

## Kilmaley N.S. R.S. E. Policy

### Relationship and Sexuality Education Policy

This policy, is in accordance with the provisions of the Child Care Act (1991), Education Act (1998), Education (Welfare) Act (2000) the child protection procedures DES and the Primary School Curriculum and details the aims and the content of the agreed programme for the provision and the delivery of '*Relationships & Sexuality Education (RSE)* in Kilmaley N.S. We trust that by detailing these procedures, it will assist all parties in relation to the content of this important subject area.

#### **School Philosophy**

Kilmaley school is a Catholic school under the patronage of the Bishop of Killaloe. It is managed by a Board of Management, elected according to the procedures agreed by the Partners in Education. The school has a Catholic ethos and this ethos is a guiding principle in the formulation and implementation of this RSE Policy. This ethos recognises the value and dignity of each pupil and all those working in the school community, and aims at promoting the full and harmonious development of all aspects of the person, including:

- a) relationship with God
- b) relationship with family
- c) relationship with teachers
- d) relationship with self
- e) relationship with others
- f) relationship with the environment.

This ethos also acknowledges the cultural and religious values of all the pupils attending the school. The school recognises that the parents are the primary educators of their children and we support them in that role.

In the area of RSE, the schools' role is subsidiary to that of the parents. We support and compliment their work.

#### **Definition of RSE**

RSE is an integral part of Social, Personal and Health Education and must be taught in this context. It provides structured opportunities for pupils to acquire knowledge and understanding of human sexuality and relationships through processes, which will enable them to form values and establish behaviours within a moral, spiritual and social framework. (p. 5 NCCA curriculum and guidelines for RSE). RSE is the formal approach to educating children in:

- Relationships with others - parents, siblings, friends and the community in general
- Respect for themselves and others
- Physical development - bodily functions and changes, and personal hygiene
- Emotional development - maturing in society
- Parenting, personal and social skills and relationships
- Sexuality in context - part of a loving relationship

### **Relationship of RSE to SPHE and Religion**

Social, Personal and Health Education contributes to developing the work of the school in promoting the health and well-being of children and young people. This happens in the context of their emotional, moral, social and spiritual growth, as well as their intellectual, physical, political, religious and creative development. (p.5 Going Forward Together Parents Information Booklet).

The key characteristics of this programme are that SPHE is a lifelong process and is a shared responsibility between family, school, health professionals and the community. The main strands of the SPHE programme are:

- Myself
- Myself and Others
- Myself and the Wider World

It is clear that the Relationships and Sexuality Programme is correctly defined as being an integral part of the programme outlined above. Sexually sensitive issues will be covered within the strand units:

- Taking care of my body
- Growing and changing
- Safety and protection.

As stated previously, the content of all lessons will be governed by the schools' Catholic ethos as taught in the Alive-O/Grow in love Religion programme.

### **Current Provision**

Traditionally we have been a child-centred school. The educational and emotional needs of the children in our care are central to our planning and policy making processes. We have always, and will always continue to put the welfare of the children first.

Included in our school curriculum is

- SPHE curriculum
- Use of RSE Manuals,
- Religious Education (grow in love / aliveo)
- Stay Safe Programme
  
- Walk Tall
- Busy bodies DVD and busy Bodies booklets
- Other relevant teaching material

#### **Policies which support SPHE/RSE**

- Code of behaviour and discipline policy
- Head lice Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Child safeguarding statement and risk assessment
- Enrolment Policy
- Mobile phone policy
- Healthy Eating Policy
- School Tour Policy
- Internet Safety Policy
- Administration of Medicines Policy.

In keeping with the sentiment and spirit of these policies, we informally support many of the aims on which RSE is modelled. We encourage good behaviour, open communication, understanding and tolerance of differences, and respect for self and others. We recognise that both pupils and staff have rights and responsibilities in our school. A sense of responsibility is fostered and attention is paid to the well being of all of the members of the school community

#### **Aims of our RSE programme**

- To help young people develop healthy friendships and relationships
- To develop a sense of self-awareness, self-esteem and self-worth
- Develop an appreciation of the dignity, uniqueness and well-being of each individual and others
- Acquire and use an appropriate vocabulary to discuss feelings, sexuality, growth and development

- To foster an understanding of and healthy attitude to, human sexuality and relationships in a moral, spiritual and social framework
- To promote knowledge of and respect for human love, sexual intercourse and reproduction
- To understand the physical changes taking place with the onset of puberty
- To promote a sense of wonder and awe at the process of birth and new life
- To enable the child to feel comfortable with his/her sexuality and that of others

### **Guidelines for the Management and Organisation of RSE in our School**

#### **[1] Organisational Matters**

- Guidelines as laid down by the Department of Education and Skills and as discussed in this document will be followed.
- It is envisaged that the programme will be taught in an integrated manner where possible.

#### **Parents**

- Parents are to be informed in advance of the programme content. They will also be informed in advance of the formal lessons on the sensitive areas of the programme eg. Puberty, sexual intercourse.
- It is a parents/guardians right to withdraw a pupil from these lessons. This request for withdrawal must be made in writing.
- If parents/guardians request the withdrawal of a child from RSE lessons, they may collect the child from school at these times. Supervision will be provided. With regard to matters of a confidential nature, the school cannot take any responsibility for what is discussed in the yard or classroom. Should a child who is withdrawn from the sexually sensitive classes receive inappropriate information from others outside of these classes, it will be the responsibility of the parent/guardian to address the issues.
- Parents will be offered a chance to view any DVDs being used in the teaching of RSE eg. Busy Bodies
- Parents have the responsibility to become involved, to inform themselves of the programme content, to prepare children for the information they will acquire around the sensitive areas and to discuss areas covered in school in RSE/ SPHE with their children.

- If a parent has a particular concern/ issue in relation to the teachings of the RSE programme, they are encouraged to discuss same with the teacher or the principal.
- As always, parents are requested to inform teachers of special family situations. These will be dealt with in confidence. It is our experience that it is to everyone's benefit if we are kept informed any relevant issues. .

## [2] Curriculum Matters

- The Curriculum by NCCA will be followed as published and will be taught in Infants to 6<sup>th</sup> class. All resources used will be in keeping with the ethos of the school and the policy. Each class teacher will teach the content for their class level.
- Children will be encouraged to discuss material being covered in class with their parents or guardians. Where possible handouts, worksheets etc. will be provided to facilitate this; eg. Home-School Links pages of the RSE manuals.
- In a class situation, children will be encouraged to recognise that certain information is for them only i.e. that it is inappropriate for them to discuss information received about puberty, intercourse and birth with younger siblings, friends from outside school etc. It will be explained that other children will be given this information by their own parents and teachers when it is developmentally appropriate for them to receive it. However, the school cannot take any responsibility for what is discussed outside of the school or on the yard.
- A respect for personal privacy and information will be emphasised. Teachers will neither give nor request personal information. Children will also be taught to recognise that certain personal disclosures are inappropriate within a group setting.

### Outside Speaker- Sensitive Elements

Occasionally it may be deemed necessary for an outside speaker to address the "sexually sensitive issues" i.e. puberty, reproductive system, conception, birth and sexual intercourse on the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Class curriculum. All resources used will be in keeping with the ethos of the school and this policy.

- Sensitive issues classes are generally taught from infants to 4<sup>th</sup> during the second term

- In a multi class situation, the younger class will be withdrawn when topics being taught are not age-appropriate
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- When an outside speaker is used, the SPHE coordinator/principal will make them fully aware of school policy. Parents/guardians will be notified of the name of this speaker in advance of the lesson. The class teacher will remain with the class during the lesson.

Topics covered up to 2<sup>nd</sup> class include:

- Keeping Safe
- Bodily changes during growth and birth
- Making age appropriate choices
- Appreciating family life
- Recognising and expressing feelings
- Self-care, hygiene, diet, exercise and sleep
- Expressing opinions and listening to others
- *Naming the parts of the male/female body using appropriate anatomical terms (Junior/ Senior Infants) \*See Appendix 1 for details*
- *Naming the parts of the male/female body using appropriate anatomical terms and identify some of their functions (1<sup>st</sup> / 2<sup>nd</sup> ) \*See Appendix 1 for details*

Topics covered up to sixth class include:

- Bodily changes
- Healthy eating, personal hygiene, exercise
- Keeping Safe
- Expressing feelings
- Family relationships- Same Love/ Different Families (INTO Resource)
- Making healthy and responsible decisions
- Forming friendships
- Discuss the stages and sequence of development of the human baby in the womb (Fourth class)
- Changes that occur in boys and girls with the onset of puberty (First Term of Fifth Class)

- Reproductive system of male/female adults (Fifth & Sixth Class) \*See Appendix 1 for details
- Understanding sexual intercourse, conception and birth within the context of a loving, committed relationship. (Sixth Class) \*See Appendix 1 for details
- Sensitive issues may be dealt with in the following class groupings:

**Puberty:**

Boys and girls separate grouping for one lesson in 4th & 5<sup>th</sup> class for puberty

**Puberty, Intercourse & Birth:**

Boys and girls mixed in sixth class.

[3] Dealing with Questions

All questions answered will reflect the parameters of the curriculum and school policy

. Certain topics will not be discussed.-curriculum guide lines will be followed

- A question box may be used throughout lessons where appropriate
- The school cannot guarantee confidentiality if a child asks a question of a personal nature or discloses personal information.
- Teachers will previously decide upon specific language and concepts for each class level in line with the SPHE curriculum and school ethos. \*See *Appendix 1 for details*
- Children's questions will be dealt with, taking into account the following criteria when relevant
  - By being aware of circumstances in which the question has arisen
  - By clarifying what information is required
  - By deciding, if the issue is relevant, who is it relevant to
  - By giving a developmentally or age- appropriate answer
  - By deferring the question as one which will be answered in the next lesson, one which should be answered at home or one which will be answered more fully in the future

At all times we will strive to maintain the child's and teacher's right to privacy

#### [4] Students with SEN

- Taking into account student's cognitive, social and emotional development and their class level (4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> Class), instruction on the sensitive aspects of RSE, will be based on individual needs and decided together by parents, mainstream teachers and support teachers.. The support and resource teachers will aid the mainstream teacher with the facilitation of appropriate and agreed RSE provision for the child with SEN. Careful consideration will be given to the NCCA Guidelines for Moderate and Severe and Profound General Learning Disabilities for RSE provision.
- There will be ongoing assessment of the programme through observation by and feedback from parents, teachers and pupils.

#### Provision of Ongoing Support

- Parents welcome to view the curriculum and resource materials if they so wish.
- Regular contact with parents prior to the teaching of lessons involving "sensitive issues" in the form of the home/school link page accompanying such lessons in the RSE Resource Books. Parents have the primary responsibility for educating their children in sexual matters. The school RSE programme acts as a support only to parents, and parents retain the right to withdraw their children from classes. Should a parent decide to withdraw their child from RSE lessons in school, they will be asked to put this in writing with reasons for doing so. They will also be asked to include a sentence stipulating that they will take full responsibility to teach RSE to their child instead.
- Parents/Guardians are the primary educators of their children and as such the school supports them in this role. As stated parents/guardians will be given the option of withdrawing their child from R. S. E if they so wish. The Parents' Council may on occasion arrange for speakers/meetings to help them in the task of communicating with their children on aspects of their development. Parents/Guardians may access copies of this policy

#### Links to other Policy Areas

- Child Protection Policy
- SPHE Policy

**Child Protection:** The school follows the DES procedures. Kilmaley N.S. has a




child safeguarding statement and risk assessment . (available to parents/ guardians at school )The Principal is the Designated Liaison Person( DLP) and in cases of disclosure, the DLP will follow the procedures.

### Review

- This policy will be reviewed on a regular basis.

## Lesson Content – Sensitive Issues

Class	Lesson	Strand Unit	Language	Date	Home/School
J.I. S.I.	<b>Theme 6</b> Caring for new life p.137 <b>Theme 7</b> My Body p.147	Growing and changing  Taking care of my body	Penis, Vagina , Vulva Breasts, bottom, naval Naming parts of male and female body using appropriate anatomical terms	<b>Term 2 every second year</b>	S.I. RSE Manual p. 145  S.I. RSE Manual p. 156
1 <sup>st</sup> 2 <sup>nd</sup>	<b>Theme 6</b> The wonder of new life p.59/p.151 <b>Theme 7</b> How my body works p67 When my body needs special care p.161 <b>Theme 8</b> Growing means changing p. 77/p.171	Growing and changing  Taking care of my body	Penis, Vagina , Vulva Breasts, bottom, naval : introduce womb, breast feeding, urethra. Naming as above and identify some of the functions. of body part e.g. s-vagina- opening where a baby leaves a mother's womb, penis- passing urine, breasts- feeding baby, navel where a baby was joined to its mother before, being born	Term 2 every second year	RSE Manual p. 65, 160, 169
3 <sup>rd</sup> 4 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Theme 6</b> Preparing for new life p.69 <b>Theme 6 from 4<sup>th</sup> class</b> The wonder of new life p.169 <b>Theme 8</b> As I grow I change p.93 <b>Theme 8</b> Boys and girls separate grouping for one lesson in 4 <sup>th</sup> & 5 <sup>th</sup> class for puberty Growing and changing p.195	Growing and changing	Discuss the stages and sequence of development of human baby in the womb from conception to birth. Umbilical cord. The physical changes that take place in males and females during growth to adulthood Any questions as to how the baby got there cannot be answered by the teacher.	Term 2 or 3 at the discretion of the teacher Note Boys and girls separate grouping for one lesson in 4 <sup>th</sup> & 5 <sup>th</sup> class for puberty every year	RSE Manual p. 181
5 <sup>th</sup> 6 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Theme 6</b> My body grows and changes p.81 <b>Theme 7</b> The wonder of new life p.93 <b>Theme 8</b> Caring for new life p.103 <b>Theme 2</b> Different kinds of love p.141	Growing and changing  Taking care of my body	Changes that occur in boys and girls at puberty. Reproductive system of male/female adults. Understand sexual intercourse, conception and birth within context of a loving, committed relationship.	Term 2 or 3 at the discretion of the teacher  <b>6<sup>th</sup> class only will cover content every year</b>	RSE Manual p. 92,101,112,149  Busy Body Booklets and DVDS  

Appendix 1