

Dear Parent/Guardian,

We are delighted to announce that our school is participating in a new Relationship Education programme for Catholic primary schools, "Flourish." This curriculum has been especially designed to follow the new statutory requirements and will be delivered alongside the already established RE programme Grow in Love and CCEA's PDMU programme Living and Learning Together . We want to give you a brief overview and consult on this new programme before we introduce and start its use.

A Parents' Guide to FLOURISH in Steelstown Primary School

What is FLOURISH?

"The Flourish programme is a Relationship and Sexuality Education (RSE) resource for use in Catholic Primary Schools on the island of Ireland. It aims to view the subject through a Catholic lens, fostering respect for self and others, helping the child, with the support of their family, to develop a moral compass."

Flourish is designed to be adapted to suit individual needs and local circumstances. Following a period of consultation with the governors, principals, and teachers, we have adapted the programme to cover appropriately the statutory requirements for RSE within the Catholic Ethos of our school.

Supporting parents

The family is the primary place for Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE). Our Catholic school is here to support and complement parents and guardians as they fulfil their duty as the primary, and most important educators of their children.

Child-centred & age appropriate

Our school will adopt a child-centred approach to the delivery of RSE. In consultation with parents, teachers will ensure that the programme is tailored to the age, maturity, and understanding of pupils.

A holistic approach

Our school is dedicated to the education of the whole human person - physical, intellectual, spiritual, religious, emotional, and moral. Through RSE, the Catholic school "educates and forms pupils for relationships with self, with others, with our created world, and with God."

Respecting human dignity

Respect for the dignity of the human person, created in the image and likeness of God, stands at the heart of Catholic education. Catholic RSE, therefore, aims "to teach, nurture, advise, guide, and enable young people to recognise their own sacredness and the sacredness of others."

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Inspired by the Gospel, Flourish helps to equip pupils with the "knowledge, skills, and disposition to relate with others in a way that is respectful and that brings joy to their own lives and to the lives of others."

What will my child learn?

Please note as we have adapted the programme, lessons may be in a different order to the web resources – please check lessons by name of the lesson rather than lesson number.

Primary 1

Lesson 1: "I am me." Life is a gift from God. Our bodies are gifts from God. I must look after and care for my body.

Lesson 2: "My body." We were all babies. Babies grow in their mother's tummy. Jesus was once a baby.

Lesson 3: "I have a family." We all live in families. God wants us to love and respect our families. Jesus had a family.

Lesson 4: "I have friends." Jesus asked us to love one another. We have fun with our friends. When we are kind to our friends, we are doing what Jesus asked us to do.

Primary Two

Lesson 1: "Growing and changing." I am getting bigger and stronger. I can do things now that I couldn't do before. God wants us to look after ourselves.

Lesson 2: "Keeping safe." I must be careful near roads. God takes care of us. We must take care of each other.

Lesson 3: "My family." My family is a great gift. I love my family. Thank God for my family. I can help at home.

Lesson 4: "I can make choices." I make choices all the time. Choices can be hard/easy, good/bad. All choices have consequences. God wants me to make good choices - to look after myself and to be kind.

Primary Three

Lesson 1: "I am unique." We're all different. We thank God for making us special. We must respect the uniqueness of others.

Lesson 2: "My body." God made us exactly how we are and He loves us. Our body has many different parts and every part has a specific role - the five senses.

Lesson 3: "My family loves me." There are many different relationships in our families. Families can have good days and bad days, but we're all called to love and support each other.

Lesson 4: "My neighbourhood." There are many different people in our neighbourhood, some we know, others we don't. We are called to be good neighbours. God wants us to be kind to each other.

Primary Four

Lesson 1: "The wonder of new life." Life is a gift from God. We were all babies once. Babies need special care and love for them to thrive.

Lesson 2: "We have feelings." Everyone has feelings. It is important to understand and talk about how we feel. We need to respect others and their personal space.

Lesson 3: "Friendship and fairness." Jesus calls us to be kind and friendly. We can learn to be better friends to each other.

Lesson 4: "Decisions." We make lots of decisions every day. Decisions have consequences. We can learn to make better choices. God helps us to do this.

Primary Five

Lesson 1: "Growing and changing." We all grow and change as we get older. We all grow at our own pace. Our bodies are precious gifts from God, so we need to look after them to keep them healthy.

****Please note breasts and hair under the arms will be omitted from this lesson in Primary 5 RSE Programme****

Lesson 2: "Making the right choices." We need to make the right choices for our personal safety. As Christians, we're called to do the right thing even when no one is looking.

Lesson 3: "Role-models." Some people are to be admired and imitated. We can all be role-models.

Lesson 4: "Why have rules?" Rules are important for our safety and well-being. If we make bad decisions, we can seek forgiveness, learn from our mistakes, and try again.

Primary Six

Lesson 1: "Feelings." Different scenarios may cause us to feel different emotions. We can talk to trusted adults and friends about our emotions. God is always there to listen to us.

Lesson 2: "Bullying." What constitutes 'bullying'. How to handle bullying. Who to talk to. We're called to be kind to each other and to respect each other.

Lesson 3: "Environmental care." Creation is a wonderful gift from God. We all have a responsibility to care for the world around us.

****Please note "Changes in Puberty" will be omitted from Primary 6 RSE Programme****

Primary Seven

Lesson 1: "Emotions and relationships." How to handle strong emotions. How to handle peer pressure. Having the courage to say 'no'.

Lesson 2: "Internet safety." Avoiding online harms. It's important to be kind in online communications and to tell a trusted adult if any difficulties or worries arise.

Lesson 3: "It's OK to say no!" How to respond to peer pressure. It's important to do what is right, and to respect the decisions of others.

Lesson 4: "Puberty." As we grow older, our bodies change, this is all part of God's plan for us. These changes are natural and are nothing to be embarrassed about. ****Please note In Steelstown PS the 'Love for Life' Organisation will deliver the 'What's Inside 'P7 RSE Programme to cover this lesson.****

Please see content of proposed programmes below:

Once again, please note as we have adapted the programme, lessons may be in a different order to the web resources – please check lessons by name of the lesson rather than lesson number.

Flourish RSE Primary Resources <https://catholiceducation-ni.org/about-us-2/rse-resources/>

Love for Life P7 Programme 'What's Inside?' <https://www.loveforlife.org.uk/our-programmes/whats-inside/>

Flourish is intended to be a partnership between home, school and church. We know that you already do a fantastic job and we see Flourish as a means to further develop, support and enrich this partnership so that your child is fully informed.

Following the consultation, Year 7 families will be informed when Love for Life are covering puberty-related topics and consent letter will be sent out prior to this.

Whilst Relationships and Sexuality Education is a statutory component of the Northern Ireland Curriculum, parents or carers have a right to have their children educated in accordance with their wishes. We will endeavour to take account of the wishes of any parent who wishes their child to be excused from particular, or all, RSE lessons. Please indicate if you would like to withdraw your child/children from RSE using the digital form provided.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support.

Yours sincerely,

Ms R O'Doherty
RSE Coordinator

Mrs S Gillen
School Principal

Mrs C Doorish
Child Protection Officer

Vice Principal / SENCO