

**Scoil Mhuire Glenties**

**Roll 19912B**

**Whole School Plan for**

**R.S.E.**

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| * **School Details** * Name: Scoil Mhuire * Address: Glen Road, Glenties * Phone Number: 07 9551521 * Category: DEIS Rural * Enrolment Numbers: 117 |
| * **Introductory Statement & Rationale**   This policy statement is an approved approach to the teaching of RSE in Scoil Mhuire NS. It was developed by School Management. It was developed to inform teachers and parents as to what material is covered in the RSE programme within SPHE. |
| * **School** **Philosophy**   Scoil Mhuire NS is a Catholic school and therefore all policies developed are implemented in ways which are in keeping with the ethos of the school. The ethos of the school is characterised by the following:   * + Sensitive to reality of our children’s lives in a changing world   + Mutual respect between all partners in education   + Child-centred   + Aims to ensure each child reaches full potential in the holistic sense   + Hopes that children are equipped with high self-esteem to enable them to go to live happy and fulfilled lives |
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| * **Definition of RSE**   RSE aims to provide opportunities for children and young people to learn about relationships and sexuality in ways that help them think and act in a moral, caring and responsible way (p.4 Going Forward Together Parents Information Booklet) |
| * **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. (p. 5 NCCA interim curriculum and guidelines for RSE) |
| * **Current Provision Included in the school curriculum in is:** * SPHE * Use of the RSE Manual and Busy Bodies DVD and Busy Bodies Booklet * Religious Education through the Alive O Programme * An outside speaker may be invited to work with sixth class until the RSE programme has been fully implemented in the school. |
| * **Aims of our RSE programme** * To help young people develop healthy friendships and relationships * To promote a healthy attitude to sexuality and to 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- Fifth and Sixth Class * To understand the physical changes taking place with the onset of puberty- Senior 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 |
| * **Guidelines for the Management and Organisation of RSE in our School** * Curriculum Matters: * Curriculum Content –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. * When an outside speaker is used, the class teacher is responsible for making them aware of school policy and that teacher will sit in during the lesson as per Circular 22/2010.   **Topics covered up to 2nd class include:**   * Keeping Safe * Bodily changes during grown and birth (birth to 9) * 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) * Naming the parts of the male/ female body using appropriate anatomical terms and identify some of their functions (1st/2nd)   **Topics from 3rd to Sixth include:**   * Bodily changes * Healthy eating, personal hygiene, exercise * Keeping Safe * Expressing Feelings * Family relationships * 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 (Fifth and Sixth Class) * Reproductive system of male/female adults (Fifth and Sixth Class) * Understanding sexual intercourse, conception and birth within the context of a committed loving relationship.(Fifth and Sixth Class) * **Organisational Matters:** * Parents will be advised, during their child’s first year at school OR upon enrolment, of the RSE Curriculum and policy and the Stay Safe Programme, both mandatory for the school to implement. * Parents will similarly be advised of their right to opt their child out of this aspect of education. * If children are withdrawn by their parents, they must give a notice in writing to the school principal that they are withdrawing their child. * With regard to matters of a confidential nature, the school cannot take any responsibility for what is discussed outside of the classroom. * 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 taught to the children by another teacher or an outside speaker. * Parents are invited/welcome to view the curriculum and may speak to the class teacher if they have any concerns. * **Dealing with Questions:**   All questions answered will reflect the parameters of the curriculum. Questions to the teacher may be written or oral within the group setting and answered within the boundaries of the curriculum and policy. Any questions asked by the children that are judged to be outside of the lesson content, the teacher will refer the child to their parents or will explain that this will be covered at second level. |
| * **Provision for Ongoing Support**    + Parents welcome to view curriculum if they wish   + Contact will be made with parents prior to the teaching of these lessons in school and ongoing contact will be maintained through use of the ‘home-school’ link pages throughout the programme.   + Parents have the primary responsibility for educating their children in sexual matters. The school RSE programme acts as a support only to parents, and parents retain the right to withdraw their children from classes. |
| * **Links to other policy areas** * Child Protection Policy   Child Protection  The school follows the DES child protection guidelines and has a child protection policy with the Principal as Designated Liaison Person. In cases of disclosure, the DLP will follow the procedures as set out in Children First.   * SPHE Policy |
| * **Review**   This policy will be reviewed after the initial 12th month period has passed by School Management and every two years thereafter. This policy will also be reviewed should a need arise. Parents and staff will be informed if any amendments are made. |

SEXUAL ORIENTATION – ADVICE FOR PRIMARY SCHOOLS

GENERAL POINTS

* Schools can foster a culture that is accepting of difference. This can be expressed where appropriate, rather than making the assumption that everyone understands it.
* An integral part of RSE is learning to respect others; this will include respect for families or individuals who are different from the norm.
* The Equal Status Acts 2000 and 2004 provide protection against discrimination on nine grounds, one of which is sexual orientation. The Acts oblige those who manage schools to protect students and staff from discrimination or sexual harassment.
* If children are using the word ‘gay’ in a negative fashion it is better not to ignore it in the hope that it will go away. The same advice would apply for any instance of bullying.
* Schools are advised to develop a strategy for responding to children who have questions about sexual orientation or who are taunting others about being gay. This should be done in the context of the school’s ethos and RSE policy and with the awareness that primary school children are probably too young to engage in any detailed discussion of sexual identity.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

* Depending on the context and the age group of the children, the teacher could ask a child or a class group what they mean by the word ‘gay’
* A school could decide on a response to this question, such as ‘The majority of people are attracted to people of the opposite sex. This is called being heterosexual. Some people are attracted to people of the same sex. This is called being homosexual or gay.’
* To give factual information like this in an open and straightforward way may help to remove the secrecy which is necessary for any bullying to flourish.
* Homophobic insults should be treated in exactly the same way as racist or other insults – the teacher can calmly explain to the child that such insults are hurtful to the other person and are not acceptable.