

Relationships and Sexuality Education Policy

Our School Philosophy

As a school under Church of Ireland management which embraces children from that tradition and other traditions, we endeavour to help children learn, at home and in school, about their own development and about their friendships and relationships with others. This work will be based on developing a good self-image, within a caring environment, sensitive to individuality, promoting respect for themselves and others and providing them with appropriate information.

Definition of R.S.E.

R.S.E. aims to provide opportunities for children and young people to learn about relationships and sexuality in ways that help them think and act in a moral, caring and responsible way.

Aims

- ❖ to enhance the personal development, self esteem and well being of the child
- ❖ to help the child 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
- ❖ as appropriate to their development, to enable the child to acquire an understanding of, and respect for human love, and reproduction
- ❖ to develop and promote in the child a sense of wonder at the process of birth and new life
- ❖ to enable the child to be comfortable with their own sexuality and that of others, while they are growing and developing

Class Teacher

The following will be taught by the class teacher during S.P.H.E. class in relation to R.S.E.:

Junior Infants – 2nd class

- ❖ naming parts of the male and female body using appropriate anatomical terms (i.e. penis, vagina and breasts) and identifying some of their functions
- ❖ understanding that reproduction, birth, life, growth and death are all part of a life cycle

3rd – 6th class

- ❖ understanding the physical changes taking place in both the male and female body
- ❖ discussing the stages and sequence of development of the human baby from conception to birth

See appendix for further details and breakdown of topics for each class level

Outside Expertise

Outside expertise will be brought in to deal with the following issues with 5th and 6th class on alternate years:

- ❖ identifying and discussing the physical and other changes that occur in boys and girls with the onset of puberty

female

hormonal changes, changing body shape, development of breasts, appearance of pubic hair, onset of menstruation (periods)

male

hormonal changes, physical growth, enlargement of testicles and penis, appearance of pubic hair, underarm hair and facial hair, breaking of the voice, beginning of sperm production, onset of nocturnal emissions (wet dreams)

- ❖ understanding the reproductive system of both male and female
- ❖ understand sexual intercourse, conception and birth within the context of a committed, loving relationship

Opt-Out Clause

All new parents will be given a copy of this policy. They will have an opportunity to opt out of R.S.E. Under the opt-out clause of the policy parents will have the option to withdraw their child from these classes by collecting them early from school. However the school cannot guarantee that incidental contact with the concept or the language would not occur during the school year.

Ratification and Communication

Parents may view a copy of this policy by appointment in the school.