



## Relationships and Sexual Education Curriculum Policy for Infants to 6<sup>th</sup> Class

### 1 OUR VISION

We are a multi-denominational, co-educational, child-centred community national school. We believe that education is best achieved in a warm and joyful environment where children are actively engaged in the learning process.

### 2 AIMS OF RSE

- To bring warmth to the subject and emphasize the context of loving human relationships.
- To encourage pupils to develop respect for themselves and others.
- To provide opportunities for pupils to develop appropriate skills to make informed decisions.
- To encourage and develop communication skills with a view to foster positive relationships.
- To give an understanding of, and positive attitude towards one's own bodily functions and those of the opposite sex.
- To inform pupils of personal health and safety issues.
- To foster an understanding of, and a healthy attitude to human sexuality and relationships in a moral, spiritual and social framework.

### 3 CONTENT

The RSE Programme is taught as part of the SPHE programme. We make use of the Resource Materials for RSE recommended by the Department of Education and Skills, published on the PDST website (<http://www.pdst.ie/node/811>).

**Strand Units from the Social Personal and Health Education Curriculum:**

**They are taught over 2 years**

- Taking Care of My Body - Year 1
- Growing and Changing - Year 1
- Safety and Protection - Year 2

#### 3.1 TOPICS FOR KINDERGARTEN, 1ST AND 2ND CLASS

- Baby grows in the mother's womb (not 'tummy') until born.
- Good and bad secrets.
- 1st & 2nd class only - Birth, Life, Growth and Death (The Cycle of Life).

**When the opportunity arises, teachers will use the proper anatomical language to label body parts.**

### 3.2 TOPICS FOR 3RD AND 4TH CLASS

- Name body parts and identify some of their functions.
- Unsafe and inappropriate secrets and touches.
- Identify people, places, and situations which threaten personal safety.
- Care of babies and young children
- Growth in the womb (stages and sequence of development of the human body from conception to birth).

### 3.3 TOPICS FOR 5TH AND 6TH CLASS

- Understanding physical changes - male and female body.
- Feelings and emotions affected by physical changes at puberty.
- Hormonal and physical change in male and female bodies.
- Reproductive system of males and females.
- Intercourse, conception and birth.

## 4 ORGANISATION

- We acknowledge that the parents are the primary educators of their children in developing relationships and knowledge of themselves and others. The programme provided by the school is to supplement and assist the parent's role.
- The school will ensure that the curriculum is covered in all areas by a teacher or outside speakers as approved by the Board. Training in the teaching of the RSE curriculum, based annually at the Galway Education Centre, will be offered to teachers.
- Teachers are entitled to opt out of teaching any aspect of the RSE curriculum. Another teacher in the school may be asked to teach for them. Otherwise the Board of Management will employ an outside speaker to teach the curriculum.
- Should a pupil request information about a topic that is not part of the primary school curriculum content, the school will attempt to address the request sensitively and encourage the child to discuss the question at home if they wish.
- In accordance with the Department of Education and Skill's guidelines on RSE we acknowledge and respect the right of parents to withdraw children if they wish. A broad outline of sessions will be sent in writing to parents well in advance of sensitive areas of the curriculum with a parental option for their child to be withdrawn from certain lessons. It is the responsibility of the parent to inform the school of this decision.
- The school is very aware of the sensitivity of certain areas of this curriculum. Teachers will, at all times, approach these topics with due care and sensitivity.
- As our school is organised in a multi-class system, both classes will be taught the programme in the last term of each school year.
- In the senior classes there are certain topics that may require boys and girls to be taught separately.
- Teachers will not answer personal questions about themselves nor require the child to give information of a personal nature which they do not wish to share.
- Children with learning challenges will be included in all class teaching of RSE topics, and will additionally receive further support from Learning Support or Resource teachers making use of differentiated resources as appropriate.

## 5 POSSIBLE SENSITIVE ISSUES

The RSE programme also includes a number of possible sensitive issues, listed below. It is school policy to deal with these issues through structured lessons, as naturally as possible and without undue emphasis. Listing the issues here, along with the classes in which they are first taught, enable parents to prepare their children in advance for a particular topic, if they so wish (see section on parents / guardians as primary educators).

Lesson Title	Class	Topic or Language
Caring for New Life	Infants	Language: baby in womb for 9 months, breast feeding.
My Body	Infants	Language used; penis, vagina.
How my Body Works	First Class	Language: urine passes through the penis in boys and the urethra in girls.
The Wonder of New Life	Second Class	Language: baby leaves its mother's womb through the vagina.
Preparing for New Life	Third Class	Language: umbilical cord, navel.
The Wonder of New Life	Fourth Class	Topic: the developing foetus
Growing and Changing	Fourth Class	Topics: physical/emotional changes in puberty. Menstruation (taught to fourth class girls only)
My Body Grows and changes	Fifth Class	Topics: puberty (revised), reproduction Menstruation (taught to boys and girls)
The Wonder of New Life	Fifth Class	Topic: reproduction
Relationships and New Life	Sixth Class	Topics: sexual intercourse in the context of a committed, loving relationship; reproduction

Topics such as sexually transmitted diseases, contraception, masturbation and abortion are not covered in the primary school RSE programme

### The RSE units 'My Family' and 'Families'

When preparing for and delivering the RSE Themes *This is My Family* (Junior and Senior Infants), *My Family* (First – Fifth Classes) and *Families* (Sixth Class) all family situations will be acknowledged and treated respectfully.

We promote a school environment of mutual respect that is inclusive, safe and positive.

## 6 CONFIDENTIALITY

Where there is a disclosure by a child of abuse, or a teacher has concerns about a child, the school authorities will follow our Child Safeguarding Statement procedures. The Principal is our Designated Liaison Person (DLP).

## 7 WITHDRAWAL FROM RSE

- Since RSE is an obligatory requirement of the Department of Education and Science, it should be inclusive.
- Cuan na Gaillimhe CNS actively promotes the implementation of RSE and strongly discourages withdrawal.
- The school will, however, take account of parental concerns and a parent's right to withdraw a pupil from themes pertaining to sensitive issues will be honoured on the understanding that the parent(s) is taking full responsibility for this aspect of education themselves.
- Parents are obliged to inform the school in writing of their decision to withdraw the child from the sensitive issues classes.
- However, the school can take no responsibility for any information, arising from classroom discussion, which the pupil may receive outside the direct teaching of the RSE lessons.

The RSE policy will be published on the school website.

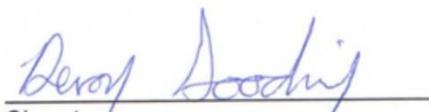
The Parent Association *may* organize National Parent Council run trainings for parents and teachers about RSE in schools and at home.

## 8 IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW

Cuan na Gaillimhe - CNS believes that the school community must be involved to successfully implement the RSE Primary Curriculum. In accordance with the systematic cycle of review of policies adopted in Cuan na Gaillimhe CNS, it will be reviewed initially after one year and then every two years, unless there is a compelling reason to review it earlier.

This policy will be ratified by the Board of Management of Cuan na Gaillimhe CNS on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of April 2018, reviewed on the 25<sup>th</sup> of March 2019 and 27<sup>th</sup> of April 2020.

Chairperson of the Board of Management



Deroy Scodny

This school plan has been issued to all teaching staff and copies will be made available for inspection by parents/inspectors and other interested parties on request from school office.

To be reviewed: May 2022