

Tag:/Re: RSE Policy

## RSE Policy

### Introduction

This policy is an approved approach to the teaching of RSE in Gaelscoil Moshíológ. It was developed to inform teachers and parents as to what material is covered in the RSE programme within SPHE.

### Rationale

Education in Gaelscoil Moshíológ is characterised by respect and care for each individual. The child's many needs are met in a well-structured environment where she/he can live fully the life of a child and develop as a whole person-academically, socially, emotionally and spiritually. While nourishing the child's young life, we strive to foster an atmosphere that will enable each child develop to his/her full potential in a safe environment. The environment is such that the child is encouraged and stimulated to be confident, appreciate, independent and creative. The Relationships and Sexuality (RSE) programme will be implemented within this framework

### Definition of RSE

RSE aims to provide opportunities for children to learn about relationships and sexuality in ways that help them think and act in a moral, caring and responsible way. This work will be based on developing a good image, promoting respect for themselves and others, and providing them with appropriate information for their age-group.

### RSE in the context of our SPHE programme

Throughout the school year, Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) is taught as a subject from Junior Infants to 6th class. A wide variety of topics are included on this programme, at age-appropriate levels. RSE forms a part of this programme; it is a spiral curriculum which ensures that topics are taught in a developmental manner throughout a child's primary school years.

### Including RSE in the Curriculum

RSE is facilitated in the following ways:

- in the context of a positive school climate and atmosphere
- in the context of an effective code of behaviour and anti-bullying policy
- as part of religious education
- as part of timetabled SPHE
- on an integrated cross-curricular basis

### Aims of our RSE programme

- To enhance the personal development, self-esteem and well-being of each child.

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- To help children develop healthy friendships and relationships.
- To foster an understanding of, and a healthy attitude to, human sexuality and relationships in a moral, spiritual and social framework.
- To enable the older child to acquire an understanding of, and respect for, human love, sexual intercourse and reproduction.
- To develop and promote in the child a sense of wonder and awe at the process of birth and new life.
- To enable the child to be comfortable with the sexuality of oneself and others while growing and developing.

### **Guidelines for the Management and Organisation of SPHE in our school:**

#### **Content**

We recognise that the parents are the primary educators of their children and that the home is the natural environment in which RSE should take place. The role of the school, therefore, is seen as one of support of the work of the home in this area. The content objectives covered will be taught as laid down by the Department of Education and Skills in the SPHE Curriculum 1999.

- RSE will be taught in all classes.
- The SPHE/RSE curriculum will be of a spiral nature and all content objectives will be covered by the time the children leave 6<sup>th</sup> class.
- Discrete lessons with regard to sensitive and areas of RSE will be timetabled for the end of 2nd term/beginning of 3rd term (March/April) for Infants to 4<sup>th</sup> class. These lessons will be covered within the strand units 'Growing and Changing' and 'Taking care of my body'. Discrete lessons in 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> class (physical changes at puberty, menstruation, intercourse, conception for senior classes) will be covered by the HSE nurse in June (Term 3).
- Questions arising from lesson content will be answered in an age-appropriate manner. The class teacher cannot answer questions which do not relate to the particular curriculum objectives for a class. Pupils will be informed if a question/issue is not on the programme and they will be advised to talk with their parents.
- All resources used in the teaching of the programme will be in keeping with the ethos of the school and in the spirit of this policy.
- RSE will be delivered to the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> class children by a HSE nurse in June each year. The 'Busy Bodies' programme will be used in conjunction with this visit. A copy of the DVD and booklet will be sent home to parents before the visit.
- Presently in Gaelscoil Moshíológ all teachers deliver this programme to their own class. However, provisions will be made for teachers who may have difficulty with teaching the sensitive areas of the programme. Arrangements may be made with colleagues by mutual agreement to deliver whatever sections of the programme a teacher may have difficulty with.
- For an outline of the RSE programme see Appendix I.
- For the vocabulary to be taught in the sensitive areas see Appendix II.

### **School Policies and Curricular Plans which support our RSE**

- SPHE Curriculum
- Stay Safe Programme
- Walk Tall Programme
- School's Code of Behaviour and Discipline Policy.
- Anti –Bullying Policy.
- Child Protection Policy.
- Enrolment Policy.
- Acceptable Use Policy

- Administration of Medicine 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 staff 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 the members of the school community.

### **Timetabling**

One half hour period per week is timetabled for each class for SPHE. RSE will be included in the programme taught during this time. It is envisaged that some aspects of RSE (including the sensitive issues) will be taught through a number of core periods while some materials will be taught in a cross-curricular manner.

### **Parental Involvement**

RSE is an ongoing process throughout life. Parents are acknowledged primary educators of their children and the school work in partnership with them in a supportive role. On enrolment of their child, parents will be provided with an overview of the SPHE/RSE programme and with a copy to this policy document. Each year prior to the teaching of the lessons containing 'sensitive issues' parents will be informed before the teacher will teach these lessons. The curriculum books and resource materials are available online on [www.pdst.ie](http://www.pdst.ie) and parents are welcome to view these if desired.

### **Withdrawal from RSE**

Since RSE is an obligatory requirement of the Department of Education and Skills it should be inclusive. However, a parent's right to withdraw a pupil from themes pertaining to sensitive issues will be respected on the understanding that the parent is taking full responsibility for this aspect of education. Parents are obliged to inform the school in writing of their decision to withdraw the child from the classes based on sensitive issues. The school cannot be responsible for any information which a child may receive outside the direct teaching of RSE lessons.

### **Pupils with SEN**

Consultation with parents of pupils with SEN may be required. At the request of the parents of the pupils with SEN, the school may facilitate the teaching of the lessons on 'sensitive issues' on another education individually or in a small group setting. A variety of teaching methodologies may be required for some children.

### **Confidentiality and Child Protection**

Where there is disclosure by a child of abuse, the school will follow the Department of Education and Skills child protection guidelines and guidelines set out in 'Children First'.

### **Resources**

- Stay Safe Programme
- RSE Manuals
- Busy Bodies

- Making the Links
- Other resource material as deemed appropriate by class teachers in consultation with the principal

### **Provision for Ongoing Support**

- Parents are welcome to view the curriculum if the wish
- There will be contact with parents prior to and during the teaching of lessons involving 'sensitive issues'. Copies of the Busy Bodies booklets/DVD will be sent home to parents prior to the visit from the HSE nurse.
- The Board of Management will support in-career development in the area of SPHE/RSE as opportunities arise.

### **Implementation**

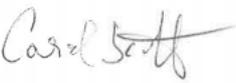
This policy will be implemented during the school year 2021-2022.

### **Review**

This policy will be reviewed on an ongoing basis or sooner should a need arise. Parents and staff will be informed of any amendments made.

### **Ratification**

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 20/09/2021.

Signed: 

Date: 20/09/2021 (Principal)

Signed: 

Date: 20/09/2021 (Chairperson)

**APPENDIX I – Overview of the RSE Programme**

| <b>Overview of content Strand</b> | <b>Infant Classes</b>   | <b>1st and 2nd Classes</b>  |
|-----------------------------------|---|---|
| <b>Strand</b>                     | <b>Strand Units</b>   |   |
| <b>Myself</b>                     | I am unique<br>My Body<br><br>As I grow I change<br><br>New Life<br><br>Feeling Safe<br><br>Feelings and emotions<br><br>Making decisions | I am unique<br>My Body<br><br>As I grow I change<br><br>New Life<br><br>Feeling Safe<br><br>Feelings and emotions<br><br>Making decisions |
| <b>Myself and others</b>          | Myself and my family<br>Myself and my friends<br><br>Special people in my life<br><br>Relating to others                                  | Myself and my family<br>Myself and my friends<br><br>Other people<br><br>Relating to others   |
| <b>Strand</b>                     | <b>3rd and 4th Classes</b>  | <b>5th and 6th Classes</b>  |
|                                   | <b>Strand Units</b>   |   |
| <b>Myself</b>                     | Accepting myself<br>Physical development<br><br>Growing and changing<br><br>Birth and new life<br><br>Feelings and emotions               | Accepting myself<br>Physical development<br><br>Becoming an adult<br><br>Parenthood<br><br>Feelings and emotions                          |

|                          |   |   |
|--------------------------|---|---|
|                          | Personal Hygiene<br>Personal Safety<br>Making decisions   | Personal Hygiene<br>Personal Safety<br>Making decisions   |
| <b>Myself and others</b> | Roles and responsibilities in families<br>Portrayal of sexuality and relationships<br>Roles of males and females in society<br>Relating to others | Changing relationships in families and friendships<br>Group affiliation and loyalty<br>Portrayal of sexuality and relationships<br>Sexual stereotypes<br>Relating to others |

#### APPENDIX II – Vocabulary to be taught in the sensitive areas

| Class          | Language Taught  |
|----------------|--|
| Junior Infants | “Womb”<br>“Penis”, “vagina” and “urethra”-taught as obvious physical differences between boy/girl<br><br>“Breast-feeding” may be used in conversations as a means of feeding a baby. |
| Senior Infants | As for Junior Infants  |
| First Class    | “penis” and *urethra” taught in terms of passing urine<br>(See DES Resource Materials p 70-71)   |
| Second Class   | As for First class   |

|              |  |
|--------------|--|
| Third Class  | Revision of terms listed above.<br>“Developing foetus”   |
| Fourth Class | “Developing foetus”<br>“Umbilical cord”<br><br>“Navel”   |
| Fifth Class  | “Growth spurt”<br>“menstruation”<br><br>“development of breasts”<br><br>“ovaries”<br><br>“fallopian tubes”<br><br>“sperm production”<br><br>“erection”<br><br>“sexual intercourse”<br><br>“conception”<br><br>“puberty”, “human reproduction” and “sexual intercourse” in the context of a loving family.<br><br>(See DES RSE resource materials for 5 <sup>th</sup> and 6 <sup>th</sup> ) |
| Sixth Class  | As in 5 <sup>th</sup> class<br>“pregnancy”<br><br>Development of baby in womb<br><br>Contractions  |

|               |
|---------------|
| Birth of baby |
|---------------|