



Parkhall Integrated College

Relationships and Sexuality Policy

Agreed by Board of Governors: June 2025

To be reviewed: June 2028

Rationale

Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) contributes to the College's vision of providing an inclusive, caring learning environment where all feel valued and respected and are empowered to reach their full potential. As a result, our Learning for Life and Work (LLW) and preventative curriculum seeks to enhance the personal and social development of each student; encourage the growth of moral, spiritual and cultural awareness so that our students may become responsible and tolerant citizens; develop such personal qualities as self-discipline, self-reliance, self-esteem and respect for others; and develop the personal and social skills necessary to cope with everyday life, both now and in the future.

Purposes

RSE includes the acquisition of knowledge, understanding, and skills. It also includes the development of attitudes, beliefs and values about sexual identity, relationships and intimacy. The College recognises that the importance of RSE is:-

- To respect the rights of young people to a good quality education in accordance with the 1989 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child which the Government has agreed to uphold;
- To promote a better understanding of diversity and inclusion;
- To help young people keep themselves safer in the digital world;
- To help young people to recognise and challenge inappropriate behaviour;
- To provide reliable, accurate and age-appropriate information about relationships and sexuality;
- To increase young people's awareness of sexual health and orientation;
- To promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, intellectual and physical development of students at the College;
- To prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.

Guidelines

Through LLW, Home Economics, Science and our preventative curriculum provision we emphasise the importance of relationships, self-esteem and the development of decision making skills. We believe that every student has a right to a RSE which:-

- complements any sex education given at home and in no way takes the place of the parent/guardians' role in this area.
- adequately prepares them for adult life.
- provides appropriate accurate and up to date factual information.
- develops skills of reflection and evaluation.
- provides opportunities for discussion of emotions and concerns within the secure environment of the classroom.
- helps young people deal with the challenges of awareness of sexuality.
- has a positive effect on self-esteem, self-confidence and respect for self and others.
- promotes a positive view of sexuality and sexual health, helping young people in the development of safe, responsible and satisfying relationships.
- encourages our students to examine their own values and beliefs in the light of those held by others.
- allow students 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 (Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2006 and is available on the Equality Commission's website)
- references the recent inquiries into child sexual exploitation and the fact that RSE provides the opportunity for schools to play a preventative role by improving awareness amongst staff of the vulnerability factors and current indicators of child sexual exploitation.

Learning objectives

The RSE curriculum should enable students 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 differing family patterns.
- develop strategies to make decisions, solve problems, and implement actions in various personal, social and health contexts.
- become aware of the variety of ways in which individuals grow and change and understand that their developing sexuality is an important aspect of self-identify.
- develop personal skills which will help to establish and sustain healthy personal relationships.
- develop some coping strategies to protect self and others from various forms of abuse.
- acquire and improve skills of communication and social interaction.
- acquire and use an appropriate vocabulary to discuss feelings, sexuality, growth and development.
- develop a critical understanding of external influences on lifestyles and decision making.
- understand human physiology with particular reference to the reproductive cycle, human fertility and sexually transmitted infections.
- understand sexual development and identify and explore aspects of sexuality including sex roles, stereotyping, gender issues and cultural influences on sexuality.
- develop skills for coping with peer pressure, conflict and threats to personal safety.
- help students to recognise potentially exploitative and dangerous situations and how to take preventative action.

Framework

RSE is delivered in Parkhall Integrated College in keeping with the College ethos. All students have the right to learn in a safe environment and to be treated with respect. The College's RSE programme aims to present facts in an objective, balanced and sensitive manner.

Confidentiality and safeguarding issues

Staff cannot give any guarantee of confidentiality to students if details are revealed that would lead staff to suspect that they are in an abusive situation, the teacher must follow the child protection procedures outlined in the school policy. The Designated Teacher must be informed of any disclosures which might suggest that a student is at risk or that physical or sexual abuse is suspected.

Parent/guardian concerns

This RSE Policy is available on the College's website. The RSE curriculum is shared with parents/guardians at the start of the academic year. The Head of LLW is the point of contact if a parent/guardian wishes to discuss the LLW curriculum in further detail.

Visitors to the College

Visitors coming into the College will comply with school regulations in keeping with the College's Child and Adult Protection Policy. All material used both by Parkhall Integrated College staff and visitors should be consistent with this policy and in keeping with the school ethos.

The RSE Programme will be made relevant and accessible to all students regardless of age, culture, disability, gender, religion or social class.

SEN

The College will ensure that young people with SEN have appropriate, accessible and relevant RSE. The College will engage in the careful planning and adapting of resources and teaching activities to ensure that there are no barriers to participation or learning for students with SEN compared to their peers.

Monitoring and evaluating

SLT and the Head of LLW are responsible for monitoring and evaluating the RSE Programme.

Staff Professional Development

The Head of LLW will attend relevant in-service training offered by the EA and other agencies. Use will be made of opportunities such as centre-based in-service courses (ensuring good dissemination to the rest of the staff), directed time after school, and staff in-service days.

Roles and Responsibilities

SLT and the Head of LLW have responsibility for the LLW and the preventative curriculum programme. They will report to the Principal to ensure that a planned, structured and coherent approach to RSE is adopted throughout the school.

Links across the curriculum and to the wider life of the College

The Head of LLW leads the regular auditing of the preventative curriculum across all subjects within the College, including visiting speakers, assemblies, and the Form Time registration programme.

These policy Guidelines are translated into action through other policies, guidance materials and procedures, for example:

- CCEA Relationships and Sexuality Education Guidance - An Update for Post-Primary Schools.
- Child and Adult Protection Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Addressing bullying in schools Policy
- Acceptable Use Policy
- Drugs Policy