



CAMPBELL
COLLEGE

EST 1894

RELATIONSHIPS AND SEXUALITY EDUCATION (RSE) POLICY

Revised: June 2017
Next Revision: June 2019* *(This Policy is likely to be reviewed during 2017/18)

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1. INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALE

All young people have a right to an education which adequately prepares them for adult life and good Relationships and Sexuality Education plays an integral part of this process. Many young people are maturing earlier and parents tend to allow young people increased independence during their years at post primary school and greater freedom to participate in a wider range of social activities. The stage of development may also be marked by the first significant experience of sexual attraction.

Sexuality includes all aspects of the human experience 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 the ability to form relationships with others; in general, the capacity to be affectionate, give and receive love, and reproduce.

Relationships and Sexuality Education is a lifelong process where there is a need to acquire information and develop attitudes, beliefs and values about personal and social relationships and gender issues. The learning process begins informally with parents/carers, and continues throughout their school and adult life.

The age at which sexual intercourse first takes place has been decreasing over the past few decades. Northern Ireland has one of the highest teenage pregnancy rates in Europe and the incidents of sexually transmitted diseases continue to rise; there is also an increasing concern over the continuing rise of HIV infection in Northern Ireland. It is against this backdrop that the Department of Education has commissioned CCEA to produce guidance for Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) (2002) and have stated that every school should have a policy setting out how the school will address RSE within the curriculum.

2. DESCRIPTION OF POLICY FORMATION AND CONSULTATION PROCESS

The Co-ordinator of Learning for Life and Work drafted the RSE policy, using the revised DENI circular 2001/15 and the CCEA guidelines.

Students were consulted through student councils.

Other parties consulted included the College Safeguarding Team and the Parent Governor.

The policy forms part of the School Pastoral Care Policy and closely links with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

3. SCHOOL ETHOS

Ethos:

At Campbell College, we aim to promote all personalities, all talents and interests and to inculcate a culture of mutual trust. Campbell's view of education celebrates the creative, physical and spiritual as well as the intellectual. Above all, we want our students to develop as whole people and to leave this school with an assured set of values; we want them to believe that they can make a difference in society; we want students to leave this school with things that are going to matter to them for the rest of their lives.

A Framework for Morals and Values

RSE should enable students to clarify what they believe and why they value certain qualities, and develop a respect for and interest in the belief of others. Students need opportunities to explore attitudes and values and to consider how they and others are affected by them. There should be an appreciation that friendships and relationships need to be based on self and mutual respect, non-exploitation, honesty, trust and commitment. Within relationships there should be recognition that rights, duties and responsibilities are involved.

Relationships and Sexuality Education is not intended to be value free. It should be tailored to the age, maturity and understanding of students. The programme therefore aims to present facts in an objective, balanced and sensitive manner, set within a clear framework of values and an awareness of the law on sexual behaviour. Students should be encouraged to appreciate the value of family, marriage, and permanent loving relationships, and the responsibilities of parenthood. Students should be helped to consider the importance of self-restraint, dignity, respect for themselves and others, acceptance of responsibility, sensitivity towards the needs and views of others, loyalty and fidelity. They should be enabled to recognise the physical, emotional and moral implications and risks of certain types of behaviour and to accept that both sexes must have responsibility in sexual matters. Teachers should, however, acknowledge that some children come from backgrounds that do not reflect such values and experiences. Sensitivity is, therefore, needed to avoid causing hurt and offence to students and their families, and to encourage the development of their sense of worth.

(Adapted from DfEE Circular No 5/1994 Education Act 1993: Sex Education in Schools, Paragraph 8).

The following key messages will be promoted throughout the College:

- An appreciation of the value of family life, marriage, permanent loving relationships, and the responsibilities of parenthood.
- A recognition of the positive benefits of seeking sexual fulfilment within a permanent, committed relationship with one person.
- A recognition that sexual responsibility belongs to each person. How we respond to our sexual feelings is our responsibility.
- A recognition that both genders, male and female, are to be appreciated, respected, valued and seen as equal, different and complementary.
- An appreciation that friendships and relationships should be based on self and mutual respect, empathy, non-exploitation, honesty, trust and commitment.
- Compassion, forgiveness, mercy, tolerance and care are essential skills and dispositions to develop in relationships.
- Within relationships there should be recognition that rights, duties and responsibilities are involved.

4. THE RSE CURRICULUM

The Education (Northern Ireland) Order 2006 requires all schools to offer a curriculum which:

- Promotes the spiritual, emotional, moral, cultural, intellectual and physical development of students at the school and thereby of society; and
- Prepares such students for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life by equipping them with the appropriate knowledge, understanding and skills.

Relationships education is a statutory element of the Northern Ireland Curriculum through the discipline of Learning for Life and Work. It supports the curriculum aim which is 'to empower young people to achieve their potential and to make informed and responsible decisions throughout their lives.'

The RSE Programme at Key Stages 3 and 4

The RSE curriculum forms part of the statutory statements of requirement for Personal Development within Learning for Life and Work. The following areas are addressed in considerable depth across each key stage:

- Self-concept
- Growth and development
- Relationships
- Sexuality
- Reproductive health
- The Law

[See Appendix 1]

Sharing Responsibility for Relationships and Sexuality Education

The College believes that the responsibility for Relationships and Sexuality Education should be appropriately shared between teachers, male and female, parents and the school community as a whole including the school nurse. Its effectiveness depends on a collaborative process involving teachers, parents, governors and other educational and health professionals. Each of the partners has distinctive contributions to make and the school will endeavour to define and fulfil its responsibility, providing an opportunity for teachers, governors and parents to raise any issues and concerns they might have about the RSE policy and programme.

Equal Opportunities

All students 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.

The RSE programme aims to be a positive experience for all participants; it is developmental, accessible and appropriate to the age and maturity of students. As maturity is not always determined by chronological age, teachers are sympathetic to the personal and emotional circumstances of individual students. They are aware of, and take into account, the variety of existing student knowledge, differing attitudes and beliefs and the student's capacity to understand issues. This is particularly important in relation to children with special educational needs where physical development may outstrip emotional maturity.

5. ROLE OF RSE CO-ORDINATOR

The Head of Learning for Life and Work is the member of staff responsible for co-ordinating all issues related to RSE programme development. Within their role he/she ensures that the programme is taught effectively and is appropriate to the age and maturity of the students.

6. THE INVOLVEMENT OF PARENTS

Many parents/carers are keen that their children are well prepared to handle situations around relationships and sexuality. Whilst the classroom teacher has a significant role to play in the implementation of RSE in school, this role cannot be considered in isolation to the role of the parents and should ideally be additional and complementary. The home exercises a major influence on all aspects of a young person's life and especially so in the domain of relationships and sexuality.

There is no statutory parental right to withdraw a child from classes in RSE. The school will consider any parental concerns expressed, attempt to deal with any misunderstandings, identify the specific issues and lessons which are problematic and explain the implications for the students in terms of the parts of the statutory programmes of study which will be missed. The social and emotional effects of exclusion should be considered as well as the likelihood that students will discuss the content of the RSE lesson outside the classroom. However, the College will, as far as possible, try to arrive at a mutually acceptable resolution.

7. SPECIFIC ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

The Status of the Family

The College supports the institutions of marriage and the family, while being sensitive to those with different family circumstances. Marriage will be presented as the ideal to which most aspire, and may be achieved for many through hard work and commitment.

The Centrality of Abstinence

Sexual abstinence should be promoted until young people are physically and emotionally mature enough to understand the consequences and their inherent responsibilities. Sexual abstinence before marriage, and fidelity within it, will be presented as a positive and desirable option and an achievable reality.

Sexual Orientation

Heterosexual relationships will be presented as the main context for sexual intimacy. All students have the right to learn in a safe environment, to be treated with respect and dignity and not to be treated less favourably, or isolated in any way on the grounds of their actual or perceived sexual orientation. Students have the right to hold different views/lifestyles in a peaceful manner. **Antagonism / bullying or other forms of abuse against students on the grounds of their sexual orientation will not be tolerated.**

Confidentiality and Child Protection

Staff cannot give a guarantee of confidentiality to students around issues relating to child protection. If details are revealed that would lead staff to suspect that sexual abuse is involved, the teacher must follow the child protection procedures outlined in the policy.

[See Appendix 2]

8. ANSWERING STUDENTS' QUESTIONS

If students raise issues that are offensive to some or beyond the maturity of the students, staff will not answer in class. If the teacher feels that the question was a genuine one, he/she may suggest that the student ask his parents or, if this is an inappropriate option, the teacher may decide to answer the question in a sensitive manner, which may require the presence of another colleague. If the question asked raises child protection issues, this will be referred to the designated teacher for child protection.

Terminology

All staff teaching RSE related issues will use the proper biological names for body parts and sexual acts, where appropriate and relevant to the RSE programme. The use of common slang will be avoided where possible. Parents are welcome to view the programme and become familiar with the language used in it.

9. THE USE OF RESOURCES AND OUTSIDE AGENCIES

All resources (books, videos, TV programmes, internet sites, CD roms etc) are vetted before use to ensure they are consistent with the school's policy and ethos.

When education or health professionals from statutory or voluntary organisations are invited into the school, the activities which the agency or individual undertake will complement the ongoing programmes within the school. Care will be taken to ascertain that they have read and are willing to comply with the school policy, and that they know what has been taught in preparation for their visit and what will be done as a follow-up. The teacher will always be present when an individual or a representative from an agency is taking a class. Such a visit is *not* seen as the RSE programme, but as an integral part of it.

10. DISSEMINATION OF THE POLICY

The contents of this policy will be made available to all members of the Board of Governors, teaching staff, and those providing substitute cover. It will also be available to all parents on request. All health and educational visitors discussing issues related to RSE, specifically the school nurse, will be provided with a copy of the school policy and will be encouraged to adhere to and follow its aims and objectives.

11. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

This policy will be reviewed and updated periodically. The ongoing process of monitoring and evaluation will be linked to assessment for learning within the NI curriculum, and developed as an integral part of the programme.

Questionnaires are issued to students following the 'Love for Life' presentation and confidential feedback is given to the College.

Information gained will then be correlated by the RSE co-ordinator and used to adapt the programme for the future.

APPENDIX 1

PROGRAMME OF RELATIONSHIP AND SEXUALITY EDUCATION

**The exact programme may vary from year to year*

KEY STAGE 3

	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10
LEARNING FOR LIFE AND WORK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender and identity • Types of relationships • Qualities of friendship • Managing difficult relationships • Sexual maturation • Peer and other influences • Exploring morals and values 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication and respect in friendship • Developing romantic friendships • Influences on relationships • Coping with difficulties in relationships • Stereotyping and its influence on attitudes and behaviour • Sensitivity towards different ways of life • Adolescence – recognising feeling, moods and emotions • Peer and other influences • Exploring morals and values • Teenage pregnancy • Gender roles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing boundaries • Appropriate and inappropriate relationships • Sexual relationships (including values and attitudes) • Abstinence as a positive option and achievable reality • Teenage pregnancy and consequences of sexual relationships • Sexual abuse and the support available to young people • Dealing with rejection and loss • Contraception • STDs and safe sex practices • Sensitivity towards different ways of life • Divorce • Peer and other influences including the media • Exploring morals and values
SCIENCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical changes that occur during puberty • Male and female reproductive systems, what happens during intercourse; the biological aspects of human fertility and conception • The development of the child from conception to birth • Factual information about the types of contraception • Awareness of what it is to be male and female 		
HOME ECONOMICS		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family Life • Roles and Responsibilities within families • Gender roles and stereotyping • Adolescence – recognising feeling, moods and emotions • Maintaining positive relationships • Considering peer and other influences • Different types of relationships • Fostering and adoption 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nutritional needs during pregnancy • Development of the child from conception to birth • Encouraging sensitivity towards different ways of life, beliefs and opinions
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Love • Stereotyping 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abortion • Relationships • Marriage
TUTOR GROUPS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate Relationships • Personal Safety • On-Line Safety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sexting • Cyber Bullying • Peer Pressure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal Health and Hygiene

KEY STAGE 4

	Year 11	Year 12
BIOLOGY	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Sexually Transmitted Diseases and safer sex practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Physical changes that occur during pubertyMale and female reproductive systems, what happens during intercourse; the biological aspects of human fertility and conceptionThe development of the child from conception to birthFactual information about the types of contraceptionAdolescence – recognising feeling, moods and emotionsTeenage pregnancy
HOSPITALITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Nutritional needs at pre-conception and during pregnancyPhysical and emotional changes that occur in males and females during puberty	
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none">AbortionFamiliesReligious views on sexMarriageDivorce	<ul style="list-style-type: none">HomosexualityContraceptionGender Roles

KEY STAGE 5

As part of the Sixth Form Enrichment classes, external speakers are invited to give talks on:

- Sexual Health
- Contraception

EXTERNAL AGENCY PRESENTATIONS



The College invites the team from Love for Life to give presentations at Key Stage 3 and at Key Stage 4.

Love for Life is an independent charity, working to equip young people with the knowledge, skills and values necessary to make good choices when it comes to relationships and sex. Recognising the inherent worth and value of each individual, Love for Life believes that young people can choose to avoid damaging behaviours, including alcohol, drugs and underage sex, when adequately supported and equipped to do so.

They deliver programmes to over 30,000 young people across Ireland each year, as well as supporting parents and carers and all those working with young people and contribute to regional health and education policy.

APPENDIX 2

CHILD PROTECTION CONSIDERATIONS

THE AGE OF CONSENT

The Sexual Offences (NI) Order 2008 contains a number of important considerations which may apply to any discussion regarding Relationships and Sexuality Education:

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

- A child below the age of 13, does not, under any circumstances have the legal capacity to consent to any form of sexual activity
- **The age of consent is 16**
 - This means that sexual activity with a child means activity with those below the age of 16 is illegal
- It is an offense for an adult to have any sexual activity with a young person below 18 years if the adult is in a position of trust with that young person (e.g. youth club, in a school, in a residential setting etc)