PDMU which includes information on Relationships and Sexuality Education.

In this 2015 ‘Relationships & Sexuality Education Guidance’ CCEA stated that: *The Northern Ireland Curriculum aims to empower young people to achieve their potential and to make informed and responsible decisions throughout their lives. Relationships and Sexuality Education is firmly grounded in Personal Development and Mutual Understanding, where the central focus is on the emotional development of children, health and safety, relationships with others, and the development of moral thinking, values and actions*

All RSE in St. Michael’s will be delivered in accordance with the Church’s moral teaching. It will emphasise the central importance of marriage and the family whilst acknowledging that all pupils have a fundamental right to have their life respected whatever household they come from.

RSE is taught through the revised programme *The Wonder of my Being* and runs parallel to the current *Grow in Love* programme for Religious Education. They offer a structure for imparting knowledge, understanding and values which will help pupils appreciate the gift of sexuality.

Children will be taught RSE within a framework which models and encourages the following values:

- A respect for God and creation.
- To be able to distinguish between what is right and wrong.
- A respect for self.
 - A respect for others.
- Self-discipline.
- A responsibility for one’s own actions and an understanding of the long term and short-term consequences of their actions.
- Non-exploitation in relationships.
 - Commitment, trust and bonding within relationships.
- A development of critical self-awareness for themselves and others.
- Compassion, forgiveness, mercy and care when people do not conform to their way of life

Ethos:

Our mission statement commits us to the education of the whole child (spiritual, physical, intellectual, moral, social, cultural and emotional) and we believe that RSE is an integral part of this education. We are a progressive, faith-based school in the catholic tradition with high expectations of our pupils and commitment to inclusiveness. As a Catholic School, we build upon the values of home and the parish. We encourage the development of a strong sense of faith and religious belief in all of our pupils. Our vision is to work in partnership with everyone including our pupils, parents, parishes, other schools and the whole community to

create a positive and inclusive environment for high quality learning and teaching where everyone is valued and respected.

The Northern Ireland Curriculum aims to empower young people to achieve their potential and to make informed and responsible decisions throughout their lives. Relationships and Sexuality Education is firmly grounded in Personal Development and Mutual Understanding, where the central focus is on the emotional development of children, health and safety, relationships with others, and the development of moral thinking, values and actions.

Aims.

Our programme of R.S.E in St. Michaels Primary School aims to provide children with opportunities to:

- promote a Catholic vision of sexuality that reflects selfless love, respect and commitment within a moral, social, spiritual framework
- help all pupils to appreciate their worth, dignity and uniqueness as children of God
- enable young people to appreciate sexuality as a gift from God and that love is the central basis of all relationships
- enable children to form healthy and respectful friendships and relationships.
- To enhance the personal development, self-esteem and well-being of the child.
- To foster an understanding of and a healthy attitude to human sexuality and relationships in a moral, spiritual and social framework.
- To foster and develop mutual respect and understanding.
- To develop a respect for difference, gender and race within the school and community.
- To enable the children to identify and manage a range of feelings.
- To help all children to value family life in its diversity and the gift of marriage.
- To help young people recognise, understand and prepare for the body changes that they (and their friends) will undergo in the years ahead (puberty).
- promote respect for all individuals regardless of sexual orientation, race, gender or creed

Objectives of RSE

In line with our school ethos and CCEA guidelines, the Relationships and Sexuality Curriculum attempts to 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 the diversity of family life and family patterns. 21
- Use decision making and problem-solving strategies.
- Acquire and improve skills of communication and social interaction.

- Discuss their feelings, growth and development using an appropriate vocabulary.
- Develop coping strategies to protect self and others from various forms of abuse (inappropriate behaviours, sexual abuse and exploitation).

Skills Promoted (including personal and social)

Pupils will develop:

- **Communication skills** - Listening to other's points of view, putting one's own view forward, dealing with conflict peacefully and being assertive.
- **Decision making skills** - Making good choices with the relevant information at hand, making moral judgments wisely in contexts and then putting them into practice, acting responsibly as an individual or as a member of a group.
- **Interpersonal skills** - Managing healthy relationships with confidence and with effectiveness.

Inclusion and Special Education Needs (SEN)

We will ensure RSE is sensitive to the different needs of individual pupils in respect to pupils' different abilities, levels of maturity and personal circumstances; for example, their own sexual orientation, faith or culture and is taught in a way that does not subject pupils to discrimination. Lessons will also help children to realise the nature and consequences of discrimination, teasing, bullying and aggressive behaviours (including cyber-bullying), use of prejudice-based language and how to respond and ask for help. In addition, with today's ever changing society we endeavour all children will have an understanding of:

- the pressures and dangers to which children may be exposed: in particular, the impact of technology, the integral role it plays, and how it may impact their lives.
- recognising potentially exploitative and dangerous situations, and teach them how to take preventative action.
- explore their understanding of 'keeping safe' in an age-appropriate way. It will also help them develop appropriate behaviour to protect themselves

Implementation

'The Wonder of my being' programme is followed by Years 1- 7. (**Appendix 3**)

Content

The content of the RSE programme has been designed to reflect the Catholic ethos of the school. 'The Wonder of My Being' and the Year 7 'What's Inside?' programme will be presented to years 1-7 as part of the Religious Education Programme. The lessons for each

year have direct links with the corresponding Grow in Love Programme and with the PDMU materials- ‘Living, Learning Together’ (Yellow units). Some areas of content are enhanced through cross-curricular links with PDMU, PATHS, TSPC and WAU. In addition, the school wide use of the “Stay safe” programme deals specifically with relationships and personal safety. (Appendix 4) Teachers will cover themes in Circle Time, RE and PDMU. We encourage active learning strategies e.g.: mind mapping, discussion techniques, reporting back, listening exercises, circle time, role-play, questionnaires and quizzes.

Delivery/Organisation of the programme

The delivery of the RSE programme will be co-educational and provided by each teacher at a whole class level.

However, for the Year 7 workshop, it is appropriate to speak to the pupils in single sex groups. A female facilitator takes the girls’ session and a male facilitator takes the boys’ session, during the ‘What’s Inside’ workshop.

A service agreement is signed by the facilitators before commencing the Year 7 sessions. **(Appendix 5)**

The activities compliment the RSE curriculum. Pupils are prepared for the class and parental permission is received. **(Appendix 6)** The session is informal and follow up activities are undertaken by the class teacher.

Resources / Programmes Used:

- ‘Grow in Love’ Catechetical Series (P1-P7). (Veritas)
- ‘The Wonder of My Being RSE Programme’ (Down and Connor Diocese)
- Living Learning Together: PDMU Programme (CCEA) **(Appendix 2)**
- ‘Inside Out’ P7 RSE Programme (Provided by the ‘Love for Life’ Organisation)

Puberty and Menstrual Cycle.

In St. Michaels’s we are aware of the early onset of puberty leading to the possibility of girls starting periods in Key Stage 2. In relation to this we:

- Make pupils aware of the sanitary facilities in the school and who they can talk to
- Encourage parents at curriculum talks to inform the school if their daughter has begun her menstrual cycle
- Provide sanitary bins in the Year 6 & 7 toilets for girls to dispose of their menstrual products.
- Outline the physical changes in puberty through the ‘Wonder of my Being’ in Year 6 & 7.
- Provide the space for girls to learn and speak about menstruation separately whilst attending the ‘What’s Inside’ workshop in Year 7.

Confidentiality and Child Protection

Confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. Where there is disclosure by a child of abuse, child protection procedures will be implemented. (See Child protection policy)

Assessment of RSE

We will assess pupils' learning through their contributions in classroom discussion and their completion of the written activities outlined in the Wonder of my being.

Curriculum links & links to the wider life of the school

- PDMU material's-Living, learning together (**Appendix 2**)
- NSPCC representatives
- Internet safety Day/workshops for pupils and parents
- Child line representative

Monitoring and Evaluation

1. The R.E co-ordinator in conjunction with Health Education and Pastoral Care co-ordinators will be involved in monitoring the inclusion of the Relationships and Sexuality policy through the evaluation of individual lessons.
2. Valuable feedback may be obtained from staff, pupils and parents.
3. Comments from agencies involved, and Diocesan Advisers may clarify evaluations, and identify areas needing expansion and development.
4. Our principal and the SLT co-ordinate the schools approach to RSE and consults the BOG, staff, parents/carers and Health Professionals as appropriate.

Links with other school policies.

- Religious Education
- Teaching and Learning
- Confidentiality Policy
- Child Protection/Safeguarding Children
- Pastoral Care Programme
- Health Education
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Positive Behaviour Policy
- Drugs Education Policy
- Internet Safety Policy/E-safety Policy
- World Around Us
- PDMU
- Homework Policy
- Use of outside agencies and vetting arrangements.

Appendix 1 Statutory Curricular Requirements for PDMU-RSE

| Foundation Stage | |
|--|--|
| <p>Theme 1: Self Awareness Teachers should enable pupils to develop knowledge, understanding and skills in developing: their self-esteem, self-confidence and how they develop as individuals.</p> | <div style="background-color: #008080; color: white; padding: 20px; text-align: center;"> <h3 style="margin: 0;">LIVING-LEARNING-TOGETHER</h3> <h2 style="margin: 0;">Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 (P1-P4)</h2> </div> |
| <p>Theme 2: Feelings and Emotions Teachers should enable pupils to develop knowledge, understanding and skills in developing: their management of a range of feelings and emotions and the feelings and emotions of others.</p> | |
| <p>Theme 4: Health, Growth and Change Teachers should enable pupils to develop knowledge, understanding and skills in developing: how to sustain their health, growth and well-being.</p> | |
| <p>Theme 4a: Safety Teachers should enable pupils to develop knowledge, understanding and skills in developing: how to keep safe.</p> | |
| <p>Theme 5: Relationships Teachers should enable pupils to develop knowledge, understanding and skills in developing: their relationships with others.</p> | |
| <p>Theme 8: Similarities and Differences Teachers should enable pupils to develop knowledge, understanding and skills in developing: similarities and differences between themselves and others.</p> | |
| <p>Theme 1: Self Awareness Teachers should enable pupils to develop knowledge, understanding and skills in developing: their self-esteem, self-confidence and how they develop as individuals.</p> | |
| <p>Theme 2: Feelings and Emotions Teachers should enable pupils to develop knowledge, understanding and skills in developing: their management of a range of feelings and emotions and the feelings and emotions of others.</p> | |

| Key Stage 1 | |
|--|--|
| <p>Theme 1: Self Awareness Teachers should enable pupils to develop knowledge, understanding and skills in developing: their self-esteem, self-confidence and how they develop as individuals.</p> | <p>Myself:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How I grow, feed, move and use my senses; caring for myself, for example: hygiene, sleep, exercise. • Their own and others' feelings/emotions and how their actions affect others. • 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. • The importance of keeping healthy and safe. • The importance of keeping healthy and strategies and skills for keeping healthy. <p>My Relationships:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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: situations of the pupils 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. |
| <p>Theme 2: Feelings and Emotions Teachers should enable pupils to develop knowledge, understanding and skills in developing: their own and others' feelings and emotions.</p> | |
| <p>Theme 4: Health, Growth and Change Teachers should enable pupils to develop knowledge, understanding and skills in developing: strategies and well-being.</p> | |
| <p>Theme 4a: Safety Teachers should enable pupils to develop knowledge, understanding and skills in developing: strategies and well-being.</p> | |
| <p>Theme 5: Relationships Teachers should enable pupils to develop knowledge, understanding and skills in developing: and initiating relationships.</p> | |
| <p>Theme 8: Similarities and Differences Teachers should enable pupils to develop knowledge, understanding and skills in developing: Similarities and differences.</p> | |
| <p>Theme 1: Self Awareness Teachers should enable pupils to develop knowledge, understanding and skills in developing: their self-esteem, self-confidence and how they develop as individuals.</p> | |
| <p>Theme 2: Feelings and Emotions Teachers should enable pupils to develop knowledge, understanding and skills in developing: their management of a range of feelings and emotions and the feelings and emotions of others.</p> | |

| Key Stage 2 | |
|--|--|
| <p>Theme 1: Self Awareness Teachers should enable pupils to develop knowledge, understanding and skills in developing: their self-esteem, self-confidence and how they develop as individuals.</p> | |
| <p>Theme 2: Feelings and Emotions Teachers should enable pupils to develop knowledge, understanding and skills in developing: their management of a range of feelings and emotions and the feelings and emotions of others.</p> | |
| <p>Theme 4: Health, Growth and Change Teachers should enable pupils to develop knowledge, understanding and skills in developing: how to sustain their health, growth and well-being.</p> | |

Appendix 2 Living Learning Together Content.

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 (P5-P7)

Myself:

- The importance of keeping healthy and safe.
- My body, how it works and how to keep it healthy.
- The physical, social and emotional changes that 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 who can support families and individuals in different circumstances.

Messages and images about health, gender roles and sexuality from the media, family and peers.

Appendix 3- 'Wonder of my being' Programme Overview-

<http://www.downandconnor.org/rse-programme/>

Appendix 4- Stay Safe programme overview-

<http://www.staysafe.ie/teachers.htm>

Appendix 5 Service Level Agreement for External Agencies

I/We acknowledge the school's ethos and policies of _____ and agree to abide by its ethos and policies:

- In working with young people and,
- In the delivery of the programmes outlined below:

I am/we are, willing to provide in advance full details of material content to: Senior Management, Teachers, Parents, Governors and other Appropriate Bodies and agree to fully implement any changes deemed necessary by the above representatives.

I accept the right of the school to withdraw the invitation issued to support the school in the education of our young people.

I/We formally accept the above terms of reference and in so doing I/We will acknowledge the agreement made.

Signed _____ (External Agency)

Dated _____

Countersigned _____ (Principal/Board of Governors)

Dated _____

Appendix 6- Parental Consent for the Year 7 RSE workshop.

Principal: Mrs Bronagh Finn

Vice Principal: Mrs Anne Kennedy Armstrong

22nd May 20...

Dear Parent/Guardian

On Tuesday 29th May 20..., Year 7 will attend a workshop entitled 'What's inside?'. This workshop has been devised around the area of RSE (Relationships and sexual education) by the Catholic Schools Support Service and Dr. Richard Barr, a General Practitioner and his team. It specifically explores the theme of relationships through drama, role-play, prayer and fun activities, all of which have moral messages and corresponding values. The day is set within a spiritual and moral context and links up with the wonder of My Being, Alive-O and Grow in Love programmes.

Please give permission for your child to attend the workshop which will be held in the school on Tuesday 29th May from 9.15-12.15pm.

The cost of the workshop is £4.00. A text message will be sent to you today to enable payment for this service.

Yours Sincerely

Mrs Patricia Carson

(Religion Coordinator)