

Anglesboro N.S. –RSE Policy

Introductory Statement & Rationale:

This policy statement is an approved approach to the teaching of RSE in Anglesboro N.S. RSE is mandatory in primary level. The content taught is informed by the programme outlined by the Department of Education. The aim of the policy is to inform teachers and parents as to what material is covered in the RSE programme within SPHE. The school RSE programme acts as a support only to parents, and parents retain the right to withdraw their children from classes.

Definition of RSE:

RSE is an integral part of Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) and is 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.

RSE aims to help children learn, at home and in school, about their own development, about their friendships and relationships with others. This work is based on developing a good self-image and self-esteem and providing them with appropriate information.

Relationship of RSE to SPHE:

In Anglesboro N.S. RSE will be taught in the context of Social, Personal and Health Education. SPHE is a subject on the school curriculum that 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. This happens in the context of their emotional, moral, social and spiritual growth as well as their intellectual, physical, political, religious and creative development. The content of the schools SPHE programme covers a wide range of topics such as healthy eating, alcohol and drug awareness, environmental issues, safety and social responsibility as well as RSE.

Including RSE in the Curriculum:

RSE is facilitated in the following ways:

- in the context of a positive school climate and atmosphere
- in the context of an effective code of behaviour and anti-bullying policy
- as part of religious education

- as part of timetabled SPHE
- on an integrated cross curricular basis

Aims of our RSE programme:

- To help young people develop healthy friendships 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 wonder and awe at the process of birth and new life

Guidelines for the Management and Organisation of RSE in our school:

Content:

- The content objectives covered will be taught as laid down by the Department of Education and Science in the SPHE Curriculum 1999.
- RSE will be taught in all classes.
- The SPHE/RSE curriculum will be of a spiral nature and all content objectives will be covered by the time children leave 6th class.
- All resources used in the teaching of the programme will be in keeping with the ethos of the school and in the spirit of this policy.
- For an outline of the RSE programme - see Appendix 1.
- For the vocabulary to be taught in the sensitive areas - see Appendix 2.

Timetabling:

One half hour period per week is timetabled for each class for SPHE. RSE will be included in the programme taught during this time. It is envisaged that some aspects of RSE (including the sensitive will be taught through a number of core periods while some material may be taught in a cross curricular manner. The sensitive RSE material will be taught in each classroom during Term 3.

Parental Involvement:

RSE is an ongoing process throughout life. Parents are acknowledged as primary educators of their children and the school works in partnership in a

supportive role. Each year, prior to implementation of the RSE programme, parents will be informed when the teacher will begin to teach the programme.

Withdrawal from RSE:

Since RSE is an obligatory requirement of the Department of Education and Skills, it should be inclusive. However, a parent's right to withdraw a pupil from themes pertaining to sensitive issues will be respected on the understanding that the parent is taking full responsibility for this aspect of education. Parents are obliged to inform the school in writing of their decision to withdraw the child from the sensitive issues classes. The child must then be collected from class at the appropriate time on the days on which these lessons will be taught. The school cannot be responsible for any information which a child may receive outside the direct teaching of RSE lessons.

Teacher Opt Out:

It is envisaged that all aspects of SPHE and RSE will be taught by class teachers to their own classes. Teachers will teach only the topics laid down for the class and will answer only those questions related to the topics taught. Pupils will be informed that questions/issues not on the programme cannot be addressed and they will be referred back to their parents. Teachers may exercise discretion to contact parents themselves if they feel that a question is inappropriate. A teacher's right to opt out from teaching the sensitive areas will be respected. Arrangements for the teaching of the programme in that teacher's class will be made by the Principal.

Questions

Staff should not invalidate questions but use limits.

The main aim of talk and discussion is to create an atmosphere where children feel comfortable to ask important questions and that the relationship fostered in these sessions is open, controlled and safe for all pupils. While you may not be able to answer all questions, your hope is 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 of schooling or education, and are not put off because they perceived the topics or questions be embarrassing.

We 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
- The teacher will be mindful of their reaction to any questions
- Questions do not have to be answered straight away

Sample responses:

- I'll do my best to answer your questions but I may not be able to answer all of them
- That's something you'll learn about as you get older
- Is that something you could talk to your parents / guardians / family about?
- Somebody asked a question and the language they used was slang language, what they meant to ask was....

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 for suitable answers, consult with colleagues, etc.

Question Box

During the delivery of each section of the sensitive lessons– children will be encouraged to place their questions into a 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 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
- 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

Confidentiality and Child Protection:

Where there is disclosure by a child of abuse or if issues arise which might be seen to contravene Children First Guidelines, the school will follow appropriate procedures.

Resources:

www.pdst.ie/primary/RSE - various updated resources including PDF copies of the the manuals and Busy Bodies booklet
 Walk Tall Resource Books
 Stay Safe Programme
 RSE Manuals

Other resource material as deemed appropriate by class teachers in consultation with the Principal.

Provision for Ongoing Support:

For Parents:

- Parents are welcome to view the curriculum if they wish (available at www.curriculumonline.ie)
- There will be contact with parents prior to and during the teaching of lessons involving "sensitive issues".

For Teachers:

- The Board of Management will support in-career development in the area of SPHE/RSE as opportunities arise

Implementation:

This policy will be implemented every 2nd school year. Sensitive lessons will be taught in term 3 after the Easter holidays.

Review:

This policy will be reviewed where and when necessary. Parents and staff will be informed of any amendments made.

Ratification and Communication

This Policy was ratified by the Board of Management at a BOM meeting held on _____

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Chairperson

RSE Contents – Appendix 1

Junior Infants:

Themes:

This is Me

Who Are You

We are Friends

This is My Family

People Who Teach Us about Keeping Safe.

We Have Feelings

New Life

I Grow

Making Choices

Senior Infants:

Themes:

Look what I can do

These are my friends

This is my family

I can be safe

Other people have feelings too

Caring for new life

My Body

I grow and change

Making decisions

First Class:

Themes:

Things I like to do

My friends

My family

Keeping Safe

Showing our feelings

The wonder of new life

How my body works

Growing means changing

Decisions and their consequences

Second Class:

Themes:

Other people are special

Being friends

My family

Keeping safe
Coping with our feelings
The wonder of new life
When my body needs Special Care
Growing and changing
Personal Decisions

Third Class:

Themes:

Special Gifts
Sometimes Friends Fight
My family
Keeping safe
Expressing feelings
Preparing for new Life
Our Senses
As I grow I change
Making Decisions

Fourth Class:

Themes:

Myself and others
Bullying Behaviour
My family
Reasons for Rules
Feelings and emotions
The Wonder of new life
Being Clean - Keeping Healthy
Growing and Changing
Problem-solving

Fifth Class:

RSE Themes:

The person I am
Different kinds of friend
Keeping Safe
Feelings and Emotions
My Body grows and changes
The wonder of new Life
Caring for new Life
Making Healthy Decisions

Sixth Class:

RSE Themes

Me and My Aspirations

Different kinds of love

Families

Keeping Safe and Healthy

Feelings and Emotions

Growing and Changing

Relations and New Life

A Baby is a Miracle

Choices and Decision Making

Appendix 2

RSE SENSITIVE AREAS LANGUAGE

Junior/Senior Infants

My Body: identify external parts of the male and female body, head, eyes, ears, nose, nipple, breast, skin, navel, private parts, penis, bottom, vagina.

New Life

A baby grows and is nurtured in the mother's womb until ready to be born.

First/Second Classes

My body: How my body works.

Name and identify external parts of the male and female body and their associated function.

Naval: The proper name for the part of the body where a baby was joined to his/her mother before being born.

Penis: The proper name for the part of the body of a boy that passes urine.

Urethra: The proper name for the part of the body of a girl that passes urine.

Vagina: Opening where a baby leaves a mother's womb. Sometimes a mother has to have an operation to have the baby. This is all normal.

Breasts: Breasts produce milk after a mother has had a baby. Sometimes the mother feeds the baby with this milk,

New Life: caring for a new born baby. A baby grows in the mother's womb until ready to be born.

Third Class

My Body: As I grow I change (ref: pg 95-101 RSE Third Class Resource materials).

New Life:

Caring for a new baby. Nutrition in the womb and the function of the umbilical cord. Before a baby is born the baby spends nine months in the mother's womb and gets food through a tube called the umbilical cord. (Ref: pp.73-74 RSE Third Class Resource Materials).

Fourth Class

My body

Growing and changing-body changes. Hormones. Changes in shape.

Increases in body hair. Pubic hair. Menstruation. (Ref: p.199 RSE Fourth Class Resource Materials).

Birth and New Life: Stages of growth of a baby from conception to birth. Identify objects which coincide with size of foetus at different stages. Care while waiting for a baby. After nine months the baby is ready to be born. Develop an appreciation of the wonder of the birth of a new baby. (Ref: The Wonder of New Life pp.170-181 RSE Fourth Class Resource Materials).

Fifth Class

Physical Development:

Puberty

Physical changes for boys:

Growth spurts, Testicles, Scrotum, Penis enlarge, Pubic/Facial and other body hair, Voice deepens, Perspiration, Oily skin, Pimples.

Physical changes for girls: Breasts develop, Menstruation/Periods begin, Growth spurt, Underarm and pubic hair, Hips broaden, Perspiration, Oily skin, Pimples, Male/Female Reproductive Organs. Ovulation/Menstruation. Psychological, Emotional and Social Changes. (Ref: pp.82-92 RSE Fifth Class Resource Materials).

New Life: How New Life Begins? Ovum (Ova)/Sperm. Ovaries. Conception. (Ref pg 96 Fifth Class Resource Materials).

Sixth Class. Growing and Changing:

Responsibility: what age must I be toRituals, post primary school. Adulthood. (Ref: pg 184-197 Sixth Class RSE resource materials)

New Life: Relationships and a context for New Life. Conception. Sexual Intercourse in the context of a committed loving relationship. Respect for Human Life. Development in the womb. (Ref: Chapters 7 and 8 RSE Sixth Class Resource Materials).