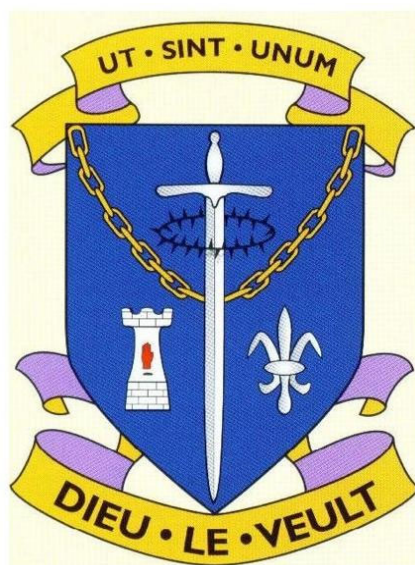


# St Louis Grammar School Kilkeel



**Relationship and Sexuality Policy**  
**St Louis Grammar School**

**Reviewed by C.King**  
**Review Date:** December 2025  
**Ratified by the Board of Governors:** December 2025

**Next Review Date:** June 2027

## **Relationship and Sexuality Policy**

### **Our School Mission Statement**

We are committed to providing a high standard of education in all senses of the word for every student. But above all, we strive to create an environment which encourages pupils' physical, moral and spiritual well-being. The school's RSE policy emphasises self-esteem, respect for one another and the development of good interpersonal relationships as the basis for effective learning.

#### **1. Aims and objectives of the policy**

We at St Louis 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.

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

- Form values and establish behaviour within a moral, spiritual and social framework consistent with our Catholic ethos
- Learn how to develop and enjoy personal relationships and friendships which are based on responsibility and mutual respect
- Build the foundations for developing more positive personal relationships in later life
- Make positive, responsible choices about themselves and others and the way they live their lives.

We at St Louis 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. RSE should enable pupils to make moral decisions in good conscience.

How the aims of the Relationships and Sexuality Education Policy support the values, ethos, and moral and ethical framework of the school, and how this will inform the teaching of Relationships and Sexuality Education:

The school's approach is rooted in the Catholic Church's teaching of the human person and presented in a positive framework of Christian ideals. RSE will be delivered within a context that reflects the Catholic ethos and recognises the uniqueness and importance of every pupil. The belief in the unique dignity of the human person made in the image and likeness of God underpins this approach. RSE is concerned with nurturing human wholeness and is integral to the physical, spiritual, emotional, moral, social and intellectual development of pupils.

All RSE will be delivered in accordance with the Church's moral teaching. The programme emphasises the central importance of marriage and the family whilst acknowledging that all pupils have a fundamental right to have their life respected whatever household they come from. Our programme promotes those virtues which are essential in responding to the call to love others with a proper respect for their dignity, explicitly exploring and promoting: faithfulness, fruitfulness, chastity, integrity, prudence, mercy and compassion. In partnership with parents, we commit to providing a positive and prudent sexual education which is compatible with their maturity and rooted in a Catholic vision of education and the human person.

This policy has been revised to reflect DENI Circular 2015/22 (Relationships and Sexuality Education Guidance). As a Rights Respecting School, the RSE programme acts in accordance with the UNCRC, particularly Article 12 (right to express views), Article 13 (right to freedom of expression), and Article 17 (right to access of information). The policy accounts for guidance from the Equality Commission on eliminating sexual orientation discrimination, which relates to the Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2006.

## **2. Policy Formation and Consultation Process**

**How the policy was drawn up:** The policy was produced by the Pastoral Care Team alongside the Religious Education Department.

**Who was consulted and how:** Consultation was carried out with particular stakeholders who have responsibilities in the formulation of the RSE policy. This consultation included:

- Pupil focus groups (student leadership team and school council).
- Review of the curriculum content with support staff, teachers and pupils.
- Consultation with the wider school community, including the Student Welfare Officer and classroom assistants with particular pastoral responsibilities.
- Consultation with the school governors

### **How the policy will be disseminated:**

A summary copy of the policy will be placed on the school website. Parents can request a full copy of the policy through the school office. Access to the agreed policy will be given to all members of the Board of Governors, and all teaching and non-teaching members of staff. Parents/carers will be made aware of the policy from the time of enrolment.

### **How and when it will be reviewed:**

The policy will be reviewed every 2 years by the Principal, Head of Pastoral Care/RSE Co-ordinator, the Board of Governors and staff. The next review date will be June 2027.

Feedback and comments on the policy can be made via the school email available on the school website.

## **3. Definition and Rationale for the Delivery of RSE**

RSE is about the development of the pupil's knowledge and understanding of themselves as sexual beings, about what it means to be fully human, called to live in right relationships with self and others and being enabled to make moral decisions in conscience. It is a lifelong process encompassing the

- acquisition of knowledge, understanding and skills; and the
- development of attitudes, beliefs and values about sexual identity, relationships and intimacy.

Sexuality includes all aspects of the human person that relate to being male or female: it changes and develops throughout life.

**Rationale for Delivery:** Effective RSE is essential if young people are to make responsible and well-informed decisions about their lives. RSE is an integral component of the Personal Development programme at Key Stage 3 and the Learning for Life and Work programme at Key Stage 4, rooted firmly within the curriculum. The programme provides pupils with the information and skills to critically evaluate the wide range of information, opinions, attitudes and values, including those from social media and the internet. RSE helps pupils to recognise potentially exploitative and dangerous situations and to equip them with the skills and knowledge to take preventative action.

Relationships and Sexuality Education in post-primary schools should build on the learning experiences from the primary curriculum, and provide young people with:

- the opportunity to develop the skills to build healthy and respectful relationships, stay safe, and develop their own moral thinking and value system;
- up-to-date, accurate and accessible information about reproduction, sex and sexual health matters.

Relationships and Sexuality Education is effective when it is taught in a sensitive and inclusive manner, and in a way that is appropriate to the pupil's emotional and physical age and stage of development. All young people have the right to quality teaching and learning across the curriculum; Relationships and Sexuality Education is no exception. An absence of such provision may leave pupils with a learning and skills deficit, making them more susceptible to inappropriate behaviours, sexual abuse and exploitation.

.

#### **4. Aims, Objectives, and Skills**

Aims of Relationships and Sexuality Education (In line with school ethos and Catholic teaching):

- Promote an appreciation of the value and sanctity of human life and the wonder of life from the moment of conception to the moment of natural death.
- Value the concept and qualities of consent in relationships and understand the law in relation to consent.
- Help pupils to develop healthy and respectful friendships and relationships.
- Foster an understanding of, and a healthy attitude towards, human sexuality and relationships in a moral, social and spiritual framework,.
- Help pupils to value family life and marriage and appreciate the responsibilities of parenthood.
- Promote positive attitudes towards respect for self and others with an understanding and appreciation of diversity and inclusion.
- Recognise common mental health issues such as anxiety, depression, disordered eating, self-harm and compulsive behaviours in themselves.

**Objectives of Relationships and Sexuality Education** (In line with school ethos and CCEA guidelines):

The RSE curriculum enables pupils to:

- Provide reliable, accurate and age-appropriate information about reproduction, sex and sexual health matters.
- Understand human physiology with particular reference to the reproductive cycle, human fertility and sexually transmitted infections and diseases.
- Know the features of positive and stable relationships (including trust, mutual respect, honesty, equality) and those of unhealthy relationships (including imbalance of power, coercion, control, exploitation, abuse of any kind),.
- Recognise the need for self-control and the importance of the virtue of chastity.
- Support all staff when dealing with sensitive issues surrounding sexual orientation, gender identity and homophobic bullying.

- Help young people to become aware of the pervasive prevalence of pornography on the internet which can destroy and degrade human sexuality and relationships.

### **Skills developed through RSE:**

The programme aims to develop key skills including:

- **Practical Skills:** For everyday living, supporting others, for future parenting, for accessing health and advisory services,.
- **Communication Skills:** Learning to listen, putting views forward clearly and appropriately, handling conflict, and being assertive,.
- **Decision making and problem solving:** Making personal decisions and sensible choices in the light of relevant information, and forming and defending their own moral and value framework.
- **Social and Personal Skills:** Cultivating mercy and compassion, developing skills to respond appropriately to **exploitation, bullying, harassment, and control in relationships**,.
- **Resilience:** Building resilience and the ability to resist unwanted pressures, recognising the influence and impact of the media, internet and peer groups.

## 5. Curriculum Content

**Organisation and Structure (Delivery of RSE):** RSE is an integral component of the Personal Development programme at Key Stage 3 and a central theme of GCSE Learning for Life (Key Concept – Personal Development) at Key Stage 4. The Post 16 Enrichment programme allows students to explore further in an age-appropriate way human relationships and development,.

**Statutory Content (Key Stages 3 & 4):** In relation to Key Stages 3 and 4, the curriculum must include age-appropriate, comprehensive and scientifically accurate education on sexual and reproductive health and rights, covering prevention of early pregnancy and access to abortion.

**Ensuring a Balanced Curriculum:** While promoting Catholic values and virtues, we ensure that pupils are offered a balanced programme by providing an RSE programme that offers a range of viewpoints on issues. Pupils will receive clear scientific information as well as covering aspects of the law pertaining to RSE, such as abortion, the age of consent, and legislation relating to equality. 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 ensure pupils have access to learning needed to stay safe, healthy and understand their rights.

### Specific Issues:

- **The Status of the Family:** The school supports the Sacramental vision of marriage and family. Sexual intimacy will be taught in the context of a permanent, exclusive union between one man and one woman open to the transmission of new life, while being sensitive to other family situations.
- **The Virtue of Chastity:** Sexual abstinence before marriage and fidelity within it will be presented as a positive, desirable and achievable option.
- **The Sanctity of Life:** The value and sacredness of life will be actively promoted from the moment of conception to the moment of natural death.
- **Family Planning/Contraception:** Catholic teaching places sexual intercourse within the Sacrament of Marriage and states the use of artificial means of preventing procreation is not acceptable. However, pupils will also be provided with accurate information about methods of artificial contraception in an age-appropriate and sensitive manner.
- **Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity:** The issue will be handled in a sensitive, non-confrontational and reassuring way. Abstinence is promoted for all pupils regardless of their sexual orientation. Bullying on the grounds of sexual orientation is unacceptable and dealt with appropriately in accordance with the Anti-Bullying

Policy. Respect for all people, regardless of sexual orientation, will be promoted in line with the school ethos.

- **Digital Safety and Social Media:** The RSE Programme teaches pupils how to safely navigate the digital world, raising awareness of potential threats like sexting, cyber-bullying, pornography, abuse and exploitation,. Awareness of the impact of social media and screen time on mental health will also be raised.

## **6. Inclusion and Equality**

The RSE programme is relevant and accessible to all pupils regardless of their race, ethnicity, culture, language, gender, perceived or actual sexual orientation, disability and religion. We ensure RSE is sensitive to the different needs of individual pupils, including those with SEND or Newcomer pupils, providing appropriate, accessible and relevant Relationships and Sexuality Education within a differentiated learning environment.

## **7. Use of External Agencies**

The expertise and skills of educational and health professionals support the RSE programme. All external agencies are asked to adhere to the school's RSE policy. Current external/support agencies include: Love is For Life, School Doctor/Nurse, School Counsellor, School Age Mums (SAM), Women's Aid, Mood Matters, Southern Trust, and Cara Friend/LGBTQ+ support agencies.

It is essential that all external agencies supporting RSE should sign a service agreement agreeing with the RSE policy and the underpinning ethos of the school. Furthermore, any outside agency/individual delivering a support session must:

- Receive a copy of the school's RSE Policy.
- Be made aware of and adhere to the school's Child Protection Policy.
- Agree to respect the ethos of the school.
- Be made aware of the issues around confidentiality.
- Be vetted as appropriate.
- The teacher(s) should always be present during the session.



## **8. Confidentiality**

RSE is delivered in a secure, trusting, respectful environment. Teachers should not promise confidentiality. Both parents and pupils should be informed that confidentiality cannot be maintained. A member of the safeguarding team must be informed if a pupil is at risk or that sexual abuse is suspected. Teachers provide general educational advice but must not give personal medical advice to any pupil, advising them to seek advice from parents/carers or health professionals.

## **9. Supporting Pupils at Risk**

Teachers play a significant role in identifying potentially 'at risk' pupils and are alert to pupils who are experiencing distress and/or changes in their behaviour. Potential risks, including domestic violence, are covered by the procedures outlined within the Child Protection Policy.

## **10. Relationship to Other Policies**

This policy is set within the broader school context of Pastoral Care and should be implemented in conjunction with the following policies.

- Pastoral Care Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Drugs Education Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy (with specific reference to homophobic, transgender, and cyber bullying),
- Positive Behaviour Policy
- Online Safety and Acceptable Use Policy
- Personal Development Policy
- Health Education Policy

## **11. Parental Withdrawal**

Parents or carers have a right to have their children educated in accordance with their wishes. Whilst there is no legislative provision permitting parental withdrawal from sex education, schools can grant these requests on an individual basis. If a parent chooses to withdraw a child, they must discuss the potentially detrimental effect that this can have with the school, such as the social and emotional effects of being excluded. Ultimately, the school will respect the wishes of the parent or carer, and the student will go to either the study room or be supervised by another teacher for the duration of the lesson.

## **12. Roles and Responsibilities**

- **Board of Governors:** Responsible for having an RSE policy and curriculum. They must ensure that the policy is endorsed and linked to the pastoral care/child protection policy. They review and approve the policy at regular intervals.
- **Principal/Senior Leadership Team (SLT):** Co-ordinate the school's approach to RSE in keeping with the ethos, and consult the Board of Governors, staff, parents/carers and health professionals.
- **Head of Pastoral Care / RSE Co-ordinator:** The member of staff responsible for co-ordinating all issues related to RSE policy and programme development. Their role includes upholding and ensuring that the programme is taught in accordance with the school's Catholic ethos, ensuring the programme is taught effectively and is appropriate to the age and maturity of the pupils, and liaising with all relevant stakeholders and outside agencies.
- **Year Heads:** Monitor the delivery of RSE themes within Personal Development lessons, support Tutors, and deal appropriately with concerns raised by Tutors regarding pupils' personal development, including initiating referrals.
- **Form Tutors:** Responsible for the effective delivery of RSE themes within Personal Development lessons, ensuring equal access to the programme, creating a child-centred supportive learning environment, and reporting concerns to the Year Head.
- **Diocesan Advisor:** Supports schools in the development and delivery of an RSE policy and programme which reflects the Catholic ethos and respects the wishes of parents.

### 13. Monitoring and Evaluation

The RSE Co-ordinator will monitor the provision of the programme by examining plans, schemes of work and samples of pupils' work at regular intervals. The programme will be evaluated bi-annually by means of questionnaires/response sheets/needs assessment given to pupils, and/or by discussion with pupils, staff and parents,. The results will be reported to these interested parties and their suggestions sought for improvements.

**Staff Development and Training:** Training should be organised by the RSE co-ordinator in consultation with the Principal and SLT,. It is essential that training be provided both for new staff to the programme and new teachers to the school. No teacher should undertake delivery of the RSE programme without adequate training.

### 14. Appendices

Relevant documentation could be signposted or included, for example:

- Parent or carer-friendly summary of RSE Policy.
- Pupil-friendly summary of RSE Policy.
- Pupil-friendly list of contacts, websites and organisations related to RSE.
- Relevant Legislation and DE Circulars.



## Appendices

### St Louis Grammar School RSE Policy 2025

#### A Parent/Carer-Friendly Summary of the Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) Policy

##### 1. Our Rationale and Catholic Ethos

**What is RSE?** RSE is defined as a lifelong process encompassing the **acquisition of knowledge, understanding and skills** and the **development of attitudes, beliefs and values about sexual identity, relationships and intimacy**. It is essential for young people to make responsible and well-informed decisions about their lives.

**The School's Foundational Principles** The RSE programme is delivered within the context of our school's distinctive Catholic ethos.

- **Core Ethos:** The **morals and values of our Catholic ethos are the core principles that underpin the teaching of RSE**. Our approach is rooted in the Catholic Church's teaching and recognizes the **unique dignity of the human person**.
- **Partnership:** We acknowledge that **parents/carers are the primary educators** of their children. We commit to providing a **positive and prudent sexual education** compatible with their maturity.
- **Virtues:** The programme explicitly promotes essential Christian virtues including **faithfulness, fruitfulness, chastity, integrity, prudence, mercy and compassion**.

##### 2. Aims and Core Content

The curriculum helps pupils to develop healthy, nurturing relationships. Key areas of learning include:

#### Theme

#### Policy Commitment & Approach

##### Sanctity of Life

The **value and sacredness of life will be actively promoted from the moment of conception to the moment of natural death**.

<b>Relationships and Consent</b>	Pupils learn to develop healthy and respectful friendships and relationships. We emphasize the qualities of <b>consent</b> in relationships and educate students on the law related to consent.
<b>Family and Marriage</b>	The school supports the Sacramental vision of marriage and family. Sexual intimacy is taught within the context of marriage as a <b>permanent, exclusive union between one man and one woman open to the transmission of new life.</b>
<b>Chastity and Sexual Orientation</b>	<b>Sexual abstinence before marriage</b> and fidelity within it will be presented as a positive, desirable option. <b>Abstinence is promoted for all pupils regardless of their sexual orientation.</b> All issues of sexual orientation will be handled sensitively, non-confrontationally, and reassuringly, upholding dignity and respect for all.
<b>Contraception</b>	Catholic teaching on family planning will be presented, noting that the use of artificial means of preventing procreation is not acceptable within the Sacrament of Marriage. However, pupils will also be provided with <b>accurate information about methods of artificial contraception</b> in an age-appropriate and sensitive manner.
<b>Legal/Statutory Content</b>	The curriculum for Key Stages 3 and 4 <b>must include age-appropriate, comprehensive and scientifically accurate education on sexual and reproductive health and rights, covering prevention of early pregnancy and access to abortion.</b> The curriculum covers aspects of the law pertaining to RSE, such as <b>abortion, the age of consent, and legislation relating to equality.</b> <b>Knowing about facts and enabling young people to explore differing viewpoints is not the same as promoting behaviour.</b>

**Digital Safety** The programme teaches pupils how to safely navigate the digital world, raising awareness of potential threats like **sexting, cyber-bullying, pornography, abuse and exploitation.**

### 3. Safety, Support and Confidentiality

**Supporting Pupils** RSE helps pupils build **resilience** and develop skills to respond appropriately to **exploitation, bullying, harassment, and control in relationships.** It also helps pupils recognize common **mental health issues** such as anxiety, depression, disordered eating, self-harm and compulsive behaviours.

**Confidentiality and Safeguarding** The school maintains strict safeguarding procedures:

- Teachers **should not promise confidentiality** to pupils.
- If a pupil is **at risk or that sexual abuse is suspected**, a member of the **safeguarding team must be informed.**
- Teachers **must not give personal medical advice** to any pupil, but rather advise them to seek advice from parents/carers or health professionals.

**Working with External Agencies** The school utilizes outside specialists (including health and education professionals) to support the RSE programme. To ensure alignment with the school's ethos, **all external agencies supporting RSE should sign a service agreement** agreeing to respect the school's policy and ethos. A teacher(s) is **always present** during these sessions.

### 4. Parental Involvement and Withdrawal

**Policy Access and Review** A summary copy of the policy is available on the school website, and a full copy can be requested from the school office. The policy was updated in December 2025 and will next be reviewed in June 2027. Feedback can be provided via the school email.

**Parental Right to Withdrawal** Parents have a right to have their children educated in accordance with their wishes.

- **Right to Request Withdrawal:** While there is **no legislative provision permitting parental withdrawal from sex education** in the curriculum, schools can grant these requests on an individual basis.

- **Discussion Required:** If a parent chooses to withdraw a child, they **must discuss the potentially detrimental effect that this can have with the school**, such as the social and emotional effects of being excluded.
- **Provision:** Should withdrawal be granted, the student will go to the study room or be supervised by another teacher for the duration of the lesson.

## Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) Policy Summary for Pupils (2025)

### 1. What is RSE and Why Do We Teach It?

RSE is about lifelong learning, covering your **knowledge, understanding, skills, attitudes, beliefs, and values** regarding relationships, self-identity, and intimacy.

**The Goal:** The main aim of RSE is to give you the information and skills you need to become a successful, happy adult and to make **responsible and well-informed decisions about your life**.

**Your Right to Information:** As a student, you have the right to **access age-appropriate, accurate, and accessible information** about relationships, sex, and health,. This helps you avoid being susceptible to **inappropriate behaviours, sexual abuse, or exploitation**.

### 2. Our Catholic Foundation: Values and Ethos

All RSE teaching is guided by the **morals and values of our Catholic ethos**, emphasizing self-esteem, **respect for one another**, and the belief in the **unique dignity of the human person**,.

- **Positive Framework:** We aim to foster a positive attitude towards sexuality and relationships within a **moral, social, and spiritual framework**.
- **Virtues:** The programme explicitly promotes virtues essential for living a good life, including **faithfulness, fruitfulness, chastity, integrity, prudence, mercy, and compassion**.
- **Marriage and Family:** We emphasize the central importance of **marriage and the family**, supporting the idea of marriage as a permanent, exclusive union open to new life.
- **Chastity:** **Sexual abstinence before marriage and fidelity within it** is presented as a **positive, desirable, and achievable option** for all pupils.
- **Sanctity of Life:** We promote the **value and sacredness of human life** from the **moment of conception to the moment of natural death**.

### 3. What You Will Learn in RSE

The curriculum covers sensitive topics to ensure you are informed and safe:

Topic Area	What You Will Learn	Supporting Source
Healthy Relationships	How to build <b>healthy and respectful friendships and relationships</b> . You will learn the features of <b>positive and stable relationships</b> (like trust and respect) and recognize signs of <b>unhealthy relationships</b> (like <b>coercion, exploitation, or abuse</b> ).	
Consent and Law	You will learn the <b>concept and qualities of consent</b> and <b>understand the law in relation to consent</b> . You will also learn about legal issues related to <b>abortion, the age of consent, and equality legislation</b> .	
Physical Health & Reproduction	You will receive <b>age-appropriate, comprehensive, and scientifically accurate education on sexual and reproductive health and rights</b> , including <b>prevention of early pregnancy and access to abortion</b> . You will also learn about <b>STIs and human fertility</b> .	
Contraception	While promoting Catholic teaching that views artificial means of preventing procreation as unacceptable within marriage, you will be provided with <b>accurate information about methods of artificial contraception</b> in a sensitive manner.	
Digital Safety	How to <b>safely navigate the digital world</b> , raising awareness of risks like <b>sexting, cyber-bullying, pornography, abuse, and exploitation</b> . We also discuss the negative impact of <b>pornography on the internet</b> and how it can degrade human sexuality.	



**Mental Health** How to recognize common mental health issues in yourself, such as **anxiety, depression, disordered eating, self-harm and compulsive behaviours**.

#### 4. Skills You Will Develop

RSE focuses on building practical skills for life:

- **Communication Skills:** Learning to listen, express your views clearly, and **handle conflict** appropriately.
- **Resilience and Self-Control:** Building **resilience** and the ability to **resist unwanted pressures**. You will also learn to recognize the importance of **self-control**.
- **Safety Skills:** Developing strategies to respond appropriately to **exploitation, bullying, harassment, and control in relationships**.
- **Decision Making:** Making sound decisions and forming and defending your **own moral and value framework**.

#### 5. Support, Confidentiality, and External Visitors

**Confidentiality and Safeguarding** The classroom environment is secure and respectful, but teachers **should not promise confidentiality**.

- **Reporting Risk:** If a teacher believes you are **at risk or that sexual abuse is suspected**, a member of the **safeguarding team must be informed** immediately.
- **Professional Advice:** Teachers cannot give you **personal medical advice**; they will advise you to seek help from your **parents/carers or health professionals**.

**External Agencies** We sometimes invite external experts (like the School Nurse, Love is For Life, Women's Aid, Mood Matters, or LGBTQ+ support agencies) to enhance your learning.

- **School Ethos:** All external visitors **must agree to respect the ethos of the school**.
- **Teacher Presence:** A teacher **should always be present during the session** delivered by an external agency.

The goal of RSE is like navigating a complex online world: we aim to give you a map and compass—your knowledge and values—to safely explore relationships and make smart choices, knowing that if you encounter danger, you know exactly whom to trust and where to seek help.

## RSE Support Resources

### 1. Pupil-Friendly List of Contacts and Websites

This section lists the key staff members and external agencies who can offer support, advice, or confidential help. Remember that teachers **must not give personal medical advice** and **cannot promise confidentiality** if they believe a pupil is at risk of harm.

#### In-School Support (Trusted Adults)

Contact / Role	Where to Find Help	Purpose / How They Can Help	Citation
<b>School Counsellor</b>	Available through referral (speak to your Year Head or Pastoral Care staff).	Provides confidential support for feelings, relationships, and mental health issues.	
<b>School Doctor / Nurse</b>	Regular visits to the school or through external referral.	Provides medical advice and information on physical and sexual health matters.	
<b>Designated Teacher / Safeguarding Team</b>	Head of Pastoral Care (RSE Co-ordinator) or Deputy Designated Teacher.	Mandatory reporting if you are <b>at risk or if sexual abuse is suspected</b> .	

#### External Support and Online Safety

Organisation / Website	Focus Area	How They Can Help	Citation
<b>Childline</b>	Confidential Crisis & Support	Provides advice for young people on sensitive issues, including bullying and sexual health.	

<b>NSPCC</b>	Abuse, Exploitation, and Inappropriate Behaviour	Offers resources and support for dealing with abuse and relationship issues.
<b>Thinkuknow</b>	Online Safety and Exploitation	Resources and advice (from CEOP/NCA) for students on online safety, exploitation, and digital risks.
<b>Safer Internet Centre</b>	Digital Safety	Resources to help pupils stay safe online and manage issues like 'sexting'.
<b>Cara Friend / LGBTQ+ Agencies</b>	Sexual Orientation / Gender Identity	Provides confidential advice and support for young people exploring their sexual identity.
<b>Women's Aid</b>	Domestic Violence and Relationship Abuse	Provides advice on personal safety and abusive relationships.
<b><a href="http://www.thinkitthrough.org.uk">www.thinkitthrough.org.uk</a></b>	Sexual Health Issues	Provides advice for young people about healthy relationships and links to other organizations in Northern Ireland.

## **2. Parent/Carer-Friendly List of Organizations and Websites**

This list includes educational partners, support organizations used by the school, and key resources for legal and public health guidance.

### **School Partners and Support Agencies**

These external organizations may be utilized to support the RSE programme, adhering strictly to the school's ethos and policies:

- **Love is For Life:** Supports the RSE programme.
- **Mood Matters:** Focuses on mental health awareness and support.
- **Southern Trust:** Local health and social care provider supporting various aspects of student wellbeing.
- **Women's Aid:** Provides information and support related to domestic violence and relationship abuse.
- **School Age Mums (SAM):** Provides specific support for teenage pregnancy and parenthood.
- **Cara Friend/LGBTQ+ support agencies:** Provides sensitive guidance on sexual orientation and gender identity.

#### Public Guidance and Resources (Curriculum, Health, and Legal)

Category / Focus	Resource Name or Website	Key Information Provided	Citation
Curriculum Support & Resources	<b>RSE HUB (CCEA):</b> <a href="http://ccea.org.uk/curriculum/resource">http://ccea.org.uk/curriculum/resource</a>	Central access point for RSE guidance, resources, and curriculum materials.	
Official Guidance/Law (NI)	<b><a href="http://www.nidirect.gov.uk">www.nidirect.gov.uk</a></b>	Provides useful advice for young people about sexual health and pregnancy, and other government services.	
Crisis Pregnancy	<b><a href="http://www.crisispregnancy.ie">www.crisispregnancy.ie</a></b>	Resources related to crisis pregnancy options.	
Sexual Health/Law (UK)	<b><a href="http://www.fpa.org.uk">www.fpa.org.uk</a></b>	Summarises key points of UK law relating to sexual behaviour.	

<b>Bullying/Sexual Identity</b>	<b><a href="http://www.endbullying.org.uk">www.endbullying.org.uk</a></b>	Resources on cyber bullying and homophobic bullying from the Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying Forum.
<b>Sexual Identity Guidance</b>	<b><a href="http://www.transgenderni.com">www.transgenderni.com</a></b>	Provides advice for schools and families exploring issues around gender and identity.
<b>Inappropriate Behaviour</b>	<b><a href="http://www.safertoknow.info">www.safertoknow.info</a></b>	Information and resources from the Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland (SBNI) on raising awareness of child sexual exploitation.

The RSE Policy for St Louis Grammar School, Kilkeel, and the underlying guidance documents reference several Department of Education (DE/DENI) Circulars and legislative requirements that govern RSE provision in Northern Ireland (NI) schools.

The policy is explicitly required to reference and comply with both recent statutory changes and longstanding guidance regarding the curriculum and safeguarding.

### **1. Mandatory Statutory Legislation (Northern Ireland)**

The most significant and recent legal mandates are driven by Northern Ireland legislation, which directly impacts the curriculum content:

<b>Legislation / Regulation</b>	<b>Summary of Requirements</b>	<b>Citation</b>
---------------------------------	--------------------------------	-----------------

<b>The Relationships and Sexuality Education (Northern Ireland) (Amendment) Regulations 2023</b>	This legislation requires pupils in Key Stages 3 and 4 to receive <b>age-appropriate, comprehensive and scientifically accurate education on sexual and reproductive health and rights, covering prevention of early pregnancy and access to abortion</b> . This education must be taught in a way that <b>does not advocate or promote any particular opinion</b> .
<b>Education (Northern Ireland) Order 2006</b>	This Order establishes RSE as a statutory component of the curriculum through the Personal Development and Home Economics statements of requirement for Key Stage 3, and the Personal Development strand of Learning for Life and Work (LLW) at Key Stage 4.
<b>The Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2006</b>	The school's policy must take account of the guidance produced by the Equality Commission on eliminating sexual orientation discrimination. Bullying on the grounds of sexual orientation is unacceptable and must be dealt with appropriately.
<b>Sexual Offences (NI) Order 2008</b>	The curriculum promotes issues around consent, and pupils are educated about relevant law, such as the age of consent (16 years of age in NI). This law also addresses the criminal offense of sharing and viewing indecent photographs of any person below the age of 18.

## 2. Department of Education (DE/DENI) Circulars

The school policy is based on, or must have regard to, several key circulars issued by the Department of Education in Northern Ireland (DENI):

<b>DE Circular / Guidance</b>	<b>Purpose and Relevance to School Policy</b>	<b>Citation</b>
-------------------------------	---	-----------------

**DENI Circular 2015/22  
(Relationships and  
Sexuality Education  
Guidance)**

This circular mandated a revision of the RSE policy. It also complemented the non-statutory guidance from CCEA regarding the delivery of RSE in schools.

**DENI Circular 2013/16  
(Relationships and  
Sexuality Education  
Policy in Schools)**

This circular requires every school to have an **up-to-date written policy** on RSE delivery. It emphasizes that RSE should be taught in **harmony with the ethos of the school** and reflect the moral and religious principles held by parents and school management.

**DENI Circular 1999/10  
(Pastoral Care in  
Schools: Child  
Protection)**

This circular sets out the correct procedures that staff must follow when dealing with safeguarding or child protection issues. The school's confidentiality procedures are dictated by this guidance, requiring staff to report suspected abuse to the Safeguarding Team.

**DE Circular 2010/01**

This circular advises schools to take account of guidance issued by the Equality Commission on eliminating sexual orientation discrimination in schools.

**DE Circular 2017/04**

This addresses Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools, reinforcing the procedures for handling situations where disclosure to parents/carers may place a young person in a potentially harmful situation.

The policy explicitly commits to including a section listing "**Relevant Legislation and DE Circulars**" in the appendices.

### **3. Key Legal Principles and Requirements**

The overall legal and guidance framework dictates several principles that the policy must adhere to:

- **Policy Requirement:** All schools must have an up-to-date RSE policy available to parents and for inspection.
- **Ethos and Values:** The teaching must align with the school's ethos, reflecting the moral and religious principles of the school authorities.
- **Consultation:** Policy development requires consultation with parents/carers, pupils, staff, and governors.
- **Parental Withdrawal:** While **no legislative provision permits parental withdrawal from sex education** in the curriculum, schools may grant these requests individually after discussing the potentially detrimental social and emotional effects of exclusion with the parent. However, the Department of Education (NI) is required to make regulations about the circumstances in which a pupil may be excused from receiving the statutory education on sexual and reproductive health and rights or specified elements at the request of a parent.
- **Safeguarding:** Teachers **cannot promise confidentiality** if abuse is suspected, and all safeguarding procedures must be followed.