

POLICY TITLE

DOCUMENT CONTROL

REVISION HISTORY

[illegible]

1. Introductory Statement & Rationale

This policy statement is an approved approach to the teaching of RSE in St. Paul's Primary School. It was developed to inform teachers and parents as to what material is covered in the RSE programme within SPHE.

2. School Philosophy/Ethos

St. Paul's Primary School is a mixed Catholic school serving an urban area under the trusteeship of the Bishop of Limerick. Our school aims to give the children in our care a sound religious and moral education within the established Catholic ethos of the school and to help them establish a faith in God which will grow and develop. The ethos of St. Paul's can be seen in the everyday dealings with all those who work in the school and the relationships that they have with each other. It is manifested in the respect and consideration shown by teachers to pupils and vice versa. We are proud of the children who are part of our school and hope they go on to become fulfilled adults.

As a Catholic school St. Paul's Primary School seeks to nurture the dignity, uniqueness and wellbeing of every child in accordance with the values and teachings of the Catholic faith. The school recognises parents/guardians as the primary educators of their children and aims to support them in fostering healthy, respectful and caring relationships.

At the same time, St. Paul's Primary School recognises and respects the diversity of family life and relationships in modern Irish society. The RSE programme will be taught in an age-appropriate, sensitive and inclusive manner that affirms the dignity of every person, while remaining consistent with the characteristic spirit and Catholic ethos of the school.

3. Definition of RSE

RSE aims to provide opportunities for children to learn about relationships and sexuality in ways that help them to form values and establish behaviours within a moral, spiritual and social framework. It is an integral part of the Social, Personal and Health Education and is taught in this context. RSE aims to help children learn, at home and in school, about their own development, about their friendships and relationships with others. This work is based on developing a good self-image and self-esteem and providing them with appropriate information.

4. RSE in the context of our SPHE programme

SPHE is a subject on the school curriculum that provides opportunities for pupils to learn basic personal and social skills which foster integrity, self-confidence and self-esteem while nurturing sensitivity to the feelings and rights of others. It is taught from Junior Infants up to 6th class. RSE forms part of this programme. It is a spiral curriculum which ensures that topics are taught in a developmental manner through the child's primary school years. SPHE aims to develop the child's emotional, moral, social and spiritual growth as well as their intellectual, physical, political, religious and creative development. The content of the school's SPHE programme covers a wide range of topics such as healthy eating, alcohol and drug awareness, environmental issues, safety and social responsibility as well as RSE.

5. Including RSE in the Curriculum

RSE is facilitated in the following ways

- in the context of a positive school climate and atmosphere
- in the context of an effective code of behaviour and anti-bullying policy
- as part of religious education
- as part of timetabled SPHE
- on an integrated cross curricular basis

6. Aims of our RSE programme

- To help young people develop healthy friendships and relationships
- To enhance the personal development, self-esteem and well-being of the child.
- 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.

7. Guidelines for the Management and Organisation of RSE in our school:

Content

We recognise that the 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 of the work of the home in this area. The content of the RSE programme will be taught in accordance with the Department of Education Primary Curriculum Framework and the SPHE curriculum, including any updated guidance and curriculum developments introduced by the Department of Education and the NCCA.

- RSE will be taught in all classes
- The SPHE/RSE curriculum will be of a spiral nature, and all content objectives will be covered by the time children leave 6th class
- Questions arising from lesson content will be answered in an age-appropriate manner.
- All resources used in the teaching of the programme will be in keeping with the ethos of the school and in the spirit of this policy
- RSE will be delivered to the 5th and 6th class boys and girls by class teachers or through the use of an outside agency. This decision can be made each school year by the class teachers involved. The content of these lessons will be made available to parents. Any external facilitators engaged by the school will work under the guidance of the class teacher and in accordance with the school's RSE policy and Department of Education guidelines.
- For an outline of the RSE programme - see Appendix I
- For the vocabulary to be taught in the sensitive areas - see Appendix II

8. School Policies and Curricular Plans which support our RSE

Traditionally, we are a child-centred school. The educational and emotional needs of the children in our care are central to our curricular planning and policy making processes.

- Grow in Love
- SPHE Curriculum
- Stay Safe Programme
- School's Code of Behaviour and Discipline Policy
- Bí Cineálta
- Child Protection Policy
- Enrolment Policy
- ICT and Social Media Expected Use Policy
- Administration of Medicine Policy

In keeping with the sentiment and spirit of these policies, we informally support many of the aims on which RSE is modelled. We encourage good behaviour, open communication, understanding and tolerance of differences and respect for staff and others. We recognise that both pupils and staff have rights and responsibilities in our school. A sense of responsibility is fostered, and attention is paid to the well-being of all the members of the school community.

9. Timetabling

One half hour period per week is timetabled for each class for SPHE. RSE will be included in the programme taught during this time. It is envisaged that some aspects of RSE (including the sensitive issues, will be taught through a number of core periods while some material may be taught in a cross curricular manner. The "sensitive issues" of RSE will be taught in each classroom during the Second Term.

10. Parental Involvement

RSE is an ongoing process throughout life. Parents are acknowledged primary educators of their children and the school work in partnership with them in a supportive role. On enrolment of their child, parents will be provided with an overview of the SPHE/RSE programme and with a copy of this policy document. Each year prior to implementation of the RSE programme parents will be informed when the teacher will begin to teach the programme. The curriculum books and resource materials are available online on <https://oide.ie/primary/home/wellbeing/sphe/resources/> and parents are welcome to view these if desired.

11. Withdrawal from RSE

Since RSE is a required element of the SPHE curriculum, all children are encouraged to participate in the programme. However, parents/guardians who wish to withdraw their child from lessons dealing with sensitive aspects of RSE may do so by informing the school in writing. This parental right will be respected on the understanding that the parent is taking full responsibility for this aspect of education. In such

circumstances, parents/guardians are responsible for making alternative arrangements for their child during the relevant lesson time. The school cannot be held responsible for information or discussions relating to RSE that may arise informally among pupils outside the direct teaching of specific RSE lessons.

12. Pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN)

Consultation with parents of pupils with SEN may be required. At the request of parents of pupils with SEN, the school will facilitate the teaching of the lessons on 'sensitive issues' on another occasion individually or in a small group setting. A variety of teaching methodologies may be required for some children.

13. Confidentiality and Child Protection

Where there is disclosure by a child of abuse, the school will follow the Department of Education and Youth child protection guidelines and guidelines as set out in "Children First".

14. Resources

Stay Safe Programme

RSE Manuals

Making the Links

Other resource material as deemed appropriate by class teachers in consultation with the Principal

15. Provision for Ongoing Support

For parents

- Parents are welcome to view the curriculum if they wish
- There will be contact with parents prior to and during the teaching of lessons involving "sensitive issues". Parents of 5th and 6th class pupils will be informed how to access to digital copies of the 'Busy Bodies' booklet.

For teachers

- The Board of Management will support in-career development in the area of SPHE/RSE as opportunities arise

Appendix I

Overview of content Strand	Infant Classes		1st and 2nd Classes
Strand	Strand Units		
Myself	I am unique My Body As I grow I change New Life Feeling Safe Feelings and emotions Making decisions		I am unique My Body As I grow I change New Life Feeling Safe Feelings and emotions Making decisions
Myself and others	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	3rd and 4th Classes		5th and 6th Classes
Strand	Strand Units		
Myself	Accepting myself Physical development Growing and changing Birth and new life Feelings and emotions Personal Hygiene Personal Safety Making decisions		Accepting myself Physical development Becoming an adult Parenthood Feelings and emotions Personal Hygiene Personal Safety Making decisions
Myself and others	Roles and responsibilities in families Portrayal of sexuality and relationships Roles of males and females in society Relating to others		Changing relationships in families and friendships Group affiliation and loyalty Portrayal of sexuality and relationships Sexual stereotypes Relating to others

Appendix II

Class	Language Taught
Junior/Senior Infants	"womb" "penis", "vulva" and "urethra"-taught as obvious physical differences between boy/girl "breast-feeding" may be used in conversations as a means of feeding a baby.
First/Second Class	"penis" and "urethra" taught in terms of passing urine (See DES Resource Materials p 70-71) "vagina"
Third/Fourth Class	Revision of terms listed above. "developing foetus" "umbilical cord" "navel"
Fifth/Sixth Class	"growth spurt" "menstruation" "development of breasts" "ovaries" "fallopian tubes" "sperm production" "erection" "wet dreams" "sexual intercourse" "conception" "puberty", "human reproduction" and "sexual intercourse" in the context of a loving family "pregnancy" Development of baby in womb "contractions" Birth of baby (See DES RSE resource materials for 5th and 6th)