



# **Relationships & Sexuality Education Policy (RSE)**

**Policy ratified by BoG: 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2021**

**Policy due for review: September 2025**

## **November 2021**

Relationships & Sexuality Education (RSE) encompasses acquiring the necessary knowledge, understanding and personal skills to aid development of positive attitudes and values regarding personal relationships, wider social relationships and issues arising with gender. Both relationships and the capacity for sexual feelings are central to our humanity and are influenced by a wide range of family, social, cultural, biological, psychological and spiritual dimensions. RSE within the curriculum at Crumlin Integrated College reflects our integrated ethos and our mission statement “Celebrating Difference: Learning and Achieving Together” and aims to create a climate where everyone has a voice, feels valued, respects difference and engages positively with it.

### **RSE directives and legislation**

The school’s RSE policy has been developed and guided by the following legislation.

The Northern Ireland Council for Curriculum, Examinations & Assessment, (CCEA) issued guidance material on RSE in 2001. In August of that year the Department of Education issued circular 2001/15 RSE to support the guidance documentation. This circular stated

“The Department considers that every school should have a policy setting out how the school will address relationships and sexuality education within each pupil’s curriculum. The policy should be the subject of consultation with parents and should be endorsed by the school’s Board of Governors. All teachers, whether or not they are centrally involved in teaching the programme should be aware of its details and their implications”

The school’s RSE policy endeavours to support The Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations (NI) 2006 which requires that all pupils have the right to learn in a safe environment, to be treated with respect and dignity and not to be treated less favourably on grounds of their actual or perceived sexual orientation.

Furthermore, the RSE policy attempts to deliver on the principles cited in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). The UNCRC articles cover all aspects of a child’s life, from the right to education, health and protection from abuse to the right to freedom of expression and access to information. It also says what governments and adults must do to ensure all children can enjoy all their rights. In particular articles 2 and 4 state that the convention applies to “all children whatever their ethnicity, gender, religion language or ability” and article 4 that “every child has a right to express their views and have their view considered and taken seriously.”

Our RSE policy aims to align with The Department of Education’s Community Relations Equality and Diversity (CRED) Policy 2011 which states that CRED “...is about working towards a society in which there is a sense of belonging by all communities, a society in which the diversity of people’s backgrounds and circumstances is appreciated and valued, a society in which similar opportunities are open to all and a society in which strong and positive relationships exist and continue to be developed...”

The RSE policy supports the school development plan’s ethos of including the rights and responsibilities of “EVERYONE” in the school community.

## **Linked Policies**

The content of the RSE policy reflects and should be taken in conjunction with school policies on Anti-Bullying, Safeguarding, Positive Behaviour and E-safety. With particular reference to our Anti Bullying Policy, bullying behaviour concerning homophobia, transgender issues, sexual harassment, FGM or other issues related to sex, gender or relationships will not be tolerated.

## **RSE Policy Consultation Process.**

Our RSE policy has been drawn up in consultation with staff, pupils via the Student Council, parents and the Board of Governors to ensure that all members of the school community have had a voice in the process. Copies of the RSE are available from the school office on request and are also available on the school website. Any comments or feedback on the policy should initially be directed to Mr Armstrong (SLT).

## **Aims and Objectives of the RSE Policy**

The aim of RSE is to provide accurate, balanced factual information about human reproduction, together with consideration of the broader emotional, ethical, religious, and moral dimensions of relationships both sexual and non- sexual. RSE encompasses learning about physical, sexual, moral and emotional development. It explores the understanding of the importance of stable and loving relationships, respect within relationships, fosters caring and endeavours to promote a positive, responsible vision for family life. It involves acquiring information, developing skills and forming positive values and attitudes. There are many influences on how relationships and sexuality are judged and perceived due to family, social and religious backgrounds. A primary objective of this policy is to encourage understanding and tolerance of a diversity of opinions and experiences with regard to relationships and sexuality such that our pupils can make informed decisions and that their education on these issues reflects our integrated ethos.

Our RSE programme aims to prepare students for an adult life in which they can:

- develop positive values and a moral framework that will guide their decisions, judgements and behaviour and to enhance their confidence and self-esteem such that they value themselves and others.
- understand the consequences of their actions and behave responsibly within sexual, family, social and other relationships.
- communicate effectively by using and developing appropriate terminology for sex and relationship issues. There is much lewd and malicious vocabulary associated with sex and sexuality which impacts negatively on attitudes, diminishes respect and can be very offensive. Usage of this type of language is highly inappropriate within the school community.
- develop awareness of their sexuality and understand human sexuality.
- challenge sexism and prejudice, and promote equality and diversity.
- avoid being exploited, exploiting others or being pressured into unwanted or unprotected sex.
- understand the arguments and benefits for delaying sexual activity

- recognising that abstaining from sexual relations at a young age may have health and emotional benefits and should be respected as a positive individual life choice.
- understand the reasons for having protected sex and have sufficient information and skills to protect themselves from unplanned pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections.
- be aware of sources of help and acquire the skills and confidence to access confidential health advice, support and treatment if necessary
- Female Genital Mutilation, learning about keeping safe from harm. Not a religious practice, criminal offence but a cultural practice with many risks.
- know how the law applies to sexual relationships and cases of FGM.

At Crumlin Integrated College we believe that RSE should:

- be an entitlement for all our pupils
- support family values where commitment, love, respect, affection, responsibility and openness are promoted. The term “family” is a broad concept and should not simply be regarded as a stereotypical nuclear family. It includes a variety of types of family structure and our education program should accept and be sensitive to these different structures.
- encourage students and teachers to share and respect each other’s views and to generate an atmosphere where questions and discussion on sexual matters can take place without any stigma or embarrassment.
- recognise that parents are central to the teaching of children about sex, relationships and growing up and that they should be informed and consulted about their child’s education on these issues.
- RSE in this school plans to cover the following areas in order to achieve our aims and objectives:

### **Attitudes and Values**

- learning the importance of values, individual conscience and moral choices
- learning the value of family life, stable and loving relationships & marriage
- learning about the nurturing of children;
- learning the value of respect, love and care;
- exploring, considering and understanding moral dilemmas;
- developing critical thinking as part of decision-making
- challenge myths, misconceptions and false assumptions concerning sexual issues and attitudes to relationships.

## **Personal and Social Skills**

- learning to manage emotions and relationships confidently and sensitively
- developing self-respect and empathy for others.
- learning to make choices without ignorance or prejudice.
- developing an appreciation of the consequences of choices.
- promote openness and help to manage conflict.
- empower students with the skills to be able to avoid inappropriate pressures or advances (both as exploited or exploiter)

## **Knowledge and Understanding**

- learning and understanding physical development at appropriate stages.
- understanding human sexuality, reproduction, sexual health, emotions and relationships.
- learning about contraception and the range of local and national sexual health advice, contraception and support services.
- learning the reasons for delaying sexual activity, and the health and emotional benefits to be gained from such delay
- the avoidance of unplanned pregnancy but also where to seek advice should unwanted pregnancy arise

## **Delivering RSE on our curriculum**

Any RSE lesson may consider questions or issues that some students will find sensitive. When students ask questions, we aim to answer them honestly, within appropriate ground rules established at the start of the sessions. RSE is delivered to mixed gender classes to encourage mutual respect from both sexes. Where sensitive issues arise from lessons pupils are encouraged to approach the relevant teacher discretely who can facilitate additional advice or direction for more help

We recognise that the wider community can offer a variety of resources and we aim to work in partnership with health professionals, social workers, peer educators and other mentors or advisers. The organisation “Love for Life” is employed to deliver core sections of RSE on our curriculum which may then be explored further in LLW lessons. The “Love for Life” programme with assistance from the Head of LLW helps provide support to teachers who may be uncomfortable with teaching certain aspects of the curriculum.

A variety of teaching approaches are used including discussion, debating and workshops which encourage pupils to develop decision making and problem solving skills and evoke a sense of responsibility for their actions.

Where outside agencies are used, such as “Love for Life” for example, the Head of LLW should ensure that:

- the content of the programme is in keeping with the aims and ethos of the school’s RSE policy.
- the programme is appropriate in terms of pupils’ age and ability.
- consult Senior Leadership before commencing the programme.
- ensure those persons delivering the programme have been properly vetted to work within a school setting.
- a member of staff is present during the delivery of the programme

The Head of LLW should ensure that any RSE information passed to pupils is age appropriate, relevant, up to date and factually correct.

## **RSE at Key Stage 3**

RSE at KS3 is predominantly covered within the Personal Development Strand of Learning for Life & Work (LLW) and Home Economics with some input from Science in Year 10 on the areas of puberty, human reproduction, sexually transmitted infections & contraception. FGM information and guidance.

Details of what are included and when it is delivered through LLW is outlined in the table below. Some strands are developed across Key Stage 3. Strands 1-4 cover Self Awareness, 5-8 Personal Health and 9-14 Relationships.

The organisation “Love for Life” are used to cover a significant amount of the RSE course (see appendices)

KS3 Strand	Year 8 1 period LLW per week	Year 9 1 periods LLW per week	Year 10 2 periods LLW per week
1.Explore and express a sense of self	•	•	•
2.Explore personal morals, values and beliefs	•	•	•
3.Investigate the influences on a young person		•	
4.Explore the different ways to develop self esteem		•	
5.Explore the concept of health as the development of the whole person	•	•	•
6.Investigate the influences on physical and emotional/mental health		•	
7.Develop understanding about, and strategies to manage the effects of change on body, mind and behaviour		•	
8.Develop strategies to promote personal safety		•	• Sci
9.Explore the qualities of relationships including friendship	•	•	•
10.Explore the qualities of a loving respectful relationship			•
11.Develop coping strategies to deal with challenging relationship scenarios		•	•
12.Develop strategies to avoid and resolve conflict		•	
13.Explore the implications of sexual maturation	•		• Sci
14.Explore the emotional, social and moral implications of early sexual activity			•

RSE is also covered within Religious Education at Key Stage 3 under “Morality”. Pupils are given the opportunity to consider relationships and responsibilities towards:

- Family
- Peers
- People with special needs
- Gender equality issues
- Ethnic and religious groups

Also included are physical changes at adolescence and puberty and that sexuality is a gift from God. Pupils learn what the Bible says about sex and how there are responsibilities and consequences attached to its issues. These consequences are explored from a moral, physical, emotional and social perspective.

The KS3 Home Economics key concept Home & Family Life also has a contribution to the delivery of RSE as outlined below.

KS3 Strand	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10
1.Explore the roles and responsibilities of individuals within a variety of home and family structures	•		
2.Develop awareness of parenting skills			•
3.Investigate some of the changing needs of family members at different stages of the life cycle		•	
4.Explore strategies to manage family life			•



## RSE on the curriculum at Key Stage 4

RSE at KS4 is predominantly covered within the Personal Development Strand of Learning for Life & Work (LLW). Details of what are included and when it is delivered through LLW is outlined in the table below. Most strands are developed across KS4.

The organisation “Love for Life” are used to cover a significant amount of the RSE course (see appendices) with follow up lessons delivered within LLW lessons over a six-week period.

Strand	Year 11 1 period LLW per week	Year 12 1 periods LLW per week
1.Explore and express a sense of self	•	•
2.Explore personal morals, values and beliefs	•	•
3.Investigate the influences on a young person	•	•
4.Explore the different ways to develop self esteem	•	•
5.Explore the concept of health as the development of the whole person	•	•
6.Investigate the influences on physical and emotional/mental health	•	•
7.Develop understanding about, and strategies to manage the effects of change on body, mind and behaviour	•	
8.Develop strategies to promote personal safety	•	
9.Explore the qualities of relationships including friendship	•	•
10.Explore the qualities of a loving respectful relationship		•
11.Develop coping strategies to deal with challenging relationship scenarios		•
12.Develop strategies to avoid and resolve conflict	•	•
13.Explore the implications of sexual maturation	•	
14.Explore the emotional, social and moral implications of early sexual activity		•

There is some extended input to RSE from GCSE Single & Double Award Science and GCSE Child Development on areas such as the biology concerning human reproduction, sexually transmitted infections and contraception but as these subjects are optional this detail is not available to all pupils.

Also pupils who opt to follow the GCSE Religious Education course will explore RSE as part of the “Christian Ethics” unit of work. Pupils will learn and discuss issues including:

- The meaning and purpose of sexual relationships
- What is a sexual relationship?
- Christian views on homosexuality
- Civil partnerships
- Pre-marital sex
- Marriage & divorce

## **Inclusion**

It is important that all our pupils have appropriate access to RSE regardless of their ability, background or sexual orientation.

### *Students with Special Needs*

We aim to ensure that all young people receive sex and relationship education at an appropriate level, and we will attempt to tailor provision appropriate to the particular needs of all our students, taking specialist advice where necessary.

### *Ethnic and Cultural Groups*

We intend our policy to be sensitive to the needs of different ethnic groups. For some young people it is not culturally appropriate for them to be taught particular items in mixed groups. We will respond to parental requests and concerns.

### *Sexual Identity and Sexual Orientation*

We aim to deal sensitively and honestly with issues of sexual orientation, answer appropriate questions and offer or direct an individual for support. Young people, whatever their developing sexuality need to feel that sex and relationship education is relevant to them.

## **RSE and public displays of affection.**

Being overtly affectionate in school does not create or is conducive to a positive learning environment. Therefore, pupils and other members of the school community should refrain from inappropriate intimate behaviour on the school premises or at school related events and activities. Pupils and all members of the school community are expected to conduct themselves respectfully at all times.

Public displays of affection are not appropriate for the school environment. Such behaviour may result in an initial meeting with parents followed by possible serious sanctions if inappropriate behaviour continues. The expression of feelings of affection towards others is a personal concern between two individuals and not of others surrounding them therefore good taste and respect for others is the guideline for appropriate behaviour.

## **Right of Withdrawal of Students from RSE**

Parents will be consulted on the implementation of our RSE policy and are encouraged to share in the responsibility of this element of their child's education. Parents may wish to independently educate their child on certain aspects of RSE and have the right to withdraw their children from sections of the sex and relationship education beyond those included in the statutory national curriculum. Parents are encouraged to discuss their concerns and are welcome to review any RSE resources the school uses. If deemed necessary by parental request alternative arrangements can be made to withdraw pupils from RSE lessons and work from other areas of the curriculum will be provided.

## **Issues arising including confidentiality and disclosures**

Where a "disclosure" is made regarding a sensitive child protection issue staff are advised to listen, reassure and record factual details of the disclosure. The pupil should be advised that the member of staff must share the information with the school's Designated Safeguarding Teachers (Mrs P. Aitken & Mrs R. Camlin) or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Teacher (Mrs S. McCabe) who will follow up the disclosure to support the pupil. Examples include disclosure of abuse or where a teacher discovers that a pupil is having or contemplating sexual intercourse.

## **Monitoring and Evaluation of RSE and Staff training**

The policy will be reviewed annually by the school's Senior Leadership Team (SLT) in conjunction with the Head of LLW, currently Mrs S. McCabe.

The Head of LLW should make the SLT aware of any specific training requirements for those teachers delivering RSE through the LLW curriculum and actively explore and attend avenues for professional development such as courses delivered by the Education Authority, CCEA and other external agencies

## **Appendices & Resources**

Details of "Love for Life" RSE programme and follow up lessons delivered within LLW curriculum are available from the LLW Department.

LLW curriculum requirements available at [www.ccea.org.uk](http://www.ccea.org.uk)

### ***Keeping young people safer in the digital world***

[www.saferinternet.org.uk](http://www.saferinternet.org.uk) – resources on teaching pupils staying safe online, sexting and preventing sharing of images

[www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk) – support and advice about sexting amongst other issues

[www.childnet.com/teachers-and-professionals](http://www.childnet.com/teachers-and-professionals) - in depth advice for teachers to be found in the "hot topics" section including sexting, online grooming, cyber bullying and online gaming safety.

[www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk) – Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) website contains advice and resources for teachers exploring online risks targeting a range of age groups.

[www.ceop.police.uk](http://www.ceop.police.uk) – law information from police

## ***Relationship issues***

[www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk) - contains a number of resources to support teachers on relationship abuse issues.

[www.safertoknow.info](http://www.safertoknow.info) – Safeguarding board for NI (SBNI) website has resources to raise awareness of child sexual exploitation

[www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk) – Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) site contains short film called “Exploited” comparing exploitative relationship to a healthy relationship.

## ***Sexual Health Issues***

[www.thinkitthrough.org.uk](http://www.thinkitthrough.org.uk) – advice on healthy relationships

[www.nidirect.gov.uk](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk) – advice for young people on sexual health and pregnancy.

[www.fpa.org.uk](http://www.fpa.org.uk) – key points of UK law relating to sexual behaviour

[www.qub.ac.uk](http://www.qub.ac.uk) – Queens University have produced a resource called “If I were Jack” concerning options and consequences of unintended pregnancy.

[www.brook.org.uk](http://www.brook.org.uk) – classroom activities, posters, leaflets and teacher training on safeguarding, contraception, sexuality, sexual health and pregnancy advice.

## ***Sexual orientation***

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

[www.exceedingexpectations.org.uk](http://www.exceedingexpectations.org.uk) – tackling homophobia and bullying issues

[www.rainbow-project.org](http://www.rainbow-project.org) and [www.cara-friend.org.uk](http://www.cara-friend.org.uk) - offers training on homophobic bullying such as awareness raising workshops for pupils and also has educational resources.

[www.transgenderni.com](http://www.transgenderni.com) – advice on dealing with transgender issues with children at school