



Gaelscoil Chorráin

Eochail

Polasaí Oideachais Caídrímh agus Gnéasacha (O.C.G.)

School Policy Statement on Relationships and Sexuality (R.S.E.)

Eanáir 2020

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Réasúnaíocht/Rationale

This policy statement is an approved approach to the teaching of Relationships and Sexuality Education R.S.E. in Gaelscoil Choráin. It was initially developed in 2016 and was reviewed and amended in 2020. It was developed to inform teachers and parents as to the material covered in the RSE programme within the Social Personal and Health Education S.P.H.E. curriculum.

Fealsúnacht na Scoile/School Philosophy

Gaelscoil Choráin is an Irish medium, co-educational, Catholic school under the patronage of the Bishop of Cloyne. It is managed by a Board of Management, elected according to the procedures agreed by the Partners in Education. The school has a Catholic ethos. However, all reasonable effort is made to accommodate pupils of other beliefs and traditions. The school's Catholic ethos is a guiding principle in the formulation and implementation of this R.S.E. Policy. This ethos recognises the value and dignity of each pupil and all those working in the school community and aims at promoting the full and harmonious development of all aspects of the person, including:

- a) relationship with God
 - b) relationship with family
 - c) relationship with teachers
 - d) relationship with self
 - e) relationship with others
 - f) relationship with the environment.
- This ethos also acknowledges the cultural and religious values of all the pupils attending the school. The school recognises that the parents are the primary educators of their children and we support them in that role.

- In the area of R.S.E., above all, the schools' role is subsidiary to that of the parents. We support and compliment their work.
- Reasonable accommodation will also be made to facilitate students with disabilities.
- We espouse a child centred approach to education, recognising the unconditional worth of each child. We aim to give a balanced education with a view to empowering the child to achieve his/her full potential.
- The general aim of education is to contribute towards the development of all aspects of the individual including aesthetic, creative, critical, cultural, social and spiritual development (emotional, intellectual, moral, physical and political) for personal and family life for living in the community and for leisure. The school aims at being transparent and inclusive in all aspects of school life.

Sáinmhíniú ar O.C.G./Definition of R.S.E.

Relationships and Sexuality Education seeks to provide children with opportunities to acquire knowledge and understanding of relationships and human sexuality through processes which will enable them to form values, to establish behaviours and to communicate effectively within a moral, spiritual and social framework. In particular, it addresses the meaning of human sexuality, relationships, growth and development, relevant personal and social skills and aspects of parenting.

Gaol idir O.S.P.S. & O.C.G./Relationship of R.S.E. to S.P.H.E.

Social, Personal and Health Education S.P.H.E. provides opportunities for students 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.

A commonly accepted curricular framework for S.P.H.E. is based on the following three dimensions:

1. Myself
2. Myself and Others
3. Myself and My Community and Environment

A spiral curriculum based on these three dimensions will include suitable modules on Relationships and Sexuality Education for each class. 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.

As stated previously, the content of all lessons will be governed by the schools' Catholic ethos as taught in the InGrá Dé/Grow In Love Religion programme.

Soláthar na scoile faoi láthair/What the school currently provides

Much of the S.P.H.E. curriculum is covered in the school both formally and informally. It is delivered formally through Social, Personal and Health Education, Religious Education, Physical Education, Social, Environmental and Scientific Education and the Stay Safe Programme.

The following policies in Gaelscoil Choráin support S.P.H.E./R.S.E.:

- Code of behaviour policy

- Anti-Bullying policy
- Child safeguarding statement
- Enrolment policy
- Internet acceptable use policy

In keeping with the sentiment and spirit of these policies, we informally support many of the aims on which R.S.E. 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 well-being of all of the members of the school community. It is also touched on in discussions in other subject areas.

Aidhmeanna an Clár O.C.G./The Aims of our R.S.E. Programme

When due account is taken of intrinsic abilities and varying circumstances, the Relationships and Sexuality Education curriculum should enable the child to:

- Develop a positive sense of self-awareness, self-esteem and self-worth
- Develop an appreciation of the dignity, uniqueness and well-being of others
- Understand the nature, growth and development of relationships within families, in friendships and in 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, change and understand that their developing sexuality is an important aspect of self-identity
- Develop personal skills, which will help to establish and sustain healthy personal relationships
- Develop some coping strategies to protect themselves and others from various forms of abuse
- Acquire and improve skills of communication and social interaction
- Acquire and use an appropriate vocabulary to discuss feelings, sexuality, growth and development
- Develop a critical understanding of external influences on lifestyles and decision making.

Treoirlínte maidir le bhainistíocht agus eagrúcháin
O.C.G./Guidelines for the management and organisation of
R.S.E.

Cúrsaí Curaclam/Curriculum Matters

The 1999 curriculum as published by the NCCA will be followed. All content objectives will be covered by the time each pupil leaves Rang 6 - (see Appendix A for further details). The curriculum will be taught from Naíonáin Bheaga to Rang 6. It will 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 and sexual intercourse on the Rang 6 curriculum. All resources used will be in keeping with the ethos of the school and this policy.

- Sensitive issues classes are generally taught from Naíonáin Bheaga to Rang 4 in the second term of the school year. Topic 1 on the programme for Rang 5 (menstruation) is generally delivered in September, with Topic 2 (puberty) in the second

term of the school year. The ‘sexually sensitive issues’ in the sixth class programme will be delivered during the child’s final term in school. A fully trained outside speaker will deliver this programme after school with parents, class teacher and children present.

- In a multi class situation, the younger class will be withdrawn when topics being taught are not age-appropriate
- When an outside speaker is used, the 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 or another member of the teaching staff will remain with the class during the lesson.

Cúrsaí Eagrúcháin/Organisational Matters

- Prior to the teaching of lessons involving “sensitive issues”, parents will be informed by letter with an accompanying outline of the lesson (including vocabulary to be used).
- 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 R.S.E. 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 R.S.E. 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.

Ag déileáil le cheisteann/ Dealing with questions

It is natural that children should wish to ask questions in the area of R.S.E. 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.

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

Íáirteachas Tuísmitheoirí/ Parental Involvement

Parents/Guardians are the primary educators of their children and as such the school supports them in this role. As stated parents/guardians will be given the option of withdrawing their child from a particular lesson if they so wish. Parents/Guardians may access copies of the policy from the school office, or school website.

Acmháinní/ Resources

Lesson plans from the Department of Education and Skills D.E.S. have been assessed and amended where necessary in line with this school policy. The Grow in Love Religious programme, the Stay safe programme, and a selection of other appropriate resources will also be used. All resources are available for parents/guardians to view if they so request prior to the delivery of the lesson.

Cumhdach Leanaí/ Child Safeguarding

Gaelscoil Choráin follows the D.E.S. Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures which are based on Children First, National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2011. The Principal Cairíona Ní Riada is the Designated Liaison Person (D.L.P.). At each staff meeting teachers are reminded of the schools Child Safeguarding Statement and the procedures to be followed in dealing with incidences related to child safeguarding. Parents are also informed of these procedures through the school website (<http://gaelscoilchorain.ie/wordpress/>). In the case of a disclosure the D.L.P. will follow the procedures as set out in our Child Safeguarding Statement.

Soláthar do thacaíocht agus do fhorbairt

leanúnach/Provision for ongoing support and development

- Parents are welcome to view curriculum if they so wish.
- Funding will be sought for the provision of suitable materials when deemed necessary.
- Opportunities for further training in the area of R.S.E. 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

Athhreithniú/Review

The policy may be reviewed at regular intervals should the need arise.

Daingniú agus Cumarsáid/Ratification and Communication

The Board of Management of Gaelscoil Choráin ratified this policy on January 21st, 2020.

Síniú: Antóin Ó Laoire

Dáta:21.01.2020

(Cathaoirleach An Bhoird Bhainistíochta)

Foscúbhinn A/Appendix A R.S.E. - Sensitive Areas

Naíonáin Bheaga/Junior Infants

New Life - mention of baby in the womb.

Naíonáin Mhóra/Senior Infants

My Body - specific names for male and female sex organs - vagina, penis, womb.

Rang 1/First Class

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

Rang 2/Second Class

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

Rang 3/Third Class

As for second class, but in more detail.

Rang 4/Fourth Class

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

Rang 5 & 6/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? (Rang 6 only)

Biological facts as follows: (Rang 6 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.

