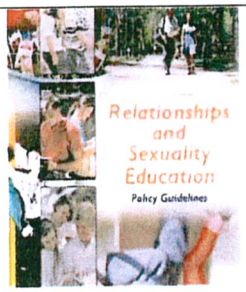
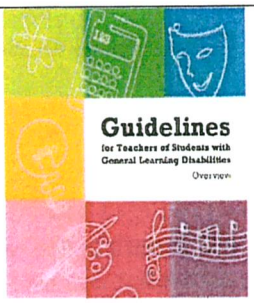
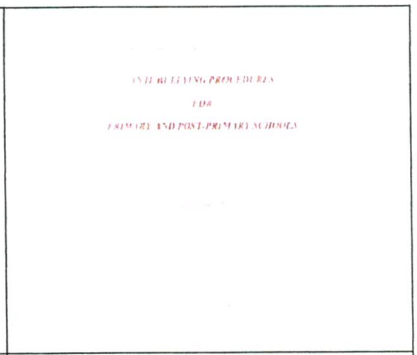
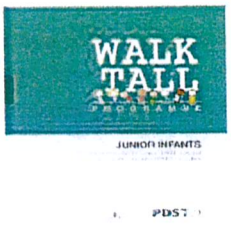
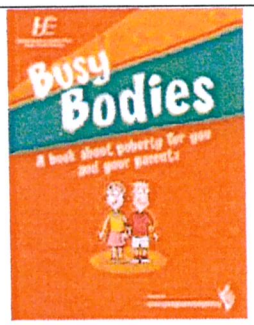
Relationships and Sexuality Education Policy for St. Fiacc's Primary School.

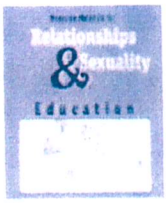




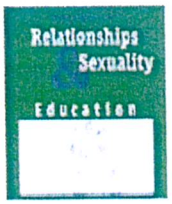




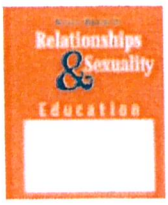




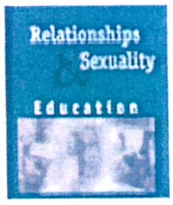
Junior & Senior Infants



1st & 2nd Classes



3rd & 4th Classes



5th & 6th Classes

Approved by	Date
BOM	26/06/2019

Signed Chairperson BOM

Lia Dooley

School Details,
School Name: St. Fiacc's National School.
Area: Graiguecullen, Carlow.
Gender: Mixed.
Size of School: 595 pupils; 23 class teachers and 3 SNAs.
Classroom Make Up: Mainly White Irish with 20% approximately comprised of first generation Irish. School has access to School Support Programmes due to majority of families on low income or in receipt of income support.
Patron Body: Catholic Church. St. Fiacc's has a Catholic Ethos. Our school embodies Christian, Catholic values which emphasises compassion, care, good work ethos, striving for excellence and respect for all, irrespective of race, religion or social status

Introductory Statement
All schools are required to have an RSE policy to detail how RSE is taught in the school, including the sensitive aspects. This policy is an approved approach to the teaching of Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE). It was developed to inform teachers and parents as to what material is covered in the RSE programme within SPHE both formally and informally.

School Philosophy
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. Our school values the uniqueness of all individuals within a caring school community. 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.

St. Fiacc's endeavours to foster, cultivate and nourish the holistic development of each individual child in its care; including a loving relationship with God. St. Fiacc's will model and promote a philosophy of life inspired by belief in God and in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Definition of RSE
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.

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:

- Is a lifelong process and consequently RSE is a continual process throughout primary school and is not confined to once off inputs or lessons.

- Is a shared responsibility between family, school, health professionals and the community
- RSE education should include an input from all, and collaboration can be fostered through the teaching and delivery of materials
- Is a generic approach. It is not so much about the specific content of RSE but rather the relationship with a child's skills, attitudes, values and understanding relevant to a range of social, personal and health issues
- Is based on the needs of the child, therefore 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
- Is spiral in nature. RSE is revisited at different stages throughout the child's time in school, this will provide opportunities to consolidate and build on previous learning. This allows for issues and topics to be explored and treated in a manner appropriate to the children's needs, abilities and levels of maturity
- Engages children to be involved in activity based learning. RSE should provide a range of learning opportunities that include working together, learning about one's own feelings and those of others, developing a sense of empathy and experiencing and supporting healthy relationships.

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.

The school has a responsibility to ensure that its curriculum is free of bias and that issues of inequality in any form are addressed and dealt with (SPHE Teacher guidelines, p25). In learning about cultures and traditions of others, children can develop a sense of respect for difference and appreciate the contribution that such has to offer. It will encourage children to be inclusive with each other, challenge prejudice and learn how to live in an intercultural society.

Current Provision Included in the School Curriculum is:

- SPHE lessons (provided through discrete curricular time and integration)
- Use of the RSE Manuals and Busy Bodies resources
- Stay Safe Programme
- Walk Tall Programme
- Webwise resources
- All Together Now – Homophobic and Transphobic bullying lessons
- RESPECT Guidelines (suggested approaches to teaching about different families)
- Adapted resources for SEN from www.pdst.ie
- Religious Education.

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 heathy 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.

Broad Objectives

When due account is taken of abilities and varying circumstances, the RSE education curriculum should enable the child to (in conjunction with the SPHE curriculum)

- 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 skills of 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

- Child Safeguarding Statement
- Substance Use Policy
- Code of Behaviour
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Enrolment Policy
- Acceptable Use Policy
- Healthy Eating Policy.

Guidelines for the Management and Organisation of RSE in our School

Curriculum Content –The curriculum by NCCA will be followed as published, and will be taught from infants to 6th class. All resources used will be in keeping with the ethos of the school, the whole school plan for SPHE and the RSE policy. Each class teacher will teach the content for their class level each year as laid out in the curriculum, and utilising the RSE manuals to complement their teaching.

Management of RSE

- The strands Growing and Changing, and Taking Care of my Body are covered in annually
- The sensitive lessons are covered as part of these broad topics (as outlined below and see appendix 1)
- Special arrangements exist for the delivery of the sensitive elements from 4th class up (see below)
- 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. Parents will be consulted around sensitive issues.

Parental Involvement

- 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, example of letter see 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/welcome 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 Principal and Class Teacher, if a parent wishes to withdraw their child from the sensitive lessons it should be given in writing stating their reasons for doing so and this will be centrally filed
- 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. eg. What they may hear on yard.

Organisation and Curriculum Planning

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

Myself
Growing & Changing Taking Care of my Body

The RSE programme is divided into two main parts:

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 any sensitive / specific content covered through RSE strands and strand units. The sensitive aspects are in **bold**.

Topics covered up to 2nd include:	Topics from 3rd to 6th include:
• Keeping safe • **Bodily changes from birth (birth-9)** • Making age-appropriate choices • Appreciating the variety of family types and the variety of family life that exists in our school and community • 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).**	• **Bodily changes** • Healthy eating, personal hygiene and exercise • Keeping safe • Expressing feelings • Appreciating the variety of family types within our school and community and how these family relationships shape us • Making healthy and responsible decisions • Forming friendships • **Discuss the stages and sequence of development of the human baby in the womb(3rd, 4th class)** • **Introduction to puberty and changes (3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th class)** • **Changes that occur in boys and girls with the onset of puberty (5th and 6th Class)** • **Reproductive system of male/female adults (5th and 6th class)** • **Understanding sexual intercourse, conception and birth within the context of a committed loving relationship (5th, 6th class).**

Sensitive content 4th – 6th

Sensitive content is taught annually as shown below.

Month	Year 1	Year 2
September / October		
November / December		
January / February	Safety and Protection (Myself)	Safety and Protection (Myself)
March /April	Growing and Changing (Myself)	Growing and Changing (Myself)
	Taking Care of my Body (Myself)	Taking Care of my Body (Myself)
May / June		

A copy of the Busy Bodies is distributed to parents in advance to support the implementation of the sensitive objectives in class

Approaches & Methodologies

Active Learning Methologies

The following techniques will allow the child to play an active part in the learning process:

- Discussion
- Role play
- Interviewing friends
- Design advertisements
- Writing captions
- Ranking statements
- Describing photographs
- Viewing

When implementing the programme, staff at St. Fiacc's NS will endeavor to display respect for and 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. The curriculum will be taught from Junior Infants to 6th class. It will be taught through a spiral curriculum (key topics will be revisited in a developmental manner at regular intervals). The materials taught will reflect the needs of the children.

The RSE curriculum will be taught through:

- ✦ stories and poems
- ✦ classroom discussion
- ✦ group work
- ✦ games
- ✦ art activities
- ✦ reflection
- ✦ circle time

*(The class teacher will stay in the room at all times in accordance with Circular 42/2018 in the event of any guest speakers being used).

Differentiation

Teachers use assessment and professional judgment to differentiate the programme and content to suit the needs of the class. Some techniques used:

- ensuring that objectives are realistic for the students
- ensuring that the learning task is compatible with prior learning
- providing opportunities for interacting and working with other students in small groups and spending more time on tasks
- organising the learning task into small stages and ensuring that the language used is pitched at the student's level of understanding
- understanding of the activity using task analysis, outlining the steps to be learned/completed in any given task, posing key questions to guide students through the different stages/processes, and to assist in self-direction and correction
- having short and varied tasks creating a learning environment through the use of concrete, and where possible every day materials, and by displaying word lists and laminated charts with pictures.

Sometimes the stage of development in a class can vary widely and strategies to differentiate in class can support gradual and appropriate teaching

- ✦ group work and discussion
- ✦ higher and lower order questioning in groups
- ✦ moderated whole class discussions through use of a Question Box.

Pupils with Special Educational Needs

Adaptions to the way in which the content is delivered will be made for children with Special Educational Needs. Consultation with parents/ guardians in advance and anticipation of the children's needs will be central to ensuring learning is meaningful.

- Children may be pre-taught language or concepts in anticipation of whole class work
- Children may work in smaller groups or 1:1 on adapted and suitable material
- Any different or specific objectives related to the pupils own learning needs should be

detailed in their IEP or IPLP in consultation with parents/guardians

Language

Language reflects values, attitudes, beliefs, prejudices and principles. It not only helps to express a culture but influences and shapes that culture as well. It is essential that children are enabled to use language in a precise and appropriate manner.

The language that is promoted in the school must be one that nurtures both children and adults as unique and valuable human beings. It should respect cultural and other differences between people and be used in a way that encourages inclusiveness. Language can significantly contribute to building positive self-esteem, whereas if used in a negative manner it can cause frustration and hurt.
These messages about language will be communicated to children in the school primarily by the manner in which language is used. The way in which children are addressed in class, the manner in which they are reproached or affirmed and the tone of voice used in exploring issues of a personal nature will all reflect the values that are upheld in the school.

The words 'gay' and 'lesbian' are sometimes used to hurt others and the use of such language in a derogatory way diminishes respect for gay and lesbian people. There are no formal lessons on being gay taught in RSE. However, as part of The Anti-Bullying Procedures 2013, schools must address identity based bullying such as homophobic bullying and include preventative educational strategies. In order for the RSE policy to be fully in line with these procedures, if questions arise as to the definition of gay and lesbian, and attitudes or opinions about gay people are expressed, age appropriate definitions will be given (from Stay Safe programme) and children will be informed that being gay is okay, and that all people in various types of relationships and families deserve respect. If the teachers deem it necessary, any moral questions around same sex relationships, will be directed to home.

SPHE curriculum provides a context in which children are given opportunities to develop and enhance their language skills and to increase their vocabulary related to SPHE. Children should become aware of the power and influence of language. When used positively, language can build up, affirm and show respect to another human being but if used in a negative manner can hurt, diminish and demean. Children need to recognise and become sensitive to the ways in which they themselves use language in their relationship and their everyday interactions. Language is a powerful tool and should be used with respect and integrity for the dignity of each person. There are two areas where the use of language is applied in RSE lessons;

- The formal use and teaching of language generally throughout the school
- The use of language in discussion through your formal RSE lessons

Appropriate vocabulary in formal teaching

- Relating to sexuality, growing up, physical changes, parts of the body and feelings will be used. The use of slang will be discouraged
- Anatomical terms and language introduced is consistent with RSE Materials Books (see Appendix 1)

Questions

Staff should not invalidate questions but use limits.
The main aim of talk and discussion is to create an atmosphere where children feel comfortable t ask important questions and that the relationships fostered in these sessions is open, controlled and safe for all pupils. While the teacher may not be able to answer all questions, the hope is that children will not be put off seeking answers in the school setting but will talk to their parents and ask questions again at different stages of schooling and are not put off because they perceived the topics or questions be embarrassing.

We use some simple principles when fostering discussion and questioning

- No personal questions of the teacher
- The Question Box will be availed of by the children
- The 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'll 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 that was used was slang language, what they meant to ask was....

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, thus 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 with their parents.
- Teachers may exercise discretion to contact parents 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 be seen to contravene Children First Guidelines, the teacher will notify the Designated Liaison Person in the school.

Assessment

Assessment in RSE is important to enable the teacher to pitch the lessons correctly to their respective class group

The teacher uses

- Observation and questions to assess the children's engagement and interest
- Use of teacher-designed tasks such as worksheets, quizzes or games
- Use of reflection or learning log.

Confidentiality

During RSE lessons often children may wish to connect and 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 you anything private after lessons. Confidentiality cannot be offered for the content covered from children whose parents have chosen not to have them included in the sensitive lessons. It is important to note that disclosures must be dealt with in line with Child Protection Procedures 2017.

- The school follows Children First Guidelines 2017 and The Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017
- If a child is withdrawn from the teaching of sensitive issues, we cannot guarantee that the other children will not tell or inform him/her about what happened.

Resources

Relationships and Sexuality Education Resource Materials (DES) - Each class teacher has a copy of the appropriate manual or access to it in online / pdf format. Other resources that support the broader aims of RSE include:

- Stay Safe programme
- Walk Tall Programme
- Anatomical Dolls and Story books
- Busy Bodies Booklet. This booklet was developed to support the teaching of the 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th class component of RSE within the context of S P H E SEP
- Picture books across the 9 grounds of equality
- INTO Different Families, Same love Poster.
- RESPECT guidelines

Provision of Ongoing Support

- Opportunities provided by our Education Centre will be brought to the attention of staff members. Teachers will be encouraged to attend CPD in R S E
- Staff meetings utilised as a platform for discussion and development of RSE materials
- Support from a PDST Advisor
- Promotion and communication of resources available from www.pdst.ie.

Review

- The policy will be reviewed after every two years. The policy may also 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.

Appendix 1

Topics covered up to 2nd include:	Topics from 3rd to 6th include:
☐ Keeping Safe ☐ **Bodily changes from birth (birth-9)** ☐ Making age appropriate choices ☐ Appreciating the variety of family types and an variety of family life that exists in our school and community ☐ 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)**	☐ **Bodily changes** ☐ Healthy eating, personal hygiene, exercise ☐ Keeping Safe ☐ Expressing Feelings ☐ Appreciating the variety of family types within our school and community and how we these family relationships shape us ☐ Making healthy and responsible decisions ☐ Forming Friendships ☐ **Discuss the stages and sequence of development of the human baby in the womb(3rd, 4th class)** ☐ **Introduction to puberty and changes (3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th class)** ☐ **Changes that occur in boys and girls with the onset of puberty (5th/6th Class)** ☐ **Reproductive system of male/female adults (5th and 6th class)** ☐ **Understanding sexual intercourse, conception and birth within the context of a committed loving relationship (5th, 6th class)**

Appendix 2

Dear Parent

Relationships and Sexuality education is an integral part of the S.P.H.E programme. The sensitive elements of the

Relationships and Sexuality education 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.

Topics covered up to 2nd include:	Topics from 3rd to 6th include:
• Keeping Safe • **Bodily changes from birth (birth-9)** • Making age appropriate choices • Appreciating the variety of family types and an variety of family life that exists in our school and community • 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)** *The Language at taught at this level will be: penis; vulva; womb; breastfeeding.* • **Naming the parts of the male/ female body using appropriate anatomical terms and identify some of their functions (1st/2nd))** *The Language at taught at this level will be: penis; vulva; womb; breastfeeding; vagina; urethra, anus*	• Bodily changes • Healthy eating, personal hygiene, exercise • Keeping Safe • Expressing Feelings • Appreciating the variety of family types within our school and community and how we these family relationships shape us • Making healthy and responsible decisions • Forming Friendships • **Discuss the stages and sequence of development of the human baby in the womb(3rd, 4th class)** *Language at taught at this level will be: pregnancy; umbilical cord; navel; belly button (3rd) fertilised egg (4th).* • **Introduction to puberty and changes (4th)** *Language at taught at this level will be: hormones; menstruation; periods; pubic hair; perspiration; hips widen; breasts develop* • **Changes that occur in boys and girls with the onset of puberty (5th and 6th Class))** *The Language at taught at this level will be: revise 4th & testicles; sperm; wet dreams; nocturnal emissions* • **Reproductive system of male/female adults (5th and 6th class))** *The Language at taught at this level will be: revise 4th & ovaries; fallopian tubes; uterus; cervix; erection; conception* • **Understanding sexual intercourse, conception and birth within the context of a committed loving relationship (5th, 6th class)** *The Language taught at this level will be sexual intercourse; Busy Bodies language*

The class teacher will send home appropriate home school links pages from the Relationships and Sexuality manual which outline the material that will be covered in class and encourage further discussion on the topics at home. If you have any questions, please make an appointment to see the class teacher.

Yours sincerely

_____

Mr John Brennan

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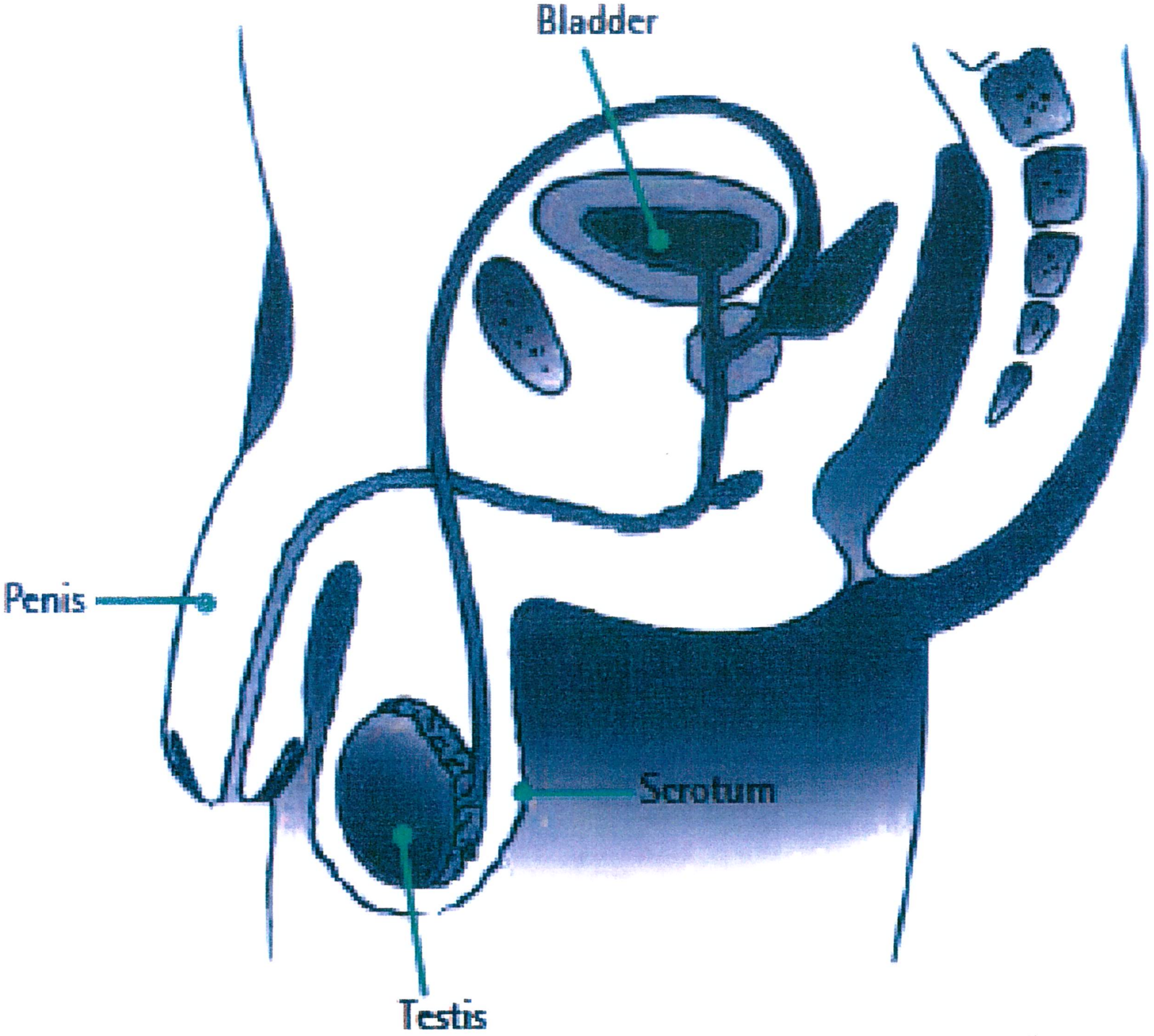
- Talking to Your Young Child about Relationships, Sexuality and Growing Up [accessed on www.pdst.ie/RSE]

Class	Strand /strand Unit	Content Objectives *Consult curriculum for complete objectives in Growing and changing and Taking care of my body*	Language	Pages in RSE Resource Materials Book	Pages in Walk Tall	Supplementary resources
Junior /Senior Infants	**Myself** ▪ Growing and changing ▪ Taking care of my body	**Growing and changing** ▪ Become aware of new life and birth in the world ▪ Develop an awareness of human birth **Taking care of my body** ▪ Name parts of the male and female body using anatomical terms	womb breastfeeding penis vulva	New Life p68 My Body p147 Caring for new life p137 At the beach or swimming pool p.153	Our Amazing Bodies p94 (Senior Infants book)	▪ Anatomically correct dolls ▪ Picture books of new baby ▪ Visit of baby to class
First/ Second Class	**Myself** ▪ Growing and changing ▪ Taking care of my body	**Growing and changing** ▪ Begin to understand that reproduction, birth, growth and death are all part of new life cycles **Taking care of my body** ▪ Name the parts of the male and female body using appropriate anatomical terms and identify some of their functions	penis vulva vagina womb breastfeeding urethra	The Wonder of new life p59 /151 How my body works p67/ 161 Growing means changing p77/171 A Visit to the Doctor p.164	Our Amazing Bodies p37 (2nd class book)	▪ Picture books of going to the doctors ▪ Tom's Power Flower ▪ Books / activities on Life cycles ▪ Birth and new life in nature
Third/ Fourth Class	**Myself** ▪ Growing and changing ▪ Taking care of my body	**Growing and changing** ▪ Understand the physical changes taking place in both the male and female body ▪ Realise that changes do not occur at the same time but nonetheless are predictable and natural and that being different is normal **Taking care of my body** ▪ Recognise and discuss how feelings and emotions are affected by the physical changes that take place during puberty ▪ Discuss the stages and sequence of development of human baby from conception to birth	Revise above umbilical cord changes in puberty menstruation	Preparing for new life p69 The wonder of new life p169 As I grow and change p93 Growing and changing p195	As I grow I change p175 (3rd class book) Changing and Growing p140 (4th class book) The Wonder of New Life p.150	▪ Body Systems ▪ Picture books on Growing and Changing ▪
Fifth/ Sixth Class	**Myself** ▪ Growing and changing ▪ Taking care of my body	**Growing and changing** ▪ Understand sexual intercourse, conception and birth within the context of a loving committed relationship **Taking care of my body** ▪ Identify and discuss the physical changes that occur in boys and girls with the onset of puberty and understand that these take place at different rates for everyone ▪ Understand the reproductive system of both male and female adults	Revise above wet dreams Busy Bodies language semen sexual intercourse	My body grows and changes p81 The wonder of new life p92 Caring for new life p103 Different kinds of love p141	My Amazing body p345 (5th class book) Creation p121 (6th class book)	▪ Busy Bodies ▪ Power points recap ▪ Question Box ▪ Puberty Quiz


Bladder
Penis
Scrotum
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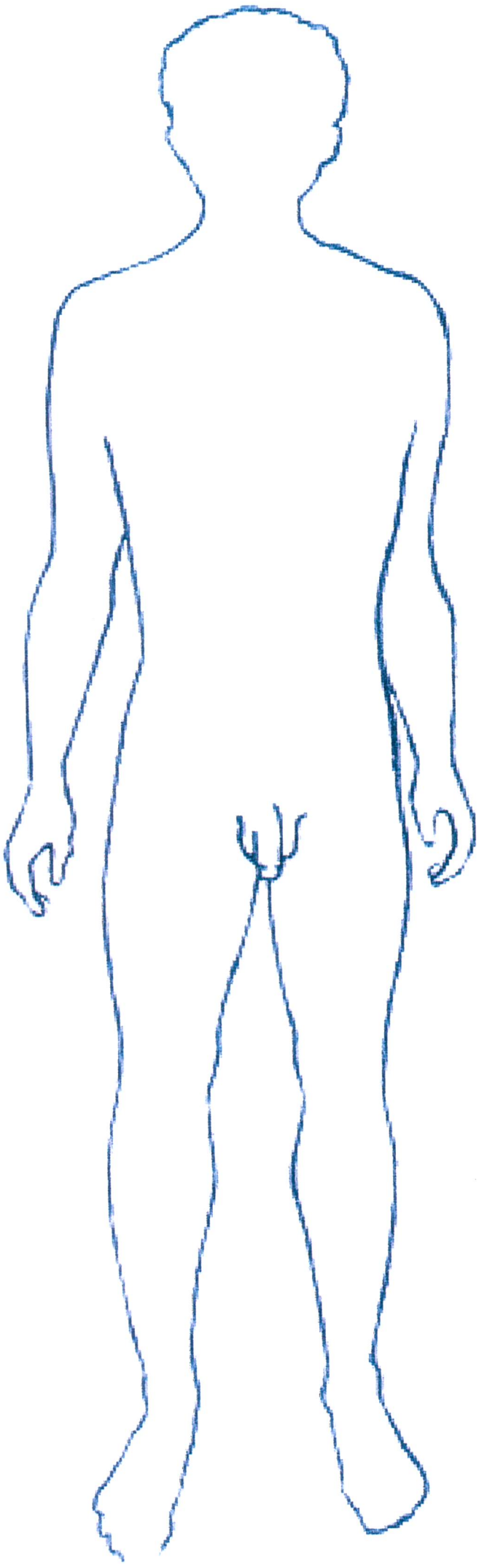

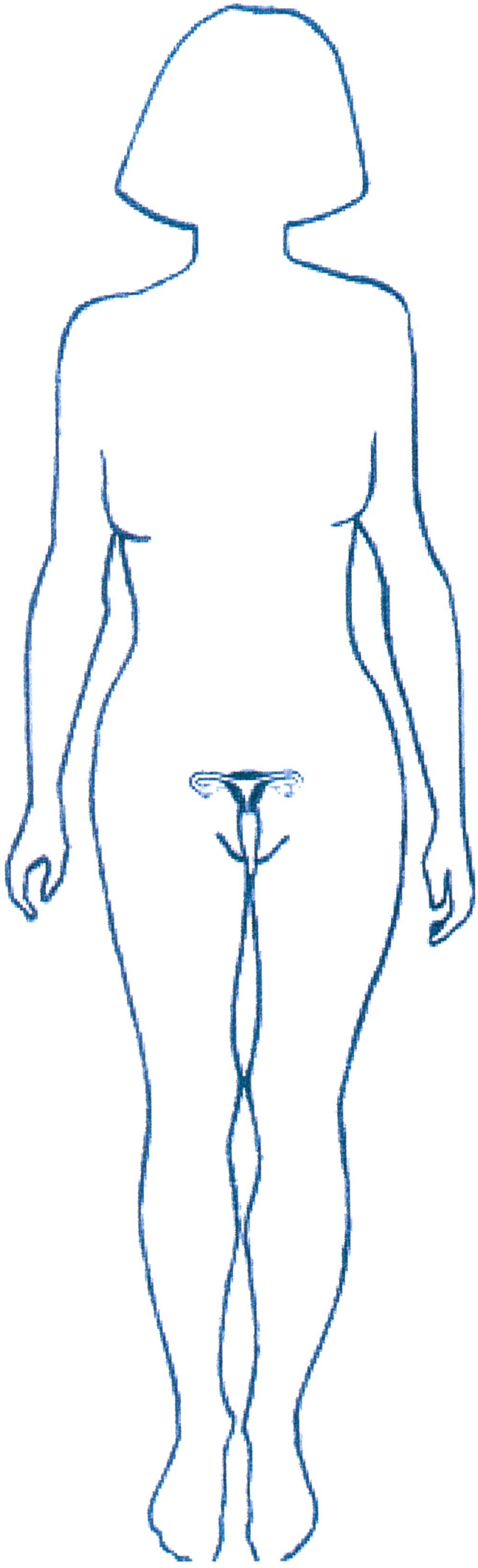

Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE)
FOR STUDENTS WITH MILD GENERAL LEARNING DISABILITIES

The NCCA 'guidelines for teachers of students with general learning disabilities' (www.ncca.ie) contain a wealth of information and material for teaching SPHE to students with general learning disabilities.

RSE is part of the educational entitlement of all students. All young people, whatever their ability, develop physically and emotionally and all need help to understand their bodies and their feelings. RSE helps students with their overall development, confidence and self-esteem. Some students with mild learning disabilities may lack confidence and need opportunities to develop the following skills through a structured SPHE/RSE programme:

- Development of positive self esteem
- Social and communication skills
- Appropriate expression of feelings
- Safety and protection skills
- An understanding of their body and the changes that take place at puberty

When teaching RSE it is worth remembering that:

- The development of interpersonal skills and knowledge about one's body is dependent on the development of communication and language skills. This is the most fundamental skill that children need in order to describe themselves, to relate to their peers, and to interact with the outside world.
- The education of the child should be needs led, meaning that the teacher should try to establish what the needs of the student are and also what the child's emotional readiness and level of understanding are. This can be done through consultation with the parents and with the student him/herself.
- Consultation with the parents on sensitive issues is advisable. They may find the subject of sexuality in relation to their child difficult and may need information and support.
- Following consultation with parents and other members of staff, an Individual Education Plan for the student should be developed.
- The child will be better able to learn if the teacher uses key words, diagrams and active learning methodologies. Children with learning difficulties may also need more repetition and reinforcement.
- The resource teacher could consider integrating some of the RSE content into his/her lessons in order to reinforce the learning from the mainstream classroom.
- Children with learning difficulties need to learn in a variety of contexts in order to be able to generalise what they have learned.
- Inappropriate behaviour is not necessarily sexual but may stem from the fact that the child is stressed, bored, lonely or lacks access to other sensory experience. This should be borne in mind when helping a student to understand the boundaries between public and private behaviour.
- Many inappropriate behaviours in children are preventable if school initiates a conversation with parents while their child is in infant classes. This should stress the importance of putting a consistent approach in place which grows with the pupil and which, from the time the child is young, teaches what is appropriate, in what setting, and with whom.

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.

Differentiation Template

Using the template below, consider these aspects of the lesson given to your students so that **all learners** can be included in order that they can **participate in** and **benefit from** the lesson. This template was provided by the Special Education Support Service

KEY WORDS TO BE TAUGHT / PRE-TAUGHT			

1. DIFFERENTIATE BY CONTENT (In what ways can I vary what I am teaching?)		
(A) Complexity of content: (concrete, symbolic, abstract)		
Concrete	*Symbolic*	*Abstract*
(B) Variety of resources		
(C) Variety of learning environments		

KEY CONCEPTS IN THE LESSON (OBJECTIVES)		
*What students **must** know or be able to do*	*What students **should** know or be able to do*	*What students **could** know or be able to do*

2. DIFFERENTIATE BY PROCESS (How will I teach the lesson?)

3. DIFFERENTIATE BY OUTCOME / PRODUCT (How will the student demonstrate understanding?)

FINALLY - ANY OTHER POSSIBILITIES FOR THIS LESSON?