

St. John the Baptist Junior Boys' National School

19006 Q

RELATIONSHIPS AND SEXUALITY EDUCATION POLICY

Introduction

St. John the Baptist Junior Boys' School is a primary school catering for boys from junior infants to second class. The values of inclusivity and respect are clearly stated in the mission statement and in each of our school policies. It is our intention that everyone feels valued and our pupils are encouraged to develop their full potential in a caring and supportive environment.

Definitions

Patron: The word "Patron" means the Catholic Archbishop of Dublin or the person with powers of governance if the diocese is vacant or impeded.

Department: The word "Department" means the Department of Education and Skills.

Board: The word "Board" refers to the Board of Management of St. John the Baptist Junior Boys' School, Seafield Road West, Clontarf, Dublin 3.

Parents: The word "Parents" as used in this document refers to any person having a position of legal responsibility for a pupil, including birth parents, adoptive parents, foster parents, step-parents and legal guardians; as notified to the School from time to time.

School: The word "School" as used in this Policy refers to St. John the Baptist Junior Boys' National School, Seafield Road West, Clontarf, Dublin 3, Roll No. 19006Q.

Staff: The word "Staff" as used in this Policy refers to all staff, teaching and non-teaching, who are employed in or by the School and includes those who volunteer assistance in any School activities.

RSE: In this Policy, the abbreviation RSE refers to relationship and sexuality Education.

SPHE: In this Policy, SPHE refers to Social Personal and Health Education

Rationale

In the 1999 curriculum, RSE was included as part of SPHE. RSE will be taught in accordance with the Department's directives and within the philosophy framework and ethos of the School. The teaching methods used in the School are child-centred and reflect the age and stage development of each child. R.S.E. is a lifelong process and involves acquiring knowledge and understanding and the development of attitudes, beliefs and values about relationships, sexual identity and intimacy. The school recognises that the home is the natural environment in which RSE takes place. We support this education and seek to promote the overall development of the child, in an age-appropriate manner within the context of our school ethos.

Relationship of RSE to Social, Personal and Health Education

In our school, RSE is taught in the context of SPHE in the strand units *Self – Identity, Relating to Others, Taking Care of my Body, Growing and Changing, Safety and Protection*.

SPHE contributes to promoting the health and well-being of children and young people. This happens in the context of their emotional, moral, social and spiritual growth, as well as their intellectual, physical, religious and creative development. SPHE is taught from Junior Infants to Second Class and is formally timetabled.

RSE will be facilitated in the following ways within our school:

- In the context of a positive school climate and atmosphere
- As part of timetabled S.P.H.E. (See appendix 1)
- On an integrated, cross-curricular basis

The RSE curriculum is a spiral curriculum. This involves revisiting key topics in a developmentally appropriate manner at regular intervals. As it is a progressive programme, it is taught annually, on an age-appropriate basis.

Aims of the RSE programme

- To assist Parents in their role as primary educators so that they may guide their child's development physically, emotionally and socially.
- To enhance the personal development and self-esteem of each child.
- To help each child develop healthy friendships and relationships.
- To promote an understanding of, and a healthy attitude to, relationships and sexuality.
- To promote a knowledge of and a respect for the creation of life.
- To enable each child to develop healthy attitudes and values towards their sexuality in a moral, spiritual and social framework.

Management and organisation of the R.S.E programme in our School

Parental involvement

RSE is an ongoing process throughout life. Parents and the family are acknowledged as the primary educators of their children. We work in a supportive role with the Parents of our school, by complementing their role with a school-based programme in RSE. Parents are encouraged to allow their children to participate in all aspects of this programme. If Parents have particular concerns they are encouraged to discuss these with the principal or class teacher. The curriculum books and resource materials are available in the school and Parents are welcome to borrow them, if they wish.

Withdrawal from RSE

Since RSE is an obligatory requirement of the Department, it is the view of the Board that it should be all-inclusive. The School therefore actively promotes the full participation in the RSE programme at all levels in the child's educational development. The Board does, however, take account of parental concerns and a Parent's right to withdraw a pupil from themes pertaining to sensitive issues will be respected on the understanding that the parent(s) take full responsibility for this aspect

of education themselves. Any parent who wishes to withdraw their child may be requested to make arrangements for the supervision of the child while the RSE class is in progress.

Content and Timetabling

It is School policy that the content objectives are covered with each class level on an age-appropriate basis, as outlined in the SPHE curriculum statement and within the context of the ethos of the School. One half-hour period per week is timetabled in each class for SPHE and RSE will be included in the programme taught during this time. The approach to the teaching of RSE will be kept as normal as possible and will usually be delivered within the child's class by the class teacher.

Pupils with Special Needs

Children with special needs may need more help than others in coping with the physical and emotional aspects of growing up; they may also need more help in learning what sorts of behaviour are and are not acceptable, and in being warned and prepared against abuse by others.

Terminology

In teaching issues related to RSE, teachers will use the correct biological terms for parts of the body.

Questions

Questions arising from curriculum content will be addressed by the teacher in a sensible, sensitive and age-appropriate manner and within the context of the School ethos. It may not be appropriate to deal with some explicit questions in class. Teachers may choose to say that it is not appropriate to deal with that question at this time. If a teacher becomes concerned about a matter that has been raised he/she should seek advice from the Principal. When deciding whether or not to answer questions, the teacher should consider the age and readiness of the students, the RSE programme content, the ethos of the School and the RSE policy.

Confidentiality and Child Protection

Should the RSE strand give rise to a disclosure by a child of abuse, the school staff will follow the Department's Child Protection Guidelines (DES, 2011) as outlined in the School Child Protection Policy.

Sources and Resources

The following resources will be used for the teaching of RSE in our School:

- *RSE Programme.*
- *Stay Safe Programme.*
- *Walk Tall Programme*
- *SPHE Whole School Policy*
- *Fun Friends*

Ongoing Support, Development and Review

The school will facilitate teachers to obtain further training in this field, bearing in mind the overall budgetary framework and the need for the ongoing teaching and learning programme of the School to continue with as little disturbance as possible. Teachers who have attended in-service courses in this area, generally share knowledge and skills with other members of staff. The policy and programme will be reviewed every three years or in line with Departmental legislation. The next formal review of this policy will take place in 2019.

Policy Review and Ratification

This policy was reviewed and ratified by the Board at its meeting held on

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Signed _____

Date _____ 5-4-2016

APPENDIX 1

Sample overview of content for SPHE over two years

Strands	Strand Units (Year 1)	Strand Units (Year 2)
Myself	Self-identity (Sep/Oct)	Self-identity (Sep/Oct)
	Taking care of my body (Nov/Dec)	
	Growing and Changing (Mar/Apr)	
		Safety and Protection (Jan/Feb) + Stay Safe programme
Myself and others		My friends and other people (Nov/Dec)
	Myself and my family (Jan/Feb) + Stay Safe programme (Safety and Protection)	
		Relating to others (Mar/Apr)
Myself and the wider world	Developing Citizenship (May/Jun)	
		Media Education (May/June)