

Asdee N.S.



Relationship and  
Sexuality Education  
Policy  
(RSE)

# Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) Policy

## **Introductory Statement & Rationale**

This policy statement is an approved approach to the teaching of RSE in Asdee National School. It was developed to inform teachers and parents as to what material is covered in the RSE programme within SPHE.

## **RSE Policy**

Asdee National School is a mixed Catholic school under the patronage of the Bishop of Kerry. Our school aims to give the children in our care a sound religious and moral education within the established Catholic ethos of the school and to help them establish a faith in God which will grow and develop. The ethos of Asdee NS can be seen in the everyday dealings with all those who work in the school have with each other. It is manifested in the respect and consideration shown by teachers to pupils and vice versa. We are proud of the children who are part of our school and hope they go on to become fulfilled adults.

## **Definition of RSE**

RSE aims to provide opportunities for children to learn about relationships and sexuality in ways that help them to form values and establish behaviours within a moral, spiritual and social frame work. It is an integral part of the Social, Personal and Health Education and is taught in this context. RSE aims to help children learn, at home and in school, about their own development, about their friendships and relationships with others. This work is based on developing a good self-image and self-esteem and providing them with appropriate information.

## **RSE in the context of our SPHE programme**

SPHE is a subject on the school curriculum that 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. It is taught from Junior Infants up to 6th class. RSE forms part of this programme. It is a spiral curriculum which ensures that topics are taught in a developmental manner through the child's primary school years. SPHE aims to develop the child's emotional, moral, social and spiritual growth as well as their intellectual, physical, political, religious and creative development. The content of the school's SPHE programme covers a wide range of topics such as healthy eating, alcohol and drug awareness, environmental issues, safety and social responsibility as well as RSE.

## **Including RSE in the Curriculum**

RSE is facilitated in the following ways

- in the context of a positive school climate and atmosphere

- in the context of an effective code of behaviour and anti-bullying policy
- as part of religious education
- as part of timetabled SPHE
- on an integrated cross curricular basis

### **Aims of our RSE programme**

- To help young people develop healthy friendships and 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.
- 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:**

#### **Content**

We recognise that the parents are the primary educators of their children and that the home is the natural environment in which RSE should take place. The role of the school, therefore, is seen as one of support of the work of the home in this area. The content objectives covered will be taught as laid down by the Department of Education and Skills in the SPHE Curriculum 1999.

- RSE will be taught in all classes
- The SPHE/RSE curriculum will be of a spiral nature and all content objectives will be covered by the time children leave 6th class
- Questions arising from lesson content will be answered in an age-appropriate manner.
- All resources used in the teaching of the programme will be in keeping with the ethos of the school and in the spirit of this policy
- RSE will be delivered to the 5th and 6th class boys and girls (separately) by two trained teachers on staff. Parents of these pupils will be notified by textparent prior to them being taught. Children will receive a copy of the 'Busy Body' booklet.
- For an outline of the RSE programme - see Appendix I

## **School Policies and Curricular Plans which support our RSE**

Traditionally, we are a child-centred school. The educational and emotional needs of the children in our care are central to our curricular planning and policy making processes.

- Grow in Love
- SPHE Curriculum
- Stay Safe Programme
- School's Code of Behaviour and Discipline Policy
- Anti –Bullying Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Enrolment Policy
- ICT acceptable Use Policy
- Administration of Medicine Policy
- Health & safety Policy

In keeping with the sentiment and spirit of these policies, we informally support many of the aims on which RSE is modelled. We encourage good behaviour, open communication, understanding and tolerance of differences and respect for staff 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 the members of the school community.

## **Timetabling**

One half hour period per week is timetabled for each class for SPHE. RSE will be included in the programme taught during this time. It is envisaged that some aspects of RSE (including the sensitive issues, will be taught through a number of core periods while some material may be taught in a cross curricular manner.

## **Parental Involvement**

RSE is an ongoing process throughout life. Parents are acknowledged primary educators of their children and the school work in partnership with them in a supportive role. On enrolment of a child in Asdee NS, the enrolment form states that Stay Safe & RSE are taught in Asdee NS. The curriculum books and resource materials are available online on [www.pdst.ie](http://www.pdst.ie) and parents are welcome to view these if desired. Parents of the senior class will receive a textparent message prior to the 'sensitive' content of the RSE is taught, this is to give the parents an opportunity to chat to their child before or after the lesson or to talk to the teacher about the content of the lesson.

## **Withdrawal from RSE**

Since RSE is an obligatory requirement of the Department of Education and Skills it should be inclusive. However, a parent's right to withdraw a pupil from themes pertaining to sensitive issues will be respected on the understanding that the parent is taking full responsibility for this aspect of education. Parents are obliged to inform the school in writing of their decision to withdraw the child from the classes based on sensitive issues. The school cannot be responsible for any information which a child may receive outside the direct teaching of RSE lessons.

## **Pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN)**

Consultation with parents of pupils with SEN may be required. At the request of parents of pupils with SEN, the school will facilitate the teaching of the lessons on 'sensitive issues' on another occasion individually or in a small group setting. A variety of teaching methodologies may be required for some children.

## **Confidentiality and Child Protection**

Where there is disclosure by a child of abuse, the school will follow the Department of Education and Skills Child protection guidelines and guidelines as set out in "Children First".

## **Resources**

Stay Safe Programme

RSE Manuals

Busy Bodies

Making the Links

Other resource material as deemed appropriate by class teachers in consultation with the Principal

## **Provision for Ongoing Support**

### **For parents**

- Parents are welcome to view the curriculum if they wish [www.pdst.ie](http://www.pdst.ie)
- There will be contact with parents prior to the teaching of lessons involving 'sensitive issues'. Copies of the 'Busy Bodies' booklets will be available to parents on request.

### **For teachers**

- The Board of Management will support in-career development in the area of SPHE/RSE as opportunities arise

**Review**

This policy will be reviewed on an ongoing basis or sooner should a need arise. Parents and staff will be informed of any amendments made.

**Implementation & Ratification**

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management in February 2022

Chairperson of Board of Management : \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Oliver Kearney

Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Michelle Sheehy

## Appendix I : Content

RSE forms part of the national curriculum for SPHE and will be taught from Junior

Infants to 6th class. RSE will be covered under the following strands and strand units of

the SPHE curriculum:

### Myself: Growing and Changing

### Myself: Taking Care of my Body

1) The general programme which contains content covered through SPHE strands and strand units and compliment the aims and objectives of RSE • Friendship • Self-identity • Family • Self-esteem • Growing up

2) The second section will deal with the sensitive / specific content covered through RSE strands and strand units.

Topics covered up to 2nd Class include:	Topics from 3rd to 6th classes include:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keeping Safe</li> <li>• Bodily changes from birth (birth-9)</li> <li>• Making age appropriate choices</li> <li>• Appreciating the variety of family types and a variety of family life 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>• Naming the parts of the male/ female body using appropriate anatomical terms (Junior/ Senior Infants)</li> <li>• Naming the parts of the male/ female body using appropriate anatomical terms and identify some of their functions (1st/2nd)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bodily changes</li> <li>• Healthy eating, personal hygiene, exercise</li> <li>• Keeping Safe</li> <li>• Expressing Feelings</li> <li>• Appreciating the variety of family types within our school and community and how we these family relationships shape us.</li> <li>• Making healthy and responsible decisions</li> <li>• Forming Friendships</li> <li>• Discuss the stages and sequence of development of the human baby in the womb (3rd, 4th class)</li> <li>• Introduction to puberty and changes (3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th class)</li> <li>• Changes that occur in boys and girls with the onset of puberty (5th and 6th Class)</li> <li>• Reproductive system of male/female adults (5th and 6th class)</li> <li>• Understanding sexual intercourse, conception and birth within the context of a committed loving relationship (5th, 6th class)</li> </ul>

