Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) Policy

Name of school: Holy Trinity Primary School

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Date of policy: June 2021

Members of staff responsible for drawing up policy: Religion Co-ordinator Gráinne Carroll, Fiona

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School ethos and Mission Statement

In Holy Trinity Primary School our ethos is founded upon Christian principles. Religious education and faith, is an essential and integral part of the life of our school. The person of Jesus Christ is placed at the heart of the education we provide, inspiring and animating every action of the school's life. Holy Trinity Primary School is committed to providing to all pupils, the highest level of pastoral care in a safe, caring and attractive learning environment. The school holds all pupils in the highest esteem and considers it essential that all play a full and integrated part in the life of the school. We at Holy Trinity believe in the holistic development of the child and endeavour to nurture their spiritual, moral, intellectual, social, physical and aesthetic capabilities through promoting attitudes and values according to the Catholic tradition. Holy Trinity is committed to having high expectations for academic achievement, good conduct, sport and creative arts.

At Holy Trinity we seek to promote attitudes and values according to the Catholic tradition in harmony with the school chaplain. We endeavour to foster personal integrity among staff, pupils and in all aspects of the life of the school. Holy Trinity regards our parents as valued and respected educational partners who are made to feel welcome at the school. The school provides regular feedback to parents on the progress of pupils and offers to them ,any other relevant pastoral guidance. We place considerable importance upon our links to the parish with regard to monthly mass, assemblies and sacramental preparation.

We in Holy Trinity Primary School view the development and implementation of a policy in Relationships and Sexuality (RSE) as an important step towards achieving our aim to develop all aspects of a young person's personality and growth. The morals and values of our Catholic ethos are the core principles that underpin the teaching of RSE.

Policy Formation and Consultation Process

The Religion Co-ordinator drafted the RSE policy, in consultation with principal, teachers and parents.

Our RSE policy has been written taking into consideration the following Department of Education circulars

- DENI Circular Relationships and Sexuality Education 2001/15
- 2007/06
- Every School a Good School 2009.
- Guidance on Relationships and Sexuality Education 2010/01
- Relationships and Sexuality Education Policy in Schools 2013/16
- Community Relations, Equality and Diversity Policy 2011.
- Relationships and Sexuality Education Policy in Schools 2021

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

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

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

No person shall be denied a right to an education. In the exercise of any functions which it assumes in relation to education and to teaching, the State shall respect the

right of parents to ensure that such education and teaching is in conformity with their own religious and philosophical convictions.

CCEA Documents

- CCEA (2015) Relationships and Sexuality Education Guidance: An update for Primary Schools
- Living Learning Together
- PDMU Understanding Guidance Booklet
- PDMU Understanding Progression Grids
- Active Learning and Teaching Methods
- Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities

<u>Implementation and Review of Policy</u>

The Principal, Religion co-ordinator and Senior Leadership Team co-ordinate the school's approach to RSE and consult with the Board of Governors, staff, pupils, parents/carers, and health professionals as appropriate.

The Board of Governors examines and ratifies the school's RSE Policy

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years by the RSE co-ordinator the principal, the Board of Governors and staff. The next review date is October 2025.

Defining RSE

RSE is a lifelong process of learning about physical, moral and emotional development. RSE should provide young people with the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds. It should enable them to know what a healthy relationship looks like and what makes a good friend.

Rationale

The school is involved in relationships and sexuality education precisely because of our Christian beliefs about God and about the human person. The belief in the unique dignity of the human person made in the image and likeness of God underpins the approach to all education in a Catholic school. Our approach to RSE therefore is rooted in the Catholic Church's teaching of the human person and presented in a positive framework of Christian ideals.

At the heart of the Christian life is the Trinity; Father, Son and Spirit in communion, united in loving relationship and embracing all people and all creation. As a consequence of the Christian belief that we are made in the image and likeness of God, gender and sexuality are seen as God's gift, reflect God's beauty, and share in the divine creativity. RSE, therefore, will be placed firmly within the context of relationship as it is there that sexuality grows and develops.

RSE will be firmly embedded in the PDMU and the RE Curriculum as it is concerned with nurturing human wholeness and integral to the physical, spiritual, emotional, moral, social and intellectual development of pupils. It is centred on Christ's vision of being human as good news and will be positive and prudent, showing the potential for development, while enabling the dangers and risks involved to be understood and appreciated.

All RSE will be delivered in accordance with the Church's moral teaching. It will emphasise 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.

Through RSE we endeavour to equip, form and prepare children for life in a moral and spiritual context thus enabling them to make positive responsible choices about themselves and the way they live their lives.

Our Mission Statement in Holy Trinity aims to develop the child holistically by nurturing their physical, spiritual, emotional, moral, social and intellectual development. Our programme aims to deliver RSE in accordance with the Church's moral teaching.

It will develop the following aims, objectives and skills.

The Centrality of Virtue

In Holy Trinity children will be taught RSE within a framework which models and encourages the following values:

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

Aims:

The aims of RSE are to:

- Help children to appreciate their worth, dignity and uniqueness as children of God.
- enable children to appreciate that sexuality is a gift from God and that love is the central basis of all relationships.
- enhance the personal development, self-esteem and well-being of each child
- help each child develop healthy and respectful friendships and relationships
- foster an understanding of, and a healthy attitude to, human sexuality and relationships in a moral, social and spiritual framework
- promote responsible behaviour and the ability to make informed decisions
- help each child come to value family life and marriage
- appreciate the responsibilities of parenthood
- promote an appreciation of the value of human life and the wonder of birth.
- foster and develop mutual respect and understanding.
- develop a respect for difference, gender and race within the school and community.
- To help young people recognise, understand and prepare for the body changes that they will undergo in the years ahead.

Objectives

The RSE curriculum will enable pupils to:

- acquire and develop knowledge and understanding of self
- develop a positive sense of self-awareness, self-esteem and self-worth
- develop an appreciation of the dignity, uniqueness and well-being of others
- understand the nature, growth and development of relationships within families, in friendships and in wider contexts
- develop an awareness of the diversity of family life and family patterns
- use decision making and problem-solving strategies.
- acquire and improve skills of communication and social interaction
- discuss their feelings, growth, and development using an appropriate vocabulary.
- develop coping strategies to protect self and others from various forms of abuse.

Skills

The RSE curriculum will enable pupils to develop the skills necessary to form and maintain relationships and to make informed choices and decisions regarding health and well-being. Pupils will also be helped to develop skills to critically evaluate a wide range of information, opinions, attitudes and values.

They will be given opportunities to develop:

- **communication skills** listening to others' points of view; putting one's own view forward clearly and appropriately; dealing with conflict peacefully and being assertive;
- decision-making and problem-solving skills making good choices with the relevant information at
 hand, making moral judgements wisely in contexts and then putting them into practice, acting
 responsibly as an individual or as a member of a group.
- inter-personal skills managing healthy relationships confidently and with effectiveness.

Inclusion and Special Education Needs

We will ensure RSE is sensitive to the different needs of individual pupils in respect to pupils' different abilities, levels of maturity and personal circumstances; for example, their own sexual orientation, faith or culture and is taught in a way that does not subject pupils to discrimination. Lessons will also help children to realise the nature and consequences of discrimination, teasing, bullying and aggressive behaviours (including cyber-bullying), use of prejudice-based language and how to respond and ask for

help. Teachers will ensure appropriate differentiation strategies, co-operative learning strategies, classroom management strategies and the use of new technology are employed.

RSE Curriculum

Grow in Love is at the centre of our RSE programme and RSE will be delivered in a holistic, cross curricular way, ensuring that teaching is at all times appropriate to the maturity and understanding of the pupils. Teachers will be ever alert to the personal and emotional circumstances of the pupils. RSE will include the physical and emotional changes that occur at puberty for children in Primary 7 but will not include sex education.

In the summer term of their P7 year, children attend a workshop on puberty entitled 'Inside Out' delivered by trained staff in our assembly hall. Only children with written parental/carer consent receive this talk. Course content will be shared in advance with parents both in written form and on request during one-to-one meetings.

Boys and girls are taught separately at one point during this workshop, then brought back together as a group at the end. Follow up activities are then undertaken by the class teacher.

Pupils also have the opportunity to provide feedback about the content of the programme of RSE delivered by the school so that it can be responsive to their needs.

In the light of the RSE policy and in the context of the ethos of the Catholic school, the statutory requirements for RSE are taught through the religious education programme Grow in Love and Wonder of My Being RSE Programme while linking with the significant and relevant areas of the curriculum such as PDMU and Safeguarding. Teachers will cover themes in Circle Time, RE and PDMU. We encourage active learning strategies e.g. mind mapping, discussion techniques, reporting back, listening exercises, circle-time, role-play and quizzes.

Children will explore a range of ways of communicating and expressing feelings and emotions through the Arts including art and design, music and drama. Through Language and Literacy, children can develop a vocabulary to discuss emotions and feelings through talking and listening, reading, writing, drama and role-play.

The following outline illustrates the topics covered through the delivery of the Northern Ireland Curriculum in Primary School. Many of the aspects included below are also part of the Health Education curriculum, PDMU, RE, the World Around Us, PE, Drama or in reaction to specific situations. All teachers will deliver the RSE programme.

The selection of teaching resources are consistent with the school's RSE policy and the aims and objectives of the RSE programme.

RSE Resources / programmes used

Grow in Love Catechetical series (P1-P7) Veritas

The Wonder of my Being RSE programme – Down and Connor Diocese.

Living Learning Together: PDMU Programme CCEA

Inside Out P7 RSE Programme (Provided by the 'Love for Life' Organisation.)

Love for life P3 RSE programme (Provided by the 'Love for Life' Organisation.)

P7 Retreat – Transitioning to Secondary School - De La Salle Centre.

Assessment of RSE

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

Use of Outside Agencies

Where appropriate, we may use the skills and expertise of outside agencies and professionals. Where this occurs, the school will be satisfied that resource materials and presentations are in harmony with the aims and ethos of the school and therefore rooted in Catholic principles and practices.

All outside visitors / speakers will be approved by the principal.

All external agencies supporting RSE should sign a service agreement (see **Appendix 2**) agreeing with the RSE policy of the school and the underpinning ethos of the school. This record will be kept in a safe place as part of the delivery of RSE and for authenticity.

Any outside agency/individual delivering a support session in Holy Trinity will:

- receive a copy of the school's Relationships & Sexuality Education Policy;
- be made aware of and adhere to the school's Child Protection Policy;
- receive a copy of the school's policy on the use of outside agencies/visitors;
- agree to respect the ethos of the school;
- be made aware of the issues around confidentiality;
- · be vetted as appropriate

Parents and Carers

RSE is a lifelong process which begins in the home, however, in view of the significant amount of time children spend in school, parents or carers entrust teachers to help educate their children in this sensitive and important area of their lives.

The effectiveness of our policy and programme depends upon the involvement of teachers, parents, governors and other education and health professionals. Each of these has distinctive contributions to make to our policy. It is our role to assist the work of parents and to teach RSE in a manner appropriate to the emotional and psychological development of the child.

At the beginning of the school year during the parent curriculum meetings, parents / carers will be fully informed of the content of the RSE programme, enabling them to support the work of the school and to encourage parents to discuss the topics and issues raised by the programme with their children. In developing our policy we have consulted parents. A copy of our policy is readily available for parents to consult at any time. We will have a regular review of our policy and on-going communication with parents.

Parents/carers will be made aware in advance of the use of outside agencies. We will explain the type of activities which will take place to ensure that parents and carers have the opportunity to raise any concerns they might have before the visit. During the session the teachers will be present at all times.

Afterwards the teachers will provide pupils with the opportunity to discuss their experience and honestly evaluate the session. We will use pupil feedback to inform future planning and provision along with any evaluation carried out by the outside agency/individual.

Ensuring the Curriculum is balanced

While promoting Catholic values and virtues, we will ensure that pupils are offered a balanced programme by providing an RSE programme that offers a range of viewpoints on issues.

Pupils will also receive clear scientific information. Knowing about facts and enabling young people to explore differing viewpoints is not the same as promoting behaviour and is not incompatible with our school's promotion of Catholic teaching. We will ensure that pupils have access to the learning they need to stay safe, healthy and understand their rights as individuals and to relate to other individuals in a mature and respectful way.

Responsibility for Teaching the Programme

The principal and SLT co-ordinate the school's approach to RSE in consultation with the Board of Governors, staff, parents/carers and health professionals as appropriate. The RSE coordinator's role includes upholding and ensuring that the programme is taught in accordance with the school's Catholic ethos and is appropriate to the age and maturity of the pupils;

- attending in-service training and disseminating appropriate information to other staff members;
- organising training for staff as and when appropriate;
- liaising with outside agencies where appropriate
 - liaising with the Principal, chaplain, all staff, parents and health and educational visitors on RSE matters.

Relationship to other Policies and other Curriculum Subjects

The RSE policy is designed to be consistent and coherent within the framework of the overall school development plan. It shares links with the following policies:

- Religious Education
- Teaching and Learning
- Child Protection/Safeguarding Children

- Pastoral Care
- Health Education
- Anti-bullying Policy
- · Positive Behaviour Policy
- Internet Safety/E-Safety Policy
- World Around Us
- PDMU
- Homework
- Use of outside agencies and vetting arrangements.

Responding to pupil questions and sensitive areas

There will be occasions when teachers will have to use their own discretion and judgement about how to deal with particular questions. Teachers should exercise their professional judgement, guided by the age of the pupils, the RSE curriculum and the RSE policy for the school. For example, they may need to decide whether it is appropriate to deal with the question in a whole-class forum, through circle-time, or if it may be more appropriate to respond on an individual basis. The teacher may also wish to discuss the question asked with the parents/carers and/ or a senior member of staff to ascertain how they would like to handle the matter. Any advice provided and the way the teachers respond should support the role of the parents or carers and reflect the ethos of the school.

All staff teaching RSE related issues should use the proper biological names for body parts and sexual acts, where appropriate and relevant to the RSE programme. The use of common slang should be avoided.

Teachers should remember that, as they are not medical professionals, they must not give personal medical advice to any pupil. Teachers must advise pupils to seek advice from parents or carers and health professionals. If any question asked raises child protection issues, this should be referred to the designated teacher for child protection.

Boundary Setting

In Holy Trinity we will:

- 1. Teach the fundamental principle of respect for human persons.
- 2. Challenge any discriminatory remarks.
- 3. Deal firmly with any acts of bullying / cyberbullying
- 4. Follow school procedures for accessing outside support for any pupil requiring additional help.
- 5. Support the parents.
- 6. Follow school procedures for monitoring the wee-being of pupils.
- 7. Provide time and safe spaces for young people, in an age appropriate way, to engage at ta deep level with these issues, to dialogue with their peers and their teacher and to be invited into a rich understanding of the Church's teaching in these areas.

Supporting children and young people at risk

- We understand that the child's right to privacy must always be respected by the teacher and other pupils. Children will not be expected to answer any personal questions.
- Teachers will not compromise confidentiality.
- The principal or designated teachers will be informed of any disclosures which might suggest a child is at risk of harm.

Monitoring and Evaluating

The Religion co-ordinator will monitor and evaluate the programme through evaluating monthly notes, monitoring meetings and pupil work.

Staff Training

Where outside agencies are used for training purposes, their remit will be clear and will reflect the ethos of the school.

Withdrawal from RSE

Since RSE is a statutory requirement, it is part of our school curriculum. As a school we actively promote the implementation of RSE and strongly discourage withdrawal. The school will, however, take account of parent/carer concerns and we will support those parents who choose to withdraw their child from RSE programme should the occasion arise.

Appendix 1 Statutory Curricular Requirements for PDMU - RSE

Foundation Stage

Theme 1: Self Awareness

Teachers should enable pupils to develop knowledge, understanding and skills in developing: themselves and their personal attributes.

Theme 2: Feelings and Emotions

Teachers should enable pupils to develop knowledge, understanding and skills in developing: their own and others' feelings and emotions.

Theme 4: Health, Growth and Change

Teachers should enable pupils to develop knowledge, understanding and skills in developing: The importance of keeping healthy.

Theme 4a: Safety

Teachers should enable pupils to develop knowledge, understanding and skills in developing: How to keep safe in familiar and unfamiliar environments.

Theme 5: Relationships

Teachers should enable pupils to develop knowledge, understanding and skills in developing: their relationships with family and friends.

Theme 8: Similarities and Differences

Teachers should enable pupils to develop knowledge, understanding and skills in developing: Similarities and differences.

Key Stage 1

Theme 1: Self Awareness

Teachers should enable pupils to develop knowledge, understanding and skills in developing: their self-esteem and self-confidence.

Theme 2: Feelings and Emotions

Teachers should enable pupils to develop knowledge, understanding and skills in developing: their own and others' feelings and emotions and how their actions affect others.

Theme 4: Health, Growth and Change

Teachers should enable pupils to develop knowledge, understanding and skills in developing: strategies and skills for keeping healthy.

Theme 4a: Safety

Teachers should enable pupils to develop knowledge, understanding and skills in developing: strategies and skills for keeping safe.

Theme 5: Relationships

Teachers should enable pupils to develop knowledge, understanding and skills in developing: and initiating mutually satisfying relationships.

Theme 8: Similarities and Differences

Teachers should enable pupils to develop knowledge, understanding and skills in developing: Similarities and differences between people.

Key Stage 2

Theme 1: Self Awareness

Teachers should enable pupils to develop knowledge, understanding and skills in developing: their self-esteem, self-confidence and how they develop as individuals.

Theme 2: Feelings and Emotions

Teachers should enable pupils to develop knowledge, understanding and skills in developing: their management of a range of feelings and emotions and the feelings and emotions of others.

Theme 4: Health, Growth and Change

Teachers should enable pupils to develop knowledge, understanding and skills in developing: how to sustain their health, growth and well-being.

LIVING-LEARNING-TOGETHER Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 (P1-P4)

Myself:

- How I grow, feed, move and use my senses; caring for myself, for example: hygiene, sleep, exercise.
- Their own and others' feelings/emotions and how their actions affect others.
- Naming parts of the body (basic) developing an agreed language for our bodies.
- Being myself I am unique, my self-esteem, self-confidence, independence, respect and caring for myself.
- Similarities and differences between myself and others, for example: uniqueness, fingerprints, gender issues, different rates of growth.
- An introduction to the stages of human development changes as we grow, for example: baby, child, teenager, adult, mother/father, grandparents.
- Recognising moods, feelings and concerns and developing a language and an appropriate manner of expressing them, for example: what do I do if I feel sad or angry?
- Personal likes and dislikes.
- The importance of keeping healthy and safe.
- The importance of keeping healthy and strategies and skills for keeping healthy.

My Relationships:

- My family, special people in my life what they do for me and what I do for them.
- Friendships, getting on with each other for example: communicating, playing together, listening, co-operating and sharing.
- Ageing how do we know that things are alive, dead, young and old.
- Loss and mourning death of a person or a pet (Note: situations of the pupils should be considered prior to introducing this topic).
- Respect and caring for family members and friends for example: caring for a new baby.
- Bullies and what to do about them.
- Personal safety simple skills and practices to maintain personal safety.
- The difference between good and bad touches.
- Realise that adults and older children are not always friends; the potential danger of relationships with strangers or acquaintances.
- Strategies which pupils might use to protect themselves from potentially dangerous situations.

My Community/Environment:

- Awareness of different types of families and the roles of individuals within families.
- Keeping safe for example: dangerous places, dangerous situations, the adults who will help, how to get help from others.
- Rules at home, at school and in the community.

Respect and caring for people in the community, e.g. elderly people.

Key Stage 2 (P5-P7)

Myself:

- The importance of keeping healthy and safe.
- My body, how it works and how to keep it healthy.
- The physical, social and emotional changes that occur during puberty (girls and boys).
- Myself and my peers different rates of growth and physical development, maturity.
- Valuing and respecting myself, identifying personal strengths and weaknesses.
- Feelings for example: things that make me happy, sad, excited, embarrassed, angry, scared; expressing our feelings, showing love and affection.
- Gender roles.
- Making choices the influences on me and the consequences of actions for oneself and others.
- Distinguishing between right and wrong.
- Secrets knowing the difference between good and bad secrets, what to do about bad secrets.

My Relationships:

- Identifying the positive traits of friendship and their corresponding values.
- Differences and similarities in people; the need to respect other people's views, emotions and feelings.
- Families and how they behave what family members expect of each other.
- The meaning of friendship and loyalty; making and maintaining friendships and social relationships for example: identifying and understanding pressures and influences, taking account of other people's point of view.
- Handling difficult situations for example: teasing, bullying, death of a family member.
- The meaning of relationships within families, between friends and in the community.
- Behaviour what constitutes appropriate and non-appropriate physical contact.
- Identifying dangers and risks within relationships.
- Being assertive in defending individual rights and beliefs.
- People who can help pupils when they have anxieties, concerns or questions.

My Community/Environment:

- Appreciation of the family in relation to the school and the wider community.
- Cultural differences in families and family relationships.
- Helping agencies who can support families and individuals in different circumstances.

Messages and images about health, gender roles and sexuality from the media, family and peers.

The Wonder of My Being Programme Overview

1. To appreciate that I am a boy/girl.
2. To appreciate that I am part of a family.
3. To understand that I grew in my mother's womb.
4. To learn that Jesus was part of a family.
5. To appreciate that I am special.
1. To understand that I needed help with everything when I was a baby.
2. To understand that I have grown and changed since I was a baby.
3. To understand some developmental stages of babies e.g. crawling, walking,
talking
4. To appreciate that my family loves and cares for me.
5. To appreciate that God chose Mary to be the mother of his son Jesus.
6. To appreciate that Mary and Joseph loved and cared for Jesus.
1. To appreciate that people celebrate weddings.
2. To appreciate the qualities that are required for friendship.
3. To appreciate the qualities necessary for family.
4. To appreciate how a mother cares for her new baby.
5. To appreciate that Jesus helped Mary and Joseph at home.
6. To appreciate how we can help at home.
1. To appreciate that Mary was told by an Angel that she was to be the mother of
Jesus.
2. To appreciate that an Angel appeared to Joseph to tell him he would be the one
to care for Mary and Jesus.
3. To appreciate the role of Mary as the mother of God.
4. To appreciate the qualities and values that were part of the Holy Family of
Nazareth.
5. To learn the vocabulary associated with pregnancy and birth.
6. To appreciate the preparations that were needed for your birth.
7. To appreciate that family is a gift from God

	1. To appreciate the uniqueness of each person.
Year	2. To appreciate that we are all created in the image and likeness of God.
Five	3. To appreciate the importance of preparing responsibly for new life.
	4. To appreciate the stages of development between birth and two years.
	5. To appreciate we change as we grow (2 years – 9/10 years).
	6. To be aware of people who help us grow and develop: family, church, medical.
	7. To revisit the Sacrament of Baptism so that the children can become aware of
	their place in God's family.
	1. To appreciate that we are made in God's image and likeness.
Year	2. To appreciate the stages of growth before birth.
Six	3. To recognise significant moments in our lives to date.
	4. To recognise that we are created by God and that our bodies are sacred.
	5. To recognise that our bodies change as we grow.
	6. To appreciate that everyone is part of the body of Christ.
	7. To appreciate the values of friendship in our lives.
	8. To identify negative behaviour and how it can affect other people.
	1. To appreciate that we are called by God.
Year	2. To appreciate the presence of God in our lives as we grow and change.
Seven	3. To appreciate the talents that each of us has and consider how we will use these as we grow and change.
	4. To appreciate the qualities and characteristics of friendship.
	5. To understand the importance of accepting and respecting each other just as
	we are.
	6. To make pupils aware that they are influenced by many different people and
	things.
	7. To appreciate that I can be a good or bad influence others.
	8. To help make informed decision about their lives.
	9. To enable the children to face future changes with optimism.

Appendix 2