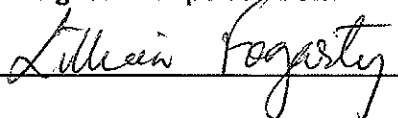


Relationships and Sexuality Education Policy for St. Fiacc's Primary School.

Approved by	Date
BOM	26/06/2019
BOM	06/03/2024

Signed Chairperson BOM


Lillian Fogarty

Relationships and Sexuality in Education Policy St. Fiacc's 2024

School Details,

School Name: St. Fiacc's National School.

Area: Graiguecullen, Carlow.

Gender: Mixed.

Size of School: 600 pupils; 24 class teachers and 4 ANAs.

Saint Fiacc's is a diverse school with 80% of the school population Irish and the remaining 20% comprising 35 nationalities.

Saint Fiacc's is a DEIS Band 2 school.

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 was drawn up by a committee involving staff/parents/guardians on 9/02/2024. It was reviewed 06/03/2024. This policy is an agreed approach to the teaching of Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE). It was developed to inform teachers and parents/guardians about the provision of RSE in school.

School Philosophy

We recognise that SPHE is intrinsic to the teaching and learning that occurs both formally and informally in school. 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 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 acknowledges that parents/guardians/carers have the primary role in the social personal and health education of their children and as such, their involvement will be encouraged. SPHE/RSE is a key component in supporting our pupils 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. (DE 1996, p.5)

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.

RSE is part of the Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE). 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.

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SPHE/RSE is:

- a **lifelong and continual process** throughout primary school and should not be confined to once off inputs or solitar lessons
- a **shared responsibility** between family, school, health professionals and the community
- a subject which develops a child's **skills, attitudes, values and understanding** relevant to a range of social, personal and health issues
- **child-centered**. RSE education should prioritise the needs of the child and his/her environment, with appropriate adaptations made to suit individual requirements and individual school situations
- **spiral in nature**. SPHE/RSE formally begins in Junior Infants and is developed throughout the child's time in school. This will provide opportunities to consolidate and build on previous learning in developmentally appropriate manne
- taught through **active learning methodologies**. RSE provides a range of learning opportunities that requires children to actively participate in their learning in a wide variety of ways e.g. discussion, circle time, role play.
- **free of bias**. Lessons, language and resources selected by the school should reflect this. SPHE/RSE encourages children to be inclusive with each other, challenge prejudice and learn how to live together in an intercultural societ

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.
- (DE 1996, P.9)

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.
- (DE 1996, p.9)

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Policies which support SPHE

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

Curriculum planning for SPHE/RSE

There are 3 strands in the SPHE curriculum. There are 9 strand units for Junior to Second class and 10 strand units for Third class onwards. The Making Decisions strand unit applies to 3rd - 6th class. The Department of Education (DE) advises to follow a 2 year plan when planning for SPHE. Each year schools should teach from each of the three main SPHE strands. Sharing the strand units over a two year period ensures pupils will have covered the entire content relevant to their class groupings with balanced offering from the three strands. It also ensures adequate time is allocated to each strand unit.

A Standard approach to whole school planning for the content in SPHE can help schools develop consistency around the teaching of SPHE. This approach offers a guide to teachers in school around what to teach and when. This standard approach involves;

- Teaching 5 Strand units in year 1.
- Teaching 5 Strand units in year 2.
- Ensuring each year at least one Strand unit is taught from each of the three strands.
- Each Strand unit is allocated two months of teaching time.
- The timing of these two months blocks are mapped across each school year.

Within this standard approach all teachers are covering the same Strand units at the same time. This supports the work of the whole school atmosphere and integration with planned school activities. It also enables the teachers to anticipate what will be covered and when, therefore increasing the scope for planned integration or thematic planning with other curricular areas.

Month	Year 1	Year 2
September / October	Self-identity (Myself)	Myself and my family (Myself and others)
November / December	My friends and other people (Myself and others)	Relating to others (Myself and others)
January / February	Safety and Protection (Myself)	Growing and Changing (Myself)
March /April	Making decisions* (Myself)	Taking Care of my Body (Myself)
May / June	Media education (Myself and the wider world)	Developing citizenship (Myself and the wider world)

* Making Decisions is only a strand unit from 3rd - 6th, Juniors - second may complete the Safety Issues section of Safety and protection at this time. Due to the increased amount of lessons in the Stay Safe Programme from 3rd to 6th class, placing the strand unit Making decisions after the Safety and Protection Strand Units in a standard two-year plan will enable the teachers to achieve some of the content objectives of Making Decisions through the Stay Safe programme.

RSE, which largely looks at the development of relationships, is interwoven through all strands and strand units of the SPHE curriculum. The more sensitive aspects of RSE will be covered under the strand 'Myself' and strand units 'Growing and

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changing' and 'Taking care of my body'. Teachers will refer to the resource Making the Links to support their planning for the delivery of these strand units.

Suggested resources are listed under the Resources Section of this policy.

Guidelines for Implementation of RSE in our School

The SPHE curriculum will underpin all teaching and learning of RSE in St. Fiacc's. The SPHE curriculum 1999 is allocated 30 minutes of discrete teaching time by the Department of Education. Teachers can use their professional discernment if extra time is required, this can be taken as discretionary time. Teachers are encouraged to use an integrated approach for the delivery of SPHE. All resources used will be in keeping with this RSE policy and will take into consideration the sample criteria for choosing resources, as outlined in the SPHE Teacher Guidelines p.103.

- The strands units 'Growing and changing' and 'Taking care of my body' are covered in Year Two of the 2 year plan (There will be a recap lesson on Year 1)
- Lessons containing sensitive material are covered as part of these strand units
- Special arrangements exist for the delivery of the sensitive elements from 4th class up. Parents will be informed in advance and a plan will be put in place for delivery in respect of AN/EAL pupils where deemed necessary.
- Special consideration will be taken to ensure that the needs of children with SEN are met. For example EAL pupils at specific AN pupils will be explicitly taught key vocabulary by the SEN team in collaboration with the class teacher and SENCO.
- Taking into account the pupils' social and emotional development, instruction will be based on individual needs where possible
- Parents will be informed around the teaching and learning of RSE. Notification of the lessons will be given in our January Newsletter. Parents in 5th & 6th will be handed a copy of the Busy Bodies Parent Booklet at the January parent teacher meeting. The HSCL will arrange a coffee morning in January with the topic of RSE being addressed by the SPHE coordinator.

Pupil Voice

In our school the voice of our pupils is acknowledged, valued and respected. Children are given opportunities to reflect and feedback on SPHE/RSE provision via focus groups and questionnaires.

This information will be used to inform school improvement in relation to future RSE provision.

The Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice (DE 2019) encourages schools to enhance the voice of children in their school community (DE 2019, p.30). This is reflective of the key principles of the SPHE curriculum

Approaches & Methodologies <https://www.pdst.ie/SPHE-Approaches-and-Methodologies>

Active learning is the principal learning and teaching approach recommended for SPHE. It requires children to actively participate in their learning in a wide variety of ways, thereby increasing the possibility of internalising what they have explored and of being able to use this learning in their everyday lives. Active learning contributes significantly to fostering their self-confidence, self-discipline and self-control in the learner. Active learning methodologies are an integral part of teaching and learning in SPHE and RSE.

At St. Fiacc's, we will use the following approaches and methodologies to teach RSE;

- stories and poems
- classroom discussion
- ICT Activities
- group work
- games
- art activities

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- reflection
- circle time

Resources

When selecting resources due consideration will be given to the following:

- In line with the principles of the SPHE curriculum
- Free of bias
- Demonstrates equality
- Up to date
- Devoid of racial or sexual stereotyping

At St. Fiacc's our staff may consult any of the following teaching resources when teaching RSE in addition to the DE Relationships and Sexuality Education Programme:

- <https://www.pdst.ie/wellbeing>
- NCCA SPHE/RSE Toolkit
- DE Walk Tall Manuals
- Making the Links and Beyond
- Stay Safe programme
- Walk Tall Programme
- Anatomical Dolls
- HSE publications (www.healthpromotion.ie)
- Busy Bodies Booklet/ Videos/ Workbook (PDST)
- Inclusive picture and story books
- INTO Different Families, Same Love Poster
- INTO Different Families, Same Love Lesson Ideas
- INTO Different Families Same Love Online Presentation J1 – 2nd
- INTO Different Families Same Love Online Presentation 3rd – 6th
- RESPECT guidelines
- Gender Equality Matters (GEM)
- All Together Now
- We All Belong
- PDST Education and Transgender Information
- PDST Identity Based Bullying Information
- RSE related educational websites

Parental Involvement

As RSE is an integral component of SPHE, parental consent is not required in advance of lesson delivery. However, the Education Act 1998, section 30 subsection 2 (e) shall not require any student to attend instruction in any subject which is contrary to the conscience of the parent of the student or in the case of a student who has reached the age of 18 years. Therefore, parents have the right to withdraw their child out of aspects of the SPHE curriculum, if they so wish.

At St. Fiacc's parents/guardians/carers will be informed at enrolment that the school fully implements the RSE strands of the SPHE curriculum. The RSE policy is accessible to all members of the school community from the school website.

- Parents/guardians/carers will be informed in advance of the teaching of the formal RSE lessons. (A sample letter is provided in Appendix 1). This will offer parents/guardians/carers an opportunity to meet with relevant teachers to discuss/view the material that will be covered and share any personal details they feel the teacher should be aware

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prior to their child engaging in RSE lessons. If they wish to withdraw their child from specific formal RSE lessons, this should be provided in writing to the school and kept on file. Alternative arrangements will be considered and agreed upon by the relevant parties.

- The school cannot accept responsibility for indirect RSE related information delivered to the child outside of formal RSE lessons i.e. on yard, school bus etc.
- Parents may be signposted to developmentally appropriate resources to support them in speaking with their child about relationships, sexuality and growing up.
- The home school links page of the relevant programmes are regularly communicated.

Differentiation

The age and stage of development in a class can vary widely and strategies for differentiation can support gradual and appropriate learning. At St. Fiacc's, teachers use assessment and professional judgement to differentiate the curricular objectives and content to best suit the needs of all pupils.

Adaptations to the way in which the content is delivered will be made for children with additional educational needs. Both consultation with parents/guardians/carers in advance of lessons and the anticipation of the pupil's needs will be central to ensuring learning is meaningful. This may be reflected in the student's support file.

If learning activities are to be made meaningful, relevant and achievable for all students, it is important that the teacher finds ways to respond to students' diversity by using differentiated approaches and methodologies.

NCSE Guidelines for teachers of students with Mild, Moderate and Severe and Profound Learning Disabilities is available to download at <https://www.sess.ie/cat-categories>

Questions to consider:

- Who requires differentiation in your class?
- How do you differentiate for those pupils?
- What resources will support you to do this?
- What other supports do you have at your disposal?

Also important to consider:

- that objectives are realistic for the students
- that the learning task builds upon prior learning
- providing opportunities for interacting and working with other students in small groups or 1:1
- organising the learning task into small stages: outlining the steps to be learned/completed in any given task, posing key questions to guide pupils through the different stages/processes, and assisting in self-direction and correction
- ensuring that the language used is pitched at the pupil's level of understanding. Some children may be pre-taught language or concepts in preparation of whole class work
- creating a learning environment through the use of concrete, and where possible everyday materials, and by displaying word lists and laminated charts with pictures
- employing active learning methodologies

Useful Resources:

- Middletown Centre for Autism
- PDST RSE

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.

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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 is a powerful tool and should be used with respect and integrity for the dignity of each person. 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 it can hurt, diminish and demean.

We will consider the following:

- what language you model in your classroom
- what language you use to promote a positive, inclusive classroom environment for all
- becoming aware of binary language or language that implies gender stereotyping
- if the correct anatomical terms are used in a consistent way across all class levels
- what strategies you use to tackle derogatory language in your classroom (e.g. when a child misuses the word 'gay' or 'lesbian')* How are they corrected
- what strategies you use to teach correct anatomical terms (e.g. when a child misuses the word 'willy' or 'pee-pee') How you respond
- familiarising staff with the PDST Identity Based Bullying resource

<https://www.pdst.ie/sites/default/files/Identity%20Based%20Bullying.pdf> and PDST Education and Transgender resource which is useful in creating an awareness about the spectrum of sexualities and genders that exist.

*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 T 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.

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)
- The NEW Sensitive Language Grid is appended to this policy.

Questions

At St. Fiacc's teachers may use a variety of methodologies to create a safe, open space where pupils feel comfortable to ask RSE related questions.

Question Box

For older pupils a 'question box' is one methodology that may be used as part of the formal RSE lessons. Teachers can follow up on the written questions at a later date, thus allowing time to prepare suitable answers, consult with colleagues/RSE policy to formulate an appropriate response.

During the delivery of each RSE lesson, pupils can be encouraged to place their questions into a box.

These questions can be reviewed and the following may be taken into account:

- All pupils are encouraged to write on the question sheet. If they don't have a question ask them to write something interesting they learned in the lesson
- Questions arising from lesson content will be answered in an age-appropriate manner.

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- The 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 curriculum and they will be advised to talk with their parents/guardians/carers
- Teachers may exercise discretion to contact parents if a need arises
- No personal questions will be answered and children will be reminded not to share inappropriate personal information about their families or others

Open Forum Questions

Teachers give pupils an opportunity to ask questions at various times throughout the RSE lesson. Questions will be answered in an age and developmentally appropriate way. Children will be made aware that the class teacher may not be able to answer their question and they will be signposted to ask an adult they trust at home.

Possible 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. I think what they meant to ask was....

If a perceived child protection matter arises throughout RSE lessons or indeed otherwise, the teacher, as a mandated person will refer to the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2023.

Consider:

- What specific question strategies will you use in your class?
- Are they effective and how do you know?
- What other strategies you could use?

It is important that the teacher creates a safe, open space where pupils feel comfortable to ask RSE related questions. Teachers should be cognisant not to invalidate a pupil's question, but rather set boundaries and manage expectations around questions. This can be done using a variety of strategies; question box, open forum questions. In the instance that the teacher may not be able to answer a specific question, it is important that child will be signposted towards another adult who they trust for an answer.

Teachers may refer to HSE website: <https://www.sexualwellbeing.ie/for-parents/sample-questions-and-answers/> to formulate agreed, appropriate responses to pupil queries. *Some of the topics addressed on the website are not appropriate for Primary School.

Assessment

Assessment is an integral part of the teaching and learning process. St. Fiacc's will employ the following methods for assessment in SPHE/RSE:

- Observation and questions to assess the pupils' engagement and interest.
- Use of teacher-designed tasks such as worksheets, quizzes or games. The Busy Bodies Workbooks will be used in 5th & 6th. Sample copies will be retained for record keeping.
- Use of reflection or learning log
- Pupil Portfolio and digital portfolio through Seesaw.
- Self assessment through use of KWL charts.
- Checklists to assess vocabulary acquisition

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Confidentiality

St. Fiacc's follows the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2023. If a child is withdrawn from specific RSE lessons, the school cannot guarantee that the withdrawn child will not hear the information from another source. Parents are invited to share any changes in circumstances with the school as necessary e.g. changes in family structures etc. For the welfare of some children, this information may be important for a teacher to know prior to engaging in specific topic on family/relationships etc

Children may disclose personal information during RSE lessons. It is important to protect the privacy of children and their families. This can be done by ensuring there are ground rules for the sharing of information in relation to the topics covered in RSE. Disclosures of abuse must be dealt with in line with Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2023.

Provision of Ongoing Support

St. Fiacc's ensures the provision of ongoing support by the following:

- encouraging teachers to attend RSE CPD
- utilising staff meetings as a platform for discussion and development of RSE
- seeking the support from an Oide Advisor
- create a mentor system amongst staff to support the teaching RSE lead by the SPHE coordinator.
- budgeting for the updating and development of RSE materials
- reviewing the RSE policy on a regular basis
- ensure special education teachers have adequate training opportunities
- staff will reflect on information gathered from pupil questionnaires and focus groups. This will be used to inform future developments regarding RSE.
- signposting staff to resources available from PDST and other sources.
- Some teachers may not feel comfortable teaching RSE. However on-going training, team teaching, mentoring and review can alleviate this issue.

Review

St. Fiacc's will review this policy every three 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 on 06/03/2024.

Appendix 1

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.

<p>Topics covered up to 2nd include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 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 	<p>Topics from 3rd to 6th include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 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 th 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) Tl Language at taught at this level will be: revise 4th & testicles; sperm; wet dreams; nocturnal emissions ● Reproductive system of male/female adult (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 committed loving relationship (5th, 6th clas The Language taught at this level will be sext intercourse; Busy Bodies language
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Our school's RSE policy is available to view on our school website www.stfiaccsns.ie. It outlines our agreed approach to achieve the objectives of the aforementioned strand units.

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 wish to discuss this further, please do not hesitate to arrange an appointment to meet with your child's class teacher

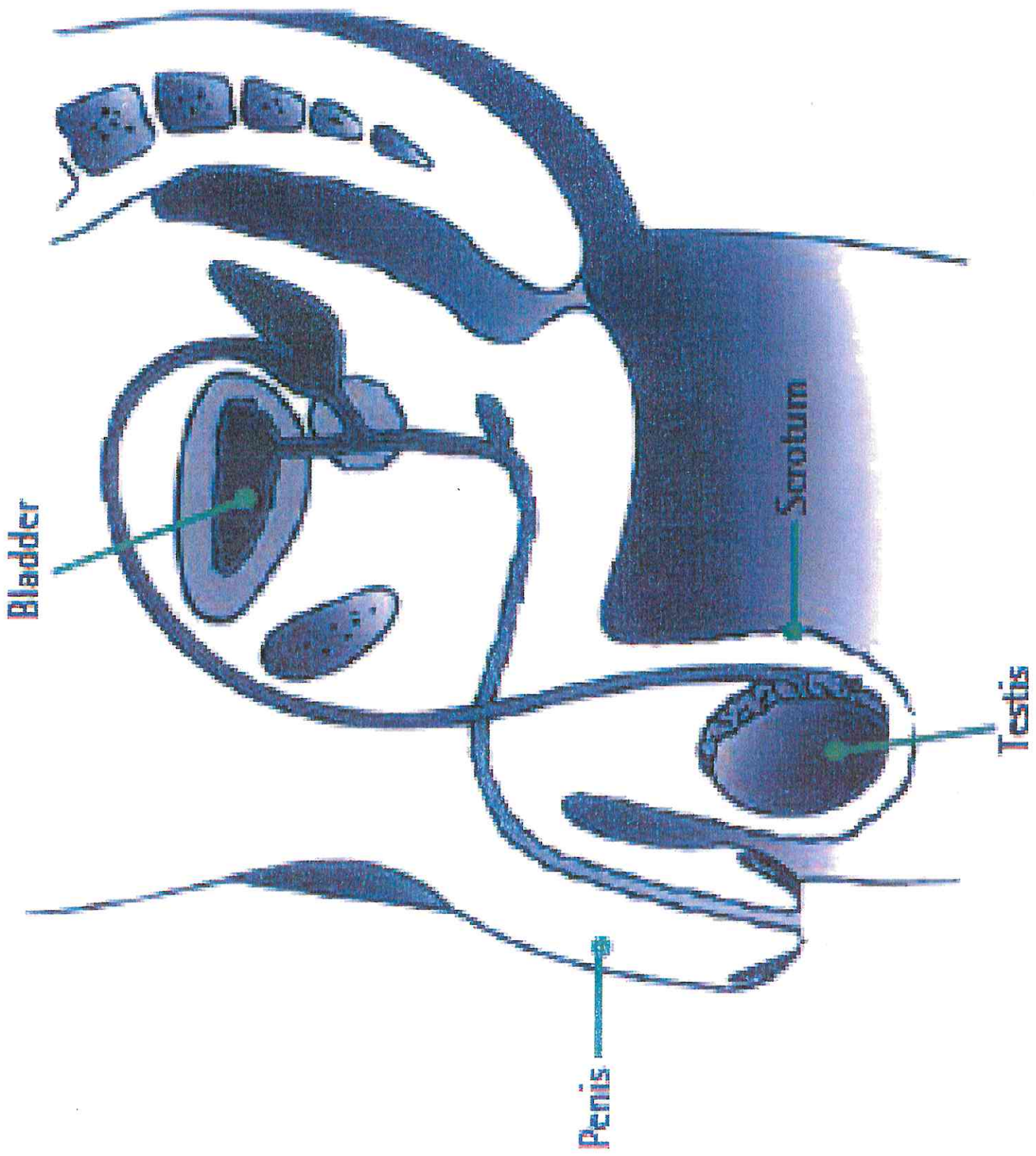
Yours sincerely

Mr John Brennan

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Class	Strand /strand Unit	Content Objectives <i>Consult curriculum for complete objectives in Growing and changing and Taking care of my body</i>	Language	Pages in RSE Resource Materials Book	Pages in Walk Tall	Supplementary resources
Junior /Senior Infants	Myself <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Growing and changing Taking care of my body 	Growing and changing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Become aware of new life and birth in the world Develop an awareness of human birth Taking care of my body <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anatomically correct dolls Picture books of new baby Visit of baby to class
Third/ Fourth Class	Myself <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Growing and changing Taking care of my body 	Growing and changing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 (3 rd class book) Changing and Growing p140 (4 th class book) The Wonder of New Life p.150	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Body Systems Picture books on Growing and Changing
Fifth/ Sixth Class	Myself <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Growing and changing Taking care of my body 	Growing and changing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand sexual intercourse, conception and birth within the context of a loving committed relationship Taking care of my body <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 				

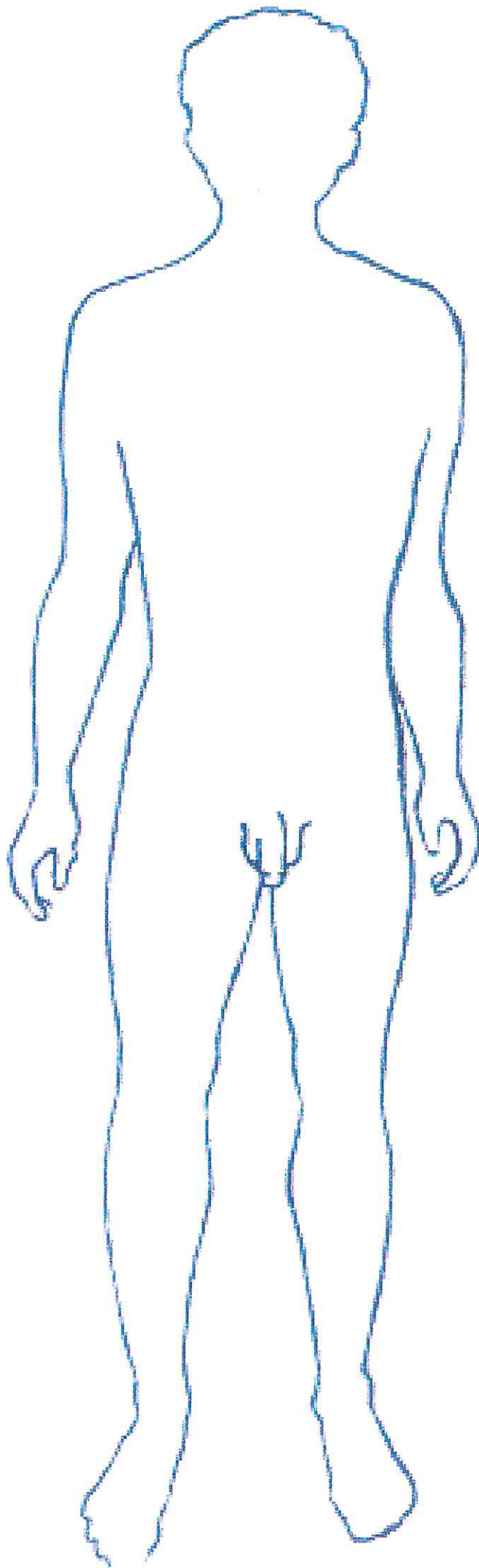


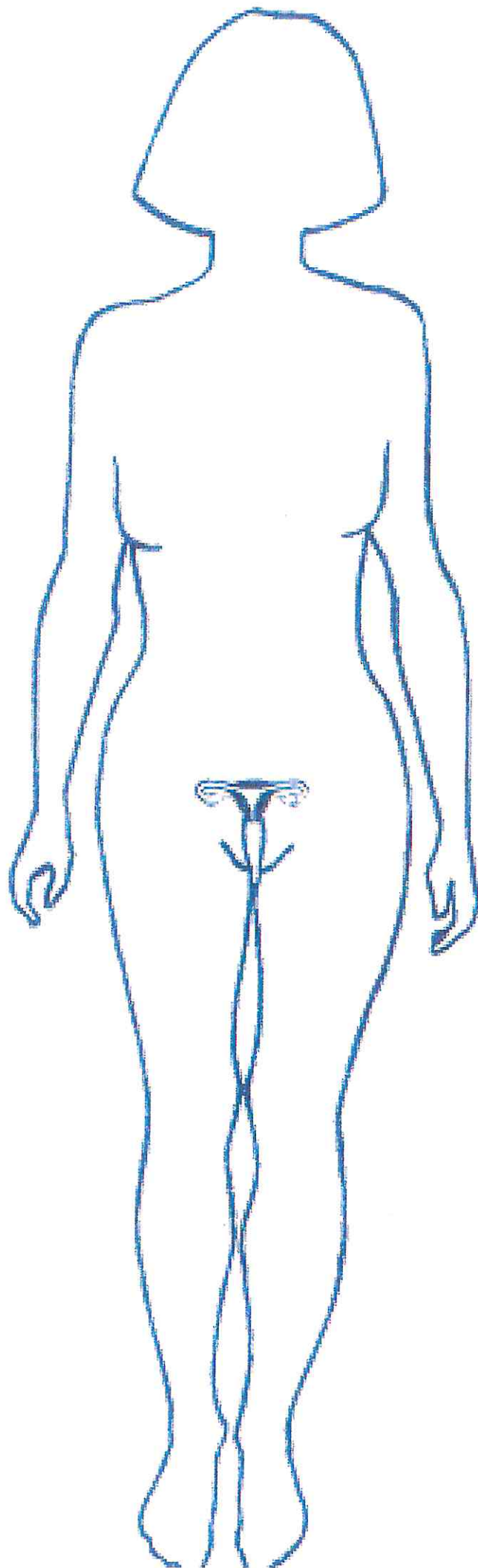
Bladder

Scrotum

Testis

Penis





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?)		
<i>(A) Complexity of content: (concrete, symbolic, abstract)</i>		
<i>Concrete</i>	<i>Symbolic</i>	<i>Abstract</i>
<i>(B) Variety of resources</i>		
<i>(C) Variety of learning environments</i>		

KEY CONCEPTS IN THE LESSON (OBJECTIVES)		
<i>What students must know or be able to do</i>	<i>What students should know or be able to do</i>	<i>What students could know or be able to do</i>

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

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

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FINALLY - ANY OTHER POSSIBILITIES FOR THIS LESSON?

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