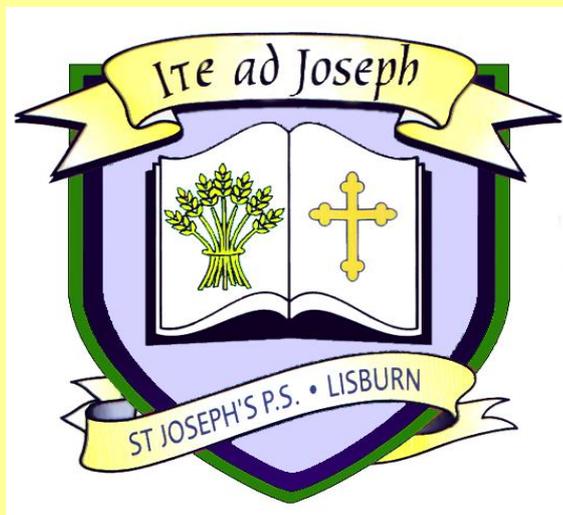


ST JOSEPH'S PRIMARY SCHOOL LISBURN

RELATIONSHIPS AND SEXUALITY EDUCATION



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RSE Policy

Ratified by
the Board of
Governors
February
2017

Rationale

In today's society young people are often influenced by the mixed messages they receive from the media about relationships and sexuality. This makes it essential to have effective teaching and learning on the subject if they are to make responsible and well informed decisions. With this in mind, and with the introduction of PD&MU, the Diocesan Advisers have developed a programme of study namely: 'The Wonder of My Being.'

This programme provides each year group in the primary school with 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 corresponding Alive O lessons. The programme is also linked to other curricular areas such as PD&MU (Living, Learning Together) and Health Education. Primary six and seven lessons have links to the Love for Life resources: 'I'm Special/You're Special', now known as 'Inside Out.'

Mission Statement

The ethos of a Catholic school is Christ centred, and concentrates on the growth potential of the human person, physically, emotionally, socially and spiritually. In the Wonder of my Being, prayer is included in each lesson. This serves to remind the children of the love God has for each of them as they journey through life.

Aims of the Wonder of my Being

- To help the children to appreciate their worth, dignity and uniqueness as children of God.
- To foster and promote their moral development.
- To enable the children to appreciate that sexuality is a gift from God.
- To foster and develop mutual respect and understanding.
- To develop a respect for difference, gender and race within the school and community.

Definitions

- Relationships and sexuality involve the whole person and impact on the physical, spiritual, social, psychological and cultural aspects of each person. The gift of sexuality shapes relationships through the qualities of love, respect and future new life.
- Sexuality is a gift from God. Our faith leads us to a sense of belonging and identity and of being connected to others, the world and to God.

Morals

Morality is linked with how we behave and what we do. It is also linked to our values and faith. It is both personal and public.

Values

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

Ethics

This refers to a systematic structure, in this case the Christian tradition which involves living a particular lifestyle with inherent values.

Specific Issues

- **The status of the Family**

The model of marriage and the family is central to the RSE programme, while teachers will remain sensitive to social changes and family make-up of modern society today.

- **Sacredness of Life**

Life is sacred from the moment of conception and can never be compromised.

Confidentiality

The issue of confidentiality should be discussed and a decision made in line with the school policy on Child Protection.

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 should be dealt with through the school's behaviour policy.

Withdrawal

The 2001 DENI circular stipulates the right of parents to withdraw children from RE lessons. As RSE is taught through RE, parents thus have the right to withdraw their child. However it is recommended that the content, methods and resources of the programme be discussed with parents before lessons are delivered. This should help to allay fears. Parents should 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

It is important that proper biological terms be used and placed in the context of:

- family
- love
- respect for self and others

Implementation of the Programme

The programme depends on sensitive delivery of the lessons by class teachers. This includes adapting lessons to meet the needs of children with learning difficulties.

The use of outside Agencies

If personnel from outside agencies are to be invited in, for example a nurse to talk about pubertal changes, their work should complement the RSE programme rather than replace it. The class teacher should be present during any presentation by outside agencies. 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 introduce should be vetted beforehand.

Monitoring and Evaluating

The RE Co-ordinator should work with the Pastoral Care and PD&MU Co-ordinators and class teachers to monitor and evaluate the programme. There should be feedback from:

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

The policy should be reviewed periodically.

Staff Training

Staff training will be accessed through the Diocesan Advisers and selected outside agencies.

Programme Overview

Year One	<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.
Year Two	<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.
Year Three	<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.
Year Four	<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. 6. To appreciate the preparations that were needed for your birth. 7. To appreciate that family is a gift from God.

<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. To appreciate the importance of preparing responsibly for new life. 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 recognise that our bodies change as we grow. 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.

Co-ordinator: Sinead Clarke

Consultation with Staff: January 2017

Ratified by the Board of Governors: February 2017