

LE CHEILE NATIONAL SCHOOL RSE POLICY

Introductory statement

This policy was formed from the existing policies of Southill Junior School and Galvone N.S. This process was facilitated by the Post Holder with responsibility for SPHE and was overseen by the Principal. The new policy was presented at the staff meeting as a discussion document, then presented to members of the parents council and then presented at a Board of Management meeting for ratification.

This document adheres to present departmental guidelines. As a Catholic school we provide a climate in which we strive to help all our children to achieve their full potential in a happy and caring environment. In doing so we are sensitive to the reality of our children's lives in a changing world. It is our ultimate aim and hope that the children who have experienced our care will leave with a pride in themselves and in everything they do and go on to live happy and fulfilled lives. This document outlines general issues rather than specific topics dealt with at any particular level. More detailed information can be obtained by referring to the NCCA guidelines for the teaching of R.S.E. in Primary Schools, or by direct contact with the school.

Rationale

Social Personal and Health Education contributes to developing the work of the school in promoting the health and well being of children and young people. Social Personal and Health Education 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.

Schools Philosophy

Le Cheile National School is a catholic school and our philosophy is based on Christian values.

The school endeavours to create an atmosphere of caring, co-operation, responsibility, respect, honesty, openness, tolerance and kindness. Children, parents, teachers, ancillary staff and the Board of Management are working in partnership support this.

The children attending the school are encouraged to be friendly, courteous and conscientious.

R.S.E. will be taught within the context of the Christian vision of human life and relationships, being sensitive to and recognising the cultural, religious and ethnic differences of children and the changing nature of the family structure.

All children, regardless of gender, religion, disability, race or family circumstances are valued equally.

R.S.E. will be taught in a way appropriate to the age, maturity and knowledge of the children. It is envisaged that all the 'sensitive issues' will be taught throughout the child's school life but flexibility will be employed and the best interests of the child will always influence content to be taught.

The school sees the parent/guardian as the primary educator and the teacher as a support. Provision will be made for the parent/guardian who holds a conscientious/moral objection to the inclusion of S.P.H.E. in the curriculum. Provision will also be made for

those teachers who hold conscientious/moral objections to teaching the core aspects of the R.S.E. programme while respecting the rights of the children to be taught R.S.E.

R.S.E. Programme

RSE stands for relationships and sexuality education.

At Primary level RSE aims to help children learn at home and at school about themselves as individuals and themselves in relationship with others.

This programme helps develop a good self-image in children, promoting respect for themselves and others and providing them with appropriate information.

In this school the RSE programme is part of the Social, Personal and health Education programme (S.P.H.E.). The wider programme contributes to developing the work of the school in promoting the health and well being of the children. The content of the programme includes a range of topics such as healthy eating, alcohol, drugs education, environmental issues, safety and social responsibility as well as R.S.E.

Current provision-programmmes which support R.S.E:

1. **Code of Discipline;** A code of discipline has been drawn up for the school with the co-operation of teachers, parents and management. Respect for self and others and responsibility towards self and others are the core elements in this policy and underpin many aspects of the R.S.E. programme.
2. **Grow in Love;** The Grow in Love Religious Instruction Programme is used in all classes. This programme covers many topics of the S.P.H.E, and R.S.E. programme.
3. **Stay Safe Programme;** The Stay Safe programme is used as a resource to teach the children about personal safety as laid down in the S.P.H.E. school plan. Newly enrolled families will be informed and given the option of participation in the programme. Parents have the right to withdraw their child from the Stay Safe Programme once they inform the school.
4. **Outside Speaker;** An outside speaker may address the 'sexually sensitive issues' i.e.-puberty, stages of the development of the baby in the womb, the reproductive system, birth and sexual intercourse with the 6th class if this is deemed appropriate and/or necessary.

Aims of the R.S.E. Programme

- To help young people to develop healthy friendships and relationships.
- To promote a healthy attitude to sexuality 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 awe and wonder at the process of birth and new life.
- To enable the child to be comfortable with his own sexuality and that of others while growing and developing.

Management and Organisation of R.S.E.

It is necessary to make specific arrangements to deal with a number of issues related to the management and teaching of R.S.E. These issues will be generally dealt with as outlined below. Should circumstances prevail where the principal and teachers find it necessary to make alterations, this will be done with due regard to the spirit of the agreement. The principal, in consultation with the staff will make provision for the delivery of the S.P.H.E. programme according to the following criteria;

- School ethos
- Age, maturity and readiness of the children
- Parents viewpoints

Curricular matters

The content of the NCCA guidelines will be followed as published and will be taught in infants to sixth class. It will be taught by the teaching staff. An outside speaker may address the sexually sensitive issues with 6th class. All resources used will be in keeping with the ethos of the school and the policy. When an outside speaker is used the class teacher is responsible for making them aware of the school policy and the class teacher will sit in during the lesson.

Lessons to be taught

Under the heading within S.P.H.E. “Taking care of my body”

- Infants and 1st/ 2nd class are expected to be able to name parts of the male and female body using appropriate anatomical terminology.
- 5th /6th class pupils are expected to be able to identify and discuss physical and other changes that occur in girls and boys at puberty and to understand the reproductive systems of male and female adults.

Under the heading “Growing and changing”

- 3rd/4th class pupils are expected to be able to discuss the stages and sequences of development of the human body from conception to birth.
- 5th/6th class pupils are expected to be able to understand sexual intercourse and birth within the context of a committed loving relationship.

Organisational matters

- A standard letter will be sent to the parents in February of each year stating that it is proposed to teach R.S.E., growing and changing to the class during the coming weeks. Parents will have to notify the principal if they don't wish their child to participate in any part of the R.S.E. programme. The rights of the parents to withdraw their children from the class will be acknowledged.
- Information meetings for parents regarding programme content and methodology may be held.
- If children are withdrawn, they will be accommodated in another teacher's classroom.
- With regard to matters of a confidential nature, the school will not take any responsibility for what may be discussed in the yard or classroom.

- Teachers have the right to opt out of the teaching of sexually sensitive subject matter contained within the R.S.E. programme. Another teacher or an outside speaker will deliver the curriculum to the class. Should the latter situation arise, the class teacher will be present during the presentation.
- SET teacher may be asked to support the delivery of the RSE program if needed.
- Parents are welcome to view the curriculum and may speak with the Principal or class teacher if they have any questions or concerns.
- We use the following programmes: Walk Tall, Stay Safe, the RSE Programme and Incredible Years, Dinosaur School approach. We use the Making The Links, revised edition, to select appropriate lessons from these programmes to teach the objectives from the SPHE curriculum. Teachers will teach the content of the RSE programme within the context of the school ethos, which emphasizes a caring and nurturing approach to relationships.

Dealing with Questions

- The child's right to privacy will be respected at all times.
- The teacher's right to privacy will be respected at all times.
- Teachers will emphasise that questions dealt with in the classroom setting will be confined to material covered in that or previous years. Teachers will show sensitivity and discretion when dealing with pupil's questions. Teachers will gently direct children to ask those questions which are outside the boundaries of the RSE programme of their parents/guardians.
- Factual questions, once within curricular boundaries for the age, will be answered. If the question is a moral one, catholic teaching will be adhered to. However, sensitivity to differing religious, cultural, ethnic and social circumstances will be shown in the implementation of the R.S.E. programme.
- Teachers will not answer personal questions.
- The school cannot guarantee confidentiality if a child asks a question or discloses information, which has implications under the child protection act.
- The teacher or visiting speaker will use discretion based on the content of the RSE programme and the spirit of the school policy to decide whether the question should be discussed in the classroom context, answered privately for the individual, or whether the individual should seek an answer from their parents/guardians.

Guest speaker

Where the subject matter relates to the area of RSE, and where the guest speaker is invited to address the children, the following guidelines will apply:

- The teacher(s) concerned will discuss the planned subject matter with the guest speaker.
- Contact will be made with parents prior to the presentation and the parents will be given the option of viewing the content of the material to be taught.
- The policy of the school will be outlined and care taken to ensure that the guest speaker is aware of the content which would be covered by the class teacher in the

areas of growth, development and reproduction. The guest speaker would be required only to cover matters, which are currently in our agreed policy.

- The class teacher will remain with the class group while the guest speaker is present.
- The guidelines for responding to pupil's questions are as already outlined.

Relevant Resource Material

- Relationships and Sexuality Education, .Dept. of Education and Science
- Walk Tall programme
- Stay Safe
- Anatomical dolls
- Busy Bodies book and DVD
- Grow in Love
- Extra resources to support the teaching of RSE from the PDST website.

Resource materials will be added to depending on the needs and requirements of Parents, teachers and children as perceived by those involved in the educational process.

Roles Responsibilities and Provision for ongoing support

- The class teacher will be responsible for the selection of the guest speaker subject to approval by the principal and the BOM.
- The class teacher will also be responsible for the evaluation and selection of resources for the teaching of the RSE programme ensuring that all resources are consistent with the school ethos.
- The SPHE postholder will be responsible for staff development in the area of R.S.E.
- The S.P.H.E. postholder may organise educational opportunities for parents which support the teaching of the R.S.E. programme in school.
- Each teacher will have responsibility to teach the content of the programme where appropriate or attend while it is being taught. Each teacher is obliged to be mindful of the school ethos as it pertains to the RSE programme.
- Parents are welcome to view the Curriculum and policy documents if they wish. A copy has been uploaded to the school website.

Timeframe for implementation

This reviewed policy will come into effect when the Board of Management has approved the final draft. This policy will remain in effect unless difficulties arise demanding an early review.

Timeframe for review

After a period of two years, a further review will take place and the review committee will consist of teachers, parents and Board of Management representatives. Any changes recommended by the review committee should be presented in draft form to the parent, teacher and board committees before bringing the draft of the reviewed RSE policy into effect. The Board of Management will be responsible for approving the final draft of the

APPENDIX 1

Le Chéile National school will teach aspects of all three major strand units of SPHE each year and strand units will be chosen in such a way that the child will receive a comprehensive programme in SPHE over a two year period.

The Growing and Changing content of the RSE program will be taught in both year 1 and year 2 of the 2 year SPHE cycle (see SPHE plan)


	YEAR ONE (JI,1st,3rd,5th)	YEAR TWO (SI,2nd,4th,6th)
Sept/Oct	Self-identity (Myself)	Myself and my family (Myself and Others)
Nov/Dec	My friends and Other people (Myself and Others)	Relating to Others (Myself and Others)
Jan/Feb/Mar	Safety and Protection :Stay Safe (Myself) Growing and Changing (Myself) RSE <i>Media Education (Myself and the wider world)</i> Internet Safety Day. Feb	Safety and Protection :Stay Safe (Myself) Growing and Changing (Myself) RSE <i>Media Education (Myself and the wider world)</i> Internet Safety Day. Feb
April/May	Making Decisions * (Myself) (3 rd - 6 th only)	Taking Care of my Body (Myself)
June	Media Education (Myself and the wider world)	Developing Citizenship (Myself and the wider world)

reviewed RSE programme. Future reviews will take place every subsequent two years or as the need arises.

Ratification

Policy reviewed by the BOM on 11/9/24 2024 for ratification

Signed: 
Chairperson

Signed: 
Principal