

Carriglea N.S.

Relationships and Sexuality Education Policy

School Ethos:

As defined in our School Policy our hope for our pupils is that they will be happy, confident, hopeful and responsible individuals with a good standard of education.

Through our R.S.E. programme we hope to enhance the self-esteem of the pupils and enable them to form values and establish behaviours within a moral, spiritual and social framework.

Equal Opportunities:

The R.S.E. programme will be available to all pupils regardless of age, culture, disability, gender, religion or social class.

Definition of R.S.E.

R.S.E. aims to help children learn about their own development and about their friendships and relationships with others. It helps children to develop a good self-image, promotes respect for themselves and others and provides them with appropriate information. R.S.E. provides opportunities for children to learn about relationships and sexuality in ways that help them think and act in a moral, caring and responsible way.

Context:

R.S.E. will be taught within the context of S.P.H.E.

Sensitive issues will be covered within the strand units "Taking Care of my Body" and "Growing and Changing". The Stay Safe and Walk Tall programmes are used through the school. The Stay Safe is used in the second year of our SPHE plan. A letter is sent to parents prior to commencement of the programme outlining to them what material will be covered. All homework sheets will require parent's signature. At the end of each stay safe block, all teachers will sign stating that they have covered the required content for that year. This will be presented to the B.O.M. A letter will also be sent to parents prior to the commencement of the teaching of sensitive elements of the RSE programme with the strand unit "Growing and Changing" and "Taking Care of my Body" in term 2 each year outlining the content for each grouping.

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
- To enable the child to acquire an 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

The Relationship and Sexuality Education Curriculum should enable the child to:

- Acquire and develop knowledge and understanding of self
- 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

Management and Organisation:

- Parents are acknowledged as the primary educators of their children and we work in a supportive role
- All information delivered will be within the programme as set down by the N.C.C.A.
- All content objectives will be covered by the time the children leave 6th class
- Some aspects of R.S.E. will be taught through a number of time-tabled core periods with the remainder being taught in a cross-curricular manner
- RSE will be taught in term 2 every second year. A letter will be sent home to families prior to commencement outlining sensitive elements that will be covered. See letter attached.
- Many aspects of the programme will be taught or reinforced by the general climate and everyday interactions of the classroom and school
- As we are in a multi-class situation suitable arrangements will be made where necessary to separate classes if deemed necessary
- In general boys and girls will not be separated except at 5th/6th class level where some issues relating to the biological aspects are being taught. This is to allow for questioning and explanation
- Teachers right to opt out from teaching the sensitive issues will be honoured
- A suitable guest speaker may be invited into the school yearly to deliver the sensitive issues of the senior class programme
- A parent's right to withdraw a pupil from R.S.E. will be honoured on the understanding that the parent is taking full responsibility for this aspect of education themselves. It is the responsibility of the parent to inform the school of this decision in writing
- Should a pupil require information that is not in line with the curriculum content and considered not to be age appropriate for the general body of pupils the school will refer the child to his/her parents
- An outline of the lessons will be available to parents on request before the commencement of the programme each year. Handouts copy of Busy Bodies booklet is sent out to each child's home prior to commencement of programme

Child Protection:

The school follows the DES child protection guidelines and has a Child Protection Policy with the Principal as Designated Liaison Person. In cases of disclosure; the DLP will follow the procedures as set out in Children First.

Resources:

N.C.C.A. curriculum guidelines

Stay Safe Programme

Relationships and Sexuality Manuals

Busy Bodies

Making the Links and Beyond - Revised Edition

Review:

- This policy will be reviewed every year or as required
- All partners will be informed of any amendments necessary after such a review
- R.S.E. resources will be kept up to date
- Relevant information will be provided for all members of the school community

Ratification:

This Policy was presented to the B.O.M. of Carriglea N.S. for ratification,

Chairperson: Conor Blackwell

Date: June 2021

Dear Parent(s)/ Guardian(s),

Relationships and Sexuality education is an integral part of the SPHE programme. The sensitive elements of the Relationships and Sexuality education programme are covered under the Strand Units, 'Growing and Changing' and 'Taking Care of My Body'. We will be completing these Strand Units with all class levels in the following weeks.

Topics covered up to 2nd include:

- Keeping safe
- **Bodily changes from birth (birth-9)**
- Making age appropriate choices
- Appreciating the variety of family types and a variety of family life that exists in our school and community
- Recognising and expressing feelings
- Self-care, hygiene, diet, exercise and sleep
- Expressing opinions and listening to others
- **Naming the parts of the male/female body using appropriate terms (Junior/Senior infants)** *The language taught at this level will be: womb, breast feeding, penis, vagina*
- **Naming the parts of the male/female body using appropriate anatomical terms and identify some of their functions (1st / 2nd)** *The Language taught at this level will be penis, vagina, vulva, womb, breast feeding, urethra*

Topics from 3rd to 6th include:

- **Bodily changes**
- Healthy eating, personal hygiene, exercise
- Keeping safe
- Expressing feelings
- Appreciating the variety of family types within our school community and how we use these family relationships to shape us
- Making healthy and responsible decisions
- Forming friendships
- **Discuss the stages and sequence of development of the human baby in the womb (3rd - 4th class)**
- **Introduction to puberty and changes (3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th class)** *The language taught at this level will be the language from previous years, umbilical cord and changes in puberty (4th class)*
- **Changes that occur in boys and girls with the onset of puberty (5th and 6th class)**
- **Reproductive system of male/female adults (5th and 6th class)**
- **Understanding sexual intercourse, conception and birth within the context of a committed loving relationship (5th and 6th class)** *The language taught at this level will be wet dreams, language used in Busy Bodies programme, semen, sexual intercourse, periods*

Yours sincerely,
