

Saint Anthony's Primary School, Craigavon



RSE: Relationships and Sexuality Education.

Composed April 2022
Ratified by BOG June 2022
For Review February 2022

H. Hamill April 2022

Mission Statement

At St. Anthony's we aim to provide a happy, friendly and caring environment where children feel secure and valued. Children are encouraged to develop self-discipline and mutual respect for each other and for all adults in an atmosphere that promoted learning and excellence, enabling children to fulfil their true potential.

We aim to deepen the Catholic faith of each child by making prayer and worship a meaningful experience with emphasis on the liturgy and the sacraments.

Parents and all members of our community are welcomed into the school. Their involvement and contribution are sought consistently across the school in a partnership that enhances the children's education, welfare and social awareness.

All members of staff – teaching and non-teaching alike are valued and are actively encouraged to extend and develop their interests and professional skills.

The Rationale for RSE within a Catholic School

Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) is a complex and vitally important area of a school's curriculum. Relationships and Sexuality Education is defined as a lifelong process encompassing:

- The acquisition of knowledge, understanding and skills;
- The development of attitudes, beliefs and values about sexual identity, relationships and intimacy.

In a Catholic school, RSE provision should primarily be understood and delivered within the wider context of the characteristic spirit or ethos of the school. The Department of Education, reiterating previous legislation and policy, affirms this same principle when it emphasises the need for the values inherent in the school's RSE programme to be consistent with the core values and ethos of the school: RSE is an integral part of the revised curriculum in both primary and post-primary schools and must be delivered in a sensitive manner which is appropriate to the age and understanding of pupils and the ethos of the school.

RSE Policy

The Catholic school shares its vision of the human person in relationship with others by how it lives out important values like inclusion, respect, and care. Schools should be places where everyone is valued and their innate dignity respected, and where those struggling to find themselves are accompanied and supported.

At the heart of Relationships and Sexuality teaching is an understanding that:

- Human sexuality is an integral part of the human person and that it determines in a significant way our capacity to give and receive love.
- Human life is sacred.
- Each person is a unique human being created in the image and likeness of God.

Programme:

The school will use as a resource the RSE revised programme provided by the Diocesan Advisors. This programme is fundamentally linked into the existing Grow in Love programmes for each year group.

It is also linked with the PDMU aspects of the Northern Ireland Curriculum and the lessons should intertwine with the strong pastoral ethos of care, love and respect that permeates all that we do.

In addition, links have also been made with the NSPCC, Barnardos, Women's Aid, Helping hands, Love for Life and the PSNI. Our Barnardos Counsellor, Julie, is available in school each Friday.

Prayer is central in each classroom in our school and each RSE lesson includes an element of prayer.

While the lessons are in line with the catechetical programme there is no set time for them to be delivered. Teachers are therefore encouraged to seek out and plan for appropriate linkages and opportunities across the curriculum and include the lessons, either in blocks or, if appropriate, as stand-alone elements.

Parents are, of course, the first educators of their children and as such will be informed of this programme by the class teacher before lessons commence. If there are queries or concerns, these can be dealt with if the teacher is contacted.

Parents are entitled to remove their child from specific RSE/PDMU lessons as they so wish and this entitlement will be facilitated by the staff of Saint Anthony's.

Every effort is made to ensure that The Equality Act is taken into consideration in an age appropriate and sensitive manner.

RSE Policy

This policy should not be viewed in isolation but rather as a component of our Pastoral care, Safeguarding and Child Protection Provision. It is therefore linked to:

The Pastoral Care Policy

The Child-Protection Policy

Positive Behaviour Policy

Internet Safety/E-Safety Policy