

*Relationships & Sexuality  
Education Policy (RSE)*

*(Pastoral Care)*

*2024*

*Ashgrove Primary School*



*Learning, Caring, Growing Stronger Together*

## A PASTORAL CARE POLICY

<i>Agree Date</i>	<i>Review Date</i>	<i>Person Responsible</i>
2024	2027	PD&MU Leader & SLT

This Policy is written in line with guidance from DENI Circular 2015/22 released on 26<sup>th</sup> August 2015 and CCEA RSE Guidance.

### **THE RSE CO-ORDINATOR IN ASHGROVE PRIMARY IS MRS JILL CARBERRY.**

The Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 1989 requires all grant-aided schools to offer a curriculum which:

- a). promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, intellectual and physical development of pupils at the school and thereby of society; and
- b). prepares such pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.

### **UNCRC (RIGHTS RESPECTING SCHOOLS)**

All children have Rights. We are a Rights Respecting School and place the UNCRC at the core of our ethos. ALL children should enjoy and access their Rights and enable fellow peers to access and enjoy their Rights too. We aim to educate our young people that negative behaviours can deny friends and classmates from enjoying their Rights.

Article 28: Every child has the right to an education. Discipline in schools must respect children's dignity.

Article 2: The Convention applies to everyone: whatever their race, religion or abilities, whatever they think or say, whatever type of family they come from.

Article 23: A child with a disability has the right to live a full and decent life with dignity and independence and to play an active part in the community. Governments must do all they can to provide for and support disabled children.

Education is concerned with the personal, social, emotional and vocational preparation and moral development of young people as well as with their academic attainment.

RSE is an issue which places distinct demands on schools and teachers. It is, however an important part of children's preparation for adult life. It must not be value-free and it should lead to the acquisition of understanding and attitudes which prepare pupils to view their relationships in a responsible and healthy manner.

Ashgrove Primary School's RSE programme aims to present facts in an objective, balanced and sensitive manner, set within a clear framework of values and an awareness of the Northern Ireland legislation on sexual behaviour. Pupils will be encouraged to appreciate the value of a stable family life, marriage and the responsibilities of parenthood. As they mature, pupils should come to understand the importance of self-restraint, dignity, respect for themselves and others, including those of a different sexual orientation, and acceptance of responsibility.

## **SCHOOL ETHOS**

Ashgrove Primary School endeavours to create a friendly, open relationship between pupils and staff where the children are valued as individuals. We are proud of our open and accepting ethos and strive to respect and value pupils, families and staff from all backgrounds. We aim to ensure the children's expectations of their own behaviour and self-esteem are high and supported by staff. Recognition will be given to good behaviour and every opportunity will be taken to praise children for any contribution to the life of the school. Children will be encouraged to become involved in a full range of activities and through this to find school a pleasurable experience. They will be encouraged to work co-operatively towards common objectives.

In line with the ethos of Ashgrove Primary we believe that all forms of bullying are wrong, in the context of RSE this includes homophobic, ethnic origin, gender identify bullying.

## **WHAT IS RSE?**

Effective Relationships and Sexuality Education is essential if children are to value themselves as individuals and are to make responsible and well-informed decisions about their lives.

Relationships and Sexuality Education in Ashgrove Primary school should provide children with opportunities to:

- ✓ value themselves as unique individuals;
- ✓ respect themselves and others;
- ✓ begin to develop their own moral thinking and value systems;
- ✓ learn about friendships, healthy relationships and behaviours with others;
- ✓ recognise and communicate their feelings and emotions and those of others;
- ✓ learn about the changes that occur as they progress towards adolescence, particularly the emotional and physical changes at puberty; and
- ✓ learn about keeping themselves safe and know what to do or who to go to if they feel unsafe.

## **AIMS**

1. To enhance the personal development, self-esteem and well-being of the child.
2. To help the child develop healthy and respectful friendships and relationships.
3. To develop a respect for their own, and other people's bodies.
4. To promote responsible behaviour and ability to make informed decisions and choices about their lifestyle.
5. To develop skills to resist detrimental peer pressure and exert positive pressure on others.
6. To foster an understanding of, and a healthy attitude to, human sexuality and relationships in a moral, social and spiritual framework.

## **STATEMENT ON SPECIFIC ISSUES**

### **1. The status of the family**

The value of family life will be promoted but issues regarding break-ups, one-parent families and alternative families will be dealt with sensitively.

## **2. Confidentiality and child protection**

Staff cannot give any guarantee of confidentiality to pupils, and if details are revealed that would lead staff to suspect that sexual abuse is involved, the teacher must follow the child protection procedures outlined in the Safeguarding Policy.

### **HOW MUCH DETAIL WILL WE TEACH?**

Any topic taught within RSE will be appropriate to the age and maturity of pupils (age and stage approach).

- a) The RSE programme will include all issues up to and including the physical and emotional changes at puberty, but not to cover intercourse, conception, contraception etc.
- b) For some issues, girls may be taught separately from boys e.g. puberty and menstruation.

### **WITHDRAWAL FROM CLASS**

If parents feel very strongly about excluding their child then provision will be made for that pupil in another classroom.

### **SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND GENDER IDENTITY (Refer to Equality & Inclusion Policy)**

A young person's sexual orientation and/or gender identity is a central and significant part of who they are and how they see themselves in relation to others. There is some evidence to suggest that children as young as eight years old may begin to question their sexual orientation, and from early adolescence, begin to identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual (McDermott, 2010, page 9).

Recent research reveals that transgender young people become self-aware that their assigned birth sex is different from their gender identity between the ages of 3–5 years old. However, it is between the ages of 6–16 years old that transgender young people begin to understand their feelings, and can start to talk about them (McBride, 2013).

### **TERMINOLOGY**

Pupils should be taught the correct biological terms for parts of the body.

### **USE OF VISITORS**

Outside agencies e.g. School Health Team or other specialists may be used to help deliver the RSE programme. In these instances staff will insure that the resources to be used are suitable and that the visiting speakers will have read the school policy and are willing to comply with it.

Where outside agencies are used, e.g. Love for Life, we will inform parents of the contents of any workshops or talks and seek consent for children to take part.

### **IMPLEMENTATION OF RSE POLICY**

#### **1. Evaluating and monitoring RSE**

Evaluating and monitoring will involve the whole staff at a staff meeting every two years in line with the School Development Plan. The evaluation will be measured against the aims of the RSE

programme and to help evaluate it feedback from pupils and teachers in the form of questionnaires from RSE guidance will be used.

Monitoring will be carried out by the co-ordinator using the evidence of pupils' work.

## **2. Roles and Responsibilities**

a. The Board of Governors have worked in collaboration with teachers and parents in drawing up this RSE policy, especially in relation to the specific issues.

b. The staff will plan for and implement the RSE policy after they have had suitable training.

## **3. Where will RSE be taught?**

Currently issues involved in RSE will be taught primarily through PD&MU.

## **4. WHO WILL TEACH IT?**

All teachers will be involved in delivering the RSE programme. The teaching of specific issues e.g. concerning puberty may be carried out by outside agencies such as Love for Life (parental consent will be sought for children to attend these workshops).

## **5. COMMUNICATING WITH OTHERS**

In drawing up this policy we have consulted with staff, Board of Governors and parents.

Parents have given a copy of the draft policy, indicating sensitive issues and the opportunity to respond in writing. These responses will be taken into account in the formation of this policy.

### **LINKS TO PD&MU IN ASHGROVE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

#### **Themes covered in Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2:**

##### **Strand 1: Personal Understanding and Health**

- ✓ Theme 1: Self Awareness
- ✓ Theme 2: Feelings and Emotions
- ✓ Theme 3: Learning to Learn
- ✓ Theme 4: Health, Growth and Change
- ✓ Theme 4A: Safety

##### **Strand 2: Mutual Understanding in the Local and Wider Community**

- ✓ Theme 5: Relationships
- ✓ Theme 6: Rules, Rights and Responsibilities
- ✓ Theme 7: Managing and Difference

✓ Theme 8: Similarities and Differences

✓ Theme 9: Learning to Live as Members of a Community

PDMU Themes with RSE links are outlined below:

- Themselves & Their Personal Attributes
- Their Own & Other’s Feelings & Emotions
- Keeping Healthy & Safe
- Relationships with Family & Friends
- Responsibilities & Conflict Situations
- Similarities & Differences
- Learning to Live as a Member of a Community

Primary 1	There’s No-one Quite Like Me!	Sometimes I Feel	Taking Care of Me	Belonging & Co-operating	Caring & Sharing	You & Me!	
Primary 2	Wonderful Me!	How do I feel?	Keeping Healthy, Staying Safe	Getting Along with Others	I am Learning to...		
Primary 3	Getting to Know me!	Families	Why Should I?	Living With Difference			
Primary 4	Difficult Feelings	Growing means Changing	Friendships	Who Influences Me?	I am... You are... We can...		
Primary 5	Valuing Self & Others	Ups & Downs	Learning More About Others	Valuing Self & Others	Stay Safe & Healthy	Myself & my Attributes	I have feelings
Primary 6	Speaking Up for Me	Check It Out First	Healthy Habits	Who Am I?	Working At Harmony	Dealing with Feelings	Decisions, Decisions, Decisions...
Primary 7	Who Says So?	Who Cares?	Moving On	Fit For Future	New Horizons	What Makes Me, Me?	Thinking & Feeling

For a full outline of what we teach in RSE, please refer to our RSE Progressive Framework. This is readily available on our website.

<https://www.ashgroveprimary.com/cmsfiles/items/securedocs/RelationshipsandSexualityEducationProgressionFramework2022.pdf>

The document above contains hyperlinks to CCEA resources for the teaching of PDMU & RSE.

## **MONITORING AND EVALUATING**

As opportunities become available, staff will engage in training for RSE. The RSE programme will be monitored and evaluated against the aims stated above. Feedback will be sought from teachers and pupils on past teaching and learning.

As with any area of the curriculum, the implementation of RSE in Ashgrove Primary School will be reviewed at appropriate intervals. This review will involve staff, parents, pupils and Governors. The BOG will be consulted in writing, approving and reviewing the policy and programme.

Links with other policies:

- Safeguarding Policy
- Period Dignity Policy
- Intimate Care Policy
- Pastoral Care Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Equality & Inclusion Policy