



'OPENING DOORS OF
OPPORTUNITY TOGETHER'

RELATIONSHIPS AND SEXUALITY EDUCATION POLICY

JUNE 2022



RELATIONSHIPS AND SEXUALITY EDUCATION POLICY

Article 29 (Goals of Education): Children's education should develop each child's personality, talents, and abilities, to the fullest. It should encourage children to respect others, human rights, and their own and other cultures.

(Rights Respecting Schools – UNICEF; The Convention on the Rights of the Child)

RSE Policy

The general aim of education is to contribute towards the development of all aspects of the individual, including the aesthetic, creative, critical, cultural, emotional, intellectual, moral, physical, political, social, and spiritual development for personal and family life, for working life, for living in the community, and for leisure. Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) is clearly a part of this general aim. (RSE Guidance for Primary Schools)

INTRODUCTION

The ethos of Meadow Bridge Primary School centres around the maintenance of a safe, stable, and caring learning environment in which pupils, parents and staff work together to develop self-respect and respect for others. This document reflects the aims and objectives of this school, in addition to taking account of the RSE and Department of Education guidelines.

The school has consulted with staff and Governors and where there was sufficient consensus on areas that required change, changes were then implemented.

KEY AIMS OF THE RSE EDUCATION PROGRAMME

- To place the pupil at the centre of a programme that helps them to understand the values and morals inherent within the context of personal development.
- To equip children with the skills and knowledge necessary to make informed choices and decisions about their own behaviour.
- To make children aware that actions have consequences and that their behaviour should reflect this.
- To promote in children a positive feeling of self-worth so that each child develops an awareness that they are special and unique.
- To help a child develop respect for friendships and relationships by encouraging positive role modelling within the school environment.
- To develop self-confidence in pupils so that they can cope with detrimental peer pressure.
- To achieve high standards in all areas of the curriculum.

MORAL AND VALUES FRAMEWORK

This school values all of its pupils equally. It recognises the diversity of family life. The school will promote the institution of the family, referring to mums and dads where appropriate. Stable, caring, and loving relationships will be presented as the ideal.

Relationships and Sexuality Education should enable our pupils to clarify what they believe in and why they believe it. In line with our school ethos, the pupils can respectfully express their view or opinion about any issue, whilst understanding that other children within the class may not agree with it and that different views and opinions can be/are held. The teacher will present facts regarding relationships and sexuality in a non-sensational manner. There should be an appreciation that friendships and relationships should be based on self and mutual respect, non-exploitation, honesty, trust, and communication. Within relationships there should be recognition that rights, duties, and responsibilities are involved.

The school acknowledges that, in this 'IT Age', children may be the recipients of sexual information presented in a variety of forms both acceptable and unacceptable. Given this situation, one major focus of the school's RSE programme will be to encourage our pupils to develop their self-esteem and confidence to enable them to make critical and informed decisions in later life.

THE ROLE OF RELATIONSHIPS AND SEXUALITY IN EDUCATION

This school acknowledges that sexuality is a gift. It involves the whole person, their values, and beliefs, personal and social domains. It is primarily influenced by parents, their attitudes, and children's experiences at home. Morality is in essence behavioural and it is important that children realise that their behaviour has implications for them, both personally and socially. For this reason, our school will endeavour to help children develop feelings of honesty and self-worth.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

The school will seek to ensure that the RSE programme is relevant and accessible to pupils, regardless of age, culture, disability, gender, religion, or social class. However, the school is sensitive to the views of the parents and will make suitable arrangements, should a parent wish to withdraw a child from a particular aspect of RSE.

With an understanding that maturity is not always determined by chronological age, it is accepted that some information will not be understood by all children, some of whom may have Special Educational Needs. Whilst in other areas of learning, individual tasks may be set to allow all children to reach their full potential, this is not possible in terms of Relationships and Sexuality Education and the differentiation is through outcome.

ORGANISATION OF THE RSE PROGRAMME

RSE will be taught across the curriculum, mainly through PDMU but also through RE and other subject areas. Although specific topics will be addressed, other areas may arise incidentally and will be treated with sensitivity. Staff will use a variety of teaching strategies and approaches in keeping with the maturity of the pupils, using age appropriate terminology.

The class teacher will deliver most of the RSE programme. However, occasions will arise where the expertise of outside agencies and other professionals will be used, eg Love for Life (including separate puberty talks arranged for girls and boys in P7), 'Moving On' programme, BeeSafe resources from LCCC, Keep Safe Day, Internet Safety Day, Health Visitor, and PSNI.

As a Rights Respecting School we will incorporate RRS aims in the implementation of this policy. Normal classroom arrangements will prevail during RSE related activities. Where it is necessary to alter this, the consent of parents will be sought.

As opportunities become available, staff will engage in training for RSE. Review of RSE procedures and provision will take place following new training or guidance. This review will involve staff, parents, pupils, and Governors. The Principal will ensure that all outside agency support is age appropriate and in keeping with the general aims and values of the school.

Foundation Stage

Self-Awareness:

- Exploring who they are, what they can do, identifying favourite things, and what makes them special, through Amazing Me and Ourselves topics, including Superheroes.

Feelings and Emotions:

- Beginning to recognise how they feel through Class Charter and the use of an emotion meter.
- Knowing what to do if sad or lonely, afraid, or angry, using The Colour Monster activities.
- Telling others about feelings. Reading emotional literacy books.
- Realising what makes people sad or unhappy via Circle Time throughout the year, recognising how people feel through stories and social stories.

Health and Safety:

- Being aware of caring for his/her own body.
- Recognising good hygiene practices.
- Understanding growth and change through Amazing Me, Jack and the Beanstalk, and Growing topics. Bringing in photos as babies.
- Exploring appropriate personal safety strategies, road safety via Road Safety Calendar, Colour and Light, Twinkle, and Transport topics. Keeping safe on school trips.
- Medicines and drugs -safety rules through Amazing Me topic.

Key Stage 1

Self-Awareness:

- Feeling positive about oneself through classroom displays, WOW Wall and Star of the Week.
- Awareness of own strengths, abilities, qualities, personal preferences.
- Recognising own feelings and emotions.
- Recognising and managing the effects of strong feelings – anger, sadness, loss.
- Acknowledging that everyone makes mistakes.
- Recognising how they can develop and improve learning through use of self-assessment.

Health, Growth and Change:

- Recognising and valuing the options for a healthy, balanced lifestyle through Food of the Week and other initiatives. Participating in High 5 Friday activities.
- Having respect for their bodies and those of others.
- Being aware of the stages of human growth and development through personal timelines.
- Recognising how responsibilities and relationships change as you grow older, through Celebration topic and personal Celebration Books.
- Understanding medicines and drugs.
- Understanding that, if not used properly, all products can be dangerous.
- Being aware that some diseases are infectious and some can be controlled (eg Covid).

Key Stage 2

Self-Awareness:

- Developing self-awareness, self-respect, and self-esteem.
- Confidently express own views and opinions.
- Identify current strengths and weaknesses.
- Face problems and try to resolve them.
- Examine and explore own and others' feelings and emotions.
- Recognise, express, and manage feelings in a positive and safe way.
- Develop insight into potential and capabilities.
- Reflect on progress and set goals.
- Identify and practise effective learning strategies.
- Be aware of different learning styles.
- Link to RE topics – Miracles/Missionaries.

Health, Growth and Change:

- Understand the benefits of a healthy lifestyle through High 5 Be Active activities, and Healthy Breaks.
- Recognise what shapes positive mental health through PDMU Emotions lessons.
- Know about the harmful effects of tobacco, alcohol, and other illicit and illegal substances through PDMU.
- Understand that bacteria and viruses affect health and know that basic routines can be followed to minimise risks, including sanitising and washing hands.
- Know how the body grows and develops through Love for Life visit (P7).
- Be aware of physical and emotional changes that take place during puberty (P7 only – Love for Life visit).
- Be aware of the skills and importance of good parenting.
- Recognise how responsibilities change as they become older and more independent – P7 Buddy Scheme, School Council, Eco Committee, House System, representing the school at events/matches, personal organisation, and managing homework.
- Roots of Empathy – changes in a baby's growth and empathising with a baby.

Keeping Safe:

- Develop strategies to resist peer pressure through Anti-Bullying Week, Safer Internet Day and P7 Moving On initiative.
- Recognise the nature of bullying and the harm which can result through Anti-Bullying Week activities, SUPER initiative, rules for inside and outside the classroom, and reminders in Assembly.
- Become aware of the potential danger from strangers, through Safer Internet Lessons and how their attention can make you uncomfortable.
- Recognise appropriate road use – Cycling Proficiency.
- Develop a pro-active and responsible approach to safety – at home, near water, on the internet, TV, etc – through the swimming programme, Bee Safe resources, and the P5 Fire Brigade visit.
- Know where, when, and how to seek help – through fire safety lessons, PSNI visits, Safeguarding Assemblies and posters displayed throughout the school.
- Being aware of basic emergency procedures and first aid, through fire drills, Buddy training, and Fire Brigade visit.

MONITORING, EVALUATING, AND REVIEWING THE RSE POLICY

Meadow Bridge Primary School staff are committed to monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of this policy.

Specifically, important to the RSE Programme are:

- Pupil feedback.
- Staff review and feedback.
- Parental feedback.
- Further Departmental guidance and legislative changes.

OTHER RELEVANT POLICIES/PROCEDURES

This policy complements and supports a range of other school policies including:

- Positive Behaviour/Anti-Bullying Policy.
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
- Pastoral Care Policy.
- Special Educational Needs Policy.
- First Aid Policy.
- Administration of Medication Policy.
- Health and Safety Policy.
- Use of Mobile Phones.
- ICT and access to the Internet.
- Intimate Care Policy.
- Risk Assessments.

CONFIDENTIALITY

From time to time, a child may make a disclosure of a confidential nature. This will be treated with sensitivity but in line with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures.

A copy of the policy is available from the school office for parents' inspection.