



Learn to Love, Love to Learn

Relationships and Sexuality Policy

Introduction

Sexuality is a God given gift encompassing the whole person, their beliefs, values and social domains. It is a lifelong process, which is influenced by parental values, attitudes and skills. As a gift, sexuality nourishes relationships, nurtures love and respect for life.

Sexuality as a God given gift, calls the whole person into a relationship with Christ. It is personal and at the same time is relational connecting us with the world, ourselves, others and God. Faith enables moral structures and values which influence behaviour.

St. Mary's on the Hill Primary School places Christ at its centre. It seeks to be a place of love and justice where every person is seen as a unique individual who can develop to their full potential, spiritually, morally and academically. This ethos is characterised by the quality of relationships within the school.

We seek to develop our ethos by developing every individual's sense of self-worth. We promote Catholic values based on the gospel and the teachings of Christ.

Rationale

Love, sex, marriage and family life have been part of the human experience for thousands of years. There has always been a need for education in these matters but never more so than at present. Many children are maturing earlier and it is important that they are prepared for the emotional and physical changes of puberty. Parents can be reluctant or ill-equipped to deal with these issues. Children are being bombarded by pressures from society and the media and need to develop a sense of their own self-worth and to recognise that in other people they meet the person of Christ.

Aims

- 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;
- To develop a respect for women;
- To encourage and promote among staff, pupils and parents a deep respect for women and men within the context of the school.

There are many specific issues which need to be addressed in order to achieve these aims. They include:

1. The Status of the Family

The model of family life and marriage remains 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.

2. Sacredness of Life

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

3. Homosexuality

Within the primary school context and given media influence, children are much more aware of language in this area 'gay', 'lesbian' and 'homosexual', and are also aware of more derogatory terms. It will be important to look at issues related in the context of bullying and the use of the above names and more besides. Staff discussion will be important where there is an issue of labelling or cataloguing of pupils. Parents will be referred to if issues are specifically related to their own child.

4. Withdrawal from Class and Supervision

The DENI Circular 2001 clearly stipulates the right to withdraw from RE and children can be withdrawn from class by parent(s) over the area of RSE, particularly if taught through RE. This causes logistical problems and may mean the child going into another class or may involve parents taking responsibility during the times for RSE.

5. Emotional and Physical Changes

Emotional and pubertal changes are caused by hormonal activity, this is revealed in the influence of peers going through such change. Relations with parents can become strained with an increase in communication difficulties. Children can begin to view themselves in an adult world and yet are very much children. Sport becomes a great release for aggression with self-awareness and self-perception becoming paramount. Bodily changes (puberty) are intricately linked with emotional changes. The school will address such issues in a comfortable and reassuring manner with effective resources.

The "Wonder of My Being Programme" is set within, and can only be taught through RE. It is intrinsically linked with the liturgical year and issues around RSE are dealt with in a moral and spiritual framework. Time for RSE is limited given the fact that other areas of the curriculum cover much of the required work. In Primary 6 and Primary 7 there is a more concentrated time factor of approximately three – four weeks in the context of RE.

Special Education Needs are paramount requiring the given material to be well broken down at times and the Alive-O, Grow in Love and Wonder of My Being re-interpreted.

6. Terminology

Use of proper biological terms and language is vital and when these terms are placed in the context of respect and self-respect then their essence is understood.

7. The use of the expertise of Agencies and Individuals

All agencies/individuals used by the school have a specified Child Protection Policy. All resources used in any lesson will be viewed in advance and agreed by the school. The class teacher will agree the aims and objectives of the lessons in advance. All agencies/individuals used by the school will have access to a copy of the school's RSE Policy and will indicate that they are prepared to adhere to it. Parents will be informed in advance that the agency/individual will visit the school and the reason for the visit. They will be offered the opportunity to opt their child out of the lesson if they wish. Teachers should be present during these sessions.

Monitoring and Evaluating

Class teachers in conjunction with the RE Co-ordinator will be involved in monitoring the programme. This requires 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. The Principal and Senior Leadership Team will evaluate the effectiveness of the programme.

Staff Training

Staff training will be accessed through the Diocesan Advisers and selected outside agencies. Best Practice will be used and skills in other areas of the curriculum will be beneficial.

The RSE Programme

RSE is part of the PDMU curricular area.

Class teachers will be involved in teaching the programme within the context of the classroom with the assistance of outside agencies.

The post-primary schools will be kept informed about the rationale and content of the RSE programme as this is crucial for progression and continuity.

Review Date: 2018/2019

THE WONDER OF MY BEING

Programme Overview

YEAR ONE	<p>Lesson 1 – To appreciate that I am a boy/girl.</p> <p>Lesson 2 – To appreciate that I am part of a family.</p> <p>Lesson 3 – To understand that I grew in my mother’s womb.</p> <p>Lesson 4 – To learn that Jesus was part of a family.</p> <p>Lesson 5 – To appreciate that I am special.</p>
YEAR TWO	<p>Lesson 1 – To understand that I needed help with everything when I was a baby.</p> <p>Lesson 2 – To understand that I have grown and changed since I was a baby.</p> <p>Lesson 3 – To understand some developmental stages of babies e.g. crawling, walking, talking</p> <p>Lesson 4 – To appreciate that my family loves and cares for me.</p> <p>Lesson 5 – To appreciate that God chose Mary to be the mother of his Son Jesus</p> <p>Lesson 6 – To appreciate that Mary and Joseph loved and cared for Jesus.</p>
YEAR THREE	<p>Lesson 1 – To appreciate that people celebrate weddings.</p> <p>Lesson 2 – To appreciate the qualities that are required for friendship.</p> <p>Lesson 3 – To appreciate the qualities that are necessary for family.</p> <p>Lesson 4 - To appreciate how a mother cares for her new baby.</p> <p>Lesson 5 – To appreciate that Jesus helped Mary and Joseph at home.</p> <p>Lesson 6 – To appreciate how we can help at home.</p>
YEAR FOUR	<p>Lesson 1 – To appreciate that Mary was told by an Angel that she was to be the Mother of Jesus.</p> <p>Lesson 2 – To appreciate that an Angel appeared to Joseph to tell him he would be the one to care for Mary and Jesus.</p> <p>Lesson 3 – To appreciate the role of Mary as the mother of God.</p> <p>Lesson 4 – To appreciate the qualities and values that were part of the Holy Family of Nazareth.</p> <p>Lesson 5 – To learn the vocabulary associated with pregnancy and birth</p> <p>Lesson 6 – To appreciate the preparations that were needed for your birth.</p> <p>Lesson 7 - To appreciate that family is a gift from God.</p>

<p>YEAR FIVE</p>	<p>Lesson 1 – To appreciate the uniqueness of each person. Lesson 2 – To appreciate that we are all created in the image and likeness of God. Lesson 3 – To appreciate the importance of preparing responsibly for new life. Lesson 4 - To appreciate the stages of development between birth and two years. Lesson 5 – To appreciate we change as we grow (2 years – 9/10 years) Lesson 6 - To be aware of people who help us grow and develop: family, church, society. Lesson 7 – To revisit the Sacrament of Baptism so that the children can become aware of their place in God’s family.</p>
<p>YEAR SIX</p>	<p>Lesson 1 – To appreciate that we are made in God’s image and likeness. Lesson 2 – To appreciate the stages of growth before birth. Lesson 3 – To recognise significant moments in our lives to date. Lesson 4 – To recognise that we are created by God and that our bodies are sacred. Lesson 5 – To recognise that our bodies change as we grow. Lesson 6 – To appreciate that everyone is part of the Body of Christ. Lesson 7 – To appreciate the values of friendship in our lives. Lesson 8 – To identify negative behaviour and how it can affect other people.</p>
<p>YEAR SEVEN</p>	<p>Lesson 1 – To appreciate that we are called by God. Lesson 2 – To appreciate the presence of God in our lives as we grow and change. Lesson 3 – To appreciate the talents that each of us has and consider how we grow and change. Lesson 4 – To appreciate the qualities and characteristics of friendship. Lesson 5 – To understand the importance of accepting and respecting each other just as we are. Lesson 6 – To make pupils aware that they are influenced by many different people and things. Lesson 7 – To appreciate that I can be a good or bad influence on others. Lesson 8 – To help make informed decision about their lives. Lesson 9 – To enable the children to face future changes with optimism.</p>