



Dunshaughlin Community National School

Relationship and Sexual Education (RSE) Policy



Introduction

Dunshaughlin Community National School (CNS) is a multi-denominational, co-educational, state primary school, under Patronage of the Louth Meath Education & Training Board. Dunshaughlin CNS is committed to the education and development of each pupil. At Dunshaughlin CNS we aim to protect the wellbeing of our pupils and staff by providing a safe and nurturing environment. As a Community National School our ethos is underpinned by the core values of: Excellence in Education, Care, Equality, Community and Respect

Dunshaughlin CNS has a responsibility to devise a Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) policy as part of the wider Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) curricular area. RSE provides structured opportunities for pupils to acquire knowledge and understanding of human sexuality and relationships, which will enable them to form values and establish behaviours within their emerging moral, spiritual and social framework. RSE is part of the SPHE (Social, Personal and Health Education) curriculum, however two separate policies are required. This policy has been written in accordance with the 'National Curriculum and Guidelines for RSE' as prepared by the 'National Council for Curriculum and Assessment' (NCCA) and 'Relationships and Sexuality Education Policy Guide for Primary Schools' as prepared by the 'Professional Development Service for Teachers' (PDST).

School Ethos

Dunshaughlin CNS is a multi-denominational school which welcomes pupils of all beliefs and none. Our school is committed to inclusion, equality and fairness.

RSE is a key component in supporting our children to develop into healthy young adults. We recognise that SPHE is intrinsic to the teaching and learning that occurs both formally and informally in school. Through our RSE programme, we wish to assist children to develop their personal self-knowledge and self-confidence as they explore their unique place in their family, school and society. Our ethos values respect, inclusion and diversity of all members of our school community. RSE is taught in a space of deep respect, tolerance and openness. As parents/guardians are the primary educators in the social, personal and health education of their children, their involvement is encouraged.

Definition of RSE

The following definition of RSE is referenced from the interim curriculum and guidelines for primary schools (DE 1996, p.5):

“Relationship and Sexuality Education is an important part of the education of young people, and schools provide a safe context within which young people can learn about themselves and the wider world. Relationships and Sexuality Education is an integral part of the Social, Personal and Health

Education (SPHE) 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. In particular, it addresses the meaning of human sexuality, relationships, growth and development, relevant to personal and social skills.”

Relationship of Relationship and Sexuality Education (RSE) to Social Personal and Health Education (SPHE):

SPHE – social personal and health education is a central part of the Primary school curriculum. In SPHE the children will develop a broad range of attitudes, skills and understanding relevant to their own health and wellbeing, to other people and to the society in which he/she lives. Through formal and informal instruction, the children will deal with scenarios, stories, and examples which will help inform their actions, behaviour and decisions in the many situations that he/she may encounter and deal with as everyday part of life and living. RSE is an integral part of Social Personal and Health Education (SPHE) and must be taught in this context to keep its perspective and to give it proper emphasis.

Other school policies which support RSE and SPHE

- Child Safeguarding Statement
- Code of Behaviour
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- SPHE policy

Current Provision

- SPHE curriculum followed as per DES recommendations.
- Use of RSE Manuals
- Goodness Me, Goodness You (GMGY) programme
- Currently, the teachers cover all aspects of RSE with their classes on an annual basis.

Aims and objectives of our RSE Programme (taken from Interim Guidelines for RSE Education 1996)

- Enhance the personal development, self-esteem and wellbeing of the child
- Help the child to develop healthy friendships and relationships
- Foster an understanding of, and a healthy attitude to, human sexuality and relationships in a moral, spiritual and social framework
- Enable the child to acquire an understanding of, and respect for, human love, sexual intercourse and reproduction

- Develop and promote in the child a sense of wonder and awe at the process of birth and new life
- Enable the child to be comfortable with the sexuality of oneself and others while growing and developing
- Acquire and develop knowledge and understanding of self
- Develop an appreciation of the dignity, uniqueness and wellbeing of others
- Develop a positive sense of self-awareness, self-esteem, and self-worth
- Understand the nature, growth and development of relationships within families, in friendships and wider contexts
- Develop an awareness of different family patterns
- Come to value family life and appreciate the responsibilities of parenthood
- Become aware of the variety of ways in which individuals grow and change, and understand that their developing sexuality is an important aspect of self-identity
- Develop personal skills which help to establish and sustain healthy personal relationships
- Develop coping strategies to protect self and others from various forms of abuse
- Acquire and improve skills of communication and social interaction
- Acquire the use of appropriate vocabulary to discuss feelings, sexuality, growth and development
- Develop a critical understanding of external influences on lifestyles and decision making

Guidelines for the Management and Organisation of RSE in our School

Curriculum Planning for RSE

- 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.
- Children will be encouraged to discuss material being covered in class with their parents or guardians. Where applicable, handouts and worksheets will be provided to facilitate this, e.g., Home-School Links pages from the RSE manuals.
- In a class situation, children will be encouraged to recognise that certain information is for them only i.e., that it is inappropriate for them to discuss information received about puberty, intercourse and birth with younger siblings, friends from outside school etc. It will be explained that other children will be given this information by their own parents and teachers when it is developmentally appropriate for them to receive it.
- A respect for personal privacy and information will be emphasised. Teachers will neither give nor request personal information.

Topics covered up to 2nd class include:

- Keeping Safe
- Bodily changes during growth and birth
- 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) *See Appendix 1 for details
- Naming the parts of the male/female body using appropriate anatomical terms and identify some of their functions (1st/ 2nd) *See Appendix 1 for details

Topics covered up to 6th class include:

- Bodily changes
- Healthy eating, personal hygiene, exercise
- Keeping Safe
- Expressing feelings
- Family relationships- Same Love/ Different Families (INTO Resource)
- Making healthy and responsible decisions
- Forming friendships
- Discuss the stages and sequence of development of the human baby in the womb (Fourth class)
- Changes that occur in boys and girls with the onset of puberty (Fourth class)
- Reproductive system of male/female adults (Fifth & Sixth Class) *See Appendix 1 for details
- Understanding sexual intercourse, conception and birth within the context of a loving, committed relationship. (Sixth Class) *See Appendix 1 for details

Students with SEN

Taking into account student's cognitive, social and emotional development and their class level, instruction on the sensitive aspects of RSE, will be based on individual needs and decided together by parents, mainstream teachers and support teachers. The special education teacher will aid the mainstream teacher with the facilitation of appropriate and agreed RSE provision for the child with SEN if applicable to the targets of the child's School Support Plan. Progress will be monitored by ongoing assessment of the programme and feedback from parents, teachers and pupils.

Provision for ongoing support, development, and review

- Parents/guardians welcome to view the curriculum and resource materials if they so wish.

- Regular contact with parents/guardians 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.

Implementation and Review

Once ratified by the Board of Management, this policy will be reviewed yearly until we have a full complement of classes (junior infants to sixth). After this, the policy will be reviewed every two years. However, should the need arise, the policy can be reviewed at any time in the interim if deemed necessary by the Principal and/or Board of Management.

BOM Ratification

LMETB School/College:	Dunshaughlin CNS
Date of Board of Management Meeting:	3/4/2025
Policy:	Relationships and Sexual Education
Proposed By:	Laura Murphy
Seconded By:	Jonathan Dunne
Signed by Chairperson BOM:	Gerry O’ Connor

Appendix 1

<i>Class</i>	<i>Strand/strand unit</i>	<i>Content Objectives</i>	<i>Language</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Pages in RSE/Walk Tall Resource Materials Book</i>
Junior/ Senior Infants	Myself <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Growing and changing Taking care of my body 	Growing and changing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Become aware of new life and birth in the world Develop an awareness of human birth Taking care of my body <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Name parts of the male and female body using anatomical terms 	womb breastfeeding penis vulva	Term 2	<u>RSE Manual</u> New Life p. 68 My Body p. 147 Caring for new life p. 137 At the beach or swimming pool p. 153 <u>Walk Tall Manual</u> Our Amazing Bodies p. 94 (SI book)
First/ Second Class	Myself <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Growing and changing Taking care of my body 	Growing and changing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begin to understand that reproduction, birth, growth, and death are all part of new life cycles Taking care of my body <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Name parts of the male and female body using appropriate anatomical terms and identify some of their functions 	penis vulva vagina womb breastfeeding urethra	Term 2	<u>RSE Manual</u> The wonder of new life p. 59 & 151 How my body works p. 67 & 161 Growing means changing p. 77 & 171 A visit to the doctor p. 164 <u>Walk Tall Manual</u> Our Amazing Bodies p. 37 (2 nd class book)
Third/ Fourth Class	Myself <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Growing and changing Taking care of my body 	Growing and changing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand the physical changes taking place in both the male and female body Realise that changes do not occur at the same time but nonetheless are predictable and natural and that being different is normal Taking care of my body <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognise and discuss how feelings and emotions are affected by the physical changes that take place during puberty 	Revise above umbilical cord changes in puberty menstruation	Term 2	<u>RSE Manual</u> Preparing for new life p. 69 The wonder of new life p. 169 As I grow and change p. 93 Growing and changing p. 195 <u>Walk Tall Manual</u> As I grow I change p. 175 (3 rd class book) Changing and growing p. 140 (4 th class book) The wonder of new life p. 150

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss the stages and sequences of development of human baby from conception to birth 			
Fifth/ Sixth Class	Myself <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Growing and changing Taking care of my body 	Growing and changing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand sexual intercourse, conception and birth within the context of a loving committed relationship Taking care of my body <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and discuss the physical 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 	Revise above Wet dreams <u>Busy Bodies</u> <u>language</u> semen sexual intercourse	Term 2	<u>RSE Manual</u> My body grows and changes p. 181 The wonder of new life p. 92 Caring for new life p. 103 Different kinds of love p. 141 <u>Walk Tall Manual</u> My Amazing Body p. 345 (5 th class book) Creation p. 121 (6 th class book)