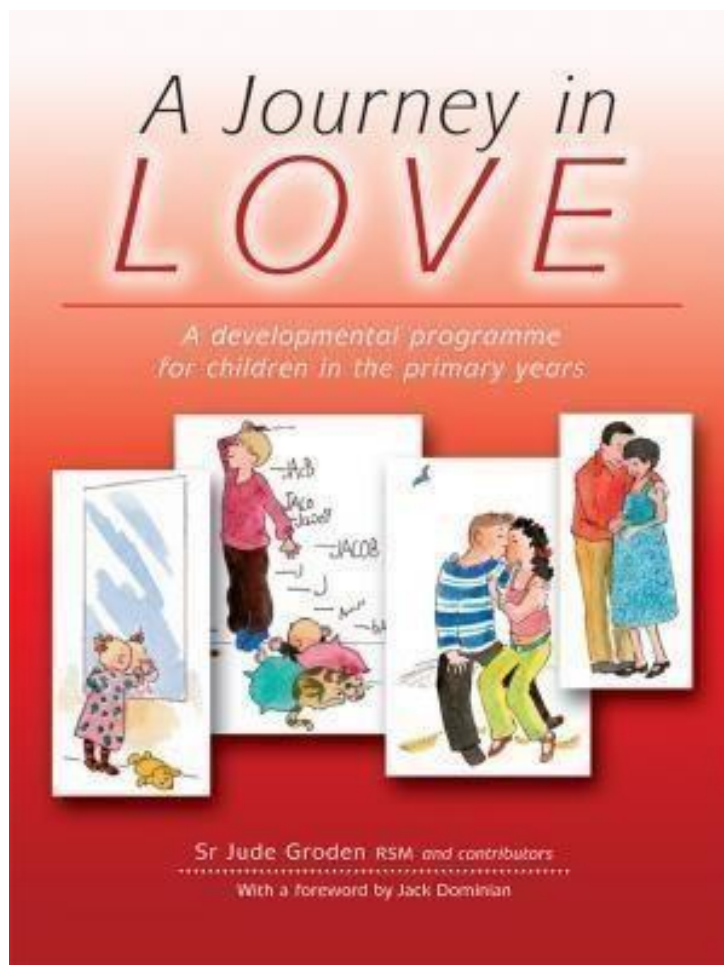


## Relationships and Sex Education

### A Guide for Parents and Carers



#### Aims of Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)

- To encourage pupils' growth in self-respect, acknowledging we are all created in the image and likeness of God
- To help pupils develop an understanding that love is the central basis of relationships

- To help pupils to understand the nature of relationships and to encourage them to reflect on their own relationships and respect differences between people.
- To develop pupils' confidence in talking, listening and thinking about feelings and relationships.
- To help pupils acquire the skills necessary to develop and sustain relationships
- To offer sex education in the wider context of relationships.
- To ensure that pupils protect themselves and ask for help and support when needed.
- To ensure that pupils are prepared for puberty.
- To help pupils to develop a healthier, safer lifestyle.
- To prepare pupils to play an active role as citizens and to understand the Catholic vision of what it means to be citizens of the kingdom of God.



## Love...



At the heart of Christian faith is love: St. John says that God is love (1 John 4:9) and the whole purpose of Christianity is to live it as fully as possible in and through love. This means that we have to link every aspect of our

being, from birth to death, with love.

Love starts to enter our life from the moment of birth when we are held tenderly in the arms of our mother and developed throughout our first intimate relationship of childhood with our parents, family members, friends and teachers.

At puberty, sexual characteristics develop and we begin to seek someone outside of the family with whom we can grow in love, usually ending in marriage.

The whole purpose of education at home and in our primary school is to connect every aspect of growth, physical, emotional, intellectual and social with love. The ultimate goal is to enable adults to fully love themselves (to accept themselves positively) and in turn love their neighbour (making themselves fully available to others).

Through our love for others, we link ourselves with God the Father, through Jesus Christ his Son, and through the Spirit.

The programme for Relationships and Sex Education which we teach from at St Finbar' is called 'A Journey in Love'. This booklet for parents and carers outlines how the programme is organised and what is covered in each year group.

A Journey in Love has at its foundation the belief that we are made in the image and likeness of God, and as a consequence, gender and sexuality are God's gift, reflect God's beauty and share in the divine creativity.



In order that children may grow and develop healthily and as complete human beings, they must have an understanding of their gender and the implications for successful relationships, they must be at ease with themselves and grow in self-knowledge.

A different aspect of the mystery of love is explored in each year group and all are encouraged to marvel at the wonder and beauty of God's creative love. This is reflected in each stage of a person's growth, through a series of lessons with activities and reflections which focus on physical, social, emotional, intellectual and spiritual development.

### Themes explored in each year group...

Reception: God made me unique

Year One: How we live as part of a family

Year Two: How we live as part of a community

Year Three: How we live in love

Year Four: God loves us in our differences

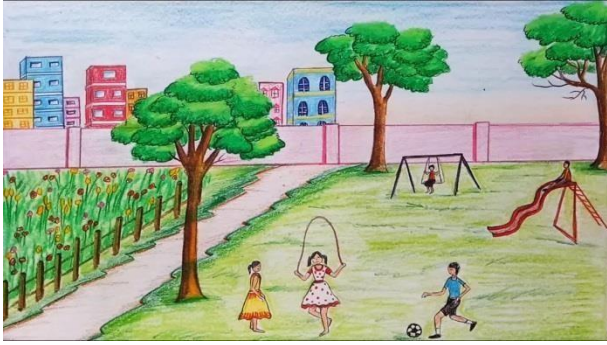
Year Five: God loves me in my changing and development

Year Six: The wonder of God's love in creating new life

### How will we organise lessons for Journey in Love?

- All children and teachers treat each other with respect, all questions and answers are listened to in a sensitive and sensible manner.
- All children will cover the same topics.
- Lessons may include: discussions, presentations, questions, written work, and homework.

## What if a child asks a difficult question?



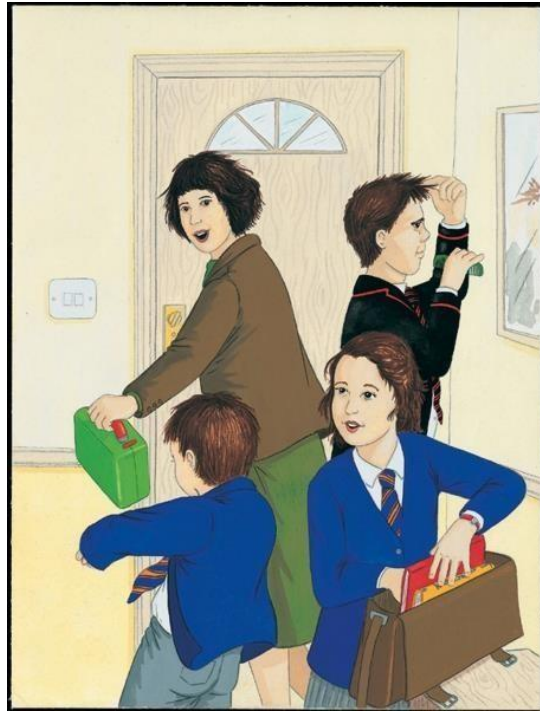
There are specific areas that we feel should not be discussed within the context of our school lessons, e.g. contraception, as we feel that our children are not yet emotionally mature to handle these issues. These are all topics which are dealt with at secondary school.

If a child does ask a question outside the scope of our programme it will be dealt with in a sensitive and caring manner. We would always ask the child concerned to discuss the issue with his/her parents.

### How can I help?

- By talking with your child at home.
- By discussing their work after each lesson.
- By listening to any concerns.
- By reassuring your child that you are there if they need to talk about anything at all.
- By helping with homework activities.





We praise and thank you, Lord, for gifts of life and love.  
Help us to use these wisely as we continue to journey in love.

