

## RSE Policy of Kingsland NS

### **School Ethos and Philosophy**

This policy reflects the overall ethos of our school: Our school is a Co-Ed, Catholic, Primary school. The ethos of our school is to promote the formation of the pupil in the Catholic Faith and to foster a progressive and harmonious development of all their faculties, natural and supernatural. Implicit in this ethos is the intention to respect the rights of all children and their parents, regardless of their denomination. Our ethos means that we value respect, tolerance and openness through the lived experience of the children and school community. Parents have the primary role in the social, personal and health education of their children so their involvement will be encouraged as much as possible. SPHE and RSE are key components in supporting our school and children to develop into healthy young adults

### **Definition of Relationship and Sexuality Education (Guidelines p.7)**

Relationships and Sexuality Education is an integral part of SPHE and must be taught in this context. It provides structured opportunities for pupils to acquire knowledge and understanding of human sexuality and relationships through processes which will enable them to form values and establish behaviours within a moral, spiritual and social framework. In particular, it addresses the meaning of human sexuality, relationships, growth and development, relevant to personal and social skills.

### **What the school provides:**

The content outlined above will be taught every second year in keeping with the overall SPHE curriculum. It will be taught using lessons taken from the RSE documents as supplied by the Dept of Education and Skills. It will be left to the discretion of the principal and the class teachers to modify the content to meet the needs of the pupils. All pupils will be given access to this education.

### **Aims of our RSE Programme :**

- To enhance the personal development, self-esteem and wellbeing of the child
- To help the child to 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.

When due account is taken of abilities and varying circumstances, the RSE education curriculum should enable the child to (in conjunction with the SPHE curriculum)

## **Broad Objectives:**

- Acquire and develop knowledge and understanding of self
- Develop an appreciation of the dignity, uniqueness and wellbeing of others
- Develop a positive sense of self-awareness, self-esteem, and self-worth
- Understand the nature, growth and development of relationships within families, in friendships and 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 help to establish and sustain healthy personal relationships
- Develop coping strategies to protect self and others from various forms of abuse
- Acquire and improve skills of communication and social interaction
- Acquire the use of appropriate vocabulary to discuss feelings, sexuality, growth and development
- Develop a critical understanding of external influences on lifestyles and decision making.

## **Curriculum Guidelines Dept of Education Sensitive Areas.** (See Appendix 1 and 2 for Language Used and topics covered)

### **Junior Infants:**

Taking Care of my Body (p17 curriculum statement). Naming parts of the male and female body, using appropriate anatomical terms.

Growing and Changing: New Life, Develop an awareness of human birth, that a baby grows and is nurtured in the mother's womb until it is ready to be born.

### **First and Second Class:**

Taking Care of my body: (Curriculum statement p27). Name the parts of the male and female body, using appropriate anatomical terms and identify some of their functions.

### **Third and Fourth Class:**

Growing and Changing: ( Birth and New Life, p41 curriculum statement). Discuss the stages and the sequence of development of the human baby, from conception to birth- in the context of school ethos and plan.

## **Fifth and Sixth Class:**

Knowing about my Body, (p56 curriculum statement). Identify and discuss the Physical and other changes that occur in Boys and Girls with the onset of puberty and understanding that these take place at different rates for everyone. Understand reproductive system of both Male and Female adults.

Birth and New Life: (p58 curriculum statement), Understand sexual intercourse, conception and birth with the context of a committed, loving relationship.

## **Management and Organisation of RSE in our school**

Parents are acknowledged as the primary educators of their children and we work in the supportive role. Therefore the children should not be hearing this for the first time in the school. Parents have the primary role in discussing this with their children.

All objectives (as in the curriculum) will be covered by the time the children leave 6<sup>th</sup> Class.

Teachers have the right to opt out. The school will provide for alternative arrangements in this case if a teacher opts out.

The Policy was drawn up by a committee comprising of Teachers and parent representatives from the Board of Management in consultation with the general parent body of the school in the school. Mary Hoch a facilitator for SPHE assisted in drawing up the final document. It is reviewed as the need arises in light of new guidelines/ directives or as matters arise in consultation with parents and B.O.M.

Visitor: If teacher ops out then the B.O.M will provide a suitably qualified person to deliver the programme within the school environment in the presence of the class teacher.

## **Parental Involvement:**

A Parent's right to withdraw a pupil from the process will be honoured on the understanding that the parent is taking full responsibility for this aspect of the education themselves. Where this occurs the following will apply: (Education Act: 1988 Section 30 Sub 2 (E))

- Parents will be informed that the school fully implements the RSE strands of the SPHE programme including sensitive aspects of the programme at enrollment.
- Parents will be informed in advance of lessons on the sensitive areas of the RSE programme, with a letter relevant to what will be taught at their child's class level, example of letter see Appendix 3. <sup>[1]</sup><sub>[SEP]</sub>
- The letter will be issued in advance, giving parents an opportunity to meet with relevant class teachers if they so wish, to discuss or clarify what is covered and to prepare their children, it also gives parents an opportunity to become involved, to inform themselves of the programme content and to prepare children for the information they will acquire around the sensitive areas and discuss areas covered in RSE/SPHE.
- Parents are invited/welcome to view the curriculum and may speak to the class teacher if they have any concerns at any time during the year. The school acknowledges that parents have the primary responsibility for educating their children about growing and changing.

- Following discussion with Principal and Class Teacher, if a parent wishes to withdraw their child from the sensitive lessons it should be given in writing stating their reasons for doing so and this will be centrally filed.
- If a child has been withdrawn from the sensitive RSE lessons, the school takes no responsibility for what the child may hear following on from the teaching of the lessons. eg. What they may hear on yard.

Questions outside the direct content of the prescribed curriculum will be referred to the parent of the child.

An outline of the lessons will be available to the parents before the commencement of the programme.

If a child is absent for any reason at the time the RSE lessons are tabled it will be the responsibility of the parent to address the issues in the lessons.

### **Differentiation:**

Teachers use assessment and professional judgment to differentiate the programme and content to suit the needs of the class. Some techniques used:

- ensuring that objectives are realistic for the students
- ensuring that the learning task is compatible with prior learning
- providing opportunities for interacting and working with other students in small groups and spending more time on tasks
- organising the learning task into small stages and ensuring that the language used is pitched at the student's level of understanding
- understanding of the activity using task analysis, outlining the steps to be learned/completed in any given task, posing key questions to guide students through the different stages/processes, and to assist in self-direction and correction
- having short and varied tasks creating a learning environment through the use of concrete, and where possible every day materials, and by displaying word lists and laminated charts with pictures.

Sometimes the stage of development in a class can vary widely and strategies to differentiate in class can support gradual and appropriate teaching. The Resource Teacher will also assist in teaching the RSE programme if necessary.

### **Resources:**

Relationship and Sexuality Education Document Dept of Education and Skills.

Busy Bodies Health Board

Visitor if Required: eg Flora Duignan, Accord deliver a programme in the Family Life Centre Boyle for Sixth Class Pupils.

Links on the Bishops letter to school Principals: RSE In Catholic Schools document

Other links available on elphindiocese website

## **Review**

- The policy will be reviewed after every two years. The policy may also be reviewed at an earlier time should a need arise
- Parents and staff will be informed of any amendments made
- This plan was ratified by the Board of Management at a meeting\_\_11-2-2020\_\_\_\_\_.



## Appendix 1

Topics covered up to 2<sup>nd</sup> include:

- Keeping Safe
- Bodily changes from birth (birth-9)
- Making age appropriate choices
- Appreciating the variety of family types and an 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 anatomical terms (Junior/ Senior Infants)
- Naming the parts of the male/ female body using appropriate anatomical terms and identify some of their functions (1st/2nd)

Topics from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> include:

- Bodily changes
- Healthy eating, personal hygiene, exercise
- Keeping Safe
- Expressing Feelings
- Appreciating the variety of family types within our school and community and how we these family relationships shape us
- Making healthy and responsible decisions
- Forming Friendships
- Discuss the stages and sequence of development of the human baby in the womb(3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> class)
- Introduction to puberty and changes (3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> class)
- Changes that occur in boys and girls with the onset of puberty ( 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Class)
- Reproductive system of male/female adults (5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> class)
- Understanding sexual intercourse, conception and birth within the context of a committed loving relationship (5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> class )

# Appendix 2

Dear...

Relationships and Sexuality education is an integral part of the S.P.H.E 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 forthcoming weeks.

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- Self-care, hygiene, diet, exercise and sleep
- Expressing opinions and listening to others
- Naming the parts of the male/ female body using appropriate anatomical terms (Junior/ Senior Infants) *The Language at taught at this level will be.....*
- Naming the parts of the male/ female body using appropriate anatomical terms and identify some of their functions (1st/2nd) ) *The Language at taught at this level will be.....*

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- Keeping Safe
- Expressing Feelings
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- Changes that occur in boys and girls with the onset of puberty ( 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Class ) *The Language at taught at this level will be.....*
- Reproductive system of male/female adults (5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> class ) *The Language at taught at this level will be.....*
- Understanding sexual intercourse, conception and birth within the context of a committed loving relationship (5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> class ) *The Language taught at this level will be.....*



The class teacher will send home appropriate home school links pages from the Relationships and Sexuality manual which outline the material that will be covered in class and encourage further discussion on the topics at home.

If you have any concerns please make an appointment to see the class teacher.

Yours sincerely,

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# Appendix 3

## RSE Letter to Parents:

Dear Parent,

Leading on from our information night on RSE, the next step is to offer the opt-out right as parents of the children. This means that you will be responsible for the RSE education of your child and that your child will not take part in any of the RSE lesson in the school. Please fill in the form below and return to the school by \_\_\_\_\_. Only those that are taking this option should fill in the form. Lessons will begin on \_\_\_\_\_ and end on \_\_\_\_\_.

Yours sincerely,

\_\_\_\_\_ (Principal)

## RSE OPT-OUT FORM

As parent/guardian of: (Name of Child/Children)

\_\_\_\_\_

I/We undertake to impart the RSE programme to the child/children named above outside the school environment. The children named above will not take part in any of the RSE lessons in the school.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

