

*St. Francis' Primary School
Drumaroad*



*Relationships and Sexuality Education
Summer 2021*

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| Date Ratified | |
| Signature: Chairperson of the Board of Governors | |
| Signature: Principal | |

1 INTRODUCTION

RATIONALE

In today's society young people are often influenced by the mixed messages they receive about relationships and sexuality. Given the current media climate and culture, where children have the opportunity to be misinformed about sexuality, RSE has been introduced. Accordingly, through RSE and other relevant areas of the Curriculum, we endeavour to equip, form and prepare children for life in a moral and spiritual context thus enabling them to make positive responsive choices about themselves and the way they live their lives.

The relationships and sexuality education Programme (The Wonder of My Being) provides each year group in St Francis' with the resources to deliver the facts that are necessary to prepare children for life. The resources are tailored to suit the age and maturity of children in each year group. The programme will help to provide a firm foundation for children to build and sustain relationships. It is presented as part of the religious Education Programme and the lessons for each year group are linked to the corresponding Grow in Love. The programme is also linked to other curricular areas such as PD and MU - Living Learning Together and Health Education. Primary and Seven lessons have links to the Love for Life Resources - I'm Special, You're Special now known Inside Out (referred to later in Policy).

Ethos Statement:

Ethos by its very nature refers to the fundamental purpose and reason for being of the school. This ethos is essentially rooted in Christ and the Gospel with the spiritual charisma as its hallmark. Ethos is expressed specifically in and through faith formation, spiritual development, the development of the full potential of the human person, inclusivity and of course the relationship with God, the world, self and others.

Mission Statement:

Our ethos is implemented through the values which are promoted in the message

'St Francis' Primary School provides a high quality, rounded education which develops the complete potential of all our school family and teaches each one to respect themselves and others unconditionally. We inspire pupils to thrive in a Christ centered learning environment of faith, friendship and fun. Through the holistic enrichment of every child, we enhance their talents and advocate sharing them for the good of others. We welcome and value our whole school community as full participants in the child's learning journey; working together hand in hand with Christ who is the unseen but ever present teacher.'

Everyone is an achiever; with God all things are possible

The Governors of St. Francis' Primary School believe the school to be a vital part of the Catholic Community and are firmly committed to:

- ❖ The aims of Catholic Education.
- ❖ Providing effective education for all our children.
- ❖ Developing positive pastoral care systems in our school.
- ❖ Establishing close links with the home, the parish and the wider community.
- ❖ We aim to create and maintain an open and caring community where each child can achieve his/her potential.

St Francis' seeks to establish an educative community centred on Christ so that His values and gospel message pervade the whole life of the school.

RSE, taught through religious Education and linking with other subject areas such as Health Education, PE and Science, addresses the current trends in sexual activity, albeit in a sensitive and progressive manner according to the age of the children. These issues are not dealt with directly within the school but when opportunities arise, e.g. the "I'm Special, You're Special" workshop organised by the Diocesan Advisors, the Primary Seven Class participate fully with the consent of the parents. Alternatively, visits by school nurse and/or health visitors are used to support the children through these issues.

Young people are directly influenced by media in all its forms which highlight sexual activity and behaviour. Accordingly, young people are not interpreting such information sufficiently, hence the need for RSE in a moral and spiritual context.

The DENI circular 2001 states that RSE is included on a statutory basis within the NI Curriculum, particularly through Health Education and Science and other spheres of influence. RSE must be taught in harmony with the ethos and values of the school. RSE is not value free and has family and marriage at its heart. Any RSE Policy and Programme should link up with Pastoral Care and Child protection and any other relevant document.

DEFINITIONS

Relationships and Sexual Education:

As the title suggests there is an intricate entwining or marriage between relationships and sexuality which is a lifelong process. This process involves the whole person in terms of belief, corresponding values and relationships in the personal and social domain. Skills, attitudes and parental influence are crucial. Sexuality impacts upon the physical, social, psychological and cultural aspects of the human person. This gift of sexuality shapes and crafts relationships through the qualities of love, respect and future new life.

Sexuality in its very essence is a gift from God. Our gift of sexuality calls us into a relationship with Christ, encompasses the whole person, we have a sense of belonging and identity particularly in our connectedness to others, the world, ourselves and God. Faith colours and influences our sexuality so we can interpret our relationships in and through Christ.

Morals:

Is essentially linked with behaviour and what we actually do. It is also directly connected with experience and faith. Values are the clothing.

Values:

These are the characteristics of good moral behaviour, for example respect for self and others, honesty.

Ethics:

Refers to the systematic structure such as the "Christian Tradition" which provides a particular lifestyle with corresponding and inherent values.

Personal:

Morality by its nature is personal but also public and social. It is about what we do every day and through example. The ethos of the school is concerned and caught up in the morality Christ presents.

AIMS of the Wonder of My Being RSE Programme:

- To help young people to recognise their worth and dignity as children of God.
- To help young people to appreciate their uniqueness and full potential as human beings.
- To enable young people to appreciate sexuality as a God given gift.
- To foster the growth of values which impact on moral behaviour personally and socially.
- To develop a respect for difference, gender and race within the school and community.
- To foster and develop Mutual Respect and Understanding.
- To encourage and promote a deep respect for women and men within the context of the school among staff, pupils and parents.

2 SPECIFIC ISSUES

- The status of the Family: The model of marriage and family is central to the RSE Programme. However, teachers will remain sensitive to social changes and family make up of modern society to-day.
- Sacredness of Life - Life is sacred from the moment of conception and can never be compromised.
- Confidentiality and Child Protection - The issue of confidentiality shall be discussed and a decision made in line with the school policy on Child Protection.
 - Right to Privacy - Teacher/Pupil
 - Disclosures and Steps.
 - General Advice
 - Issues - Parents
 - Non-Medical Professional (teachers are not medical professionals).
- Homosexuality - Most children will be aware of the language relating to homosexuality. Rather than deliberating on the topic of homosexuality, which is really a post primary issue, the use of inappropriate language or related bullying will be dealt with through the schools Behaviour Policy.
- Withdrawal from Class and Supervision.

- How much detail do you teach - define emotion and physical changes at puberty - quantity/quality of programme in time given, special educational needs, fielding awkward questions.
- Terminology used.
- Use of Visitors and Resources.

The Status of the Family:

We at St Francis' affirm that "The model of family life and marriage remain at the centre of the RSE Policy, particularly as it is taught through Religious Education while linking up with other curricular disciplines. There is also an inherent sensitivity to the social changes and family make-up today."

Sacredness of Life:

We believe that Life from the very moment of conception is sacred and this tenant of belief is reflected in RSE and based upon moral and spiritual principles, in no way can that life ever be compromised.

Homosexuality:

Within the primary school context and given media influence, children are much more aware of language in this area. At St Francis' we feel that, it may be important to look at issues related in the context of bullying. Prevention of labelling or cataloguing of pupils - if this issue becomes more prominent because of media or otherwise, then staff discussion is important and referral to the parent(s) of children.

Withdrawal from Class and Supervision:

The DENI Circular 2001 also stipulates the right of parents to withdraw children from RE lessons. As RSE is also taught through RE, parents thus have the right to withdraw their child. This may mean the child going into another class or may involve parents taking responsibility during the times for RSE. However, we attempt to allay any fears by discussing with parents before lessons are delivered - the content, methods and resources of the Programme. At present no parent has withdrawn pupils from any class. Parents will also be reassured that the Programme is not intended as a substitute for their role in educating their children about relationships and sexuality. Rather it aims to build on the foundations laid by them. The programme has links for parents and it is hoped that they will play an important role in the successful delivery of it.

Terminology:

Following consultation with staff, parents and Governors, some changes that have been made to the programme of study to reflect the ethos and values of the school.

Please see appendix 1 for a list of amendments to the programme.

When is the Program of study taught?

The programme is taught in the June of the academic year.

The use of the expertise of Agencies and Individuals:

At St Francis' we feel we may wish to make use of the expertise and skills of education and health professionals from statutory or voluntary organisations or of individuals from the local community. The activities which the agency or individual is to undertake should complement the ongoing RSE Programme and the teacher should always be present during any presentation by outside agencies. In addition, the activities of outside agencies should be in line with the ethos of the school. Agency personnel should be vetted to comply with Child Protection Policy. Confidentiality should be discussed with them and all resources they intend to use vetted beforehand. Pupils should be prepared for the visit, a suitable room should be allocated, the session should be uninterrupted and follow-up activities should be undertaken by the class teacher.

While many agencies and individuals are professional in their approach, teachers may find it useful to ask some or all of the following list of questions which take account of the experiences of schools involved during 1995 to 1997 in the European Network of Health Promoting Schools Project in Northern Ireland. It is produced with the kind permission of the Health Promotion Agency for Northern Ireland. Similar questions should be asked in relation to pupil visits outside school.

- Does the agency/individual have a specified Child Protection Policy?
- How will the issue of confidentiality be dealt with?
- Are resources such as videos/tapes/role plays appropriate?
- Has the agency/individual worked with any other schools?
- Does the agency/individual have a clear set of aims and objectives as well as lesson plans?
- Has the agency/individual read the school's RSE Policy and are they prepared to adhere to it (especially the ethos, morals and values of the school)?

- Do parents know that an agency/individual is being used by the school?
- Will teachers be present?
- Will the input by the agency of individual be monitored?
- Will the pupils be asked how the session/class with the agency/individual went?
- Can the school terminate the work of the agency/individual if the classes or sessions are deemed inappropriate?
- Are evaluations carried out by the agency/individual and if so will the school have access to them? (Refer to the Drugs Education Policy NEELB).

3 IMPLEMENTATION

Monitoring and Evaluating:

The RE Co-ordinator will be involved in monitoring and evaluating through the process of individual lessons, the actual programmes, staff feedback, pupil feedback and parental views.

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

This will be carried out through the creation of questionnaires based on the template as suggested in Appendix 5 (page 33-35 pre and post programme)

Evaluating lessons - Evidence of Pupils' learning

Questionnaires will be created in order to gain feedbacks from pupils, particularly from Key Stage 2.

Feedback will also be sought from teachers, parents and any outside agencies used.

Staff Training:

Staff training will be held by Education Authority, Health Education Specialists, the Diocesan Advisors, School Health Teams and outside agencies. There will be a need to crystallise a strategy for formation using team work and tapping into positive practice and teachers who have had a positive experience of programmes. Skills in other areas of the curriculum will be beneficial.

Refer to the handout.

Roles:

Boards of Governors

- Collaboration with Teachers and Parents
- Examine and Approve Policy
- Review Policy
- Religious Sensitivity/Cultural Sensitivity

Principal

- Sets up working group
- Communication
- Co-ordination vital for RSE
- Consultation with Governors, Staff, Parents, Health Professional and other community representatives

Writing Group

- Communication
- Chairperson
- Consultation
- Time Frame
- Draft Document
- Ratification from Board of Governors

Parents

- Right to have children educated
- Need to give full time education
- Accommodated in regard to RSE (Respect)
- Be fully informed about Policy and content of programme

Staff

- Complementary role with parents
- Training/Information
- Planning and Implementation of RSE
- Education for Love
- Alive-O/ Children of God Series
- Implications of PSE material from CCEA and Interpretation
- Consultation with pupils (needs)

Reluctant Teachers

It is better that the programme is taught by someone who is positive and enthusiastic

Programme Overview

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| <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. Change word womb to tummy 4. To learn that Jesus was part of a family. Change word womb to tummy 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. Change word womb to tummy 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 learn the vocabulary associated with pregnancy and birth. Change word womb to tummy. No picture b on pg 79 6. To appreciate the preparations that were needed for your birth. Word search to be amended with suitable words. 7. To appreciate that family is a gift from God. |

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| <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. No picture 3. To appreciate the importance of preparing responsibly for new life. Naval – belly button. Pg 96 – edit the first 3 stages of the picture 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. Conception – new baby forms 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 recognise that our bodies change as we grow. No to pictures on pg 129/130/131 6. To appreciate that everyone is part of the body of Christ. 7. To appreciate the values of friendship in our lives. 8. 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. |