

R.S.E. Policy for Collon N.S.

▪ School Details

- *Name:* Collon National School
- *Address:* School Lane, Collon.
- *Phone Number:* 041 9826594
- *Category:* Catholic, 11 teacher
- *Enrolment Numbers:* 232

▪ Introductory Statement & Rationale

This policy statement is an approved approach to the teaching of RSE in Collon N.S. It was developed by the staff of Collon N.S. It was developed to inform teachers and parents as to what material is covered in the Relationship and Sexuality Education Programme within the subject Social, Personal and Health Education.

School Philosophy

- Collon N.S. is a Catholic school and therefore all policies developed are implemented in ways which are in keeping with the ethos of the school.
- Our Mission statement is as follows

The ethos of the school is characterised by the following:

- *Sensitive to reality of our children's lives in a changing world*
- *Mutual respect between all partners in education*
- *Child-centred*
- *Aims to ensure each child reaches full potential in the holistic sense*
- *Hopes that children are equipped with high self-esteem to enable them to go to live happy and fulfilled lives*

▪ Definition of RSE

RSE aims to provide opportunities for children and young people to learn about relationships and sexuality in ways that help them think and act in a moral, caring and responsible way.

- **Relationship of Relationship and Sexuality Education(RSE) to Social, Personal and Health Education**

Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) 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. (p. 5 NCCA interim curriculum and guidelines for RSE)

- **Current Provision**

Included in the school curriculum in Collon N.S. is:

- SPHE
- Use of the RSE Manual and Busy Bodies DVD
- Religious Education through the Alive O Programme
- In the past the school has used the services of an outside speaker for pupils in 6th class only, in developing this policy it was decided that it would be beneficial for this trend to continue as pupils in the past have felt very comfortable & more open in discussing concerns with someone other than their class teacher.

- **Aims of our RSE programme**

- *To help young people develop healthy friendships and relationships*
- *To promote a healthy attitude to sexuality and to 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- (Fifth and Sixth Class)*
- *To understand the physical changes taking place with the onset of puberty- 4th class, 5th and 6th classes*
- *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*

■ **Guidelines for the Management and Organisation of RSE in our School**

Curriculum Matters:

- Curriculum Content – The curriculum by NCCA will be followed as published, and will be taught in Infants to 6th class. It will be taught by the teaching staff (as outlined on the sheet attached) **OR** An outside speaker will address the "sexually sensitive issues" i.e. puberty, stages of baby in the womb, reproductive system, conception, birth and sexual intercourse, at 6th Class. All resources used will be in keeping with the ethos of the school and the policy.
- In a multi-class situation, the younger class will be withdrawn when topics being taught are not age-appropriate.
- When an outside speaker is used, the class teacher is responsible for making them aware of school policy and that teacher will sit in during the lesson.

Organisational Matters:

- Parents have the right to withdraw their child for these lessons. They must give a notice in writing to the school principal that they are withdrawing their child. The school will make arrangements for the child to attend another class while this lesson is on.
- With regard to matters of a confidential nature, the school cannot take any responsibility for what is discussed in the yard or classroom.
- Any teacher has the right to opt-out from teaching the sexually sensitive issues in RSE. It is responsibility of Board of Management to ensure that the curriculum will be taught to the children by another teacher or an outside speaker.
- Parents are invited/welcome to view the curriculum and may arrange to speak to the class teacher if they have any concerns.

Dealing with Questions:

All questions answered will reflect the parameters of the curriculum. Certain topics will not be discussed i.e. abortion, masturbation, homosexuality, contraception. Questions to the teacher may be written or oral within the group setting and answered within the boundaries of the curriculum and policy. Any questions asked by the children that are judged to be inappropriate, the teacher will refer the child to their parents or will explain that this will be covered at second level.

- **Provision for Ongoing Support**

- Parents welcome to view curriculum if they wish
- Regular contact with parents prior to the teaching of lessons involving "sensitive issues" in the form of the home/school link page accompanying such lessons in the RSE Resource Books and outline of sensitive areas **OR** Contact will be made with parents prior to the address by the outside speaker. Parents have the primary responsibility for educating their children in sexual matters. The school RSE programme acts as a support only to parents, and parents retain the right to withdraw their children from classes.

- **Links to other policy areas**

- Child Protection Policy
- SPHE Policy
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- **Child Protection**

The school follows the DES Child Protection Guidelines and has a Child Protection Policy with the Principal as Designated Liaison Person. This policy may be viewed on the school website or a hard copy is available in the school office. In cases of disclosure, the DLP will follow the procedures as set out in Children First.

- **Review**

- This policy will be reviewed by the RSE Policy Committee and staff as required. This policy will also be reviewed should a need arise. Parents and staff will be informed of any amendments made by the RSE Policy Committee.

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management of Collon N.S on

Appendix 1

Social, Personal and Health education "*provides particular opportunities to foster the personal development, health and well-being of the child and to help him/her to create and maintain supportive relationships and become an active and responsible citizen in society*". (SPHE Teacher Guidelines p. 2)

Relationships and Sexuality Education is an important part of S.P.H.E.

Relationships and Sexuality Education aims to help the child to develop healthy friendships and relationships and to promote an understanding of and a healthy attitude towards human sexuality and relationships. The themes relating specifically to sexuality are only a small part of the S.P.H.E. programme. Perhaps some of the language used in these lessons may be of concern to some parents. To alleviate any fears you may have, we have compiled a list of specific vocabulary which is used in each of the classes and the objectives they relate to in the SPHE curriculum.

We expect that this factual information is delivered to the children in a sensitive, healthy and relaxed manner, with the view to awaken in each child a sense of wonder of themselves and others.

Infants:

Junior Infants: The theme of new-life is dealt with, which relates to nature and family e.g. New life in Spring, pets and family (RSE Teaching Materials p. 68-76)

Vocabulary Introduced: born womb

Senior Infants: Taking care of my Body - covers personal hygiene and self-awareness (RSE Teaching Materials p. 148-156 Option 2)

Vocabulary Introduced: Penis vulva/vagina breasts

As SPHE is spiral in nature, the work in Junior Infants is revisited re: New Life and expanded (RSE Teaching Materials p. 158-167)

Vocabulary Introduced: breastfed little seed - 9 nine months in womb

Relevant Objectives from SPHE Curriculum for Infants:

The child should be enabled to

- develop an awareness of human birth that a baby grows and is nurtured in the mother's womb until ready to be born

(SPHE Curriculum - Infants - p. 18)

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

(SPHE Curriculum - Infants - p. 17)

First and Second Class

First Class: The themes covered include "New Life" and "How my body works" (RSE Teaching Materials p. 68-75)

Vocabulary Introduced: urine urethra

Second Class: Themes explored include "The Wonder of New Life" p.152, "When My Body Needs Special Care" (RSE Teaching Materials p. 162-169)

Vocabulary Introduced: vagina anus

Relevant Objectives from SPHE Curriculum for 1st & 2nd class:

The child should be enabled

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

(SPHE Curriculum - 1st & 2nd Class - p. 27)

- appreciate what is necessary in order to provide and care for new-born babies in both the animal and human world

(SPHE Curriculum - 1st & 2nd Class - p. 28)

Third and Fourth Class:

Third Class: Preparing for New Life (RSE Teaching Materials p.71/72& 95/96)

Vocabulary Introduced: Pregnancy umbilical cord navel (belly button), vagina, womb, breast feeding, growth, hormones

Fourth Class:) (4th class girls will be taught separately) Themes include "The Wonder of New Life" p.169-179 and "Growing and Changing" p.195-200, option 1 which deal with all stages of pregnancy and birth and encourages children not to take these daily miracles for granted (respect).

Vocabulary Introduced: Fertilized egg scan hormones cells menstruation Periods Pubic areas Pubic Hair Perspiration, lining of the womb, sac filled with liquid, special towels.

Relevant Objectives from SPHE Curriculum for 3rd & 4th class.

The child should be enabled

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

(SPHE Curriculum – 3rd & 4th Class – p. 41)

- understand the physical changes taking place in both the male and female body growing height and weight, increasing strength growing from boy to man, growing from girl to woman

(SPHE Curriculum – 3rd & 4th Class – p. 39)

Fifth and Sixth Class

Fifth Class: Themes developed include "My Body Grows and Changes", "The Wonder of New Life" and "Caring for New Life" (RSE Teaching Materials p. 82-92 & 94-101)

Vocabulary Introduced: ovaries fallopian tubes uterus cervix testicles scrotum sperm production erection wet dreams, periods, menstruation, breast development, conception but not to include the word intercourse, only to teach that conception happens when the sperm & the egg meet.

Sixth Class: Themes covered include "Growing and Changing", "Relationships and New Life" and "A Baby is a miracle" (RSE Teaching Materials p. 184-197 & 200-208 & 210-219)

Vocabulary Introduced: female hormonal changes, changing body shape development of breasts, appearance of pubic hair, onset of menstruation (periods)

male hormonal changes, physical growth, enlargement of testicles and penis appearance of pubic, underarm and facial hair, breaking of the voice, beginning of sperm production, onset of nocturnal emissions (wet dreams), conception occurs when intercourse between a man and a woman takes place but emphasise that this should ideally happen in a loving relationship.

Relevant Objectives from SPHE Curriculum for 5th & 6th class:

The child should be enabled

- 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

(SPHE Curriculum - 5th & 6th Class - p. 56)

- understand sexual intercourse, conception and birth within the context of a committed, loving relationship
- discuss and explore the responsibilities involved in being a parent and the emotional and physical maturity required to be a parent preparing

for the birth of the baby taking care of offspring from birth onwards
emotional, psychological and practical provisions
(SPHE Curriculum - 5th & 6th Class - p. 58)