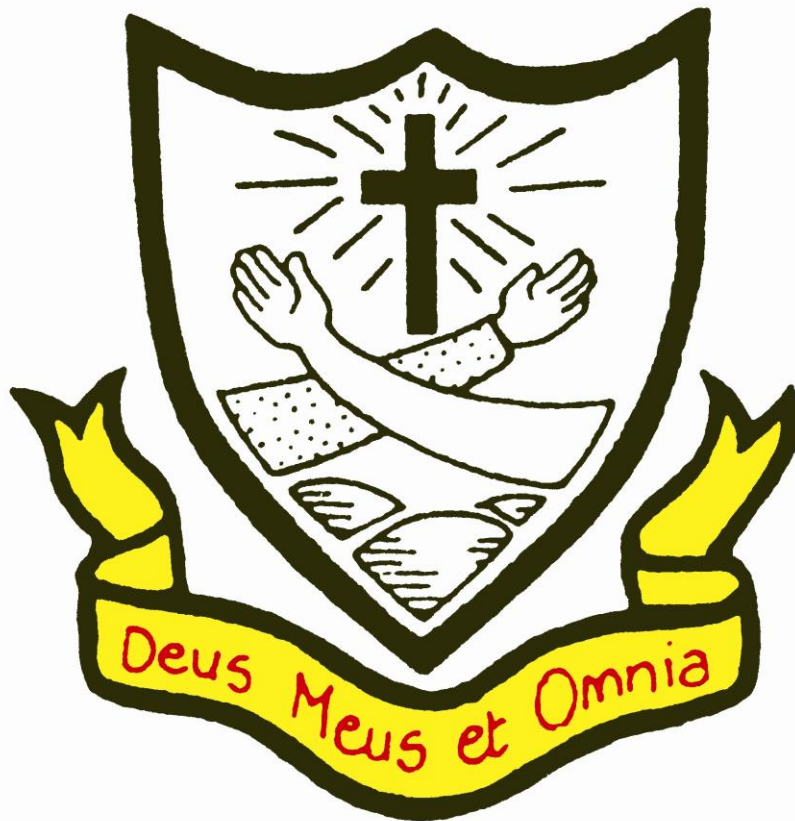


# RSE POLICY



St. Clare's Primary School  
Harold's Cross  
Dublin 6W

Roll Number 16651H

RCN 20116699

# RSE Policy St. Clare's Primary School

---

## RSE POLICY

### Introductory Statement

This document is a statement of the aims and objectives, principles and strategies for Relationships, Sexuality Education (RSE) in St. Clare's Primary School, Harold's Cross, Dublin 6W. This policy was first drawn up in 2001 in collaboration with parents and staff. It was developed to inform teachers and parents as to what material is covered in the RSE programme within SPHE both formally and informally. The RSE policy was revised in 2003, 2005, 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013, 2015 2019 and again 2023.

### School Information

St. Clare's Primary School is a Catholic school under the Patronage of the Catholic Archbishop of Dublin and the Trustees of the Sisters of St. Clare. The school was established in 1803. It is a mainstream vertical co-educational national school with two ASD classes. The ethos of the school is Catholic and in this atmosphere the spiritual, intellectual, social and physical growth of the children is fostered in the spirit of St. Francis and St. Clare encouraging pupils and staff:

- to care for each other and the world around us
- to pray and work for peace in own school, parish, world

The school motto is "*Deus Meus et Omnia*" which means "*My God and My All*"

### Relationship of RSE to the Characteristic Spirit of St. Clare's

In line with the mission statement which states:

*"We see our school as the extension of the home; a place where children are not just taught but where the teachers and children work, play and pray together. The spiritual, intellectual, social and physical growth of the children is fostered in the spirit of St. Francis and St. Clare"*

RSE is integral to this development. The content of the RSE Programme is taught in the light of the following value statements:

- each individual is unique in the eyes of God and valuable in their own right
- ours is a communal and interdependent nature, therefore our sexuality like our lives is a gift
- making decisions is not simply a private and personal matter; there are also social and moral implications

# RSE Policy St. Clare's Primary School

---

Concepts related to RSE in a Christian context are to be found in the Religious Education curriculum for Catholic pre-schools and primary schools. Such concepts are integrated throughout the children's experience of Religious Education in the primary school.

## **Definition of RSE**

RSE aims to help children learn, at home and in school, about their own development and about their friendships and relationships with others. In St. Clare's Relationships and Sexuality Education is an integral part of both the RE curriculum and the SPHE and will 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. Through RSE the pupils will become more responsible in making choices and decisions in all aspects of life and particularly in those relating to sexuality and relationships.

## **Relationship of RSE to SPHE**

The Education Act (1998) emphasises that schools are obliged to promote the social and personal development of pupils and provide health education for them. As part of the SPHE programme pupils are encouraged to develop their own confidence and build relationships with others. The aim of the SPHE programme is to promote physical, mental and emotional health and wellbeing. It also encourages the development of a healthy attitude to sexuality.

Relationships and Sexuality are key elements of healthy social and personal development in all our lives but particularly in the life of the child. The RSE programme is designed to specifically deal with human growth and development and human sexuality. The programme will encourage pupils to embrace their own sexuality and to develop positive and healthy relationships. The programme will be developmental in nature and will be age appropriate.

The aims and objectives of the RSE policy in St. Clare's are:

### **Aims:**

- 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 Christian moral, spiritual and social framework

# RSE Policy St. Clare's Primary School

---

- to promote a positive attitude to one's sexuality and in one's relationship with others
- to promote knowledge of and respect for reproduction as participation in the divine gift of life
- To develop and promote in the child a sense of wonder and awe at the process of birth and new life
- to enable young people to develop attitudes and values towards their sexuality in a Christian moral and spiritual framework

## **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 and the skills for building and maintaining self-esteem
- acquire the understanding and skills necessary to form healthy friendships and relationships
- understand the nature, growth and development of relationships within families, in friendships and the wider context
- 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 to develop respect for difference between individuals
- develop personal skills which help to establish and sustain healthy personal relationships
- develop skills for coping with peer pressure, conflict and threats to personal safety.
- 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
- understand sexual development and identity and explore aspects of sexuality including sex role stereotyping, gender issues and cultural influences on sexuality
- develop strategies for decisions and actions consistent with personal moral integrity and respectful of the rights and dignity of others

# RSE Policy St. Clare's Primary School

---

## Scope

This policy will inform all members of the school community (all teaching staff, ancillary staff, parents, students and visitors) of St. Clare's Primary School. Discussions about relationships and sexuality also takes place in classes other than SPHE/RSE. It is therefore a whole school activity.

## PROGRAMME CONTENT

RSE is an integral of SPHE and much of RSE is treated as a cross-curricular theme. RSE shares content with the following curricular/subject areas:

- Language Development
- SESE
- Religion
- PE
- Arts Education

The curriculum by NCCA will be followed as published, and will be taught from infants to 6th class. All resources used will be in keeping with the ethos of St. Clare's Primary School, the whole school plan for SPHE, the RSE policy and approved by the Board of Management.

Each class teacher will teach the content for their class level each year as laid out in the curriculum, and utilising the RSE manuals to complement their teaching. The RSE lessons are taught incrementally.

RSE will be covered under the following strands and strand units of the SPHE curriculum:

<b>Myself</b>
Growing and Changing
Taking care of my body

The strands Growing and Changing and Taking Care of my Body are covered in Year 1 of a 2 year SPHE plan. The sensitive lessons are covered as part of these broad topics.

The RSE programme is divided into two main parts.

# RSE Policy St. Clare's Primary School

The general programme which contains content covered through SPHE strands and strand units and compliment the aims and objectives of RSE are

- ✓ Friendship
- ✓ Self-identity
- ✓ Family
- ✓ Self-esteem
- ✓ Growing up

The second section will deal with any sensitive/specific content covered through RSE strands and strand units. The sensitive aspects are in **bold**.

Topics covered up to 2 <sup>nd</sup> class include	Topics covered 3 <sup>rd</sup> – 6 <sup>th</sup> include
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keeping safe</li> <li>• <b>Bodily changes from birth (birth-9)</b></li> <li>• Making age-appropriate choices</li> <li>• Appreciating the variety of family types and the variety of family life that exists in our school and community</li> <li>• Recognising and expressing feelings</li> <li>• Self-care, hygiene, diet, exercise and sleep</li> <li>• Expressing opinions and listening to others</li> <li>• <b>Naming the parts of the male/female body using appropriate anatomical terms (Junior/Senior Infants)</b></li> <li>• <b>Naming the parts of the male/female body using appropriate anatomical terms and identify some of their functions (1st/2nd)</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Bodily changes</b></li> <li>• Healthy eating, personal hygiene and exercise</li> <li>• Keeping safe</li> <li>• Expressing feelings</li> <li>• Appreciating the variety of family types within our school and community and how these family relationships shape us</li> <li>• Making healthy and responsible decisions</li> <li>• Forming friendships</li> <li>• <b>Discuss the stages and sequence of development of the human baby in the womb (3rd, 4th class)</b></li> <li>• <b>Introduction to puberty and changes (3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th class)</b></li> <li>• <b>Changes that occur in boys and girls with the onset of puberty (5th and 6th Class)</b></li> <li>• <b>Reproductive system of male/female adults (5th and 6th class)</b></li> <li>• <b>Understanding sexual intercourse, conception and birth within the context of a committed loving relationship (5th, 6th class)</b></li> </ul>

# RSE Policy St. Clare's Primary School

## Sensitive Content 4<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup>

Sensitive content is taught as per 2 year SPHE plan.

Month	Year 1	Year 2
September/October	Self-Identity (Myself)	Myself and my Family (Myself and Others)
November/December	My Friends and other people (Myself and Others)	Relating to Others (Myself and Others)
January/February	Safety and Protection (Myself)	Growing and Changing (Myself)
March/April	Making Decisions (Myself)	Taking Care of my Body (Myself)
May/June	Media Education (Myself and the Wider World)	Developing Citizenship (Myself and the Wider World)

## APPROACHES AND METHODOLOGIES

The curriculum will be taught in an age-appropriate manner at all times. The curriculum will be taught from Junior Infants to 6th class. It will be taught through a spiral curriculum in a manner that is respectful and inclusive of all pupils. The key topics will be revisited in a developmental manner at regular intervals. The materials and approaches will be consistent with ethos of St. Clare's.

The RSE curriculum will be taught through:

- ✓ stories and poems
- ✓ class discussion
- ✓ group work
- ✓ games
- ✓ SESS
- ✓ Religion
- ✓ art activities
- ✓ reflection
- ✓ circle time
- ✓ guest speakers in accordance with circular 42/2018

## Language

The acquisition of appropriate language in RSE is crucially important to enable children to communicate confidently about themselves, their sexuality and their relationships. The SPHE curriculum provides a context in which children are given opportunities to develop and enhance their language skills and to increase their vocabulary related to SPHE. Therefore, the teachers will give children the correct and appropriate language as outlined in the RSE Resource Materials. (*see Appendix 2*)

# RSE Policy St. Clare's Primary School

---

## CLASSROOM STRATEGY

To take into account pupil individual differences in maturity we have devised the following strategy for coping with questions we are not prepared to answer aloud in class:

- The teacher explains that the amount of information given is part of that year's programme and that more information will be given as part of the following years' programme.
- Questions which may arise with regard to the sensitive content of the programme will be answered by the class teacher provided that they relate to topics covered in the curriculum for that class.
- If topics arise which do not feature in the curriculum, or if questions are asked by children who have been withdrawn from the programme, children will be requested to address the questions to their parents.
- The content of the curriculum will be adhered to at all times. A copy of the content of the programme for each class (Busy Bodies Booklet) will be distributed to all parents/guardians.
- By its nature RSE explores issues, which give rise to different views and sensitivities. The teachers in their professional capacity will use their training and the RSE guidelines in dealing with these issues with due regard for the ethos of St. Clare's.
- For older children a '**Question Box**' will be used as part of a structured RSE lesson. Teachers can follow up on the written questions at a later date, thus allowing time to prepare suitable answers, consult with the SPHE co-ordinator and/or with the Senior Management Team (SMT).
- It shall be our policy not to answer personal questions about ourselves.
- Pupils will be reminded not to share personal information about their about their families or others but can share with the teacher after the lesson or place a note in the **Worry Box**.

## Differentiation

Teachers use assessment and their professional judgement to differentiate the programme content to suit the needs of the class and individual pupils. Some techniques used:

- ensure that objectives are realistic for the pupils
- ensure that the learning outcome 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 pupil's level of understanding



# RSE Policy St. Clare's Primary School

---

- understanding of the activity using task analysis, outlining the steps to be learned/completed in any given task, posing key questions to guide pupils 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

- group work and discussion
- higher and lower order questioning in groups
- moderated whole class discussions through use of a Question Box

## **Students with Special Educational Needs/Additional Needs**

The requirements of pupils with additional needs will be taken into consideration when planning class lessons and related activities. Their needs will be ascertained through consultation with the pupil, their parents/guardians and SEN teachers. Consultation with parents/guardians in advance and anticipation of the pupil's needs will be central to ensuring learning is meaningful.

- Pupils may be pre-taught language or concepts in anticipation of whole class work
- Pupils may work in smaller groups or 1:1 on adapted and suitable material
- Any different or specific objectives related to the pupil's own learning needs should be detailed in their School Support Plan (SSP) in consultation with parents/guardians

## **ETHICAL/MORAL ISSUES**

### **Child Safeguarding**

The Board of Management has adopted and will implement fully and without modification the Department's Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017 as part of this overall Child Safeguarding Statement. The Designated Liaison Person and the Deputy Designated Liaison Person are appointed by the Board of Management annually. All staff will fully comply with its statutory obligations under the Children First Act 2017 and other relevant legislation relating to the protection and welfare of children. All staff are reminded of St. Clare's Child Safeguarding Statement and the procedures to be followed in dealing with incidents related to child protection. Each staff member, Parent Association Committee members and members of the Board of Management have been issued with a copy of

# RSE Policy St. Clare's Primary School

---

the Child Safeguarding Statement and a copy issued to parents. All staff are familiar with the procedures for dealing with incidents relating to child protection. A copy of Child Safeguarding Statement is posted in the foyer at the entrance to the school and available on the website.

## **Confidentiality**

Pupils should be asked not to disclose personal information in SPHE/RSE class. It is important that pupils are made aware of the limits of confidentiality. Teachers must not guarantee confidentiality. Pupils must be informed that if a teacher becomes aware that a pupil is at risk of abuse, or in breach of the law, the teacher as a mandated person must report the matter and inform the DLP in accordance with the Children First 2017 and the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017. All disclosures are dealt with in line with Children First Guidelines 2017 and the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017.

If a child is withdrawn from the teaching of sensitive issues, St. Clare's Primary School cannot guarantee that the other children will not tell or inform them about what happened.

## **Dealing with Questions**

When answering questions, teachers will use their professional judgement, guided by the age of the pupils, the RSE curriculum and the RSE policy of St. Clare's. Teachers establish ground rules covering the limits of the discussion, the level of respect required and the concept of confidentiality. All discussions will remain within the parameters of the planned material. If a matter is divulged to a teacher where either an accusation or a suggestion of a criminal act is made, the teacher as a mandated person must report such act and inform the Designated Liaison Person (DLP).

During the delivery of each section of the sensitive lessons in senior classes pupils will be encouraged to place their questions into the **Question Box** in the classroom. These questions will then be monitored and screened with the teacher answering the questions the following week taking into account the following:

- questions arising from the lesson content will be answered in an age-appropriate manner
- the class teacher cannot answer questions which do not relate to the particular curriculum objectives for a class
- pupils will be informed if a question/issue is not on the programme and they will be advised to talk with their parents

# RSE Policy St. Clare's Primary School

---

- teachers may exercise discretion to contact parents themselves if they feel that a question is very inappropriate or needs to be communicated with home because of other reasons
- no personal questions will be answered and pupils will be reminded not to share personal information about their families or others – but can share with teacher after the lessons

## **Sexual Activity**

In accordance with the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act 2017, the age of consent for sexual activity for both males and females is 17 years of age in the Republic of Ireland. In circumstances where a teacher becomes aware that a pupil is engaging in underage sexual activity, the teacher as a mandated person must report such sexual activity and inform the Designated Liaison Person (DLP). If other members of staff (such as the school caretaker, catering staff, secretary, SNA) become aware that a student is engaging in underage sexual activity they must inform the DLP.

## **Visiting Speakers**

National and international research has consistently shown that the qualified classroom teacher is the best placed professional to work sensitively and consistently with pupils and that s/he can have a powerful impact on influencing pupils' attitudes, values and behaviour in all aspects of health education. Therefore, in St. Clare, the RSE programme will be delivered by the class teacher including the sensitive areas. Visiting speakers may occasionally be invited to enhance and supplement the RSE programme in accordance with the guidelines as outlined in DES Circular 42/2018. Such speakers must be approved in advance by the principal and the Board of Management and must work under the guidance and supervision of the classroom teacher. Visiting speakers will be made aware of this policy and all associated policies. Parents will be made aware of any visiting speakers.

## **Withdrawing pupils from the sensitive areas of the RSE programme**

St. Clare's recognises that parents are the primary educators of their children and we work with the parents in this important role. St. Clare's recognises the right of parents/guardians to withdraw their child from the RSE programme [Education Act 1998 Section 30 (2e)]. The wishes of the parents will always be respected fully in the matter of RSE and no pupil shall receive or be present at any RSE instruction of which their parents/guardians disapprove. Parental involvement is encouraged and welcomed and we will engage with parents/guardians with a view to resolving any perceived difficulties.

St. Clare's requires parents/guardians to give reasons in writing outlining their request that their child be withdrawn. The Principal may invite the parents/guardians to attend a meeting as sometimes this can resolve any misunderstandings. Parents will be offered access to appropriate information or resources. If pupils are withdrawn

# RSE Policy St. Clare's Primary School

---

arrangements will be made between parents/guardians and the Principal for their supervision and care while the programme is in progress.

## **ASSESSMENT**

Assessment in RSE is important to enable the class teacher to pitch the lessons correctly to their respective class group.

The class teacher uses:

- observation and questions to assess the pupil's engagement and interest
- use of teacher-designed tasks such as worksheets, quizzes or games
- use of reflection or learning log

## **Resources**

Resources will be provided to fulfil each strand unit of RSE. There are a variety of resources available in each classroom and further resources are available from a central store, which teachers can draw on. The following resources available are in line with school policy and suitable for the school RSE programme as outlined by NCCA.

Each class teacher has a copy of the appropriate manual in their classroom and also has access to pdf copy on the server.

- Relationships and Sexuality Manual
- Stay Safe programme
- Revised Walk Tall Programme
- Flourish Programme – A Programme for Catholic Schools
- Busy Bodies resources
- Webwise resources
- Making Links and Beyond
- Catholic Preschool and Primary Religious Education Curriculum
- Grow in Love Programme
- Adapted resources for SEN available [www.pdst.ie](http://www.pdst.ie)

Each class teacher has a set of anatomical dolls in their classroom.

Other resources available in staff resource room:

- Picture books across the 9 grounds of equality
- Windows on the World
  - Set of 4 books and posters ~ infants – 6<sup>th</sup>
  - Themes: valuing others, developing self-esteem, and ourselves media influence, heroes and heroines
- Twenty Steps Towards Language Development

# RSE Policy St. Clare's Primary School

---

- Folder of age appropriate topics – health, safety, caring for environment, people.
- Circle Time and Quality Circle Time – Jenny Mosley
- Books on separation, loss, death
- DVDs on healthy eating, hygiene, etc.,
- Posters – anatomy/physiology
- Usborne Facts of Life Series
- DVDs – Home Safe ~ Personal Safety
- Bearing Fruit – primary school programme about being young and growing old

## **Reference to other policies**

The following policies should be referred to when reading the RSE policy:

- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Bus Safety Policy
- Child Safeguarding Statement
- Code of Behaviour
- Data Protection Policy
- Educational Trips Policy
- Enrolment Policy
- Health Eating Policy
- Intimate Care Policy
- Internet and Acceptable Use Policy (AUP)
- Mobile Phone Policy
- Pastoral Care Policy
- Religious Education Policy
- Road Safety Policy
- Social Media Policy
- SPHE Policy
- Special Education Needs Policy
- Stay Safe Policy
- Substance Use Policy
- Supervision Policy
- Swimming Policy

## **Individual Teachers' Planning and Reporting**

This policy and RE and the SPHE curriculum documents will inform and guide teachers in their long and short term planning for RSE. Each teacher will record the language taught in the Cuntas Míósúil. Teachers may make observations on children's progress which may be recorded on the child's file.

# RSE Policy St. Clare's Primary School

---

## **Staff Development**

Opportunities provided by the Education Centre will be brought to the attention of staff members. Teachers will be encouraged to attend CPD in RSE and will share information/skills acquired at these courses with other members of staff during staff meetings.

Staff meetings will be utilised as a platform for discussion and development of RSE materials

Support will be availed of from a PDST Advisor from time to time and when required.

Staff receive in-service in the following areas every two years:

- in service in the Child Protection and the Stay Safe Programme
- in service in the Substance Use Programme /Walk Tall
- participation in behaviour management and conflict resolution workshops

## **Parental Involvement**

Parental involvement in St. Clare's is considered an integral part to effectively implementing the RSE strands of the SPHE Curriculum.

Parents will be informed that the school fully implements the RSE strands of the SPHE programme including sensitive aspects of the programme at enrolment.

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 and the ethos within which it will be delivered.

Parents will have an opportunity to meet with relevant class teachers if they so wish, to discuss or clarify what is covered and to prepare their children.

Parents will have an opportunity to become involved, to inform themselves of the programme content and to prepare their children for the information they will acquire around the sensitive areas and discuss areas covered in RSE/SPHE.

All parents should discuss these topics with their child prior to class discussion.

Following discussion with the principal and the 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 which will be retained in the pupil's file.

If a child has been withdrawn from the sensitive RSE lessons, St. Clare's takes no responsibility for what the child may hear following on from the teaching of the lessons.

# RSE Policy St. Clare's Primary School

---

## Community Links

St Clare's Primary School, believes that the local community has a very important role to play in supporting the programme in RSE and endeavour to liaise with the members of the HSE, the medical community, the Gardaí, etc.

## Success Criteria

The success of this plan will be evaluated through:

- Teachers long and short term planning being implemented
- Procedures outlined in the plan are consistently followed
- Reporting in the Cuntas Miosúil reflects the whole school plan
- Feedback from teachers, parents, community
- Inspectorate reports/Whole School Evaluations/recommendations

It is dependent upon the procedures outlined in this plan having been consistently followed. We will also judge its success if the pupils have been enabled to achieve the aims outlined in this plan.

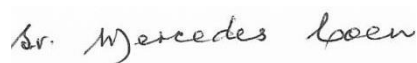
## Implementation and Review

The RSE policy will be reviewed every two years, in the month of June co-ordinated by the SPHE co-ordinator in consultation with staff members, pupils and parents. The Board of Management may, however, review this policy earlier than this, if Department of Education & Skills introduces new regulations, or if the Board of Management receives recommendations on how the policy might be improved. Any amendments will be communicated in writing to all members of the school community outlining the rationale for the change.

## Ratification and Communication

This revised policy has been ratified by the Board of Management on 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2023. Copies of this policy will be circulated and communicated to all members of the staff, parents and guardians.

**Signed:**



**Chairperson – Board of Management**

**Date:**

03.05.2023

**Next review May 2025**

# RSE Policy St. Clare's Primary School

---

## APPENDIX 1

### OVERVIEW OF RSE PROGRAMME

The following objectives cover the 'sensitive' areas in the RSE and Stay Safe programme. They will be addressed in both classes at each level, year two serving to revise the content objectives of year one.

#### Infants

##### ***Strand unit: Taking care of my body***

###### *Knowing about my body*

- Name the parts of the male and female body, using appropriate anatomical terms

##### ***Stand unit: Safety and protection***

###### *Personal Safety*

- Identify situations and places that are safe and those where personal safety might be at risk.

#### 1st & 2nd classes

##### ***Strand unit: Taking care of my body***

###### *Knowing about my body*

- Name the parts of the male and female body, using appropriate anatomical terms and identify some of their functions

##### ***Stand unit: Safety and protection***

###### *Personal Safety*

- Recognise and explore situations where children feel safe and those where safety might be at risk.

#### 3rd & 4th classes

##### ***Strand unit: Taking care of my body***

###### *Knowing about my body*

- realise the importance of caring for and treating his/her own body, and that of others, with dignity and respect.
- Understand the physical changes taking place in both the male and female body.



# RSE Policy St. Clare's Primary School

---

- Realise that these changes do not occur at the same time but nonetheless are predictable and natural and that being different is normal.

## ***Strand unit: Growing and changing***

### *As I grow I change*

- Recognise and discuss how feelings and emotions are affected by the physical changes that take place at puberty

### *Birth and new life*

- Discuss the stages and sequence of development of the human baby, from conception to birth.

## ***Stand unit: Safety and protection***

### *Personal Safety*

- Identify people, places and situations that may threaten personal safety

## **5th & 6th classes**

## ***Strand unit: Taking care of my body***

### *Knowing about my body*

- Recognise the importance of treating his/her body and others with dignity and respect.
- Identify and discuss the physical and other changes that occur in boys and girls with the onset of puberty and understand that these take place at different rates for everyone.
- Understand the reproductive system of both male and female adults.
- Become aware of some communicable diseases and explore how diseases and infection spread.

## ***Strand unit: Growing and changing***

### *As I grow I change*

- Explore patterns of development and growth, comparing present development with that of earlier stages: physical, social, emotional, intellectual and spiritual.

# RSE Policy St. Clare's Primary School

---

## *Birth and new life*

- Understand sexual intercourse, conception and birth within a context of a committed, loving relationship.
- Discuss and explore the responsibilities involved in being a parents and the emotional and physical maturity required to be a parent.

## ***Stand unit: Safety and protection***

### *Personal Safety*

- Identify situations and places that may threaten personal safety

# RSE Policy St. Clare's Primary School

## APPENDIX 2

## LANGUAGE TAUGHT

<b>Junior and Senior Infants</b>	<p>Name parts of the male and female body using appropriate anatomical terms</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Term “penis” will be taught as the obvious physical difference between boy/girl and in the context of passing urine</li><li>• Term “urethra” will be taught in the context of passing urine</li></ul> <p>Awareness of human birth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A baby grows inside the mother’s womb until ready to be born</li><li>• Term “breast feeding” may be used in conversation as means of feeding a baby</li></ul>
<b>First and Second Class</b>	<p>Name parts of the male and female body using appropriate anatomical terms and identifying some of their functions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• “Penis” and “urethra” will be revised in terms of passing urine</li><li>• Vagina-opening where a baby leaves a mother’s womb</li><li>• Navel/bellybutton – where a baby was joined to its mother before birth</li><li>• Teachers will teach that baby is in the womb for nine months and may be breast or bottle-fed</li></ul>
<b>Third and Fourth Class</b>	<p>Understand the physical changes taking place in both the male and female body. Realising that these changes do not occur at the same time but nonetheless are predictable and natural and that being different is normal.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• growing in height, weight &amp; strength</li><li>• growing from boy to man and girl to woman</li><li>• accepting own body shape/size/rate of development</li><li>• onset of menstruation (periods) for 4<sup>th</sup> class girls (end of year)</li></ul> <p>The stages and sequence of foetal development from conception to birth.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• identifying objects which coincide with the size of the foetus at different stages</li><li>• changes in foetus</li><li>• development of limbs, more recognisable shape</li><li>• Baby emerges from womb through vagina when ready after 9 months</li></ul>

# RSE Policy St. Clare's Primary School

---

## **Fifth and Sixth Class**

Identify and discuss the physical and other changes that occur in boys and girls with the onset of puberty and understand that these changes take place at different rates for everyone.

- Female: hormonal changes, changing body shape - height and weight, oily skin, spots, development of breasts, appearance of underarm and pubic hair
- Male: hormonal changes, changing body shape - height and weight, oily skin, spots, enlargement of testicles and penis, appearance of underarm, pubic and facial hair, temporary development of breast tissue, breaking of voice, beginning of sperm production, involuntary erections, nocturnal emissions (wet dreams)

The reproductive system of male & female adults

- male reproductive organs – penis, scrotum, sperm, sperm tube, testis
- female reproductive system –vagina, cervix, uterus, ovary, fallopian tubes, ovum (egg)

## APPENDIX 3

## Questions

Staff should not invalidate questions but use limits.

While teachers may not be able to answer all questions, it is hoped that children will not be put off seeking answers in the school setting but will talk to their parents and ask the questions again at different stages during their time at school.

### **Teachers use some simple principles when fostering discussion and questioning**

- No personal questions of the teacher
- The Question Box will be availed of by the children in senior classes
- The teacher will be mindful of the children's reaction to any questions.
- Questions do not have to be answered straight away

### **Sample responses**

- I will do my best to answer your questions but I may not be able to answer all of them
- That is something you will learn about as you get older
- Is that something you could talk to your parents/guardians/family about?
- We agreed in our contract that we would not ask anyone personal questions
- Somebody asked a question and the language that was used was slang language, what they meant to ask was.....

For children in senior class a **Question Box** will be used as part of a structured RSE lesson. Teachers can follow up on the written questions at a later date this allowing time to prepare suitable answers and consult with the SPHE co-ordinator and or the Senior Management Team (SMT)

# RSE Policy St. Clare's Primary School

## APPENDIX 4 Letter to Parents

xxxxx (date)

Dear Parents,

Relationships and Sexuality education is an integral part of the SPHE curriculum. 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.

Topics covered up to 2 <sup>nd</sup> include	Topics covered 3 <sup>rd</sup> – 6 <sup>th</sup> include
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Keeping safe</li><li>• <b>Bodily changes from birth (birth-9)</b></li><li>• Making age-appropriate choices</li><li>• Appreciating the variety of family types and the variety of family life that exists in our school and community</li><li>• Recognising and expressing feelings</li><li>• Self-care, hygiene, diet, exercise and sleep</li><li>• Expressing opinions and listening to others</li><li>• <b>Naming the parts of the male/ female body using appropriate anatomical terms (Junior/Senior Infants) <i>The language taught at this level will be.....</i></b></li><li>• <b>Naming the parts of the male/ female body using appropriate anatomical terms and identify some of their functions (1st/2nd) <i>The language taught at this level will be.....</i></b></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Bodily changes</b></li><li>• Healthy eating, personal hygiene and exercise</li><li>• Keeping safe</li><li>• Expressing feelings</li><li>• Appreciating the variety of family types within our school and community and how these family relationships shape us</li><li>• Making healthy and responsible decisions</li><li>• Forming friendships</li><li>• <b>Discuss the stages and sequence of development of the human baby in the womb (3rd, 4th class)</b></li><li>• <b>Introduction to puberty and changes (3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th class)</b></li><li>• <b>Changes that occur in boys and girls with the onset of puberty (5th and 6th Class)</b></li><li>• <b>Reproductive system of male/female adults (5th and 6th class)</b></li><li>• <b>Understanding sexual intercourse, conception and birth within the context of a committed loving relationship (5th, 6th class) <i>The language taught at this level will be.....</i></b></li></ul>

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 questions, please contact the secretary Mrs. Walsh to make an appointment.

Yours sincerely,

**Principal**

# RSE Policy St. Clare's Primary School

---

## APPENDIX 5 RSE Withdrawal Form

**Child's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Class:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Teacher:** \_\_\_\_\_

I wish to withdraw my child from the sensitive issues taught in the Relationship and Sexuality Education Curriculum. I am taking responsibility to cover the sensitive issues with my child outside of school hours.

I understand that St. Clare's Primary School cannot guarantee that the other children will not inform my child about what happened. I am aware that the teacher may also need to make incidental reference to the sensitive issues at another time while that child is present.

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_  
Mother/Guardian

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_  
Father/Guardian

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

# RSE Policy St. Clare's Primary School

---

## APPENDIX 6      References

Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools, DES: 2013

Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children, Department of Children and Youth Affairs: 2017.

Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools, DES: 2017

DES Circular 0081/2017: Publication of new 'Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools, DES: December 2017

DES Circular 0043/2013: Anti Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools, September 2013

DES Circular 0022/2010: SPHE Best Practice Guidelines for Primary Schools, March 2017

DES Circular 42/2018

Flourish Programme: A RSE programme for Catholic Schools – Catholic Education Partnership <https://catholiceducation.ie/the-flourish-programme-an-rse-programme-for-catholic-primary-schools/>

Friends for Life Programme - NEPS

Guidelines on Relationships and Sexuality Education Irish Catholics Bishops Conference

Inspectorate Evaluation Studies of SPHE in Primary Schools: DES, 2009

Looking at Our School 2022 – A Quality Framework for Primary Schools, DE: 2022

Making the Links and Beyond (revised edition), PDST: 2017

The Stay Safe Programme (revised edition)

The Walk Tall Programme (revised edition)

A Guide for the Reporting of Child Protection and Welfare Concerns, TUSLA: 2017

Best Practice Principles for Organisations in Developing Children First Training Programmes, TUSLA: 2017

Relationship and Sexuality Education Resource Material

Schools for Health in Ireland: Framework for Developing a Health Promoting School, HSE: 2015

Schools for Health in Ireland: Co-ordinator Handbook for Developing a Health Promoting School, HSE: 2015



# RSE Policy St. Clare's Primary School

---

School Self-Evaluation Guidelines 2016-2022: Primary, DE: 2016

SPHE Curriculum, NCCA: 1999

Wellbeing in Primary Schools – Guidelines for Mental Health Promotion, DES, NEPS, DOHE: 2015

Wellbeing in Primary Schools – Resources for Promoting Mental Health in Primary Schools, DES, NEPS, DOHE: 2015

# RSE Policy St. Clare's Primary School

---

## Appendix 7: Flourish Programme

Class	Strand/Strand Unit	Sensitive Content Objectives consult curriculum – for complete objectives in Growing/Changing and Taking Care of my Body	Language	Page: RSE Manual for sensitive objectives	Page Walk Tall for sensitive objectives	Supplementary Resources
Junior/Senior Infants	<b>Myself</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Growing and changing</li> <li>• Taking care of my body</li> </ul>	<b>Growing and changing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Become aware of new life and birth in the world</li> <li>• Develop an awareness of human birth</li> </ul> <b>Taking care of my body</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Name the parts of the male and female body using appropriate anatomical terms</li> </ul>	Womb Breast-feeding Penis Vagina	New Life p 68  My Body p 147  Caring for New Life p 137	Senior Infants: Our Amazing Bodies p94	Anatomically correct dolls  Picture books of new baby  Visit of baby to class
First/Second Class	<b>Myself</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Growing and changing</li> <li>• Taking care of my body</li> </ul>	<b>Growing and changing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Begin to understand that reproduction, birth, growth and death are all part of new life cycles</li> </ul> <b>Taking care of my body</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Name the parts of the male and female body using appropriate anatomical terms and identify some of their functions.</li> </ul>	Womb Breast-feeding Penis Vagina Vulva Urethra	The wonder of New Life p 59/151  How my body works p67/161  Growing means changing p77/171	Second Class Our Amazing Bodies p37	Picture books of going to the doctor  Books/activities on Life Cycle  Birth and new life in nature
Third/Fourth Class	<b>Myself</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Growing and changing</li> <li>• Taking care of my body</li> </ul>	<b>Growing and changing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand the physical changes taking place in both the male and female body</li> <li>• Realise that changes do not occur at the same time but nonetheless are predictable and natural and that being different is normal</li> </ul> <b>Taking care of my body</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognise and discuss how feelings and emotions are affected by the physical changes that take place during puberty</li> <li>• Discuss the stages and sequence of development of the human body from conception to birth</li> </ul>	Revise the above  Umbilical cord  Changes in puberty (4 <sup>th</sup> class)	Preparing for New Life p69  The wonder of New Life p169  As I grow I change p93  Growing and changing p195	Third Class as I Grow I Change p175  Fourth Class Changing and Growing p140	Body Systems  Picture books on Growing and Changing  Body Systems  Picture books on Growing and Changing

# RSE Policy St. Clare's Primary School

<b>Fifth/Sixth Class</b>	<b>Myself</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Growing and changing</li> <li>• Taking care of my body</li> </ul>	<b>Growing and changing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand sexual intercourse, conception and birth within the context of a loving committed relationship</li> </ul> <b>Taking care of my body</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify and discuss the physical changes that occur in boys and girls with the onset of puberty and understand that these take place at different rates for everyone</li> <li>• Understand the reproductive system of both male and female adults.</li> </ul>	Revise the above  Wet dreams  Busy Bodies language  Semen  Sexual Intercourse  Menstruation	My Body Grows I Change p81  The Wonder of new Life p92  Caring for New Life p 103  Different Kinds of Love p 141	Fifth Class My Amazing Body p345    Sixth Class Creation p121	Busy Bodies PowerPoint recap  Question Box  Puberty Quizzes  Busy Bodies DVD  Busy Bodies PowerPoint recap  Question Box  Puberty Quizzes
--------------------------	--	---	---	--	---	---