

RELATIONSHIPS AND SEXUALITY EDUCATION POLICY



Rationale:

This Policy will reflect the core values and ethos of our Catholic school. It will be a written statement of the aims of the S.P.H.E. programme, its organisation within the school and how the programme will be delivered. As stated in the document 'Catholic Education', parents are the prime educators of their children. In delivering the R.S.E. programme in St. Conal's school, the staff plays a supporting role to that of parents/guardians.

Characteristic Spirit of the School:

St. Conal's School endeavours to enable the child to develop spiritually, intellectually, physically, emotionally and socially. Great emphasis is placed upon our Catholic ethos, which reflects the values of a safe happy learning environment, self respect, respect for others, self-discipline, caring for others and love of God. We attend to special education needs, we emphasise different forms of intelligence and we promote a respect for children of other denominations.

Definition of R.S.E.:

R.S.E. provides opportunities to acquire knowledge and understanding of human sexuality and relationships, through processes that enable pupils to form values and to establish their behaviour within a moral, spiritual and social framework.

Relationship of R.S.E. to S.P.H.E.

Relationships and sexuality is an integral part of social, personal and health education and will be taught within the context of S.P.H.E. This comprehensive and structured approach will ensure that all aspects of the pupils' development will be addressed in a balanced way, in accordance with our Catholic ethos.

Aims and objectives:

- To promote the personal development, self-esteem and well-being of the child
- To help the child to develop healthy friendships and relationships
- To foster an understanding of, and a healthy attitude towards human sexuality and relationships in a moral, spiritual and social framework
- To foster in the child a respect for human love, sexual intercourse and reproduction
- To develop 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 him/herself and others while growing and developing.

Current practice within the school:

The school currently provides:

- a) Walk Tall programme
- b) The Busy Bodies programme provides sex education lessons to sixth class. It is in accordance with our ethos and was selected by the parent body and Board of Management in 2004.
- c) Stay Safe programme
- d) Alive-O religious programme
- e) Earthlink: S.E.S.E./S.P.H.E. textbooks
- f) Environmental issues: regard for all life
- g) Safety and personal responsibility: visitors to school- Garda Síochána/Fire Brigade/Cyber-bullying visits

Guidelines for the management/organisation of RSE in St. Conal's School.

R.S.E. will be taught throughout our primary school from infants to sixth class. The extent to which the content is delivered will be appropriate to the emotional and intellectual maturity of the children. The R.S.E. committee of St. Conal's school will take these decisions and all parents will be given an opportunity to respond.

Rights and Responsibilities:

- Parents will be made aware of the content of lessons involving sensitive issues being taught in senior classes
- Parents/guardians have the right to withdraw their child/children from sensitive issues of the R.S.E. programme should they prefer to address these issues at home.
- Prior consent of parents will always be sought in the event of an outside speaker delivering any part of the R.S.E. programme
- The teacher will respect the child's right to privacy at all times. It is equally important that the teacher shares this right and will not feel obliged to impart information about his/her personal life.
- Sensitive issues will be dealt with in accordance with the Catholic ethos of the school and in an age/gender appropriate manner.
- Teachers who do not wish to teach the programme or any specific area of it will be facilitated. The principal will make alternative arrangements.