



Ballycullane National School New Ross, Co Wexford.

Phone: 051 562542

E-mail: ballycullanens.ias@eircom.net

Web: ballycullanens.com

Relationships and Sexuality Policy Statement

Our School: Ballycullane National School
Address: New Ross, Co Wexford.
Phone: 051 562542
Roll Number 17194K
Category: Co educational school with multi class groupings. Deis Rural Status.
Enrolment: Currently 61 pupils enrolled.

Our School Philosophy

The ethos of Ballycullane National School is clearly Catholic. It is one which values and respects the contributions of the entire school community. It sets out to promote close working relationships between teachers, management and parents, all of whom work for the benefit of the children. We place a strong emphasis on a varied and broad curriculum to help each child to develop his/her potential to the full. We recognise that each child is unique with a history and background that is also unique. We cherish the various backgrounds of our pupils and foster a spirit of tolerance and open-mindedness.

In Ballycullane National School we constantly strive to be the best that each one of us can be. Teachers, pupils, parents and Board of Management work together to make our school a happy and inclusive environment where each person is encouraged to reach their full potential. We show tolerance and give encouragement to each other.

We learn from our mistakes and strive to do better next time.

Our Motto is **“Be the best that you can be”**.

The school recognises that the parents are the primary educators of their children and supports them in this. Consequently, in the area of RSE, the school’s role is subsidiary to that of parents and it supports and complements their work.

Definition of RSE

RSE is an integral part of Social, Personal and Health Education and must 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. (p. 5 NCCA curriculum and guidelines for RSE). RSE is the formal approach to educating children in:

- Relationships with others – parents, siblings, friends and the community in general.
- Respect for themselves and others.
- Physical development – bodily functions and changes, and personal hygiene.
- Emotional development – maturing in society.
- Parenting, personal and social skills and relationships.
- Sexuality in context – part of a loving relationship.

Relationship of RSE to SPHE and Religion

Social, Personal and Health Education contributes to developing the work of the school in 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, political, religious and creative development. (P.5 Going Forward Together Parents Information Booklet).

The key characteristics of this programme are that SPHE is a lifelong process and is a shared responsibility between family, school, health professionals and the community. The main strands of the SPHE programme are:

- Myself
- Myself and Others
- Myself and the Wider World

It is clear that the Relationships and Sexuality Programme is correctly defined as being an integral part of the programme outlined above. Sexually sensitive issues will be covered within the strand units:

- Taking care of my body
- Growing and changing
- Safety and protection.

The content of all lessons will be governed by the schools' Catholic ethos as taught in the Alive-O Religion programme.

Aims of our RSE programme

The aims of RSE in Ballycullane National School are:

- To enhance the personal development, self-esteem and well-being of the child.
- To develop an appreciation of the dignity, uniqueness and well-being of others.
- 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 moral, spiritual and social framework.
- 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.
- To enable the child to acquire and use an appropriate vocabulary to discuss feelings, sexuality, growth and development.
- To promote knowledge of and respect for human reproduction.
- To develop an understanding of external influences on lifestyles and decision making. Become aware of the variety of ways in which individuals grow, change and understand that their developing sexuality is an important aspect of self-identity
- Develop some coping strategies to protect themselves and others from various forms of abuse

Guidelines for the Management and Organisation of RSE in our School

Curriculum Matters

- The curriculum as published by the NCCA will be followed. All content objectives will be covered by the time each pupil leaves 6th class – (see Appendix A for further details). The curriculum will be taught from Infants to 6th class. It will be ideally be taught by the teaching staff. Occasionally it may be deemed necessary for an outside speaker to address the “sexually sensitive issues” i.e. puberty, reproductive system, conception, birth on 5th and 6th class curriculum and sexual intercourse on the 6th Class curriculum. All resources used will be in keeping with the ethos of the school and this policy.
- In our multi class situation, the younger class will be withdrawn when topics being taught are not age-appropriate.
- When an outside speaker is used, the teacher/principal will make them fully aware of school policy. Parents/guardians will be notified of the name of this speaker in advance of the lesson. The class teacher will review the materials due to be taught and remain with the class during the lesson.

Developmental Approach

While the content of the curriculum is laid out in class groupings, account has to be taken of the characteristics of individual classes over time. It is recognised that from time to time children in a specific class may be emotionally or physically mature/immature for that class and the curriculum should be tailored accordingly.

Organisational Matters

- Prior to the teaching of lessons involving “sensitive issues”, parents will be informed by letter.
- It is a parents/guardians right to withdraw a pupil from these lessons. This request for withdrawal must be made in writing.
- If parents/guardians request the withdrawal of a child from RSE lessons, provision will be made for them to leave the classroom at that time. Supervision will be provided. With regard to matters of a confidential nature, the school cannot take any responsibility for what is discussed in the yard or classroom. Should a child who is withdrawn from the sexually sensitive classes receive inappropriate information from others outside of these classes, it will be the responsibility of the parent/guardian to address the issues.
- 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 delivered to the children, by another teacher, or an outside speaker.
- Parents are welcome to view the curriculum and may speak to the class teacher if they have any concerns. The SPHE curriculum is available to view in Ballycullane National School and online at http://www.ncca.ie/uploadedfiles/Curriculum/SPHE_Curr.pdf

The RSE Handbook is available online at

<http://www.ecdrumcondra.ie/downloads/rse-materials/35-programmes/graphic-design/229-rse-prim>

Dealing with Questions

It is natural that children should wish to ask questions in the area of RSE. However, this area is treated somewhat differently from other subjects due to its sensitive nature.

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 school policy. If any questions asked by the children are judged to be inappropriate, the teacher will refer the child to their parents, or state that this information may be available at a later stage of the curriculum. The school cannot guarantee confidentiality if a child asks a question of a personal nature or discloses personal information. It is also worth noting that if a child makes a disclosure of abuse to a teacher during these lessons or indeed at any time the teacher has no option but to report it to the Designated Liaison Person (DLP), who in turn is duty bound to report it to the HSE.

At all times the child’s and teacher’s right to privacy will be maintained

Resources

- Lesson plans from the DES have been assessed and amended where necessary in line with this school policy. (4 books for class groupings)
- The Alive O programme
- Stay safe programme and a selection of other appropriate resources will also be used.
- Walk Tall Programme
- Busy Bodies DVD and Booklet
- All resources are available for parents/guardians to view if they so request prior to the delivery of the lesson.

Provision for Ongoing Support

- Parents are welcome to view curriculum if they so wish.
- Funding will be sought for the provision of suitable materials when deemed necessary.
- Opportunities provided by our Education centre will be brought to the attention of staff members. Career development will be sought for staff when required, or as requested.
- Principal has attended 2x3hour sessions in November 2013 on the teaching of RSE throughout the school.

Review

The staff, under the guidance of the Principal will review this policy every two years. This policy will also be reviewed should the need arise.

Ratification and Communication

The Board of Management of Ballycullane National School has ratified this amended policy

Signed: _____

Chairperson of Board of Management.

Date: _____

Appendix A

RSE - Sensitive Areas

Junior Infants

New Life – mention of baby in the womb.

Senior Infants

My Body – specific names for male and female sex organs – vagina/vulva, penis, womb.

First Class

New Life – New baby. Baby joined to mother by umbilical cord – mention breast feeding.

Second Class

Birth of baby through vagina. Mention umbilical cord and breast feeding.

Third Class

As for second class, but in more detail.

Fourth Class

Language around baby's development in womb, i.e., fertilised egg, cord. Pictures of foetuses (in RSE manual) to be used.

Menstruation may depending on the development of children involved be introduced to 4th class girls

Fifth and Sixth Classes

Menstruation in the context of hygiene and growth from a girl to a woman.

Boys and girls development – puberty.

How does new life begin? (6th class only)

Biological facts as follows: (6th class only)

- What journey does the egg make?
- What journey does the sperm make?
- Where do they meet?
- What happens when they meet?
- Optional videos : Fifth class – Growing
- Sixth class – Busy Bodies.

Overview of content
Strand
Strand Units
Myself

Infant Classes
Strand Units

I am unique
My Body
As I grow I change
New Life
Feeling Safe
Feelings and emotions
Making decisions

1st and 2nd
Classes

I am unique
My Body
As I grow I change
New Life
Feeling Safe
Feelings and emotions
Making decisions

Myself and others

Myself and my family
Myself and my friends
Special people in my life
Relating to others

Myself and my family
Myself and my friends
Other people
Relating to others

Strand
Strand Units
Myself

3rd and 4th Classes
Strand Units

Accepting myself
Physical development
Growing and changing
Birth and new life
Feelings and emotions
Personal Hygiene
Personal Safety
Making decisions

5th and 6th Classes

Accepting myself
Physical development
Becoming an adult
Parenthood
Feelings and emotions
Personal Hygiene
Personal Safety
Making decisions

Myself and others

Roles and responsibilities in families
Portrayal of sexuality and relationships
Roles of males and females in society
Relating to others

Changing relationships in families and friendships
Group affiliation and loyalty
Portrayal of sexuality and relationships
Sexual stereotypes
Relating to others

The Department of Education and Science does not endorse the use of any of the resources listed below. It is the responsibility of those using the resources to ensure that the content is appropriate to the needs of their students, in line with school policy and suitable for school programmes as outlined by the NCCA

Videos:

‘Bounty – Growing Up, A Guide to Puberty’

15 minutes long. Puberty is explained simply and clearly using animation.

‘Uniview Worldwide’, PO Box 20, Hoylake, Wirral, L48 7H7. Telephone: 0044 151 625 3453.

‘Busy Bodies’

20 minutes long. Adolescent development video. Explains puberty and sexual intercourse. Includes a user guide.

Developed by Health Promotion Department, Southern Health Service Executive. Available free of charge (€5 pp) from your local Education Centre or Health Promotion Department.

Books:

‘Boy Talk’ and ‘Girl Talk’

Lucienne Pickering, published by Geoffrey Chapman.

‘Girlfacts/Boyfacts’

Aidan Herron (Ed.) published by Poolbeg Press.

‘Lets Talk About Where Babies Come From’

Walker Books.

‘Understanding the Facts of Life’

Usborne Books.

‘Ready Steady Grow!’

Angela McNamara, Veritas, 7-8 Lower Abbey Street, Dublin 1

Other Resources:

Anatomically Correct Dolls

Can be ordered by post from Findel Education Limited, Unit 11, Naas Road Business Park, Dublin 12. Tel: 01 427 3100.

RELATIONSHIPS and SEXUALITY EDUCATION IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS

Parent Information Leaflet



Introduction

Learning about relationships and sexuality is a process that goes on throughout our lives. Children learn primarily from their families. Therefore, as a parent, you are the first and most important teacher of your child when it comes to relationships and sexuality. A school based Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) programme can complement and support what children are learning at home. RSE is most effective when schools and parents work in partnership.

Partnership is supported when schools:

- Inform parents about what will be taught in RSE, and when it will be taught
- Consult with parents of a child with a learning difficulty to ensure that his/her needs are being met.
- Inform parents of their right to withdraw their child from the sex education component of RSE.
- Collaborate with parents when reviewing their RSE policy

The Department of Education and Skills requires all schools to teach RSE and to have an RSE policy. The policy will ensure that RSE is taught in a way that reflects the core values and ethos of the school.

The purpose of this leaflet is to give you some information about RSE. For more detailed information please go to the Drumcondra Education Centre website: www.ecdrumcondra.ie/programmes/rse

What is RSE?

RSE teaches children about relationships, sexuality and their own growth and development. The lessons give children the opportunity to reflect on their lives and their relationships in a social, moral and spiritual framework. RSE is taught in the context of a wider subject called Social Personal and Health Education (SPHE).

SPHE provides opportunities to:

- Foster the personal development of children
- Promote the health and well being of children
- Help children to maintain supportive relationships
- Encourage children to become active, responsible citizens

The lessons in SPHE are arranged under three strands: **Myself, Myself and Others, Myself and the Wider World.**

The RSE programme is incorporated into the strands **Myself** and **Myself and Others**. Each strand is subdivided into strand units. These are shown below, with a very brief summary of their content.

The Stay Safe Programme is also an aspect of SPHE and should be taught under the strand unit 'Personal Safety'. The programme helps children to deal with upsetting, unsafe or frightening situations. For more information go to: www.staysafe.ie

JUNIOR INFANTS TO SECOND CLASS

MYSELF:

Self Identity: What makes me unique and special, becoming self reliant, making choices, expressing opinions.

Taking Care of My Body: Caring for one's body, respect for one's body and that of others, diet, hygiene, being able to name parts of male and female body using appropriate anatomical terms.

Growing and Changing: Understanding growth and change, exploring feelings, becoming aware of new life and birth, understanding a baby's needs.

Safety and Protection: Identifying risks, developing strategies for keeping safe, understanding why there are rules.

MYSELF AND OTHERS:

Myself and My Family: Learning about how families love and take care of each other.

My Friends and Other People: Appreciating friendship, treating others with dignity and respect, recognising bullying behaviour, understanding that it is wrong and knowing what to do about it.

Relating to Others: Listening to others, practicing care and consideration towards others, resolving conflict.

THIRD CLASS TO SIXTH CLASS

MYSELF

Self Identity: Self awareness, self confidence, expressing feelings and opinions, coping with change, becoming more responsible, body image, identifying goals and targets.

Taking Care of My Body: Understanding health, dangers of substance misuse, personal hygiene, nutrition. For 3rd/4th Class: understanding physical changes for boys and girls. For 5th/6th Class children: understanding physical and other changes at puberty, understanding the male and female reproductive system.

Growing and Changing: Identifying and discussing feelings, having a positive sense of self. For 3rd/4th Class children: being able to discuss the development of the human baby from conception to birth, recognising how feelings are influenced by puberty. For 5th/6th Class children: understanding sexual intercourse, conception and birth in the context of a committed, loving relationship.

Safety and Protection: Identifying threats to safety, knowing how to keep safe, helping others to be safe.

Making Decisions: Decision making, understanding that decisions have consequences, recognising the role of adults in setting boundaries for young people.

MYSELF AND OTHERS

Myself and My Family: Exploring what it means to belong to a family, identifying behaviour that promotes harmony in families.

My Friends and Other People: Appreciating the importance of friendship, coping with the loss of friendship, learning how to deal with bullying, recognising the importance of courtesy, good manners and caring for others.

Relating to Others: Listening and communication skills, positive strategies for resolving conflict.

