

R.S.E Policy for Scoil an Spioraid Naoimh Boys National School

School Details

- Name: **Scoil an Spioraid Naoimh Boys**
- Address: Curraheen Road, Bishopstown, Cork
- Phone Number: 021-4543333
- Category: Mainstream
- Enrolment Numbers: 407

Introductory Statement & Rationale

This policy statement is an approved approach to the teaching of RSE in **Scoil an Spioraid Naoimh Boys** N.S. It was developed by the R.S.E. Policy Committee which included two teachers, two representatives of the Board of Management, and two parent representatives. It was developed to inform teachers and parents as to what material is covered in the RSE programme within SPHE.

School Philosophy

Scoil an Spioraid Naoimh Boys is a Catholic school and therefore all policies developed are implemented in ways which are in keeping with the ethos of the school. 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. (Going Forward Together Parents Information Booklet, p.3).

Relationship of RSE to SPHE

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. (NCCA interim curriculum and guidelines for RSE p.5).

Current Provision included in the school curriculum in **Scoil an Spioraid Naoimh Boys** is

- SPHE
- Use of the RSE Manual and Busy Bodies DVD and Busy Bodies Booklet
- Religious Education through the Grow in Love Programme
- An outside speaker is currently invited to work with sixth class until the RSE programme has been fully implemented in the school. When the outside speaker visits the school parents are invited to attend with their children. The outside speaker visits in the Spring Term.

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 & Sixth Class
- To understand the physical changes taking place with the onset of puberty – Senior 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. All resources used will be in keeping with the ethos of the school and the policy. Each class teacher will teach the content for their class level.
- 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.

Topics covered up to 2nd Class include:

- Keeping Safe
- Bodily changes during growth and birth (birth to 9)
- Making age appropriate choices
- Appreciating family life
- Recognising and expressing feelings
- Self-care, hygiene, diet, exercise and sleep
- Expressing opinions and listening to others
- Naming the parts of the male/female body using appropriate anatomical terms (Junior/Senior Infants)
- Naming the parts of the male/female body using appropriate anatomical terms and identify some of their functions (1st & 2nd)

Topics from 3rd to 6th include:

- Bodily changes
- Healthy eating, personal hygiene, exercise
- Keeping safe
- Expressing feelings
- Family relationships
- Making healthy and responsible decisions
- Forming friendships
- Discuss the stages and sequence of development of the human baby in the womb (4th class)
- Changes that occur in boys and girls with the onset of puberty (5th & 6th Classes)
- Reproductive system of male/female adults (5th & 6th Classes)
- Understanding sexual intercourse, conception and birth within the context of a committed loving relationship (5th & 6th Classes)

Organisational Matters

- If children are withdrawn by their parents, they must give a notice in writing to the school principal that they are withdrawing their child. The child will be accommodated in another teacher's classroom in the school.
- 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 the 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 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.
- With regard to matters of a confidential nature, the school cannot take any responsibility for what is discussed in the yard or classroom.

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 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.

Link to other policy areas

- Child Protection Policy
- SPHE Policy
- Child Protection
- The school follows the DES child protection guidelines and has a child protection policy with the Principal as Designated Liaison Person. In cases of disclosure, the DLP will follow the procedures as set out in Children First.

Review (decide when and how the policy and programme will be reviewed by the partners)
This policy will be reviewed after the initial 12th month period has passed by the RSE Policy Committee, and every two years thereafter. 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.

Ratified On: _____

Signed (Chairman): _____

Signed (Principal): _____