



## **R.S.E. POLICY**

### **(Relationships & Sexuality Education)**

The original RSE Policy for Naíscóil Íde, which was drawn up by elected representatives from the teaching staff, the parent body and the school's Board of Management in 1999, has been reviewed and updated during the school year 2014/2015.

#### **Introduction**

Relationships and Sexual Education is an integral part of Social, Personal and Health Education (S.P.H.E.). It provides structured opportunities for pupils to acquire knowledge and understanding of human relationships and sexuality in ways that help them to form values and establish behaviours within a moral, spiritual and social framework.

#### **Relationship of R.S.E. to S.P.H.E.**

R.S.E forms part of the SPHE programme. SPHE looks at issues such as relationships at home and in school, building self-esteem, and learning skills of communication, decision-making and expressing feelings in an appropriate way. R.S.E. lessons take place within the context of the S.P.H.E. programme. Central to R.S.E. education is the fostering of self-esteem through which the pupil becomes more responsible in making choices and decisions in all aspects of life.

#### **School Provision**

The S.P.H.E. curriculum is presented in three strands

- Myself
- Myself & Others
- Myself & the Wider World.

A number of programmes are used

- Grow in Love (Religion Programme)
- Relationships and Sexuality Education
- The Stay Safe Programme
- Walk Tall
- Be Safe

These programmes have been in use in our school for a number of years.

## **Aims of the R.S.E. Programme**

The home is the natural environment in which R.S.E. should take place. The school has a role to play in supporting and complementing the work of the parents. Our aims are: -

- To help pupils understand and develop friendships and relationships.
- 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 relationships in a moral, spiritual and social framework.
- To develop and promote in the child a sense of understanding at the process of birth and new life.
- To enable the child to be comfortable with the sexuality of one self and others while growing and developing.
- To acquire appropriate vocabulary to discuss thoughts feelings and attitudes.

## **Management and Organisation of R.S.E**

We in Naíscoil Íde recognise that education is a partnership approach between parents, teachers and school authorities. We are committed to the spiritual, emotional, physical and cognitive development of the children in our care while recognising at all times that parents are the primary educators, and that the home is the natural environment in which should take place. The role of the school, therefore, is seen as one of support for the work of the home in this area.

## **Teaching the R.S. E. Programme**

Each teacher will be responsible for the delivery of the programme to his /her own class.

- **Methodologies**  
The teaching methods will be based on sound educational principles as applied in all areas of the curriculum. These methods will be child-centred and appropriate to the age and stage of development of the pupil. A variety of methodologies will be used when teaching R.S.E., such as classroom discussion, circle time, drama and role-play. Questions arising from lesson content will be answered in an age-appropriate manner. Should a pupil require information that is not in line with the curriculum content and not considered age-appropriate for the general body of pupils, the school will not give such information and refer the pupil to the parents.
- **Informing and Involving Parents**  
The Strand Unit *'Taking Care of my Body'* is taught in Senior Infants. This lesson focuses on using the right vocabulary for the body parts such as tummy, blood, bones, heart, penis and

vulva. Senior Infant teachers will decide on the exact date this lesson will be taught and parents will be notified in advance.

- **Withdrawal of pupils from the R.S.E. Programme**

The RSE programme is inclusive and so we actively discourage withdrawal. However the right of parents to withdraw their child from the “**Taking Care of my Body lesson**” will be honoured on the understanding that the parents are taking full responsibility for this aspect of education themselves. It is the responsibility of the parent to inform the school in writing of their decision to withdraw (This written directive will be stored in the child’s file). However, the school encourages parents to allow their child to participate in the lesson so that the child may learn the correct vocabulary for certain body parts. A child will be withdrawn from class for the duration of a discrete S.P.H.E. lesson pending completion of the lesson.

- **Child Protection**

Where there is disclosure by a child of abuse, or a teacher has any concerns about a child, the school authorities will follow our Child Protection Policy. The Principal is our Designated Liaison Person.

### **Provision for Ongoing Support, Development and Review**

- All teachers are qualified to teach the S.P.H.E. Curriculum
- Parents are made aware of and offered opportunity for input into policy
- Relevant R.S.E. resources are available in the school and if the need arises, others are purchased
- A review of this policy and programme will take place on a regular basis. Any amendments necessary as a result of such review will be undertaken

### **Ratification and Communication**

This policy review was ratified by the Board of Management in May 2015. This policy was reviewed in November 2021. It will be reviewed in 2026 or earlier if deemed necessary

The Board of Management reserves the right to add to or amend this policy from time to time.

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Mr. John Swords  
Chairperson  
Board of Management

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Clare Ring  
Principal



