



Relationships and Sexuality Education Policy

Rationale

Education in Scoil Phádraig is characterised by care for the individual. The child's many needs are met in a well-structured environment where they can live fully the life of a child. While nourishing the child's young life, we hope to provide them with a solid foundation for future growth and development in a Christian tradition. 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 provide for all the needs of the student body and respond appropriately to sensitive and emotive issues relating to emerging sexuality. SPHE and RSE will be taught in accordance with the curriculum guidelines of the Department of Education and in content of the Catholic ethos and philosophy of the school.

Aims of our RSE programme

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



Broad Objectives of the RSE programme

The RSE programme should enable the child:

- To acquire and develop knowledge and understanding of self.
- To develop a positive sense of self-awareness, self-esteem and self-worth.
- To develop an appreciation of the dignity, uniqueness and well-being of others.
- To understand the nature, growth and development of relationships within families, in friendships and in wider contexts.
- To develop an awareness of differing family patterns
- To come to value family life and appreciate the responsibilities of parenthood.
- To develop strategies to make decisions, solve problems and implement actions in various personal, social and health contexts.
- To become aware of the variety of ways in which individuals grow and change, and to understand that their developing sexuality is an important aspect of self-identity.
- To develop personal skills which will help them to establish and sustain healthy personal relationships.
- To develop some coping strategies to protect themselves and others from various forms of abuse.
- To acquire and improve skills of communication and social interaction.
- To acquire and use an appropriate vocabulary to discuss feelings, sexuality, growth and development.
- To develop in the child a critical understanding of external influences on lifestyles and decision making.



Overview of Content

Strand: Myself

Strand Units:

Infant Classes:

I am unique

My body

As I grow I change

New life

Feeling safe

Feelings and emotions

Making decisions

1st and 2nd Classes

I am unique

My body

As I grow I change

New life

Feeling safe

Feelings and emotions

Making decisions

Strand: Myself and Others

Infant Classes:

Myself and my family

Myself and my friends

Special people in my life

Relating to others

Myself and my family

Myself and my friends

Other people

Relating to others

Strand: Myself

Strand Units:

Strand: Myself and others



3rd and 4th Classes:

Accepting myself

Physical development

Growing and changing

Birth and new life

Feelings and emotions

Personal hygiene

Personal safety

Making decisions

5th and 6th Classes

Accepting myself

Physical development

Becoming an adult

Parenthood

Feelings and emotions

Personal hygiene

Personal safety

Making decisions

Roles and responsibilities in families

Portrayal of sexuality and relationships

Roles of males and females in society

Relating to others

Changing relationships

Group affiliation and loyalty

Portrayal of sexuality and relationships

Sexual stereotypes

Relating to others



RSE Language

Junior & Senior Infants

Term '**Chest**' to identify upper body in boys & girls.

Terms '**Penis**' and '**vulva**' will be taught as the difference between boy and girl.

Term '**Womb**' will be taught as a special place where a baby grows until birth.

Term '**breastfeeding**' may be used as a means of feeding the baby.

1st & 2nd Class

1st & 2nd Class Revision

Term '**Chest**' to identify upper body in boys and girls.

Terms '**Penis**' and '**vulva**' will be taught as the difference between boy and girl.

1st Class: Introduce terms '**vagina**', '**urine**' to explain that which is released by the kidneys when going to the toilet. (Boys & girls)

2nd Class: Introduce the term '**urethra**' in girls and '**penis**' in boys for passing urine.

1st Class: Introduce the term '**womb**' as the special place where babies grow until born.

2nd Class: each that the baby is in the **womb** for 9 months and may be **breast/bottle** fed when born.

3rd & 4th Class

3rd Class: Introduce terms '**hormones**' as chemicals which move around your body and cells.

4th Class: Introduce term '**Menstruation**'

3rd Class: Revise term '**Womb**'. Introduce terms '**umbilical cord**' and '**navel/belly button**'.

4th Class: Revise term '**womb**'. Introduce '**egg**', '**lining (womb)**', '**ready to be born**'.



5th & 6th Class

(Language taught to boys & girls).

Puberty, Ovaries-Ovum, Fallopian tube, Womb/Uterus, Cervix, Menstruation, Penis, Testicle, Scrotum, Sperm, Erection Wet Dreams

Sexual Intercourse, Conception, Ovum, Fallopian Tubes

Note: Discussed in the context of a committed and loving relationship.

Revise the Umbilical Cord.

Guidelines for the management and organisation of RSE in Scoil Phádraig:

We recognise that 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 for the work of the home in this area.

The approach in school is child-centered and will always take the age and stage of development of the children into account. Appropriate vocabulary relating to sexuality, growing up, physical changes, parts of the body and feelings will be used. The use of slang words will be discouraged.

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. Teachers may exercise discretion to contact parents themselves if they feel that a question is very inappropriate.

It is our policy not to answer personal questions and to discourage disclosure of personal or family information.

Our RSE programme is inclusive and so we actively discourage withdrawal. Should a parent seek to have their child withdrawn from the RSE lessons, the school will take account of parental concerns, and parents' right to withdraw their child 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.



Confidentiality

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 Procedures. The Principal is our Designated Liaison Person.

Ongoing support, development and review

The Board of Management of Scoil Phádraig supports the implementation of the RSE programme. We recognise that our school has a supportive role to that of the home and we have a commitment to ensuring that:


- Our teachers have access to CPD
- Relevant teaching materials are provided to teachers

Review

This policy will be subjected for review in 2025/2026

Ratified by the Board of Management

Signed

 21/02/2024

Chairperson

