

Windmill Integrated Primary School

Relationships and Sexuality Education Policy

Date

Review Date

Signature of Principal

Signature of Chairperson of Board of Governors

Relationships and Sexuality Policy

1 Introduction

* 1. Windmill Integrated Primary School follows the Northern Ireland Curriculum Guidelines for Relationship and Sexual Education and delivers this through the PDMU curriculum program entitled “Living. Learning. Together.” In addition we incorporate the NSPCC “Keeping Safe” Programme and receive additional input from the Love for Life team for P7.
  2. **Northern Ireland Curriculum Guidelines**

The NI Curriculum Guideline states that Relationships and Sexuality Education is about more than simply educating children about biological sexual reproduction, particularly in primary schools. Although it is often referred to as ‘sex education’, this terminology is misleading. Relationships and Sexuality Education is a lifelong process, encompassing:

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

For children, the learning process has begun informally, with their parents or carers, long before any education in a formal setting takes place at school. Sexuality includes all aspects of the human person that relate to being male or female: it may be subject to change, and it develops throughout life. Sexuality is an integral part of the human personality and has biological, cultural, psychological, social and spiritual dimensions.

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 primary schools 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.

**1.3** In line with our core values Relationships and Sexuality Education will be taught in Windmill Integrated Primary School in an environment of mutual respect, in a sensitive and inclusive manner, and in a way that is appropriate to the child’s emotional and physical age and stage of development. In Windmill we believe that all children have the right to quality teaching and learning across the curriculum; Relationships and Sexuality Education is no exception. We believe an absence of such provision may leave children with a learning and skills deficit, making them more susceptible to inappropriate behaviours, sexual abuse and exploitation. Therefore we will strive to provide factual and informative Relationship and Sexual Education to our pupils from P1 to P7.

2 Overall Aims and Objectives

**2.1 Overall Aims and Objectives of Relationships and Sexuality Education**

Staff should ensure that children are provided with worthwhile experiences, which enable them to

* Develop self respect, self confidence and appreciation of how they develop as individuals
* Recognise their own and others feelings and emotions
* Access learning experiences which promote the development of the personal and inter-personal skills necessary for making and maintaining healthy and respectful relationships and friendships, based on responsibility and mutual respect, and strategies to deal with breakdown of these relationships.
* Be provided with the facts to allow them to make informed choices.
* Develop strategies to promote personal safety and health and resist various forms of abuse or peer pressure.
* Gain an understanding of growth and change and that their developing sexuality is an important part of self-identity.
* Understand the physical, social and emotional changes which occur during puberty
* Use appropriate vocabulary to discuss feelings, sexuality, growth and development.
* Appreciate the wonder of human life and the roles and responsibilities associated with parenthood.
* Promote dignity, uniqueness, well-being and sense of responsibility for themselves and others.
* Develop an awareness of the relationships with friends and family, valuing them as a source of love and mutual support
* Develop an understanding of and respect for the differing family structures and patterns.
* Know how to keep themselves safe and know what to do or who to go to if they feel unsafe through the delivery of the “Keeping Safe” Programme from P1-P7

3 Morals and Values Framework

3.1 Relationships and Sexuality education should enable children to clarify what they believe and why they believe it. In line with our integrated ethos, the children 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 differing views and opinions can be/are held. It is not the role of staff within the school to promote their values or morals on issues regarding relationships and sexuality, but to present the facts 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.

**3.2** Relationships and Sexuality Education should be appropriate for the age and understanding of the children. The programme aims to present the facts, using dictionary definitions and with a clear awareness of the law on sexual behaviour. Staff should enable children to understand the importance of self restraint, dignity, respect for themselves and others, acceptance of the responsibility within friendships and relationships, sensitivity towards the needs and views of others, and loyalty.

**3.3** In line with our integrated ethos, Windmill IPS will promote the equal importance of both sexes in society. While accepting that some religions promote the importance of one sex other the other, the staff in Windmill IPS will ensure that all children are treated equally.

4 Equal Access and Inclusion

4.1All children have a right to an education, which prepares them for adult life.

4.2 Our prime focus is to develop and further the knowledge and skills of all our children, which is age appropriate. In Relationships and Sexuality Education, it is essential to provide children with the correct information so that they can then make informed choices. Many children gain knowledge through older siblings and peers, and increasingly via the media and the Internet. This information is not always correct or does not always highlight the consequences of actions. It is therefore important that as a school we provide the correct facts, which are detailed in the RSE programme. When planning work for children with special educational needs, we give due regard to information and targets contained in the children’s Individual Education Plans (IEPs). We value each child as a unique individual, and teachers are familiar with the relevant equal opportunities legislation covering race, gender and disability. We will strive to meet the needs of all our children, and to ensure that we meet all statutory requirements related to matters of inclusion.

4.3Lessons have clear learning objectives. We take these objectives from the Northern Ireland PD&MU Curriculum and the NSPCC Keeping Safe programme. We evaluate all lessons, so that we can modify and improve our future teaching.

4.4 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 who 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. Parents who may be concerned about their child’s understanding of aspects of Sexuality can speak to the class teacher concerned or to the SENCo.

4.5 Relationships and Sexuality Education will be facilitated by the class teacher or team taught.

4.6 Relationships and Sexuality will be taught in mixed groups, so that boys and girls are encouraged to work together to gain an understanding of each others’ perspective. Occasionally separate lessons will be provided for single sex groups to provide additional opportunities for children to ask questions specific to their gender.

**4.7** We conduct all our teaching in an atmosphere of trust and respect for all.

5 Organisation of Relationships and Sexuality Education Programme

PD&MU coordinator Mrs Eileen Vaughan is responsible for coordinating the planning and delivery of this Relationship and Sexuality Education Policy.

**5.1 Who will teach it**

Relationships and Sexuality Education is one aspect of ‘Living, Learning

Together’ the Northern Ireland Curriculum for Personal Development and

Mutual Understanding (PD&MU) from Primary 1 to Primary 7. As with any

area of learning, it is the responsibility of each class teacher to plan for and

facilitate the learning experiences, which develop the children’s understanding

and knowledge.

**5.2 Training Provision**

The PD&MU coordinator will receive training when appropriate. It is the responsibility of the coordinator to disseminate any relevant training to the whole staff/teaching staff. The PD&MU Coordinator will also disseminate any relevant new information and research to the whole staff/teaching staff. Mrs Nugent will be responsible in supporting the PD&MU coordinator and for training staff on the NSPCC ‘Keeping Safe’ programme.

**5.4 Methodology and Approach**

The emphasis of the RSE programme is to promote the importance of relationships and enabling children to make informed choices when presented with factual information. This factual information will be in terms of dictionary definitions. RSE seeks to promote behaviour, which will allow children to take increasing responsibility for themselves as they grow older and develop. Children are taught in their own class by the class teacher and like in other areas of learning, children are encouraged to be actively involved in their learning, through asking questions or expressing their views and beliefs. The class teacher facilitates the discussion with the class and any other work outside of the classroom by teaching assistants, as directed by the teacher.

**5.5 Curriculum**

Relationships and Sexuality is an aspect of PD&MU, which is a statutory requirement. From Primary One to Primary Seven, the theme of Relationships particularly and Sexuality is developed in an age appropriate manner. The introduction of caring for a new life in terms of a seed or a baby animal develops children’s understanding of caring for human new life. Similarly, teaching children about personal hygiene and washing hands after using the toilet to prevent disease, lays the foundation for teaching children about disease prevention such as HIV and AIDS.

The NI Curriculum states,

“When children begin school, it is quite normal for them to have other names for their genitals. However you should encourage the children to use the proper terms for parts of the body and bodily functions from the earliest age so that these terms are given status and acceptability”.

In Windmill IPS we will use proper terms for body parts from Nursery, the terms we have agreed to use are: Penis and Vagina.

* 1. **Answering Children’s Questions**

In deeming what questions should be answered, the teacher should be guided by the policy, by the Curriculum and by the “Keeping Safe” Programme. If a question is beyond the maturity level of the majority of the children in the class, the teacher should adopt the “Protective Interrupting” method which they have been trained through the “NSPCC Keeping Safe” programme. They can then if appropriate explain why they interrupted and answer the question in a factual way with that child at another time.

* 1. **Child Protection**

If the question asked raises child protection issues this should be referred to the designated teacher for child protection in line with the Child Protection Policy for Windmill Integrated Primary School and Nursery Unit. The teacher can defer answering a question, by using ‘Protective Interrupting.’ If he/she feels they want to consult the PD&MU coordinator or the Designated Teacher for Child Protection for support or advice they may do so.

* 1. **Terminology**

All staff teaching RSE related issues should use the proper biological names for body parts and sexual acts, where appropriate and relevant to the RSE programme. (Refer to terms agreed in Section 5.5 of this policy). The use of common slang while initially accepted from the children in Nursery and Primary 1 shouldn’t be encouraged. Parents are made aware of the use of correct biological terms when relevant.

**6. Specific Issues**

Windmill Integrated Primary School’s Memorandum and Articles of Association state that the school will provide a Christian rather than a secular approach however it is not the role of the teacher or of the school to place their values or morals on issues relating to Relationships and Sexuality Education but however to allow the child to receive their morals, values and beliefs about each issue from their parent/s. In keeping with our integrated ethos, it is accepted that children and families will have different views on various aspects of relationship and sexuality education, thus, the rationale for a factual approach and dictionary definitions. (ref. Oxford Shorter Dictionary)

1. **Confidentiality**

A safe environment should be created within the room. Confidentiality is important for the children, in the same way it is during Circle Time, however staff cannot give a guarantee of confidentiality to children around issues relating to child protection. Through the “Keeping Safe” Programme the children are made aware of various means of telling if they feel unsafe and identify who their “safe adults” are. If details are revealed that would lead staff to be concerned about a child, the teacher concerned must follow the Child Protection guidelines as outlined in that policy.

**8. Withdrawal from Class**

In Northern Ireland, parents or carers have the right to have their children educated in accordance with their wishes. Therefore, whilst ‘there is no legislative provision permitting parental withdrawal from RSE” the Board of Governors of Windmill IPS can grant withdrawal requests on an individual basis.

In Northern Ireland, parents or carers have the right to have their children educated in accordance with their wishes. Therefore, whilst ‘there is no legislative provision permitting parental withdrawal from sex education’, schools can grant these requests on an individual basis (Lundy, Emerson, Lloyd, Byrne and Yohanis, 2013, page 25). Schools should consider how they can support parents or carers who choose to withdraw their child from all or part of Relationships and Sexuality Education. If a parent or carer chooses to withdraw a child from all or part of Relationships and Sexuality Education, they must discuss the potentially detrimental effect that this can have on the child with the school (Lundy et al, 2013, page 25). They should consider the social and emotional effects of being excluded, as well as the likelihood that the child will hear their peers’ version of what happened or what was said in the classes, rather than the safe and reliable source of the teacher’s. Ultimately, however, the school must respect the wishes of the parent or carer.

**9. Use of resources and Outside Agencies**

**9.1** All resources used (books, DVDs, videos, CD ROMs) are vetted before use to ensure that they are consistent with the school’s policy and ethos.

**9.2** All lessons related to RSE are generally facilitated by the class teacher. Any visitor will be vetted through Access N.I. in line with the school’s Child Protection Policy. If/when education and/or health professionals or voluntary organisations are invited into the school, the activities which the agency or the individual will complement the ongoing programme within the school. The person or persons concerned will be informed of the school policy and agreement sought that they will comply with it. They will also be made aware of what has been taught in preparation for their visit. Such a visit is not to be seen as the RSE programme but as an integral part of it. The teacher must always be present when a visitor is taking the class.

**10. The Role of Parents**

We believe that parents have a fundamental role to play in helping children to learn. Windmill aims in work in partnership with the parents to educate their child/children. In terms of Relationships and Sexuality, the role of the parent/guardian is to ensure that their child/children are informed of the family’s religious, cultural, faith or beliefs and opinions on the aspects covered in the curriculum. Celebrating the rich diversity in Windmill, children share their viewpoint on an issue, within a safe environment, respecting that others’ may be different.

**10.1** Information for Parents will be provided:

* by holding parents’ evenings about the “Keeping Safe” Programme;
* sending home relevant information and leaflets
* asking parents to support their children’s’ learning about Keeping Safe through homework
* by request to the P.D.M.U Coordinator or the class teacher.

**10.2** We believe that parents have the responsibility to support their children and the school in implementing school policies. We would therefore like parents to:-

* fulfil their role in advising their child/children of the home’s cultural, religious, moral or faith take on issues relating to relationships and sexuality.
* inform school if there are matters outside of school that are likely to affect a child’s performance or behaviour;
* promote a positive attitude towards school and learning in general;
* provide opportunities for their child to discuss what they learnt about in school.

11 The Role of the Governors

Our governors determine, support, monitor and review the school’s approach to teaching and learning. In particular they:

* support the use of appropriate teaching strategies by allocating resources effectively;
* ensure that the school buildings and premises are used optimally to support teaching and learning;
* check teaching methods in the light of health and safety regulations;
* seek to ensure that our staff development and our performance management both promote good quality teaching;
* monitor the effectiveness of the school’s teaching and learning approaches through the school’s self-evaluative processes, which include reports from subject leaders, the annual principal’s report to governors, and a review of the in-service training sessions attended by staff.

12 Monitoring and evaluation

**12.1** We are aware of the need to monitor the school’s Relationships and Sexuality policy, and to review it regularly, so that we can take account of new initiatives and research, changes in the curriculum, developments in technology or changes to the physical environment of the school. We will therefore review this policy every two years, or earlier if necessary.

**12.2** The PD&MU coordinator will monitor and evaluate the provision of teaching and learning in the area of Relationships and Sexuality through planning, discussion with staff and children to ensure that continuity and progression is attained school wide.

Date of Policy: February 2017

Member of Staff

Responsible: PD&MU coordinator

**OTHER RELEVANT POLICIES**

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

* Positive Behaviour Policy
* Anti-Bullying Policy
* Child Protection Policy
* Use of Reasonable Force/Safe Handling
* Special Educational Needs
* First Aid and the Administration of Medicines
* Health and Safety Policy
* Use of Mobile Phones/Cameras
* E Safety Policy
* Intimate Care

**Useful Web Links**

Relating to the preparation of this policy:

<http://www.nicurriculum.org.uk/curriculum_microsite/pdmu/living_learning_together/home.asp>

The Northern Ireland PD&MU Curriculum resource.

<http://ccea.org.uk/curriculum/rse_primary>

The Northern Ireland Curriculum Guidance resource for Relationships & Sexuality Education.

<https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/articles/relationships-and-sexuality-education>

The Northern Ireland Department of Education Guidance for Relationships & Sexuality Education.

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/services-and-resources/working-with-schools/keeping-children-safe-in-northern-ireland/>

The NSPCC Keeping Safe Programme.

As recommended by NI Curriculum:

[www.saferinternet.org.uk](http://www.saferinternet.org.uk)

UK Safer Internet Centre have produced a range of resources to help schools

each pupils about staying safe online. These resources include a range of games, films, quizzes and advice and are pitched at children between 3–11 years old.

[www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk)

Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) ‘thinkuknow’ website contains advice and resources for teachers exploring the risks which children and young people are exposed to when online. CEOP have produced targeted advice and guidance for parents or carers and teachers, and for children aged 5–7 and 8–10 years old. www.childnet.com/teachers-and-professionals Childnet International provides in-depth advice for teachers in their ‘hot topics’ section, covering issues such as sexting, online grooming, cyberbullying and online gaming safety. There is also an online resource bank which contains lesson plans and activity ideas suitable for children of primary school age – this is available at [www.childnet.com/resources](http://www.childnet.com/resources).

[www.kidsmart.org.uk](http://www.kidsmart.org.uk)

This website contains useful support for teachers, including resources for teaching children about staying safe online. Recognising and challenging inappropriate behaviour and touch www.nspcc.org.uk www.safertoknow.info The Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland’s (SBNI) website contains useful information and resources to raise awareness on child sexual exploitation.

[www.stonewall.org.uk](http://www.stonewall.org.uk)

This website provides access to many resources on celebrating difference and encouraging respect for one another in the primary classroom setting. www.the-classroom.org.uk This website provides detailed advice on many aspects of teaching and learning to make LGBT people visible in education. It includes presentations, detailed lesson plans and a range of inclusive teaching resources celebrating diversity.

Section 6 Relationships and Sexuality Education Guidance 27 [www.exceedingexpectations.org.uk](http://www.exceedingexpectations.org.uk)

The ‘exceeding expectation initiative’ is designed to tackle homophobia and address sexuality with young people. This website is divided into three main sections and provides useful background information on what homophobia is, responding to homophobic bullying, and the homophobic bullying experiences of young people.

[www.endbullying.org.uk](http://www.endbullying.org.uk)

The Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying Forum includes resources on cyberbullying and homophobic bullying.