



## Scoil Mhuire National School, Rosslare, Co. Wexford

**Principal:** Bobby Kenny      **Board of Management Chairperson:** Fr. James Murphy

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*Acceptance, Appreciation and Achievement for All*

### **Scoil Mhuire Rosslare RSE Policy**

The school staff compiled this policy document during the school year 2022/23. The Parents' Council was consulted and The Board of Management has ratified the policy.

#### **SCHOOL DETAILS**

Scoil Mhuire Rosslare is a mixed primary school. The school, founded in 1932 by the Sisters of Mercy, has a Catholic ethos. There are eight classrooms with a total of approximately 195 pupils.

#### **INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT**

All schools are required to have an RSE policy to detail how RSE is taught in school, including the sensitive aspects. This policy is an approved approach to the teaching of Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE). It has been developed to inform teachers and parents as to what material is covered in the RSE programme within SPHE both formally and informally. The first RSE policy in Scoil Mhuire was developed in 2018, and this is the first revised policy since then.

#### **SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY**

Scoil Mhuire Rosslare values the uniqueness of all individuals within a caring, Christian school community. Our aim is to provide a happy and secure environment which is conducive to the learning and personal development of each child. To help us achieve this aim, the support and cooperation of all teachers, staff, pupils and parents is essential. It is hoped to inculcate in each pupil a sense of belonging to, and pride in Scoil Mhuire Rosslare. Our ethos means that we value respect, tolerance and openness through the lived experience of the children and school community.

Parents have the primary role in the social, personal and health education of their children so their involvement will be encouraged as much as possible. SPHE and RSE are key components in supporting our school and 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 and in the classroom. Through our SPHE programme and subsequently through RSE, we wish to assist children to develop feelings of self-worth and self-confidence while encouraging their ability to relate to others in a positive way. The curriculum also encourages

children to be aware of their rights as an individual while at the same time accepting responsibility for their actions as members of the school and the wider community.

This policy was developed and will be implemented in ways which are in keeping with the ethos of the school. The ethos of the school is characterised by the following:

- Mutual respect between all partners in education – pupils, teachers, parents, staff, Board of Management, our Catholic Patron, Parents' Council and wider Rosslare community
- Sensitive to reality of our children's lives in a changing world
- Child-centred
- Aims to ensure each child reaches full potential in a holistic sense
- Aims to instil children with positive self-esteem to enable them to live happy and fulfilled lives

### **DEFINITION OF RSE**

*'RSE 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. This makes access to RSE in schools all the more important.'* (Maycock, Kitching and Morgan 2007, p2)

Relationships and Sexuality Education is an integral part of 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. It provides opportunities for children to learn about relationships and sexuality in ways that help them think and act in a moral, caring and responsible way.

### **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.

### **SPHE/RSE:**

- a lifelong and continual process throughout primary school and should not be confined to once-off inputs or lessons
- a shared responsibility between family, school, health professionals and the community. RSE should include an input from all, and collaboration can be fostered through the teaching and delivery of materials
- a subject which develops a child's skills, attitudes, values and understanding relevant to a range of social, personal and health issues.
- child-centred. RSE education should prioritise the needs of the child and his/her environment, with appropriate adaptations made within the curriculum to suit individual requirements and individual school situations.

- spiral in nature. RSE formally begins in Junior Infants and is developed throughout the child's time in school. This will provide opportunities to consolidate and build on previous learning in developmentally appropriate ways.
- taught through active learning methodologies. RSE provides a range of learning opportunities that requires children to actively participate in their learning in a wide variety of ways e.g. discussion, circle time, role play.
- free of bias. Lessons, language and resources selected by the school should reflect this. SPHE/RSE encourages children to be inclusive with each other, challenge prejudice and learn how to live together in an intercultural society.

Through SPHE and RSE, members of the school community should be enabled to enhance their self-esteem and wellbeing through:

- A sense of identity
- A sense of purpose
- A sense of belonging
- A sense of security
- A sense of competence

### **Aims of our RSE Programme**

- To enhance the personal development, self-esteem and wellbeing of the child
- 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 enable the child to acquire an understanding of, and respect for human love, sexual intercourse and reproduction (Fifth and Sixth 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

### **Broad objectives of RSE**

Taking due account of differing abilities and varying circumstances, (and in conjunction with the SPHE curriculum) the RSE curriculum should enable the child to:

- 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 differing family patterns
- Come to value family life and appreciate the responsibilities of parenthood

- Develop strategies to make decisions, solve problems and implement actions in various personal, social and health contexts
- 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 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.

We support the aims on which RSE is modelled. We encourage good behaviour, open communication, understanding and tolerance of differences, and respect for self and others. We recognise that both pupils and staff have rights and responsibilities in our school. A sense of responsibility is fostered and attention is paid to the wellbeing of all of the members of the school community.

#### **Policies which support SPHE/RSE**

- Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment
- Substance Use Policy
- Code of Behaviour
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Admissions Policy
- Acceptable Use Policy
- Healthy Eating Policy
- SPHE Policy
- Digital Learning Plan
- Additional Needs Policy
- Data Protection Policy

#### **Child Protection**

This policy is cognisant of all aspects of our current Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment. The school follows the DES Child Protection guidelines with the Principal as the Designated Liaison Person (DLP) and the Deputy Principal as the Deputy DLP. Where a child protection concern is raised, the procedures as outlined in the school's Child Safeguarding Statement and Policy will be followed.

#### **Curriculum Planning for SPHE/RSE**

There are three strands in the SPHE Curriculum i.e Myself, Myself and Others, Myself and the Wider World. There are nine strand units for Junior Infants to Second Class and ten strand units for Third Class upwards - 'Making Decisions' Strand unit only applies to 3rd-6th Class.

Our School follows a two-year plan for SPHE/RSE

**SCOIL MHUIRE ROSSLARE: A Standard Approach to Whole School Teaching of SPHE**

Months	Year 1 (September of odd years 2023, 2025, 2027...)	Year 2 (September of even years 2022, 2024, 2026...)
September/October	<i>Self - identity</i> (Myself)	<i>Myself and my family</i> (Myself and others)
November/December	<i>My friends and other people</i> (Myself and others)	<i>Relating to others</i> (Myself and others)
	<i>Growing and changing - vocabulary</i> (Myself)	<i>Growing and changing - vocabulary</i> (Myself)
January/February	<i>Safety and protection</i> (Myself) <b>STAY SAFE (IN FULL)</b>	<i>Growing and changing</i> (Myself)
March/April	<i>Making decisions*</i> (Myself) (3rd - 6th only)	<i>Taking care of my body</i> (Myself)
May/June	<i>Media education</i> (Myself and the wider world)	<i>Developing citizenship</i> (Myself and the wider world)
	<i>Growing and changing</i> (RSE: 5th/6th)	<i>Growing and changing</i> (RSE: 5th/6th)

\* *Making Decisions* is only a strand unit from 3rd to 6th.  
 Juniors - 2nd may complete the Safety Issues section of *Safety and Protection* at this time.  
 Due to the increased amount of lessons in the Stay Safe Programme from 3rd to 6th Class, placing the *Making Decisions* strand unit after the *Safety and Protection* unit in a standard 2-year plan will enable the teacher to achieve some of the content objectives of *Making Decisions* through the *Stay Safe Programme*.  
 '*Making the Links and beyond - Revised Edition*' gives guidelines for lessons using RSE Books, Walk Tall, SPHE Curriculum and Stay Safe. [www.pdst.ie](http://www.pdst.ie)  
 Teachers use their professional judgement in choosing the most appropriate way in which the content objectives can be covered, with the exception of Stay Safe, which will be taught in its entirety every two years.

RSE, which largely looks at the development of relationships, is interwoven through all the strands and strand units of the SPHE Curriculum. The more sensitive aspects of RSE will be covered under the strand 'Myself' and strand units 'Growing and Changing' and 'Taking care of my body'. Teachers will refer to the resource 'Making the Links' to support their planning for the delivery of these strand units.

Suggested resources are listed in the Resources Section of this policy.

## **Guidelines for the Implementation of RSE**

The SPHE Curriculum will underpin all teaching and learning of RSE in Scoil Mhuire Rosslare. The SPHE Curriculum 1999 is allocated 30 minutes of discrete teaching time by the Department of Education. Teachers can use their professional discernment if extra time is required, this can be taken as discretionary time. Teachers are encouraged to use an integrated approach for the delivery of SPHE. All resources used will be in keeping with this RSE policy and will take into consideration the sample criteria for choosing resources, as outlined in the SPHE Teacher Guidelines p103.

- The strands 'Growing and Changing', and 'Taking Care of my Body' are covered in one year of a 2-year SPHE plan
- The sensitive lessons are covered as part of these broad topics (Appendix 1)
- If an outside speaker is used, the class teacher will remain in the classroom, as per Circular 42/2018. The speaker will be made aware of the school's RSE Policy.
- The Stay Safe Programme will be implemented, from January every two years, throughout the school.
- Special consideration will be taken to ensure that the needs of children with SEN are met. Taking into account the pupil's social and emotional development, instruction will be based on individual needs where possible. With the support of the School's SET teachers, parents/guardians will be consulted around sensitive issues. SEN resources are listed in the Resources Section of this policy.
- In the class situation, children will be encouraged to recognise that certain information is for them only and it would be inappropriate to discuss this with younger siblings/children for example.
- If a teacher has concerns about teaching the sensitive elements in RSE they should consult with the Principal. Any teacher has the right to opt out of teaching the sensitive elements of RSE. It is the responsibility of the Board of Management to ensure content is covered by another teacher or by an outside speaker.

## **Pupil Voice**

In Scoil Mhuire Rosslare, the voice of our pupils is acknowledged, valued and respected. Children are given opportunities to reflect and feedback on SPHE/RSE provision via focus groups and questionnaires. This information will be used to inform school improvement in relation to future RSE provision.

## **Approaches and Methodologies**

When implementing the RSE programme, teachers recognise, respect and show sensitivity towards the different cultural and family backgrounds experienced by the children. The curriculum will be taught in an age-appropriate manner at all times. Methodologies used may include:

- Stories and poems
- Classroom discussion
- ICT activities
- Group work

- Drama and role play
- Games
- Group work
- Art activities
- Reflection
- Circle time
- Guest speaker (Class teacher will stay in the room at all times in accordance with Circular 42/2018)

### **Parental/Guardian involvement**

*Going Forward Together* (Parents' Booklet – available on pdst.ie) states that 'As a parent, you are the first teacher of your child. You hand on the values and attitudes to each new generation of children.'

Our school recognises the central role of parents in their child's development. Parents have a responsibility to become involved, and to inform themselves of the programme content and to prepare children for the information they will acquire around the sensitive areas covered in RSE/SPHE. Our school also recognises the right of parents/guardians to withdraw their child from the sensitive aspects of RSE if they so wish (Education Act 1998). However, our school philosophy is one of open communication and trust between parents and school, and our implementation of the RSE curriculum will reflect this. Clear information and open dialogue between parents and school will ensure that parents and teachers work as partners in the children's RSE education. It is important that parental concerns are listened to and dealt with in a sensitive and confidential manner.

Some strategies for enhancing parental/guardian involvement in their children's RSE education may include:

- A clear, concise RSE policy that is available on the school website
- Timely delivery of information to parents/guardians re sensitive content to be taught
- Ensuring clarity of language in any form of written communication from the school
- Creating flexible opportunities for teachers and parents/guardians/carers to meet
- Sharing and signposting resources that will support parents/guardians to talk to their children about relationships, sexuality and growing up
- Ensure that home-school links pages of relevant programmes are regularly communicated

### **Information to parents/guardians**

- Parents will be informed that the school fully implements the RSE strands of the SPHE programme, including sensitive aspects of the programme, at enrolment.
- Parents will be informed in advance of lessons on the sensitive areas of the RSE programme, with a letter relevant to what will be taught at their child's class level (Appendix 2)
- The letter will be issued in advance, giving parents an opportunity to meet with relevant class teachers if they so wish, to discuss or clarify what is covered and to prepare their children. It also gives parents an opportunity to become involved, to inform themselves of

the programme content and to prepare children for the information they will acquire around the sensitive areas and discuss areas covered in RSE/SPHE.

- Parents are invited to view the curriculum and may speak to the class teacher if they have any concerns at any time during the year. The school acknowledges that parents have the primary responsibility for educating their children about growing and changing.
- Following discussion with the Class Teacher and Principal, if a parent wishes to withdraw their child from the sensitive lessons, this should be given in writing stating their reasons for doing so. This letter will be kept on file.
- If a child has been withdrawn from the sensitive RSE lessons, the school takes no responsibility for what the child may hear following on from the teaching of the lessons e.g. what they may hear on the yard.

### **Differentiation**

The age and stage of development in a class can vary widely and strategies for differentiation can support gradual and appropriate learning. In Scoil Mhuire Rosslare, teachers use assessment and professional judgement to differentiate the curricular objectives and content to best suit the needs of all pupils.

Adaptations to the way in which the content is delivered will be made for children with special and additional educational needs. Both consultation with parents/guardians/carers in advance of lessons and the anticipation of the pupil's needs will be central to ensuring learning is meaningful.

Considerations may include:

- that objectives are realistic for the students
- that the learning task builds upon prior learning
- providing opportunities for interacting and working with other students in small groups or 1:1
- organising the learning task into smaller stages
- ensuring the language is pitched at the pupil's level of understanding. Some language or concepts may need to be pre-taught
- using word lists, charts, pictures in the learning environment
- employing active learning methodologies

### **Language**

SPHE and RSE give opportunities for enhancing language skills and increasing vocabulary. Children become aware of the power and influence of language. Used positively, language can build up, affirm and show respect, but if used negatively it can hurt, diminish and demean. Children need to recognise and become sensitive to the ways in which they use language in their everyday interactions.

The following are areas where the use of language is applied in RSE lessons:

- The use of language and discussion through formal RSE lessons



- In formal teaching relating to sexuality, growing up, physical changes, parts of the body and feelings, appropriate vocabulary will be used. The use of slang terms will be discouraged
- Anatomical terms and language introduced is consistent with RSE Materials Books.

### **Dealing with questions**

It is natural that children should wish to ask questions in the area of RSE.

In Scoil Mhuire Rosslare, teachers may use a variety of methodologies to create a safe, open space where pupils feel comfortable to ask RSE related questions.

All questions answered will reflect the parameters of the curriculum. Certain topics are not in the RSE/SPHE programme and will not be discussed. 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.

The following considerations will be made when responding to children's questions:

- Awareness of circumstances in which the question has arisen
- Clarification of what information is required
- Determination of whether the questions is appropriate or relevant/to whom is it relevant
- Provision of an age appropriate answer
- Deferral of the question to be answered at home or in the future

### **We use simple principles when fostering discussion and questioning**

- No personal questions of the teacher
- Children can use a Question Box
- The teacher will be mindful of their reaction to any questions
- Questions do not have to be answered straight away

### **Question Box**

For older pupils a 'question box' is one methodology that may be used as part of the formal RSE lessons. Teachers can follow up on the written questions at a later date, thus allowing time to prepare suitable answers, consult with colleagues/RSE policy to formulate an appropriate response.

During the delivery of each RSE lesson, pupils can be encouraged to place their questions into a box. These questions can be reviewed and the following may be taken into account:

- All pupils are encouraged to write on the question sheet. If they don't have a question ask them to write something interesting they learned in the lesson
- Questions arising from the lesson content will be answered in an age appropriate way
- 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 curriculum and they will be advised to talk with their parents/guardians/carers
- Teachers may exercise discretion to contact parents if a need arises

- No personal questions will be answered and children will be reminded not to share inappropriate personal information about their families or others

### **Open Forum Questions**

Teachers give pupils an opportunity to ask questions at various times throughout the RSE lesson. Questions will be answered in an age and developmentally appropriate way. Children will be made aware that the class teacher may not be able to answer their question and they will be signposted to ask an adult they trust at home.

Possible 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 will learn about as you get older*

*Is that something you could talk to your parents/guardians/family about?*

*We agreed that we wouldn't ask anyone personal questions*

*Somebody asked a question and the language they used was slang language. I think what they meant to ask was ...*

If a perceived Child Protection matter arises through RSE lessons or otherwise, the teacher, as a mandated person, will refer to the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017*.

### **Assessment**

Assessment in RSE is important to enable the teacher to pitch lessons correctly to their respective class group. Assessment can also help the whole staff judge the effectiveness of learning through the school climate and atmosphere. Children can be encouraged to self-assess and develop some responsibility for their own learning by setting realistic goals and becoming aware of his/her strengths and challenges. Some strategies include:

- Observation and questions to assess the children's engagement and interest
- Teacher-designed tasks such as worksheets, quizzes or games
- Learning log or reflection sheet to promote self-assessment

### **Confidentiality**

Scoil Mhuire Rosslare follows the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017*.

If a child is withdrawn from specific RSE lessons, the school cannot guarantee that the withdrawn child will not hear the information from another source.

Parents are invited to share any changes in circumstances with the school as necessary e.g. changes in family structures etc. For the welfare of some children, this information may be important for a teacher to know prior to engaging in specific topics on family/relationships etc.

During RSE lessons occasionally children may wish to connect and may disclose personal or related stories and information. It is important to protect children and families and their privacy. This can be done by ensuring there are ground rules for the sharing of information in relation to

the topics covered in RSE. It might be appropriate to encourage children to tell teacher their story after lessons.

- Any disclosures will be dealt with in line with current Child Protection Procedures.
- If a child is withdrawn from the teaching of sensitive issues, there can be no guarantee that other children will not tell him/her about what happened.

## **Resources**

In Scoil Mhuire Rosslare, our staff may consult any of the following teaching resources when teaching RSE in addition to the Department of Education Relationships and Sexuality Programme

- SPHE lessons (provided through discrete curricular time and integration)
- RSE Resource Materials
- FLOURISH - An RSE programme for Catholic Primary Schools on the island of Ireland
- PDST: Health and Wellbeing: RSE
- NCCA: SPHE/RSE Toolkit
- Making the Links and Beyond
- Walk Tall Manuals
- Busy Bodies DVD, Workbook and Booklet (5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Class) Downloadable from [www.healthpromotion.ie](http://www.healthpromotion.ie)
- Anatomical Dolls and Story Books
- Stay Safe Programme
- Stay Safe for Children with SEN
- Adapted resources for SEN from pdst.ie
- Middletown Centre for Autism
- Anti-Bullying Resources
- RESPECT Guidelines (suggested approaches to teaching about different families)
- Weaving Wellbeing resources
- Friends for Life resources
- Zippy' Friends
- Webwise resources
- Religious Education: Grow in Love
- Visiting facilitators, in line with Circular 42/2018

## **Provision of ongoing support**

Scoil Mhuire Rosslare ensures the provision of ongoing support by:

- encouraging teachers to attend CPD in RSE
- utilising staff meetings as a platform for discussion and development of RSE
- seeking the support of a PDST advisor
- reviewing RSE policy on a regular basis
- signposting staff to resources available from PDST and other sources
- reflecting on information gathered from pupil questionnaires and focus groups to inform future developments regarding RSE

**Review**

The policy will be reviewed as required. The policy may be reviewed at an earlier time should a need arise. Parents and staff will be informed of any amendments made.

This plan was ratified by the Board of Management at a meeting on:

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**(Chairperson)**

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**(Principal)**

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix

### Appendix 1 Curriculum Planning

RSE forms part of the national curriculum for SPHE and will be taught from infants to 6<sup>th</sup> class. RSE will be covered under the following strands and strand units of the SPHE curriculum:

<b>Myself</b>
Growing and Changing Taking care of my body

<p>Topics covered up to 2<sup>nd</sup> class include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Keeping safe</li> <li>● <b>Bodily changes from birth (birth – 9yrs)</b></li> <li>● Making age-appropriate choices</li> <li>● Appreciating the variety of family types that exists in our school and community</li> <li>● Recognising and expressing feelings</li> <li>● Self-care, hygiene, diet, exercise and sleep</li> <li>● Expressing opinions and listening to others</li> <li>● <b>Naming the parts of the male/female body using appropriate anatomical terms (Jun/Sen Infants)</b></li> <li>● <b>Naming the parts of the male/female body using appropriate anatomical terms and identify some of their functions (1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup>)</b></li> </ul>	<p>Topics from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Bodily changes</b></li> <li>● Healthy eating, personal hygiene and exercise</li> <li>● Keeping safe</li> <li>● Appreciating the variety of family types within our school and community and how these family relationships shape us</li> <li>● Making healthy and responsible decisions</li> <li>● Forming friendships</li> <li>● <b>Discuss the stages and sequence of development of the human baby in the womb (3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>)</b></li> <li>● <b>Introduction of puberty and changes (3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>)</b></li> <li>● <b>Changes that occur in boys and girls with the onset of puberty (5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>)</b></li> <li>● <b>Reproductive system of male/female adults (5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>)</b></li> <li>● <b>Understanding sexual intercourse, conception and birth within the context of a committed loving relationship (5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>)</b></li> </ul>
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Here is a standard 2-year plan for SPHE taken from ‘Making the Links’ resource

<b>Month</b>	<b>Year 1</b> Sept of odd years e.g. 2023	<b>Year 2</b> Sept of even years e.g. 2024
September/October	Self-identity (Myself)	Myself and my family (Myself and others)
November/December	My friends and other people (Myself and others)	Relating to others (Myself and others)
January/February	Safety and Protection (Myself) STAY SAFE	Growing and changing (Myself)
March/April	Making decisions (Myself)	Taking care of my body (Myself)
May/June	Media Education (Myself and the wider world)	Developing citizenship (Myself and the wider world)

**Stay Safe Programme will be taught in its entirety every two years, in Term 2.**

## **Appendix 2**

## **Sample letter**

Dear .....

As part of your child's Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) Programme there are lessons covering Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE). This is an integral part of the SPHE programme. The sensitive elements of the RSE programme are covered under the Strand Units 'Growing and Changing' and 'Taking Care of my Body'. We will be completing these Strand Units with all class levels in the forthcoming weeks.

<p>Topics covered up to 2<sup>nd</sup> class include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Keeping safe</li> <li>● <b>Bodily changes from birth (birth – 9yrs)</b></li> <li>● Making age-appropriate choices</li> <li>● Appreciating the variety of family types that exists in our school and community</li> <li>● Recognising and expressing feelings</li> <li>● Self-care, hygiene, diet, exercise and sleep</li> <li>● Expressing opinions and listening to others</li> <li>● <b>Naming the parts of the male/female body using appropriate anatomical terms (Jun/Sen Infants)</b> <i>Language taught at this level will be.....</i></li> <li>● <b>Naming the parts of the male/female body using appropriate anatomical terms and identify some of their functions (1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup>)</b> <i>The language taught at this level will be ...</i></li> </ul>	<p>Topics from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Bodily changes</b></li> <li>● Healthy eating, personal hygiene and exercise</li> <li>● Keeping safe</li> <li>● Appreciating the variety of family types within our school and community and how these family relationships shape us</li> <li>● Making healthy and responsible decisions</li> <li>● Forming friendships</li> <li>● <b>Discuss the stages and sequence of development of the human baby in the womb (3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>)</b></li> <li>● <b>Introduction of puberty and changes (3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>)</b></li> <li>● <b>Changes that occur in boys and girls with the onset of puberty (5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>)</b> <i>The language taught at this level will be ....</i></li> <li>● <b>Reproductive system of male/female adults (5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>)</b> <i>The language taught at this level will be ....</i></li> <li>● <b>Understanding sexual intercourse, conception and birth within the context of a committed loving relationship (5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>)</b> <i>The language taught at this level will be ....</i></li> </ul>
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The class teacher will send home appropriate home-school links pages from the Relationships and Sexuality Manuals for their class. These will outline the material that will be covered in class and encourage further discussion on the topics at home.

If you have any queries or concerns, please make an appointment to see the class teacher.

Yours sincerely,

...



## **Appendix 3                      Questions**

Use simple principles when fostering discussion and questioning:

- No personal questions of the teacher
- Children use the Question Box
- 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 will learn about as you get older
- Is that something you could talk to your parents/guardians/family about?
- We agreed in our contract that we wouldn't ask anyone personal questions
- Somebody asked a question and the language they used was slang language, what they meant to ask was...
- A question was asked, and we cannot talk about that particular topic, but I think that question was about...

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, allowing time to prepare 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 to their parents/guardians
- Teachers may exercise discretion to contact parents/guardians themselves if they feel that a question is very inappropriate or needs to be communicated with home because of other reasons

- No personal questions will be answered and children will be reminded not to share personal information about their families or others – but can share with teacher after the lessons.

*If issues arise which might seem to contravene Child Protection Guidelines, the teacher will notify the Designated Liaison Person in the school.*