

St. Patrick's De La Salle Boys' National School

Relationships and Sexuality Education Policy

Introductory Statement

The school has a responsibility to put in place an R.S.E. policy as part of the wider, Social, Personal and Health Education curriculum subject area. The process was initiated in 1997 when policy committee (steering committee of 6 people) was charged with setting parameters for the organization and management of R.S.E. in the school.

Rationale

The need for this policy arises from our schools obligation to provide for all the needs of the student body and respond appropriately to sensitive and emotive issues relating to emerging sexuality.

Aims

- a) To enhance the personal development, well-being and self-esteem of each child.
- b) To enable each child to gain an understanding of and respect for human love, reproduction and sexual activity in a sensitive and measured way.
- c) To enable the child develop healthy friendships and relationships.

Relationships to School Ethos

The school ethos affirms and supports close links between school and home. To this end parents were encouraged to play a meaningful role in the R.S.E. policy formation, through a series of meetings, full representation on the Steering Committee and the ratification of the finished product. Parents also have the right to withhold their children from participating in R.S.E classes.

School Provision

Strand Units

Myself -

Self identity, taking care of my body, growing and changing, safety and protection.

Myself and Others – Myself and family, friends and relating to other people.

Taking Care of My Body – Naming parts of the male and female body using appropriate terminology (Junior and Lower Middle classes). Identifying physical changes, Understanding puberty and the Reproductive System (Senior Classes)

Growing and Changing – The stages of development of a baby from conception to birth (Middle Classes).
Understanding sexual relations within the context of a committed loving relationship (Senior Classes).

Teachers do not cover topics such as contraception and same sex friendships. Children who ask questions in class on content outside the curriculum are talked to individually and discreetly. Parents are usually informed and asked to talk to their child.

Methodology

Circle time is used extensively in Junior Classes to build confidence and address fears. Boys and girls are taught together in all classes. Senior pupils are treated in a mature way and are encouraged to discuss issues that arise with their parents. The Alive O 8 resource materials are used extensively in Senior Classes.

The Stay Safe and Walk Tall programmes.

The Stay Safe programme is taught in all classes. Aspects of the programme such as bullying are revised in all classes.

- **Topics covered up to 2nd class include:-**
 - Keeping safe.
 - Naming bodily parts using correct terminology.
 - Bodily changes during growth and development.
 - Making and keeping friends.
 - Making age appropriate choices.
 - Appreciating family life.
 - Recognizing and expressing feelings.
 - Self care, hygiene, diet, exercise and sleep (link with P.E. Healthy Eating Policy and S.P.H.E.)

- Expressing opinions and listening to others.
- **Topics covered from 3rd to 6th Classes include:-**
 - Bodily changes.
 - Healthy eating, personal hygiene, exercise.
 - Keeping safe.
 - Expressing feelings.
 - Family relationships.
 - Making healthy and responsible decisions.
 - Forming friendships.
 - Reproduction, conception (5th and 6th Classes)

Guidelines for Management

Parents have the primary responsibility for educating their children in sexual matters. The school R.S.E. programme acts as a support only to parents, and parents retain the right to withdraw their children from classes. The programme is taught within the ethos of the school and contemporary issues/topics are dealt with by the teacher at a level appropriate to the age and stage of development of pupils within a moral and spiritual framework. Teachers are present at all times when guest speakers are visiting a class.

Child Protection

The school follows the D.E.S. child protection guidelines and has a Child Protection policy with the Principal as Designated Liaison Person. In cases of disclosure the D.L.P. will follow the procedures as set out in primary school guidelines.

Teacher Choice/Staff Development

The teacher's right to choose is enshrined in the policy and if teachers do not wish to teach specific aspects of the programme or require additional resources, a suitable speaker will be

employed by the B.O.M. The teacher may need to plan the specific material to be covered and should be present during the talk.

The staff has availed of training in:-

- The Child House Prevention Programme (Stay Safe)
- Relationships and Sexuality Programme (R.S.E.)
- Walk Tall Programme (S.M.P.P.)

The whole-school plan is available on the teacher shared drive on each class computer and also in hardback copy in the principal's office. Each teacher is responsible for his/her long term and short term planning comprising of a yearly and fortnightly scheme of work. The cúntais míosiúla are also on the shared drive and further more retained in Mr. Waldron's Room (Special Duties Post) and principal's office.

School/Community Links

The school is involved in:-

- Athletics and Basketball inter-school competitions.
- Cumann na mBunscol – football, hurling and soccer
- Choir for First Communion and choir for Confirmation.
- Annual School Plays
- Credit Union Quiz.

Evaluation

- Teacher observation.
- Inventory of what needs to be changed.
- Ensuring all strands are covered.
- Teacher designed tasks and tests and self-evaluation.
- Community feedback.

Roles and Responsibilities

The whole school community of B.O.M., staff, pupils and parents play a key role in the formulation and implementation of the plan.