**S.P.H.E.**

**Clonaghadoo National School**

**Introductory Statement and Rationale**

S.P.H.E. is a lifelong process and as such begins before the child comes to school. In this school we aim to provide a foundation that will inform the child’s actions and decisions and provide a basis for further development in a safe and caring environment. S.P.H.E. is a shared responsibility between parents, school, community and health professionals.

**Vision and Aims**

In line with our school ethos, Social, Personal and Health Education will provide opportunities for the individual child to develop a framework of values, attitudes, understanding and skills that will inform her/ his decision and actions now and in the future enabling her/ him to respect and relate to herself/ himself and others and become an active and responsible citizen in society.

**Aims**

* To promote the personal development and wellbeing of the child
* To foster in the child a sense of care and respect for herself/ himself and others and an appreciation of the dignity of every human being
* To promote the health of the child, provide a foundation for healthy living, in all its aspects
* To enable the child to make informed decisions and choices about the social, personal and health dimensions of life, both now and in the future
* To develop in the child a sense of social responsibility, a commitment to active and participative citizenship and an appreciation of the democratic way of life
* To enable the child to respect human and cultural diversity and to appreciate and understand the interdependent nature of the world

In endeavoring to realise these aims we will create a positive school climate which is open, inclusive, respectful, fair, democratic and tolerant and which seeks to support the holistic development of all children and all adults working with our children. The strategies we will use to create this environment are detailed in our SPHE Plan and will involve:

• Creating a health-promoting physical environment

• Enhancing self-esteem

• Fostering respect for diversity

• Building effective communication within the school

• Developing appropriate home-school communication

• Catering for individual needs

• Developing democratic process

• Fostering inclusive and respectful language.

**CURRICULUM PLANNING**

**STRANDS AND STRAND UNITS**

**Myself** Self Identity

Taking care of my body

Growing and changing

Safety and protection

**Myself and Others**  Myself and My family

My friends and other people

Relating to others

**Myself and the Wider World** Developing citizenship

Media Education

All the strand units of the SPHE curriculum will be taught over each two-year cycle. Strand units from each of the strands will be taught each year. Every class from Junior Infants to Sixth Class will cover the same strand units each year. A balance is achieved between skill development, the fostering of values and attitudes and the acquisition of information.

In order to meet the requirements of the Department of Education and Science Guidelines and Procedures, the Stay Safe Programme will be taught in its entirety over one school year.

RSE (Relationships and Sexuality Education) will be taught yearly in all classes from Junior Infants - Sixth Classes.

The SPHE Whole School Plan attached outlines the content for SPHE over each of the two year cycles.

**APPROACHES AND METHODOLOGIES**

The Walk Tall Programme, the Relationships and Sexuality Programme, the Stay Safe Programme, the Be Safe Programme and the Self Esteem Programme all are used in the delivery of the SPHE curriculum.

Active learning is a key approach to our S.P.H.E. plan. It is a process. It can be carried out by individual children or in group situations and by all age groups. Active learning engages children at different levels. It promotes action and places children at the centre of the learning process. Active learning requires the teacher to guide and direct the work. The strategies we will use for active learning are:

* + Drama activities
  + Cooperative games
  + Pictures, photographs and visual images
  + Discussion
  + Written activities
  + The media and ICT
  + Looking at children’s work

**Guidelines for the Management and Organisation of SPHE in our School**

* The curriculum as published by the NCCA will be followed. The curriculum will be taught from Infants to 6th class. It will be taught by the teaching staff, specialist visitors and outside agencies e.g. Gardaí etc.
* The Stay Safe programme (as part of the schools SPHE programme) will be taught in its entirety each year in February, March and April. Prior to the lessons, parents will be informed by letter/ e’mail (Appendix A)
* The RSE programme (as part of the schools SPHE programme) will be taught in its entirety each year in May and June. Prior to the lessons, parents will be informed by letter/ e’mail (Appendix B).
* Copies of the SPHE and RSE Policies will be emailed to all parents.
* ***The presumption should be that the child is not hearing the names of sexual organs for the first time in the school.***
* Parents are 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. If any questions asked by the children are judged to be inappropriate or sensitive in nature, 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. The dignity, privacy and modesty of each individual child must always be respected.***

**ASSESSMENT AND RECORD KEEPING**

Children’s progress in S.P.H.E. is assessed through

* 1. Teacher observation
  2. Teacher designed tasks and tests

**CHILDREN WITH DIFFERENT NEEDS**

This S.P.H.E. programme aims to meet the needs of all the children in the school. This will be achieved by teachers varying the pace, content and methodologies to insure learning for all pupils. The requirements of children with special needs will be taken into account when planning class lessons and related activities. Children who experience bereavement and loss, serious illness or other major personal situations are supported and consideration is given to meeting their individual needs in the most appropriate manner.

**EQUALITY OF PARTICIPATION AND ACCESS**

We view the S.P.H.E. programme as playing a key role in ensuring equality of opportunity for all children. The programme at each class level will be flexible so that the learning requirements of all children may be addressed. We provide an equal educational experience for both boys and girls as we recognise that stereotyped expectations of gender roles can inhibit children’s educational achievements. Children with special needs will be included in all activities.

**CHILD PROTECTION**

Our S.P.H.E Policy embraces the revised guidelines in Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children, 2011. As a school, we will continue to identify curricular content and resources that contribute to the prevention of child abuse and to enable children to deal adequately with it, should it occur. In particular, the school ensures through the D.L.P, that it has clear procedures in place for dealing with suspicions of child abuse. Areas which require particular attention are -

* Recognition of child abuse
* Signs and symptoms of abuse
* Basis for reporting and reporting procedures
* Handling disclosures
* Mandatory reporting

We strive to ensure that our school will remain physically and emotionally safe for children. We deliver the curricular content of the S.P.H.E programme with a view to giving our children the protective skills of self-esteem and assertiveness.

**ORGANISATIONAL PLANNING**

**TIME-TABLE**

S.P.H.E. may be timetabled for ½ hour per week, one hour per fortnight or blocks of 1 -2 hours per month.

**STAFF DEVELOPMENT**

Teachers will be made aware of any opportunities for further professional development through participation in courses available in education centres or other venues.

**Success Criteria**

* Implementation of the S.P.H.E. curriculum.
* Continuity of content and methodology evident in teacher preparation
* Pupil ability to engage with others and their environment in a manner appropriate to their age and personality

**Ratification and Communication**

This policy was ratified on the 09/03/20 by the Board of Management and will be reviewed annually.

Chairperson: Bernadette Clear

Principal: Grainne Finnerty

**Appendix A**

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|  |  | St. Marys N.S  Clonaghadoo,  Geashill,  Co. Offaly  R35 W427 Phone: (057) 8628757  Email: clonaghadoons2020@gmail.com |

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s),

Social Personal and Health Education (SPHE) is a very important element of the school curriculum. SPHE covers a wide range of topics such as self-identity, making decisions, citizenship and relationships, which equip children with many of the skills and knowledge needed in today’s world.

The Relationship and Sexuality element of the programme (RSE) includes the learning, understanding and the development of attitudes, beliefs and values about relationships, sexual identity and intimacy.

The main aims of the RSE programme are:

* To enhance the personal development, well being and self-esteem of each child
* To enable each child to gain an understanding of and respect for human love, reproduction and sexual activity in a sensitive and measured way
* To enable the child develop healthy friendships and relationships
* To develop and promote a sense of wonder and awe at the process of birth and new life.

The content of the programme falls under the following headings:

* **Myself** – Self-identity, taking care of my body, growing and changing, safety.
* **Myself and Others** - Myself and family, friends and relating to other people.
* **Taking Care of My Body -** Naming parts of the male and female body using appropriate terminology (Lower and Middle classes). Identifying physical changes. Understanding puberty and the Reproductive System (Senior Classes)
* **Growing and Changing** - The stages of development of a baby from conception to birth (Middle Classes). Understanding sexual relations within the context of a committed loving relationship (Senior Classes).

Within this content, there are a number of sensitive issues such as conception and reproduction. Our school policy outlines that these issues will primarily be taught in May and June and we are now advising parents in advance that this will take place in the coming weeks. We encourage you to talk to your child about what s/he will learn through RSE in a mature and respectful way.

The following guidelines have been put in place to ensure everyone is happy with the delivery of the RSE programme. These are taken from our RSE policy, which, along with all other school policies, is available to parents on request from the office. Please read through the guidelines and do not hesitate to contact me should you have any queries or comments.

* The sections within the RSE programme which have been identified as sensitive issues will be taught in May and June in each class.
* The programme is taught within the ethos of the school and contemporary issues/topics are dealt with by the teacher at a level appropriate to the age and stage of development of pupils within a moral and spiritual framework.
* Relationships and Sexuality Education is an on-going process throughout life. A child's first experience of love, of intimacy and of relationships takes place in the family. Parents and the family are acknowledged as the primary educators of their children. We work in a supportive role with the parents, by complementing their role with a school based programme in RSE
* All the content objectives of the RSE Programme will be covered by the time children leave sixth class.
* The teachers' right to opt out will be honoured which will not affect the teaching of the subject.
* Parents will be informed by letter at least two weeks prior to the teaching of sensitive issues. This will allow time for parents to discuss topics with the child. It is in your child’s best interest to have a conversation with your child about the RSE programme prior to the lessons which will take place in May/June and meet the teacher if required and/or follow the appropriate procedure for opting out of the RSE programme.
* If a visitor or guest speaker is invited to a class to enhance the delivery of the RSE programme, the class teacher will remain present in the class. Parents will be informed of such a visit and the content being addressed in advance of the visit. Parents are encouraged to use this opportunity to discuss these topics with their children beforehand. Parents are advised to inform childminders etc. that the sensitive topics are going to be discussed.
* A parent's right to withdraw a pupil from the sensitive issues process will be honoured on the understanding that the parent(s) is taking full responsibility for this aspect of education themselves.
* Parents are obliged to inform the school in writing of their decision to withdraw the child from the sensitive issues classes. Any parent who wishes to withdraw their child are asked to discuss with the principal how this may be facilitated.
* Teachers do not cover topics such as contraception and same sex friendships. Children who ask questions in class on content outside the designated curriculum are encouraged to discuss the issue with their parents. Parents are informed and asked to talk to their child. Support is offered to the parent in the form of information and support agencies to assist a parent to inform their child in an accurate and suitable way.
* Curriculum books and resource materials are available in the school and parents are welcome to borrow them if desired.
* The school has no responsibility for any information which the pupil may receive outside the direct teaching of the RSE lessons
* Questions arising from curriculum content will be addressed by the teacher or by the visitor in a sensible, sensitive and age-appropriate manner.
* Questions arising outside of the curriculum will be referred back to the parent(s).
* As part of the RSE programme worksheets will be sent home for parents to sign and return to the school, as this will confirm that parents have had discussions with their children in relation to the programme.

We are very aware of the importance and sensitivity of teaching the RSE programme to our pupils and we thank you for your ongoing support in ensuring your child will have received a balanced education in Clonaghadoo N.S., which will prepare them not only for secondary school, but for life.

Please find enclosed a copy of the “specific content details for Relationship and Sexuality Education” and a list of some websites you may find helpful. I am also sending home relevant booklets for your child/ren. “ Busy Bodies” booklet is aimed for Fifth and Sixth Class children only. Please retain these books as these books will be used each year. Busy Bodies will only be sent to new fifth Class Children and Tom’s Flower Power Pack will be available to new Junior Infants from next year.

Thank you for your co-operation,

Clonaghadoo Staff

**Specific Content Details – Relationship and Sexuality Education**

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| **Class** | **Description** | **Language** |
| Junior Infants  Senior Infants | Name parts of the male and female body using appropriate anatomical terms.  Awareness of human birth – a baby grows inside the mother’s womb until ready to be born. | * **Penis** in context of passing urine * **Urethra** in context of passing urine |
| 1st Class  2nd Class | Name parts of the male and female body using appropriate anatomical terms and identifying some of their functions. | * **Penis** – passing urine * **Urethra** – passing urine * **Vagina** – Opening where a baby leaves a mother’s womb. * **Breasts** – for feeding a baby. * **Navel/ belly button** – where a baby was joined to its mother before birth. |
| Third and Fourth Class. | Understand the physical changes taking place in both the male and female body. Realising that these changes do not occur at the same time but nonetheless are predictable and natural and that being different is normal.  The stages and sequence of foetal development from conception to birth | * Growing in height, weight and strength. * Growing from boy to man and girl to woman. * Accepting own body shape/size/rate of development. * Onset of menstruation (periods) for Fourth Class girls only. * Identifying objects which coincide with the size of the **foetus** at different stages. * Changes in foetus – development of limbs, more recognisable shape. * Baby emerges from womb through vagina when ready after **9 months** |
| 5th Class  6th Class | Identify and discuss the physical and other changes that occur in boys and girls with the onset of puberty and understand that these changes take place at different rates for everyone. | * **Female - hormonal changes** Changing body shape. Development of breasts.   Appearance of underarm and pubic hair.   * **Male - hormonal changes**   Oily skin  Spots  Physical growth  Enlargement of testicles and penis  Breaking of voice  Beginning of sperm production.  Involuntary erections  Nocturnal emissions (wet dreams) |
| **The reproductive system of male and female adults**   * Male reproductive organs – **penis, scrotum, sperm, sperm tube, testis** * Female reproductive organs – **vagina, cervix, uterus, ovary, fallopian tubes, ovum (egg)** | | |
| **Sexual intercourse, conception and birth**  The penis **penetrates** the vagina when **erect**. Sperm is **ejaculated**. A sperm penetrates an egg inside the female and so **fertilises** the egg. The egg splits in 2 and then in 4 and so on. Foetal development begins as covered previously. After 9 months when the baby is ready, the womb muscles begin to **contract** and start pushing the baby out. When the baby is born the **umbilical cord** is cut and it is not needed. The baby begins life outside the womb. | | |

**Useful websites**

[www.education.ie](http://www.education.ie)

[www.hse.ie](http://www.hse.ie)

[www.healthpromotion.ie](http://www.healthpromotion.ie)

**Appendix B**

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|  |  | St. Marys N.S  Clonaghadoo,  Geashill,  Co. Offaly  R35 W427 Phone: (057) 8628757  Email: clonaghadoons2020@gmail.com |

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s),

We are planning to teach a personal safety education programme called Stay Safe to all pupils in Junior Infants – 6th class in the coming weeks. The aim of the Stay Safe programme is to teach children personal safety skills so they can look after themselves in situations which could be upsetting or dangerous. It deals initially with common situations which most children will experience at some stage or other, e.g. getting lost or being bullied. The programme also teaches the safety skills necessary to protect themselves from physical or sexual abuse and emphasises the importance of telling a trusted adult about any problems they have.

The Stay Safe programme is part of the Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) curriculum which all primary school are required to implement. Co-operation between parents and teachers is essential to the success of this programme. It is important that parents are aware of the content of the Stay safe lessons and are able to discuss the lessons with their children. Your child may bring home worksheets which will inform you on the topics being covered in class and how you can reinforce the messages at home. You can familiarise yourself with the content of the Stay Safe lessons at [www.staysafe.ie/teachers/resources.htm](http://www.staysafe.ie/teachers/resources.htm).

Copies of our school’s SPHE and RSE Policies can be found on our school website.

Thank you for your co-operation.

The staff