

# STEELSTOWN PRIMARY SCHOOL & NURSERY UNIT

## Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) Policy



Implementation of the policy will take place after consultation with the Board of Governors in 2022. This policy will be reviewed every year/2 years by the RSE Co-ordinator, the Board of Governors and Staff. The next review date is 2024.

Signature of Chair of Board of Governors: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Principal: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE)**

### **Context**

The school's RSE policy has been developed within the context of current legislation as outlined below.

- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

The UNCRC (1989) states in Articles 28 & 29 that children and young people are entitled to good quality education while at the same time acknowledging (Article 24e) that parents have the right to 'access education' for their children.

The European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) in Protocol 1, Article 2 of the Right to Education states,

No person shall be denied a right to an education. In the exercise of any functions which it assumes in relation to education and to teaching, the State shall respect the right of parents to ensure that such education and teaching is in conformity with their own religious and philosophical convictions.

- RSE Guidance Document for Primary Schools (NI) 2021 –Catholic Schools' Trustee Service
- Northern Ireland RSE Curriculum

Since September 2007, the (revised) Northern Ireland Curriculum in all grant-aided schools as required under the Education (Northern Ireland) Order 2006, establishes Relationships and Sexuality Education as a statutory component of Personal Development and Mutual Understanding.

In 2015, the Council for Curriculum Examinations and Assessment (CCEA), supporting the delivery of the NI curriculum, provided non-statutory guidance for schools on delivering PDMU which includes information on Relationships and Sexuality Education. In this 2015 'Relationships & Sexuality Education Guidance' CCEA stated that: The Northern Ireland Curriculum aims to empower young people to achieve their potential and to make informed and responsible decisions throughout their lives. Relationships and Sexuality Education is firmly grounded in Personal Development and Mutual Understanding, where the central focus is on the emotional development of children, health and

safety, relationships with others, and the development of moral thinking, values and actions.

- Department of Education NI Policy and Guidelines

The Department of Education policies, Every School a Good School (2009) and Community Relations, Equality and Diversity in Education (CRED) 2011, outline how each school should provide a safe, welcoming and inclusive environment with an inherent respect for difference and the diversity of family life in today's society.

Issued by the Department of Education in June 2013, the DENI Circular 2013/16 states:

'The Department requires each school to have in place its own written policy on how it will address the delivery of Relationships and Sexuality Education.'

The circular also states that 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'.

The circular reminds schools that RSE is an integral part of the revised curriculum, recognises the importance of RSE in the development of young people and states that it must prepare them to view relationships in a responsible and healthy manner.

This circular also points out that all pupils have the right to learn in a safe environment, to be treated with respect and dignity and not to be treated any less favourably on grounds of their actual or perceived sexual orientation.

More recently, DENI Circular 2015/21 and CCEA (2015) provides specific guidance for schools in the preparation of the RSE policy.

## **Rationale**

Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) is a complex and vitally important area of a school's curriculum. Relationships and Sexuality Education is life long learning about physical, moral and emotional development. RSE should provide young people with the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not simply intimate relationships. It should enable them to know what a healthy relationship looks like and what makes a good friend.

We, Steelstown Primary School view the development and implementation of a policy in Relationships and Sexuality (RSE) as an important step towards achieving our aim to develop all aspects of a young person's personality and growth. The morals and values of our

Catholic ethos are the core principles that underpin the teaching of RSE. Sexuality includes all aspects of the human person that relate to being male and female and develops throughout life. It is a complex dimension of human life and relationships. As parents/carers are the primary educators of their children, we will endeavour to engage in full consultation with them regarding aims, objectives and the teaching programme of this policy and their views will be considered when implementing and reviewing this policy.

The RSE programme is structured to teach, nurture, advise, guide and enable the children to celebrate their faith. Accordingly, the children are introduced to Jesus as the model for living an ethical life and the moral teachings of the Church to provide them with a framework for living. RSE will be firmly embedded in the PDMU and the RE Curriculum as it is concerned with nurturing human wholeness and integral to the physical, spiritual, emotional, moral, social and intellectual development of pupils. The RSE Policy takes account of the Equality Act NI 2006 and the guidance from the Equality Commission in March 2009 and seeks to promote inclusivity, equality and respect for all pupils. The pupils learn in a safe and secure environment and all are treated with respect and dignity. There is a direct link to Child Protection issues which are addressed through the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and procedures. The school seeks to provide a safe, welcoming and inclusive environment in which there is an inherent respect for difference and the diversity of family life in today's society. Issues of bullying or exclusion are addressed through the Anti-Bullying Policy.

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. An improving awareness will be developed amongst staff of the vulnerability factors and current indicators of child exploitation. Effective RSE provision will help pupils recognise potentially exploitative and dangerous situations and how to take preventative action. Sexuality includes all aspects of the human person that relate to being male or female and is subject to change and development throughout life. Sexuality is an integral part of the human personality and has biological, cultural, psychological, social and spiritual dimensions. It especially concerns affectivity, the capacity to give and receive love; and, in a more general way, the aptitude for forming relationships with others. It is a complex dimension of human life and relationships. We, as a school will be seeking to communicate the Christian vision of human life and human

relationships - RSE is underpinned by a theology of relationship. Pupils will come to understand more about themselves, others and the beauty of creation.

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 appreciate the sanctity of human life.
- 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.
- To appreciate the values of respect, trust, honesty and compassion
- To understand the importance of personal safety and the dangers of abuse.
- To understand that love is the central basis of all relationships
- To develop a respect for difference, gender and race.

Our Mission Statement commits us to the education of the whole child (spiritual, physical, intellectual, moral, social, cultural, emotional) and we believe that RSE is an integral part of this education. Furthermore, our school aims state that we will endeavour to raise pupils' self-esteem, help them to grow in knowledge and understanding, recognise the value of all persons and develop caring and sensitive attitudes. It is in this context that we commit ourselves:

In partnership with parents, to provide children and young people with a positive and prudent sexual education which is compatible with their physical, cognitive, psychological, and spiritual maturity, and rooted in a Catholic vision of education and the human person.

### **Withdrawal from RSE**

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.

The social and emotional effects of withdrawal from RSE should be considered, due to the likelihood that pupils will discuss the content of RSE lessons outside the classroom.

### **Aims**

In line with our school's ethos, RSE should provide opportunities that enable pupils to:

- promote a Catholic vision of sexuality that reflects selfless love, respect and commitment within a moral, social, spiritual framework
- help all pupils to appreciate their worth, dignity and uniqueness as children of God
- enable young people to appreciate sexuality as a gift from God and that love is the central basis of all relationships
- enable children to form healthy and respectful friendships and relationships.
- enhance the personal development, self-esteem and well-being of the child.
- foster an understanding of and a healthy attitude to human sexuality and relationships in a moral, spiritual and social framework.
- foster and develop mutual respect and understanding.
- develop a respect for difference, gender and race within the school and community.
- enable the children to identify and manage a range of feelings.
- help all children to value family life in its diversity and the gift of marriage.
- help young people recognise, understand and prepare for the body changes that they (and their friends) will undergo in the years ahead (puberty).
- promote respect for all individuals regardless of sexual orientation, race, gender or creed.

### **Learning Objectives**

In line with the school's ethos and CCEA guidelines, the Relationships and Sexuality Curriculum attempts to enable pupils to:

- Acquire and develop knowledge and understanding of self.
- Develop a positive sense of self awareness, self-esteem and self-worth.

- Develop an appreciation of the dignity, uniqueness and well-being of others.
- Understand the nature, growth and development of relationships within families, in friendships and in wider contexts.
- Develop an awareness of the diversity of family life and family patterns.
- Use decision making and problem-solving strategies.
- Acquire and improve skills of communication and social interaction.
- Discuss their feelings, growth and development using an appropriate vocabulary.
- Develop coping strategies to protect self and others from various forms of abuse (inappropriate behaviours, sexual abuse and exploitation).

### Skills

The RSE curriculum enables pupils to develop the skills necessary to form and maintain relationships and to make informed choices and decisions regarding health and well-being.

Pupils will also be helped to develop skills to critically evaluate the wide range of information, opinions, attitudes and values. They will be provided with opportunities to develop:

- **practical skills** for everyday living; for supporting others; for future parenting;
- **communication skills** learning to listen, listening to others' points of view; putting one's own view forward clearly and appropriately; giving and receiving feedback; handling and resolving conflict peacefully; being assertive;
- **decision-making and problem-solving skills** for sensible choices made in the light of relevant information; making moral judgements about what to do in actual situations and putting these judgements into practice; acting responsibly and with initiative as an individual or as a member of a variety of groups;
- **inter-personal skills** for managing relationships confidently and effectively; for developing as an effective group member or leader.

### 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. While promoting Catholic values and virtues, we will ensure that pupils are offered a balanced programme by providing an RSE programme that offers a range of viewpoints on issues. Pupils will also receive clear scientific information. Knowing about facts and enabling young people to explore differing viewpoints is not the same as promoting behaviour and is not incompatible with our school's promotion of Catholic teaching. We will ensure that pupils have access to the learning they need to stay safe, healthy and understand their rights as individuals and to relate to other individuals in a mature and respectful way.

As RSE in our school acknowledges the centrality of values and virtues within the Catholic Ethos, children will be taught RSE within a framework which models and encourages:

- A respect for God and creation.
- The ability to be able to distinguish between what is right and wrong.
- A respect for self.
- A respect for others.
- Self-discipline.
- A responsibility for one's own actions and an understanding of the long term and short-term consequences of their actions.
- Non-exploitation in relationships.
- Commitment, trust and bonding within relationships.
- A development of critical self-awareness for themselves and others.
- Compassion, forgiveness, mercy and care when people do not conform to their way of life.

### **Inclusion and Special Educational Needs**

The Church affirms the right of every individual to be treated equally. All pupils, male and female have a right to an education which adequately prepares them for adult life, regardless of their age, gender, culture, sexual orientation, disability status, religion or social class. We will ensure RSE is sensitive to the different needs of individual pupils in respect to pupils' different abilities, levels of maturity and personal circumstances; for example, their own sexual orientation, faith or culture and is taught in a way that does not subject pupils to discrimination. Lessons will also help children to realise the nature and consequences of discrimination, teasing, bullying and aggressive behaviours (including cyber-bullying), use of prejudice-based language and how to respond and ask for help.

## **Child Protection**

We understand that the child's right to privacy must always be respected by the teacher and other pupils. Children will not be expected to answer any personal questions. Teachers will not promise confidentiality. A child does not have the right to expect incidents in the classroom or school to go unreported. The Principal or designated teacher must be informed of any disclosures which might suggest a child is at risk from physical or sexual abuse.

## **Relationship to other Policies and other Curriculum Subjects**

To ensure consistency all school policies should strive to be consistent and coherent within the framework of the overall school development plan. The RSE policy is developed in this context and shares links with, the following policies:

- Religious Education
- Teaching and Learning
- Positive Behaviour
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Pastoral Care 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
- Internet Safety/E-Safety Policy
- Homework Policy
- PDMU
- PATHS
- World Around Us

## **Delivering the RSE Programme**

In the light of the RSE Policy, and in the context of the ethos of the Catholic school, the statutory requirements for RSE are taught through the Religious Education programme Grow in Love, CCEA PDMU Programme Living Learning Together and Council for Catechetics of the Irish Bishops Conference/CPSMA approved Flourish programme while linking with the significant and relevant areas of the curriculum such as

ICT, WAU and Safeguarding. Teachers will cover themes in Circle Time, RE, PDMU and RSE.

### **The Classroom Environment**

In Steelstown Primary School, we believe it is essential that teachers create a classroom environment which is supportive, where self-esteem is fostered and where the pupils feel valued and affirmed. The climate of the classroom should promote mutual respect and the dignity of each individual. It is important to create an atmosphere in the classroom, which allows all pupils to feel comfortable to express opinions and feelings in a secure and safe manner and to explore issues which may be sensitive and personal. Every effort should be made to ensure that the whole group is at ease, with pupils showing respect for each other and realising their responsibilities to each other. Steelstown PS will use strategies such as circle time to help to create a positive and safe learning environment.

Ground rules should be agreed to help to minimise embarrassment and encourage the respect of each other's opinion. Realistic scenarios, case studies, role-play, drama, videos and stories can be used to enable pupils to discuss issues without personal disclosure.

Important considerations are the:

- degree of trust, respect and positive regard for pupils;
- relationships between the teacher and pupils, and between the pupils themselves;
- need for clear expectations, goals and learning objectives;
- use of teaching and learning methods which involve pupils actively in their own learning and encourage the consideration of attitudes and values and the ability to make informed and healthy decisions

### **Responding to Pupil's Questions and Sensitive Issues**

The school's RSE policy and approach to teaching and learning will be sensitive to specific issues that arise in the life of pupils and in the overall life of the school. When teaching Relationships and Sexuality Education, the natural inquisitiveness of children often results in the teachers being asked many questions which they had not planned for.

There will be occasions when teachers will have to use their own discretion and judgement about how to deal with particular questions raised by a pupil or a group of pupils. It is important that the type of advice and the manner in which it is given is supportive of the role of the parents. In all cases, teachers should encourage pupils to discuss any

issues and concerns they might have with their parents, if this is appropriate.

Teachers should exercise their professional judgement: for example, they may need to decide whether it is appropriate to deal with the question in a whole-class forum, through circle time, or if it may be more appropriate to respond on an individual basis, or to arrange time for group discussion outside class time.

The teacher may also wish to discuss the questions the children have asked with the parents or carers and/or a senior member of staff to ascertain how they would like to handle the matter. The school nurse may also be approached for advice.

Teachers are not medical professionals and will not give personal medical advice to any pupil. Teachers will advise pupils to seek advice from parents or carers and health professionals.

If any question asked raises child protection issues, this should be referred to the designated teacher for child protection.

### **Assessment**

The nature of RSE is strongly orientated towards Personal Development which does not necessarily lend itself to summative assessment. RSE is not easily measurable as it is qualitative rather than quantitative.

### **Use of Outside Agencies**

Where appropriate, the skills and expertise of outside agencies and professionals may be accessed. Where this occurs, the school should be satisfied that contribution from informed outsiders are an integral part of the whole programme and in harmony with the aims and ethos of the school. They will ensure that all teaching is rooted in Catholic principles and practice. Parents/carers will be made aware in advance providing them with the opportunity to raise any concerns prior to any visit. Any external agencies involved with supporting the RSE curriculum in the school must be approved by the principal and/or RSE coordinator. They will also be appropriately vetted and must agree to terms set out in this RSE policy prior to any visit taking place. In Steelstown Primary School, Love for Life will deliver “What’s Inside?” programme to Primary 7 children. **Parental consent will be sought beforehand.** Please see

information letter and Primary 7 consent letter in appendix at the end of policy.

## **Responsibilities**

### **Board of Governors**

The Board of Governors should foster and support the development of an RSE policy and programme by collaborating with teachers and parents. It should also facilitate the consultative process whereby the school community can respond and contribute. The governors should examine and approve the completed policy and programme prior to their implementation in the school and review the policy at regular intervals.

### **Principal and Senior Management Team**

As with all subject areas, it is the role of the Principal to make possible a coherent and coordinated approach to RSE in keeping with the ethos of the school. The Principal and Senior Management Team co-ordinate the school's approach to RSE and consults the Board of Governors, staff, parent(s)/carer(s) and health professionals, as appropriate.

### **RSE Co-ordinator**

The Religious Education Co-Ordinator, Ms Rebecca O'Doherty, is responsible for co-ordinating all issues related to the RSE policy, the Department of Education specifications and the programme designed for the pupils.

The RSE Co-ordinator's role includes:

- upholding and ensuring that the programme is taught in accordance with the school's Catholic ethos;
- ensuring that the programme is taught effectively and is appropriate to the age and maturity of the pupils;
- liaising with the Board of Governors, the Principal, the Vice Principal/SLT, all staff, parents and health and educational visitors on RSE matters;
- attending in-service training and disseminating appropriate information to other staff members;
- organising training for staff as and when appropriate;
- liaising with outside agencies where appropriate. Designated Teacher for Child Protection The Designated (Mrs Catherine Doorish) / Deputy Designated Teacher (Mrs Siobhan Gillen) and SENDCO (Mrs Catherine Doorish) will provide relevant information which will ensure that the needs of all pupils are met.

### **Chaplain (Fr. John McDevitt)**

The role of the chaplain is to:

- support the teaching of RSE where possible;
- meet with the RSE co-ordinator to discuss the RSE programme and its delivery in school;
- witness to Gospel values.

### **Monitoring, evaluating and reviewing the RSE Policy**

The policy will be reviewed annually by the Safeguarding Team as part of its evaluation of the school's policies and procedures. The Board of Governors will have due regard to any updated guidance issued by DE, CCEA, Catholic Education Partnership and/or Derry Diocesan Catechetical Centre and revise the policy in light of this guidance as required.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ (Chair of Board of Governors)

\_\_\_\_\_ (Principal)

### **Appendix**

The general principles which underpin our work are those set out in Departmental guidance and the following references and Circulars:

Irish Episcopal Conference, Share the Good News (2010)

Bishop's Conference of Ireland, Guidelines on Relationships and Sexuality Education (2013).

Love is for Life – No 7

Irish Episcopal Conference, Love is for Life (1985)

<http://www.catholicbishops.ie/2004/05/03/supporting-marriage-and-the-family/>

Circular 2001/15: Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE)

Circular 2001/15-2: Guidance for Primary Schools - Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE)

Relationships and Sexuality Education Guidance Document for Primary Schools: Northern Ireland (NI) 2021

Congregation for Catholic Education (1965), Declaration on Catholic Education, Gravissimum Educationis

Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (1975) Declaration on Certain Questions Concerning Sexual Ethics, Persona Humana

Pope John Paul II, (1981) Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation Familiaris Consortio: On the Role of the Christian Family in the Modern World

DENI Circular 1986/45 - 'Sex Education' United Nations Convention for the Rights of the Child (1989) Articles 12, 18, 19, 28 and 29

DENI Circular 2001/15 - 'Relationships and Sexuality Education'

CCEA (2001) "Guidance for Primary Schools: Relationships and Sexuality Education"

The Education Order (NI) 2006

DENI (2009) 'Every School a Good School'

Equality Commission for Northern Ireland (2009) Eliminating Sexual Orientation Discrimination in Northern Ireland, A Short Guide - Education

DENI Circular 2010/01 - 'Guidance on Relationships and Sexuality Education'

DENI (2011) 'Community Relations, Equality and Diversity in Education Policy'

DENI Circular 2013/16 - 'Relationships and Sexuality Education Policy in Schools'

CCMS Circular 2013/19 – 'Guidelines on Relationships and Sexuality Education'

DENI Circular 2014/01 – 'Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE)'

DENI Circular 2015/21 – 'Relationships and Sexuality Education Guidance'

CCEA (2015) 'Relationships and Sexuality Education Guidance: An Update for Primary Schools'

Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland (2015) 'Sexting and the Law' (A Basic Guide to Help Professionals and the Public Deal with Incidents of 'Sexting')

ETI (2016) An evaluation of RSE in Primary and special Schools

Pope Francis (2016), Apostolic Exhortation - Amoris Laetitia (The Joy of Love)

DENI Circular 2016/05 - 'Children Who Display Harmful Sexualised Behaviour'

DENI Circular 2017/04 – 'Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools - A Guide for Schools'

Pope Francis (2018), Apostolic Exhortation – Gaudete et Exsultate (The Call to Holiness)

Congregation for Catholic Education (2019), Male and Female He Created Them – Towards a Path of Dialogue on the Question of Gender Theory in Education

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

“What’s Inside?” – Love For Life <https://www.loveforlife.org.uk/our-programmes/whats-inside/>

## Service Level Agreement for External Agencies

I/We acknowledge the school's ethos and policies of \_\_\_\_\_ and agree to abide by its ethos and policies:

- In working with young people and,
- In the delivery of the programmes outlined below:

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I am/we are, willing to provide in advance full details of material content to:

Senior Management, Teachers, Parents, Governors and other Appropriate Bodies and agree to fully implement any changes deemed necessary by the above representatives.

I accept the right of the school to withdraw the invitation issued to support the school in the education of our young people.

I/We formally accept the above terms of reference and in so doing

I/We will acknowledge the agreement made.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ (External Agency)

Dated \_\_\_\_\_

Countersigned \_\_\_\_\_ (Principal/Board of Governors)

Dated \_\_\_\_\_

## Information Letter to Primary 7 Parents

Dear Parent/Guardian

As part of our ongoing commitment to the RSE of our Primary 7 pupils, we are delighted that Love for Life will be visiting our school on \*\*  
INSERT DATE/TIME.

The fun and interactive ‘What’s Inside?’ programme aims to equip the Primary 7 pupils to make healthy choices and is a vital part of their learning before their transition to post-primary education.

During the workshop, topics covered will include: the development of a baby from conception, managing changes and emotions throughout puberty and how to be confident and assertive in making healthy choices.

The main focus of the programme is to affirm the uniqueness of the individual and to encourage respect for themselves and others. All these topics will be delivered in a sensitive and age appropriate way.

This programme is delivered firmly within the context of the Catholic Church’s teachings.

Please come and talk to us if you have any concerns. We will be happy to discuss any part of the programme.

Yours sincerely,  
PRINCIPAL

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I would / would not like to withdraw my child from RSE.  
I would / would not like to withdraw my child from Love for Life.  
I would / would not like more information on Love for Life’s ‘What’s Inside?’ P7 programme.

Name of Child: \_\_\_\_\_

Class: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of adult: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Information Letter to P1-7 Parents

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.

### ***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."  
Through RSE, the Catholic school "educates and forms pupils for relationships with self, with others, with our created world, and with God."

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.

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 below:

**I would / would not like to withdraw my child from RSE.**

Thank you, as always, for your continued support.

Yours sincerely,