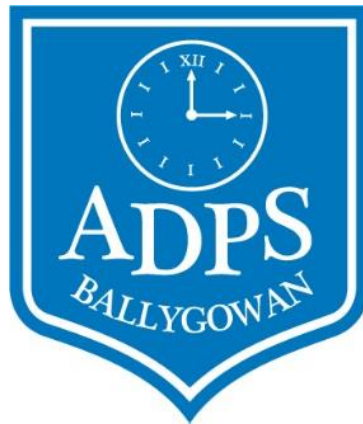


Alexander Dickson Primary School



Helping small
people with
BIG ideas



Relationships & Sexuality Education Policy

Mission Statement

“Our school builds relationships with kindness and honesty. We encourage creativity, imagination and independence. We will develop learning for life and work through effort and collaboration”.

Introduction

Alexander Dickson Primary School is committed to the education of children regardless of race, religion, gender or status. Everyone should feel welcome and valued within our school community and be appreciated for who they are.

RSE (Relationships and Sexuality Education) is a statutory element of the Northern Ireland curriculum through Personal Development & Mutual Understanding (PDMU). It supports the curriculum aim which is ‘to empower young people to achieve their potential and to make informed and responsible decisions throughout their lives’.

RSE is a life-long process which encompasses the acquisition of knowledge, understanding and skills and the development of attitudes, beliefs and values about personal and social relationships and gender issues. The learning process commences informally with parents/ carers long before any formal education takes place at school. Therefore, we are mindful that our role is complementary to that of the parents/ carers. This policy reflects the inclusive ethos of our school and is intended to provide a framework through which our pupils can develop the skills, attitudes and values necessary to deal with the challenges which they will meet through society & the media about relationships and sexuality so that they can make responsible and well-informed decisions.

In RSE all pupils will be taught in an atmosphere of mutual respect. The value of a stable family life and the responsibilities of parenthood will be presented. As they mature, pupils will be encouraged to appreciate the importance of self- discipline, dignity, respect for themselves and others. Through PDMU and the World Around Us children will learn about changes in their bodies.

Teaching at all times will be appropriate to the maturity and level of understanding of the pupils concerned. Teachers will be aware of, and take into account, the variety of existing pupil knowledge, the different attitudes and beliefs and the pupil’s capacity to understand the issues.

Sexuality includes all aspects of the human person that relate to being male or female and is subject to change and development throughout life, it is a complex dimension of human life and relationships.

Teaching RSE should provide opportunities which enable pupils:

- to form values and establish behaviour within a moral, spiritual and social framework
- to examine and explore the various relationships in their personal lives
- to learn how to develop and enjoy personal relationships and friendships which
- are based on responsibility and mutual respect
- to build the foundations for developing more personal relationships in later life
- to make positive, responsible choices about themselves and others and the way they live their lives.

Relationships and Sexuality Education in the N.I. context

RSE is not a new area of the curriculum. The framework for sex education was initially established by the Department of Education for Northern Ireland (DENI) in a Guidance Circular 1987/45. The main recommendation of this Circular was that each school should have a written policy on sex education which is endorsed by staff and governors and communicated to parents. The Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 1989 further set out the legislative basis, requiring all grant aided schools to offer a curriculum which:

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

The general principles which underpin our work are those set out in Departmental guidance and the following Circulars have underpinned the development of this policy:

Circular 2001/15:	Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE)
Circular 2001/15-2:	Guidance for Primary Schools - Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE)
Circular 2010/01:	Guidance on Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE)
Circular 2013/16:	Relationships and Sexuality Education Policy in Schools
Circular 2015/22:	Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) Guidance

We further recognise the importance of working in partnership with parents/carers in this area of personal development and acknowledge the contribution that can be made by outside agencies with skill and expertise in particular areas of the curriculum (NSPCC & Women's Aid).

Values in RSE

The RSE programme will reflect the moral principles developed through our ethos at Alexander Dickson. Pupils need opportunities to explore values and attitudes and to consider how they, and others, are affected by them. The importance of a moral framework is emphasised in the DE Circular (1994) "*RSE . . . must not be value-free; it should also be tailored not only to the age but also to the understanding of pupils.*" Teachers are reminded: "to acknowledge that many children come from backgrounds that do not reflect such values and experiences. Sensitivity is therefore needed to avoid causing hurt and offence to them and their families, and to allow such children a sense of worth."

At Alexander Dickson Primary School, we value:

- Our happy, caring ethos, where everyone is valued
- An attractive stimulating environment
- Academic achievement
- Respect for self and others, their opinions and property
- High standards of behaviour
- Self-discipline, accepting responsibility for one's actions
- Honesty with self and others.

Aims

The aims of RSE are to:

- enhance the personal development, self-esteem and well-being of the child
- help the child develop healthy and respectful friendships and relationships
- foster an understanding of and a healthy attitude to human sexuality and relationships
- promote responsible behaviour and the ability to make informed decisions
- help the child come to value family life
- begin to appreciate the responsibilities of parenthood
- promote an appreciation of the value of human life and the wonder of birth.
- create a partnership with parents and others to enhance children's development.

Confidentiality

Teachers cannot promise confidentiality if the child might be 'at risk' however they can provide information about where & from whom they can receive advice & support.

Special Needs

Teaching staff are aware of the fact that physical development / age may not be in line with emotional maturity in the case of pupils with Special Needs. This disparity will be taken into account during class lessons and discussions.

Implementation of the RSE Programme

The Principal has responsibility for the RSE Policy and programme development. All teachers are responsible for teaching aspects of the programme appropriate to the age of their pupils. It will be delivered through a range of subjects, mainly PDMU. Appendix 1 in the policy shows how the programme is implemented throughout the school.

Teachers will endeavour to ensure that pupils are enabled to develop knowledge, understanding and skills in developing:

- Self-awareness

- Feelings and emotions
- Learning to learn
- Health, growth and change
- Safety
- Relationships
- Rules, rights and responsibilities
- Managing conflict
- Similarities and differences
- Learning to live as members of the community

The RSE Programme is developmental, accessible and appropriate to the maturity of the pupils. Generally, it will be taught in mixed groups so that boys and girls are encouraged to work together and gain an understanding of each other's perspectives. In P6/7 pupils will be given the opportunity to explore specific gender body changes in single sex groups in order to prepare them fully for post-primary schools and the emotional and physical changes they may expect to experience over the next few years.

Outside Agencies

If an outside agency or individual is to visit school regarding the RSE programme e.g. NSPCC we will inform parents prior to the visit and ensure:

- Personnel will comply with our child protection policy.
- Visitors will be made aware of our RSE policy
- Resources will be vetted for suitability to age & maturity of children.
- A member of staff from Alexander Dickson will be present.

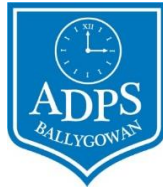
Other relevant policies

This policy is set within the broader school context of Pastoral care and should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Pastoral Care Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Positive Behaviour/Anti-Bullying Policy
- Internet safety policy
- Drugs education Policy

Monitoring & Evaluating

The policy was drafted in conjunction with staff, the parents' committee & Governors. The Senior Management Team will monitor & evaluate the RSE policy bi-annually. They will seek feedback from pupils (consultation with P6/7 members of School's council), staff & parents and take note of new guidance from the Department of Education. Parents will be made aware of the policy updates and the content of the school's programme.



The RSE Programme

Foundation Stage

- **Self-Awareness**
 - Exploring who they are
 - what they can do
 - identifying favourite things
 - what makes them special

- **Feelings and Emotions**
 - beginning to recognise how they feel
 - begin to appreciate that it is natural to experience a range of feeling e.g. Angry, sad, happy
 - knowing what to do if sad or lonely, afraid or angry
 - telling others about feelings
 - realising what makes people sad or unhappy, recognising how people feel

- **Health and Safety**
 - Being aware of caring for his/her own body
 - recognising good hygiene practices
 - understanding growth and change
 - exploring appropriate personal safety strategies, road safety,
 - medicines and drugs - safety rules

Key Stage 1

- **Self-Awareness**
 - Feeling positive about oneself
 - awareness of own strengths, abilities, qualities, personal preferences
 - appreciate that it is natural to experience a range of feeling e.g. Angry, sad, happy
 - recognizing & accepting 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

- **Health, Growth and Change**
 - Recognising and valuing the options for a healthy lifestyle
 - having respect for their bodies and those of others
 - being aware of the stages of human growth and development
 - recognising how responsibilities and relationships change as you grow older
 - 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

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, emotions and how they are expressed
- 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 practice effective learning strategies
- be aware of different learning styles

○ **Health, Growth and Change**

- understand the benefits of a healthy lifestyle
- recognise what shapes positive mental health
- know about the harmful effects of tobacco, alcohol and other illicit and illegal substances
- understand that bacteria and viruses affect health and know that basic routines can be followed to minimise risks
- know how the body grows and develops
- be aware of physical and emotional changes that take place during puberty (P6/7)
- be aware of the skills and importance of good parenting
- recognise how responsibilities change as they become older and more independent

○ **Keeping Safe**

- develop strategies to resist peer pressure
- recognise the nature of bullying and the harm which can result
- become aware of the potential danger from others and how their attention can make you uncomfortable
- become aware that bullies/abusers can be adults, other children, family members, strangers or people you know.
- recognise appropriate road use
- develop a pro-active and responsible approach to safety – at home, near water, on the internet, TV etc.
- know where, when and how to seek help
- being aware of basic emergency procedures and first aid (P6/7 Heart Start)
- become aware of the importance of feeling safe and how to keep safe at home (P5 Helping Hands Programme from Woman's Aid)

○ **Resources**

The RSE Scheme have been compiled using the following resources:

- Living and Learning Together (CCEA)
- Take Care! (NSPCC)
- Helping Hands (Women's Aid)