



Presentation Senior School

"A community of learners inspired by the vision and values of Nano Nagle"

Policy Statement on Relationships & Sexuality Education

Presentation Senior School is a Roman Catholic School. As such we aim to promote the full and harmonious development of all aspects of the person of the pupil intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual, based on belief in God and Catholic values.

Within the school, a spirit of mutual respect is promoted between children, parents, teacher, ancillary staff and members of the Board of Management. Pupils are drawn by example and teaching to appreciate and respect people of different religious affiliations and of different nationalities. Teachers are sensitive to the needs and particular circumstances of the pupils and supportive of their parent's role.

The Relationships and Sexuality programme will be taught within this ethos.

Within our school, we promote the following ideals:

- People feel valued.
- Self-esteem is fostered.
- Respect, tolerance and fairness are evident.
- High expectations and standard are promoted.
- There is support for those with difficulties.
- Open communication is the norm.
- Effort is recognized and rewarded.
- Uniqueness / difference is valued.
- Conflict is handled constructively.
- Initiative and creativity are encouraged.
- Social, moral and civic values are promoted.

The RSE programme will reflect these ideals.

Definition of RSE

RSE aims to help children learn, at home and at school, about their own development and about their friendships and relationships with others. This work will be based on

- Developing a good self-image.
- Promoting respect for themselves and others.
- Providing them with appropriate information.



RSE aims to provide opportunities for the children in our school to learn about relationships and sexuality in a way that helps them think and act in a moral, caring and responsible way.

Relationship of RSE to SPHE

RSE will be taught within the wider context of Social Personal and Health Education and religious and moral education. The programme will be covered using a cross-curricular approach but some lesson topics will be taught under specific curricular headings. For these sensitive lessons, the cross-curricular approach will not apply.

What the school currently provides

As many of the objectives of RSE are similar to those in other curricular area, much of its content will be treated in a cross-curricular manner. RSE shares content with the following subject area:

- Language and RSE – providing children with the correct vocabulary for different situations is one of the main objectives of the RSE programme.
- Social, environmental and scientific education and RSE – this area includes history, geography, science and health education.
- Religious education and RSE – the Alive-O programme currently in use in our school provide many opportunities for addressing the topics of friendships and relationships.
- Physical education and RSE – the emphasis on enjoyment of, and positive attitude towards, physical activity is important in fostering self-esteem and enhancing the personal growth and development of the individual.
- Arts Education and RSE – RSE focuses primarily on the development of the individual. Opportunities for individual expression are found in music, dance and drama.
- School Policy on Bullying.
- Promotion of healthy eating in school
- Recycling.

Aims of RSE

After 8 years in Primary School the programme will have succeeded in:

- Enhancing the personal development, self-esteem and well-being of the child.
- Helping the child to develop healthy friendships and relationships.
- Fostering an understanding of, and a healthy attitude to, human sexuality and relationships in a moral, spiritual and social framework.
- Enabling the child to acquire an understanding of, and respect for, human love, sexual intercourse and reproduction.
- Developing and promoting in the child a sense of wonder and awe at the process of birth and new life.
- Enabling the child to be comfortable with the sexuality of oneself and others while growing and developing.



Broad Objectives

When due account is taken of intrinsic abilities and varying circumstances, the Relationships and Sexuality Education curriculum should enable the child to:

- 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 differing family patterns.
- Come to value family life and appreciate the responsibilities of parenthood.
- Develop strategies to make decisions, solve problems and implement actions in various personal, social and health contexts.
- Become aware of the variety of ways in which individuals grow and change and understand that their developing sexuality is an important aspect of self-identity.
- Develop personal skills which will help to establish and sustain healthy personal relationships.
- Develop some coping strategies to protect self and others from various forms of abuse.
- Acquire and improve skills of communication and social interaction.
- Acquire and use an appropriate vocabulary to discuss feelings, sexuality, growth and development.
- Develop a critical understanding of external influences on lifestyles and decision making.

Guidelines for the Management and Organisation of RSE in our School.

The RSE content and methodology to be used will be based on the **Resource Materials for Relationships and Sexuality Education** as provided by the **Department of Education and Skills** based on the **Interim Guidelines for Primary Schools** drawn up by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) and the official Bishop's Conference Document on RSE.

This programme will be delivered after a process of consultation between parents, teachers and Board of Management. In order to promote the joint involvement of parents and teachers in implementing the RSE programme, the following will be available for review to parents at the start of every school year.

- The report of the Expert Advisory Group on RSE.
- The interim Guidelines on RSE for primary school.
- The RSE programme details for each class.
- RSE Resource Materials (Teacher's books).

The principal and teachers are also available to assist parents.



Parent/Guardian Rights

Our school is committed to working with parents and acknowledges that parents are prime educators of their children. Parents may wish to exercise their right to withdraw their children from RSE classes. In such cases, the Principal will explore with the parents their concerns and any impact that withdrawal may have on the pupil.

Confidentiality

Teachers will deliver lessons in a spirit of respect for the rights of the children and their families concerning privacy and confidentiality.

Organisation – Delivery

In our school, the class teacher will teach the programme as he/she has most contact with the children. However, if this is deemed inappropriate or unsuitable, the Principal will make arrangements for the Core Periods of the programme to be taught by someone suitable.

With regard to the sensitive issues, i.e. puberty, adolescence, conception and birth, parents of 6th Class pupils will be informed in advance of the commencement of these lessons.

RELATIONSHIPS AND SEXUALITY EDUCATION

Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) is an integral part of SPHE

The lessons related to RSE can be found in the following strands and strand units:

MYSELF – SELF-IDENTITY, TAKING CARE OF MY BODY, GROWING AND CHANGING, SAFETY AND PROTECTION.

MYSELF AND OTHERS – MYSELF AND MY FAMILY, MY FRIENDS AND OTHER PEOPLE, RELATING TO OTHERS.

UNDER THE HEADING ‘TAKING CARE OF MY BODY’:

- INFANTS AND 1st/2nd CLASS PUPILS ARE EXPECTED TO BE ABLE TO NAME PARTS OF THE MALE AND FEMALE BODY USING APPROPRIATE ANATOMICAL TERMINOLOGY.
- 5th/6th CLASS PUPILS ARE EXPECTED TO BE ABLE TO IDENTIFY AND DISCUSS PHYSICAL AND OTHER CHANGES THAT OCCUR IN GIRLS AND BOYS AT PUBERTY AND TO UNDERSTAND THE REPRODUCTIVE SYSTEMS OF MALE AND FEMALE ADULTS.

UNDER THE HEADING ‘GROWING AND CHANGING’:

- 3rd/4th CLASS PUPILS ARE EXPECTED TO BE ABLE TO DISCUSS THE STAGES AND SEQUENCE OF DEVELOPMENT OF THE HUMAN BABY FROM CONCEPTION TO BIRTH.



- 5th/6th CLASS PUPILS ARE EXPECTED TO BE ABLE TO UNDERSTAND SEXUAL INTERCOURSE AND BIRTH WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF A COMMITTED LOVING RELATIONSHIP

Ratification of Policy

This RSE policy was ratified by the Board of Management in March 2005.

