



Draft

**Relationships and
Sex Education Policy**

Castle Tower School

Rationale/Introduction

Castle Tower School caters for pupils with special educational needs in the North Eastern area of the Education Authority. The school provides education for pupils from 3 to 19 years old with a wide range of barriers to learning.

At Castle Tower we celebrate the talents of each individual and strive to improve the quality of each person's life by developing confidence, tolerance, honesty, happiness and curiosity. We aim to develop within each individual the skills they require for a full and happy life and help them to be independent, ambitious and look forward with hope to the future.

The Importance of RSE

Introduction

"Every school requires a policy that will address the delivery of Relationships and Sexuality Education. Relationships and Sexuality Education should be taught in harmony with the ethos of the school and reflect the moral and religious principles held by parents and school management authorities". (*DE Circular 2013/16*)

Sex and relationship education is lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about the understanding of the importance of loving and caring relationships. It is about the teaching of sex, sexuality and sexual health.

Process for Policy development/Consultation

This policy has been developed by the Pastoral Team consisting of teaching staff and leadership.

Nowadays young people have more freedom, increased responsibility, and exposure to a bewildering variety of messages about sexuality and gender issues. RSE helps young people deal with these challenges.

Statistics have clearly shown that in N. Ireland the occurrence of teenage births is rising dramatically. Many young people are also maturing earlier. It is therefore important that young people are provided with appropriate factual information and have opportunities to discuss their feelings and concerns.

RSE can help to promote a positive view of sexuality and sexual health by helping young people to feel good about themselves, to respect others and to be able to make safe, responsible and satisfying relationships.

RSE can have a positive effect on self-esteem. School can help to develop their pupil's self esteem by creating a climate of trust and acceptance in which each person is valued and respected and encouraged to feel good about themselves.

Pupils will be encouraged to recognise their individual needs, to respect the needs and wants of others, and to develop the skills and self esteem to become confident adolescents.

We aim to provide a RSE programme to increase informed choice by providing opportunities for pupils to examine their own values and beliefs in light of those held by others.

RSE will be taught in a sensitive manner which is in harmony with the ethos of the school.

If pupils disclose anything during discussion through RSE issues, which makes a member of staff suspicious, the Child Protection procedures should be followed.

Sensitive questions and issues will be dealt with appropriately. Teachers will endeavour to answer questions as honestly as possible but if faced with a question they do not feel comfortable with answering within the classroom, provision would be made to meet the individual's pupil's needs.

AIMS

The aims of RSE are to:

- emphasise the importance of respecting themselves and their own body
- raise the awareness of the importance of safety and sexual health
- promote responsible behaviour and the ability to make informed decisions;
- enhance the personal development, self-esteem and well-being of the young person;
- to make young people more aware of the stages of development from infancy through adolescence to adulthood.
- help them cope with the physical and emotional challenges of growing up.
- help a young person develop healthy and respectful friendships and relationships;
- foster an understanding of, and a healthy attitude to, human sexuality and relationships in a moral, social and spiritual framework;
- help a young person come to value family life and marriage;
- appreciate the responsibilities of parenthood;
- promote an appreciation of the value of human life and the wonder of birth.

Moral and Values Framework

RSE will be taught through a range of subjects within the Northern Ireland Curriculum. RSE will promote self esteem and emotional health and well being and help pupils form and maintain worthwhile and satisfying relationships, based on respect for themselves and for others, at home, school, work and in the community.

Morals and Values

RSE should enable pupils to clarify what they believe and why they believe it and develop a respect for and interest in the beliefs of others. Pupils need opportunities to

explore values and attitudes and to consider how they, and others, are affected by them.

The following key messages will be offered as a potential basis for a morals and values framework.

- The deferment of sexual activity until young people are physically and emotionally mature enough to understand the inherent responsibilities.
- An appreciation of the value of stable family life, marriage, permanent loving relationships and the responsibilities of parenthood.
- A recognition of the positive benefits of seeking sexual fulfilment within a permanent, committed relationship with one person.
- Abstinence as a positive option which is an achievable reality to which young people can aspire.

Monitoring and evaluation

Evaluation should form part of an ongoing process. The policy and resources will be evaluated by relevant staff. Teachers will frequently evaluate their lessons and liaise with the RSE Link Teacher/Senior Management where necessary. Oral feedback will be given by the pupils.

Aims and Objectives for Sex and Relationship Education

The aim of RSE is to provide children with age appropriate information, explore attitudes and values and develop skills in order to empower them to make positive decisions about their health related behaviour.

This should take place with consideration of the qualities of relationships within families.

The objectives of Sex and Relationship Education are;

- To raise pupils' self esteem and confidence, especially in their relationships with others;
- To help pupils understand their sexual feelings and behaviour, so they can lead fulfilling and enjoyable lives;
- To provide the confidence to be participating members of society and to value themselves and others;
- To develop skills for a healthier safer lifestyle
- To respect and care for their bodies
- To be prepared for puberty and adulthood

How RSE is delivered in Castle Tower School

Health, Growth and Change: Foundation

- Realise that growth and change are part of the process of life and are unique to each individual.
- Recognise and practise basic hygiene skills.
- Children learn about the concept of male and female and about young animals.

Self Awareness and Relationships: Foundation

- Explore who we are and what makes us special
- They develop skills to form friendships and think about relationships with others.

Health Growth and Change: Key Stage 1

- that animals including humans, move, feed, grow, and use their senses and reproduce.
- to recognise and compare the main external parts of the bodies of humans and reproduce.
- that humans and animals can reproduce offspring and these grow into adults.

Self Awareness and Relationships: Key Stage 1

- to recognise similarities and differences between themselves and others and treat others with sensitivity.

Health Growth and Change:Key Stage 2

- that the life processes common to humans and other animals include nutrition,
- growth and reproduction.
- about the main stages of the human life cycle.

Self Awareness and Relationships: Key Stage 2

- Children reflect on family relationships, different family groups and friendship.
- They will develop skills needed to form relationships and to respect other people's emotions and feelings
- They will consider how to make simple choices and exercise some basic techniques for resisting pressures.
- Pupils continue to develop an understanding of relationships within a family, between friends and the community and that there are different patterns of friendship.
- Sex and relationship education should focus on the development of skills and attitudes not just the acquisition of knowledge.

- Every child is entitled to receive RSE regardless of ethnicity, gender, religion, age, culture, disability, sexuality, language special needs, disadvantaged and looked after children.
- It is our intention all children have the opportunity to experience a programme of RSE at a level which is appropriate for their age and physical development with differentiated provision if required.

Key stage 3 & Key Stage 4

The following show examples of topics being covered within the RSE programme.

Growth and Development: Key Stages 3 & 4

- The physical and emotional changes that occur in males and females during puberty; individual variation and rates of development.
- Hygienic practices associated with the physical changes at puberty.
- The male and female reproductive systems, what happens during intercourse; the biological aspects of human fertility and conception.
- Aspects of human fertility and conception.
- The development of the child from conception to birth, including understanding of the various stages of pregnancy.
- Factual information about the types of contraception.
- An awareness of what it is to be male and female.
- My abilities, talents, strengths, weaknesses and vulnerabilities.
- Influences on me.
- Responsibility.
- The difference between HIV and AIDS, modes of transmission, practical hygiene and risky behaviour.
- Safer sex practices in relation to STIs, HIV and AIDS.
- The range of information, the services and support which are available from relevant agencies.
- My stage of development, eg physical, emotional, academic, spiritual, emotional, moral and sexual.
- Respecting myself, my self-esteem and self-confidence.
- Sexual identity and orientation.
- Understanding the differences in and values and attitudes about sexuality and sexual relationships including media messages.

Relationships: Key Stages 3 and 4

- Adolescence

- Recognising feeling, moods and emotions (sometimes conflicting) and knowing the language to express these appropriately;
- Maintaining positive relationships with, eg friends, parents, other family members and teachers;
- Considering peer and other influences;
- Exploring morals and values in a variety of contexts and recognising the personal implications.
- The differences between the various types of relationship, eg parents, siblings, other family members, peers, teachers, friends and acquaintances;
- The factors influencing the different lifestyles of family, friends and acquaintances;
- Different types of friendship, caring and loving relationships, eg parents, siblings,
- Friends, neighbours, married couples, partners, work colleagues, acquaintances;
- Establishing and maintaining relationships;
- Abstinence as a positive option and an achievable reality;
- Appropriate and inappropriate relationships;
- Sexual abuse and the support available to young people;
- Sharing, commitment, respect, rights and responsibilities within relationships;
- Possible sources of conflict and strategies for dealing with differences;
- Making informed and responsible decisions about personal and social relationships.
- Family issues, eg parenting, childcare, lifelong responsibility and the extended family:
 - Fostering and adoption;
 - Single parents . positive and negative issues; divorce;
 - Gender roles, eg choices, prejudice, stereotyping.

Post 16 – CCEA Life Skills: Relationships and Sexuality Education External Agencies

Parental consultation

The school informs parents when aspects of the sex and relationship programme are taught and parents can contact us to discuss the content of the programmes.

Parent workshops are also provided in relation to sex and relationship education to support parents/pupils.

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from those aspects of sex and relationship education, not included in the National Curriculum Science Orders, alternative work would be set.

However this rarely happens, by working in partnership with parents they recognise the importance of this aspect of their child's education.

Links with other curricular areas

Learning for Life and Work/ PD/PDMU

Citizenship

Science

Religion

English

Physical Education

Home Economics

Other

Child Protection / Confidentiality

Teachers need to be aware that effective sex and relationship education, which brings an understanding of what is and is not acceptable in a relationship, may lead to disclosure of a child protection issue.

The staff member will inform the Principal/Designated Child Protection person in line with procedures for child protection.

A member of staff cannot promise confidentiality if concerns exist.

Use of Visitors/External Agencies

“Visitors should complement but never substitute or replace planned provision. It is the teacher’s responsibility to plan the curriculum and lessons.”

When appropriate, outside agencies may be involved in the delivery of sex and relationship education. They support the delivery of the subject.

Points to consider when delivering RSE.

- Teach in small group settings
- Make use of external agencies
- Avoid personal opinions. Always follow school policy
- Do agree/disagree exercises. Use problem/issue cards- agree, disagree, unsure exercise. Discussions re certain scenarios.
- Remember confidentiality, but be realistic.
- Always evaluate your work

Classroom Teaching and arrangements

This will be arranged according to the needs of the pupils

There will be aspects of the programmes taught within mixed gender groups and sometimes as single sex groups.

A range of resources/teaching strategies will be used to deliver RSE.

Staff training will be available for staff.

Resources

A range of resources will be used some of which are outlined below:

CCEA Resources

Love Matters Resources

External Agencies

Other- materials received from staff training.

A variety of recommended websites through CCEA.

In preparing this policy reference has been made to The Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations (Ni) 2006, DE Circulars, CCEA guidelines

Parents/Carers can request a copy of the policy at school.

The policy has been shared with governors and teachers.

Feedback re the policy can be given to the principal.