

# Esker E.T.N.S.

## Social Personal and Health Education: Relationships and Sexuality Policy

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### Introductory Statement

This policy statement is an approved approach to the teaching of RSE in Esker Educate Together National School. It was developed to inform teachers and parents of the material covered within the RSE programme within the SPHE curriculum. The committee recognises the sensitivity of the subject matter of some of the lessons, particularly at the senior level of the school and every effort will be made to inform and discuss the material with our parent body.

The teachers on the steering committee examined every lesson in the RSE programme and identified the content that may be deemed sensitive by some parents. This is outlined below.

### Rationale

*Carla N. Mac*

The need for this policy arises from our school's obligation to provide for all the needs of the student body and respond appropriately to sensitive and emotive issues relating to emerging sexuality. Schools are legally bound to teach the RSE programme.

## **Aims**

- 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 to develop healthy friendships and relationships.
- To enable each child to think and act in a caring and responsible way.
- To foster in the child a healthy, caring and respectful attitude to human relationships and sexuality.
- To enhance the personal development, self-esteem and well-being of the child.
- 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.

## **School Philosophy and Ethos**

Our school ethos is rooted in the holistic and child centred vision of Educate Together ethos. The school ethos affirms and supports close links between school and home. To this end parents will be encouraged to play a meaningful role in the RSE formation. This policy and teaching slides will be made available to parents on our school website (password protected). Parents will be informed of the teaching of RSE prior to lessons commencing. Parents will be encouraged to view the curriculum online in order to prepare for questions from their children.

In drawing up this policy we recognise the diversity among our school community and to this end we recognise and appreciate their different values and morals regarding relationship and sexuality education. Accordingly, the school feels that it is the duty of parents/guardians to ensure that their own religious and moral values will be central to what they teach at home.

The general aim of education is to contribute towards the development of all aspects of the individual, including the aesthetic, creative, critical, cultural, emotional, intellectual, moral, physical, political, social and spiritual development for personal and family life, for working life, for living in the community and for leisure. Relationships and Sexuality Education is clearly a part of this general aim.

## **RSE as part of Social Personal and Health Education**

RSE is part of Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE). RSE provides children with structured opportunities to develop the knowledge, attitudes, values, beliefs and practical skills necessary to establish and sustain healthy personal relationships as children and, subsequently as adults.

*Caoimhe M'Neel*

## How are we going to teach RSE?

- The curriculum will be taught in an age-appropriate manner at all times.
- The curriculum will be taught from Junior Infants to 6<sup>th</sup> class. It will be taught through a spiral curriculum.
- We will revisit key topics in a developmental manner at regular intervals.
- The materials taught will reflect the needs of the children
- It is intended that most themes will be revisited every year.
- The RSE curriculum will be taught through
  - Stories and poems
  - Classroom discussion
  - Group work
  - Games
  - Art activities
  - Quiet time
  - Classroom visitors
  - Circle time
  - Discrete SPHE time

RSE will be taught throughout the SPHE curriculum at all levels and will feature during the teaching of the strand and strand units below:

**Strand: Myself** – Self Identity, taking care of my body, growing and changing, safety and protection

**Strand unit: Taking care of my body** – naming the parts of the male and female body using appropriate terminology (Junior and Lower Middle Classes). Identifying physical changes, understanding puberty and the reproductive system (Senior Classes)

**Strand unit: 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 relationships (Senior classes).

**Strand: Myself and others** – Myself and family, friends and relating to other people.

## Guidelines for the Management and Organisation of RSE

- Parents have the primary responsibility for educating their children in sexual matters. The school RSE Programme acts as a support only to parents. All schools in Ireland are legally bound to protect children by teaching the RSE Programme. Parents retain the right to withdraw their children from classes. **If a parent wishes to withdraw his/her child from the RSE lesson/s, that wish must be put in writing and presented to the class teacher and principal. This letter will then be filed in the pupil's record.** However, parents who opt to withdraw their children from discrete RSE lessons should be aware that the

*Cara M. Mc*



teacher or other pupils may use language from the RSE lessons in other areas of the curriculum, in keeping with the overall climate and atmosphere of the school. Parents should also be aware that material taught during the RSE programme may be discussed by the children outside class time, and the staff will have no control over what aspects of the information are passed on. Furthermore, television, social media, a child's access to the internet and of course, friends are sources of information and influence about relationships and sexuality. Parents may not even be aware of, or indeed may not like, the messages their children are getting from these informal sources. The staff believe that it is preferable that this information is presented accurately and sensitively by a professional educator.

- The RSE programme will normally be taught by the class teacher as part of an ongoing spiral curriculum and is part of the larger Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) programme. Boys and girls will be taught the programme together. Teachers will separate 4th Class boys from girls for the topic of menstruation.
- Making the Links: Links will be made from the RSE programme to Walk Tall and the Stay Safe programmes.
- When implementing the programme, teachers will endeavour to display the utmost respect for and sensitivity towards diverse family backgrounds at Esker ETNS.
- Questions which may arise with regard to the sensitive content of the programme will be answered by the class teacher provided that they relate to topics covered in the curriculum for that class. If topics arise which do not feature in the curriculum, or if questions are asked by children who have been withdrawn from the programme, children will be requested to address the questions to their parents.

## **Content Objectives of the National RSE Curriculum**

All content objectives will be covered by the time children leave 6<sup>th</sup> Class.

### **Junior Infants RSE Programme**

The Relationship and Sexuality Education will cover the following themes:

1. This Is Me
2. Who Are You?
3. We Are Friends.
4. This Is My Family
5. People Who Teach Us About Keeping Safe.
6. We Have Feelings
7. New Life
8. I Grow

*Alice M. Mee*

## 9. Making Choices

### **This is me**

- This is me! I am special
- About me
- Appreciate that I am special and unique and have a positive self awareness

SPHE Strand: Myself

Strand Unit(s): Self identity

Sensitive Content: None

### **Who are you?**

- Appreciating that all people are special
- About your friends
- You and me, me and you

SPHE Strand: Myself

Strand Unit(s): Self Identity

Sensitive Content: None

### **We are Friends**

- Appreciation of friends, with a focus on peer friendship
- The hand of friendship
- Liking each other

SPHE Strand: Myself and Others

Strand Unit(s): Myself and Other people

Sensitive Content: None

### **This is My Family**

- Who constitutes your family?
- Explore things that families do together
- Recognise the roles played by family members

SPHE Strand: Myself and others

Strand Unit(s): Myself and my family

Sensitive Content: None

*Carol M. McCall*

### **People who teach us about Keeping Safe**

- Identify the people in their family, school and community who teach them about keeping safe
- Who can help
- A visit from a community member

SPHE Strand: Myself

Strand Unit(s): Safety and Protection

Sensitive content: None

### **We have Feelings**

- Naming emotions and identifying experiences in which these emotions are experienced.
- About Feelings
- Showing how you feel

SPHE Strand: Myself

Strand Unit (s): Growing and changing

Sensitive Content: None

### **New Life**

- Becoming aware of new life in the world
- Signs of new life
- New Life in Spring

SPHE Strand: Myself

Strand Unit (s): Growing and Changing

Sensitive Content: None

### **I Grow**

- Becoming aware of Physical Growth
- Growing things
- How you grow

SPHE Strand: Myself

Strand Unit(s): Taking care of my body, growing and changing.

Sensitive Content: None

## **Making Choices**

- Becoming aware that we make choices in everyday life
- About choices you make
- Lots of Choices

SPHE Strand: Myself

Strand Unit(s): Self Identity

Sensitive Content: None

# **Senior Infants RSE Programme**

The Relationships and Sexuality Programme will cover the following themes –

1. Look What I Can Do.
2. These Are My Friends.
3. This Is My Family.
4. I Can Be Safe
5. Other People Have Feelings Too
6. Caring For New Life
7. My Body
8. I Grow I Change
9. Making Decisions

## **Look what I can do**

- Discover personal strengths
- What can you do
- Things that I can do

SPHE Strand: Myself

Strand Unit(s): Self Identity

Sensitive Content: None

## **These are my Friends**

- Appreciation of the value of Friendship in my live

- What is a Friend
- Showing Friendship

SPHE Strand: Myself and Others

Strand Unit(s): My Friends and other people

Sensitive Content: None

### **This is my Family**

- Roles of different members of families
- Understanding how these roles may vary
- Looking at Photographs

SPHE Strand: Myself and Others

Strand Unit(s): Myself and my Family

Sensitive Content: None

### **I Can Be Safe**

- How to keep safe
- Road Safety
- Going home from school

SPHE Strand: Myself

Strand Unit(s): Safety and Protection

Sensitive Content: None

### **Other People have Feelings too**

- Identify and name feelings which they have experienced
- Understanding that other people have feelings.
- About Feelings.

SPHE Strand: Myself, Myself and others

Strand Unit(s): Growing and Changing, Relating to others

Sensitive Content: None

### **Caring for New Life**

- Become aware of human life
- Caring for a new baby



- New life in Spring

SPHE Strand: Myself

Strand Unit(s): Growing and changing

Sensitive Content: How to tell if the baby is a little boy or a little girl?

### **My Body**

- Learning about body parts correctly
- Give a doll a bath
- Keeping clean

SPHE Strand: Myself

Strand Unit(s): Growing and changing

Sensitive content: Naming body parts e.g. penis, testicles, vagina

### **I Grow and Change**

- Growing involves change and that rates of growth are unique for each person.
- Measuring growth
- Growing and Changing – The Caterpillar

SPHE Strand: Myself

Strand Unit(s) : Growing and Changing

Sensitive content: None

### **Making Decisions**

- Becoming aware of factors that influence choices.
- Making decisions
- Finding a solution to a problem

SPHE Strand: Myself

Strand Unit(s): Self Identity

Sensitive Content: None

## **1<sup>st</sup> Class RSE Programme**

The Relationships and Sexuality Programme will cover the following themes –

1. Things I Like to Do
2. My Friends
3. My Family
4. Keeping Safe
5. Showing our feelings
6. The Wonder Of New Life
7. How My body Works
8. Growing Means Changing
9. Decisions and their Consequences.

### **Things I like to do**

- Things they like doing at home and at school
- Draw pictures and talk about likes and dislikes
- Showing a preference of one activity over another

SPHE Strand: Myself

Strand Unit (s): Self Identity – Self Awareness, Developing self – confidence and making decisions.

Sensitive content: None

### **My Friends**

- What makes a good friend
- Write a letter to a friend telling them why they like being their friend
- Complimenting others gifts and talents.

SPHE Strand: Myself

Strand Unit (s): Self- Identity, Self – Awareness, Developing Self confidence

Sensitive Content: None

### **My Family**

- Things I like to do with my Family
- Questions about family: Eldest, youngest, who lives at home
- Drama – Family activities – e.g. having breakfast etc

SPHE Strand: Myself

Strand Unit(s): Myself and my family

Sensitive Content: None

## **Keeping Safe**

- Identify people or places and things that threaten personal safety.
- How to respond to danger presented
- Keeping safe.

SPHE Strand: Myself

Strand Unit(s): Safety and Protection – Personal Safety, Safety Issues

Sensitive Content: None

## **Showing our feelings**

- Develop awareness of meaning and emotion conveyed through facial expression
- How to show our feelings
- All about feelings and emotions

SPHE Strand: Myself and others

Strand Unit(s): Relating to others

Sensitive Content: None

## **The Wonder of New Life**

- Appreciation of the wonder of new life in the world of nature
- Animal babies
- New Life

SPHE Strand: Myself

Strand Unit(s): Growing and Changing

Sensitive Content: None

## **How my body works**

- Learning about the senses and their functions
- What happens to the food that we eat?
- A listening walk

SPHE Strand: Myself

Strand Unit (s): Self Identity, Taking care of my body

Sensitive Content: None

## **Growing Means Changing**

- Growing up brings extra responsibility
- Looking at how we have grown up and changed
- Looking at photographs of growing

SPHE Strand: Myself

Strand Unit (s): Self Identity, Growing and Changing, Taking care of my body

Sensitive Content: None

### **Decisions and their Consequences**

- Our decisions have consequences for us and for others
- What will I do? What will happen if I do that?
- A Promise

SPHE Strand: Myself

Strand Unit(s): Self Identity

Sensitive Content: None

## **2nd Class RSE Programme**

Relationship and Sexuality Programme will cover the following themes –

1. Other People Are Special
2. Being Friends
3. My Family
4. Keeping Safe
5. Coping With Our Feelings
6. The Wonder Of New Life
7. When My Body Needs Special Care
8. Growing and Changing
9. Personal Decisions

### **Other People are Special**

- Become more aware of others
- How we are the same, and how we are different
- Appreciate that other people are special too

SPHE Strand: Myself

Strand Unit(s): Self Identity

Sensitive content: None

### **Being Friends**

- What being a friend means
- What do friends do for us
- Relating friendships to our own experiences

SPHE Strand: Myself and Others

Strand Unit(s): My friends and other people

Sensitive content: None

### **My Family**

- Examine own role and place within the family
- Ways in which we can help out at home
- Identifying the child's own individual responses towards other family members.

SPHE Strand: Myself and Others

Strand Unit(s): Myself and My Family

Sensitive Content: None

### **Keeping Safe**

- Identify people, places and things that may threaten our safety
- Keeping ourselves safe
- Getting lost

SPHE Strand: Myself

Strand Unit(s): Safety and Protection

Sensitive Content: None

### **Coping with our Feelings**

- Identifying feelings and ways of coping with their feelings



- About ways we sometimes feel
- Expressing feelings through art / music

SPHE Strand: Myself

Strand Unit(s): Growing and Changing

Sensitive Content: None

### **The Wonder of New Life**

- Appreciation and celebration of the wonder of new babies
- Minding babies – what they need etc
- A visit from a parent
- Myself as a baby

SPHE Strand: Myself

Strand Unit (s): Growing and changing

Sensitive Content: Breastfeeding/Bottle feeding

### **When My Body Needs Special Care**

- Revise the name of the external parts of the male and female body parts
- How our body works – functions
- Discussion – visit to the doctor

SPHE Strand: Myself

Strand Unit(s): Taking care of my body

Sensitive Content: Where might you have a pain? How did the nurse know that you were a boy or a girl when you were born?

Building on language taught in earlier years. New language to include: **urethra, umbilical cord, breasts**. Identifying the following body parts using anatomically correct terms:

What is the proper name for:

- The part of a boy that passes urine?
- The part of a girl that passes urine?
- The opening where a baby leaves its mother's womb?
- The part of the body where a baby was joined to its mother before being born?
- The parts of a mother's body that feed the baby after it is born?

## **Growing and Changing**

- What I was like when I was little
- Changes in my life as I grow
- How relationships change with family and friends.

SPHE Strand: Myself

Strand Unit(s): Growing and changing

Sensitive Content: None

## **Personal Decisions**

- Factors that may influence personal decisions and choices
- The reasons for doing things
- About other points of view

SPHE Strand: Myself and Others

Strand Unit (s): Relating to others, My friends and other people

Sensitive content: None

# **3<sup>rd</sup> Class RSE Programme**

The Relationships and Sexuality Programme will cover the following themes –

- i. Special gifts
- ii. Sometimes Friends fight
- iii. My Family
- iv. Keeping Safe
- v. Expressing Feelings
- vi. Preparing for new life
- vii. Our Senses
- viii. As I Grow I change
- ix. Making Decisions

## **Special Gifts**

- Value our Individual Characteristic
- Appreciate our personal achievements and the achievements of others
- Fostering the growth of self esteem

SPHE Strand: Myself

Strand Unit(s): Self Identity

Sensitive Content: None

### **Sometimes Friends Fight**

- A friendship timeline
- When friends argue
- Making friends again

SPHE Strand Unit: Myself

Strand Unit(s): Growing and Changing

Sensitive Content: None

### **My Family**

- Appreciate how family members are related to each other
- Family timeline
- About families

SPHE Strand Unit: Myself and others

Strand Unit(s): Myself and my family

Sensitive content: None

### **Keeping Safe**

- People who help others
- People who can help us
- Personal safety

SPHE Strand: Myself and the wider world, Myself

Strand Unit(s): Developing citizenship & Safety and protection

Sensitive content: None

### **Expressing Feelings**

- Identifying feeling and emotions
- Ways to show feelings in an appropriate manner
- How are you feeling?

SPHE Strand Unit: Myself

Strand Unit(s): Growing and changing

Sensitive content: None

### **Preparing for New life**

- Learn about the care that is needed by parents waiting for a baby
- Caring for a baby
- A visit from a parent

SPHE Strand: Myself

Strand unit(s): Growing and changing

Sensitive content: None

### **Our Senses**

- Learn about the sensory organs and their functions
- Our senses
- Using our senses

SPHE Strand: Myself

Strand Unit(s): Taking care of my body

Sensitive content: None

### **As I grow I Change**

- Understanding the physical, psychological and social changes
- The changing that I have done already
- Stages of growing up
- When I am grown up?

SPHE Strand: Myself

Strand Unit: Growing and Changing

Sensitive Content: None

### **Making decisions**

- Healthy choices and decisions
- Factors that influence personal decisions and choices
- (Moral) Decisions and consequences

SPHE Strand: Making decisions

Strand Unit: Making decisions

Sensitive content: None

## 4<sup>th</sup> Class RSE Programme

The Relationships and Sexuality Programme will cover the following themes

1. Myself and others
2. Bullying Behaviour
3. My Family
4. Reasons for rules
5. Feelings and emotions
6. The wonder of new life
7. Being Clean- Keeping Healthy
8. Growing and changing
9. Problem solving

## **Myself and others**

- Developing skills
- To appreciate the importance of interacting with other
- Working together

SPHE Strand: Myself and others

Strand Unit(s): Relating to others

Sensitive content: none

## **Bullying behaviour**

- Understanding bullying
- What is bullying
- The solutions to bullying

SPHE Strand: Myself and others

Strand Unit(s): My friends and other people, relating to others

Sensitive content: None

## **My family**

- How families are the same, and how they are different
- The origin of your family name
- Why families are special

SPHE Strand: Myself and others

Strand Unit(s): Myself and my family

Sensitive content: None

## **Reasons for Rules**

- Recognise why rules exist
- Consequences of breaking rules
- Rights, responsibilities and rules

SPHE Strand: Myself and others

Strand Unit(s): My Friends and other people, personal safety.

Sensitive content: None



## **Feelings and Emotions**

- Coping with feelings that are difficult to manage.
- Ways of feeling better
- Everyday feelings and actions

SPHE Strand : Myself

Strand Unit(s): Self Identity & Growing and changing

Sensitive Content: None

## **The Wonder of New Life**

- Recognise and learn the stages of development of baby
- Gestation to birth
- Diary of a new baby

SPHE Strand: Myself

Strand Unit(s): Growing and Changing

Sensitive Content: Gestation - starting out as an egg, fertilised egg stays in the womb for 9 months.

## **Being Clean – Keeping Healthy**

- Learn about the importance of personal hygiene
- Body protection
- Infection and the Body.

SPHE Strand: Myself

Strand Unit(s): Taking care of my body

Sensitive content: Using correct terminology for body parts and bodily functions:

## **Growing and Changing**

- Understanding changes that takes place in males and females
- Growing and changing
- A list of changes

SPHE Strand: Myself

Strand Unit(s): Growing and Changing

Sensitive Content:

Children will identify how the male and female bodies change during puberty using templates e.g. changing shape of body, body hair and body odour.

**For girls (to be taught separately): Menstruation**

The onset of puberty will be discussed with the class as a whole

Language used: Building on language already taught. New language to include: menstruation, period, ovaries, fallopian tubes, uterus, sanitary towel.

**Problem Solving**

- Ways to Solve Problems
- Decisions and Choices
- Future References

SPHE Strand: Myself

Strand Unit(s): Self Identity, Making decisions

Sensitive Content: None

## 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> class RSE Programme

The 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Class programme will be delivered by the class teacher.\* (See Teacher Choice below) Parents will be informed by letter in advance of RSE being taught in the classroom. Parents will be encouraged to view the teaching slides online and to access the curriculum on the PDST website:<https://www.pdst.ie/primary/health-wellbeing/RSE>  
If parents do not want their child to participate they must make this request in writing to the school principal.

## 5<sup>th</sup> Class RSE Programme

The relationship and sexuality Programme will cover the following themes:

1. The person I am
2. Different kinds of friends
3. My Family
4. Keeping safe
5. Feelings and emotions
6. My body grows and changes
7. The wonder of new life

8. Caring for new life
9. Making healthy decisions

### **The person I am**

- Getting to know you and me
- Developing the child's self esteem
- Who am I as a person e.g. hobbies, favourite subject in school, what would you like to be when you grow up, three wishes

SPHE strand: Myself

Strand unit(s): Self identity, developing self confidence

Sensitive content: None

### **Different kind of friends**

- What and who is a friend
- Who is close to you
- Qualities of a true friend / what I value in a true friend

SPHE strand: Myself and others

Strand unit(s): My friends and other people / relating to others

Sensitive content: None

### **My family**

- Role play – family scenarios
- Feelings and actions within a family
- Are families on the television true to life?

SPHE Strand: Myself and others

Strand unit(s): Myself and my family

Sensitive content: None

### **Keeping Safe**

- What can you do now
- Helpful safety hints
- Responsibilities
- Making resolutions

SPHE Strand: Myself

Strand Unit(s): Safety and protection. Personal safety and safety issues

Sensitive content: None

### **Feelings and Emotions**

- Talking about emotions
- Responding to emotions
- How certain things make us feel e.g. poetry and music

SPHE Strand: Myself

Strand unit(s): Growing and changing – feelings and emotions

Sensitive content: None

### **My body grows and changes**

- Puberty – physical changes for boys and girls
- Psychological and social changes
- Growing and changing is a natural thing

SPHE Strand: Myself

SPHE Strand Unit(s): Growing and changing

Sensitive content: Physical changes in girls – Breasts developing, menstruation, pubic hair, perspiration, skin changes, labelling female and male anatomical parts (internal and external) cervix, fallopian tubes. Physical changes in boys – testicles, scrotum, penis enlarging, pubic/facial hair, erections, nocturnal emissions (wet dreams), ejaculation, perspiration, skin changes. Hormone changes and how they affect us.

### **The wonder of new life**

- Revision of puberty
- How new life begins- conception
- Timeline – from conception to birth

SPHE Strand: Myself

Strand unit(s): Growing and changing

Sensitive Content: sperm and egg meeting, becoming a parent, conception

### **Caring for new life**

- About for a new life
- Looking after a baby

- Being a parent
- Timeline of a baby from birth to one year

SPHE Strand: Myself

Strand unit(s): Birth and new life

Sensitive content: Breastfeeding, important job of being a parent, who becomes a parent

### **Making Healthy decisions**

- Boys and girls concerns
- Health and hygiene
- About responsibilities for our own health and hygiene
- Health and hygiene practices

SPHE Strand: Myself

Strand unit(s): Taking care of my body – health and well being, knowing about my body, food and nutrition.

Sensitive content: sensitive issues about hygiene e.g. menstruation, body odour, pubic hair, spots.

## 6<sup>th</sup> Class RSE Programme

The relationship and sexuality Programme will cover the following themes:

1. Me and my aspirations
2. Different kinds of love
3. Families
4. Keeping safe and Healthy
5. Feelings and Emotions
6. Growing and Changing
7. Relationships and New life
8. A baby is a Miracle
9. Choices and Decision Making



## **Me and my Aspirations**

- Describing people
- Describing me
- Dreams of the future

SPHE Strand: Myself

Strand Unit(s): Self Identity, self awareness, developing self confidence

Sensitive content: None

## **Different kinds of love**

- What is love?
- Different kinds of love – friendship, family, pet, partner
- A special love

SPHE Strand: Myself and others

Strand Unit(s): Relating to others, myself and my family

Sensitive content: none

## **Families**

- Talking about family relationships
- Different families, Same Love
- Resolving family conflicts

SPHE Strand: Myself and others

Strand Unit(s): My family, relating to others

Sensitive content: Discussing particular home situations e.g. single parent families, fostered or adopted children, death in the family. Different religious beliefs about cultural norms within the homes of the children in the class.

## **Keeping Safe and Healthy**

- Good health and Safety Practices
- Healthy Habits
- Viruses, Bacteria and HIV

SPHE Strand: Myself

Strand Unit(s): Safety and protection

Sensitive content: Discussing safety hazards e.g. substance misuse. How the HIV virus is passed from person to person e.g. passing of bodily fluids, sharing syringes, infected pregnant mother to baby, injection or transfusion of blood.

### **Feelings and Emotions**

- How can I handle my strong feelings
- How actions affect feelings
- A symbol of our feelings

SPHE Strand: Myself

Strand Unit(s): Growing and changing

Sensitive content: none

### **Growing and Changing**

- Responsibilities that come with independence
- Responsibilities in Ireland and other countries
- Rituals to mark the end of childhood

SPHE Strand: Myself and the wider world

Strand unit(s): Developing citizenship

Sensitive Content: Being sensitive to depicting how children are treated in other cultures

### **Relationships and new life**

- Human anatomy
- Puberty
- Reproduction
- Relationship and context for new life
- Looking after a baby's needs

SPHE Strand: Myself and others

Strand Unit(s): Myself and My family

Sensitive content: Understanding the changes that occur during puberty e.g. menstruation, reproductive organs beginning to function.

### **A Baby is a Miracle**

- New life – appreciation of the miracle of new life
- Changes that a baby brings to a parent
- Caring for new life

SPHE Strand: Myself and Others  
Strand Unit(s): Myself and My Family  
Sensitive Content: None

### **Choices and Decision- Making**

- Choices we make
- Difficult decisions
- The consequences of decisions made

SPHE Strand: Myself  
Strand Unit(s): Making decisions  
Sensitive content: None.

### How teachers will deal with questions

- All answers to questions shall reflect the parameters of the curriculum.
- The curriculum does not include the topics of sexuality, gender identity, contraception or abortion. Children who ask questions in class on content outside the curriculum are talked to individually and discreetly and advised to address the questions they have to their parents. Parents are usually informed and asked to talk to their child. Teachers will always promote and teach inclusion and respect for everyone.
- Questions to the teacher may be written or oral within the group section and answered within the boundaries of the curriculum and policy. If a child has asked a question that the teacher deems to be inappropriate the teacher will refer the child to his/her parents/guardians.
- The school cannot guarantee confidentiality if a child asks a question of a personal nature or discloses personal information.
- In the case of a Child Protection "Disclosure" the Children First Guidelines will be followed.

### Provision for Ongoing Support

- Parents are encouraged to view the curriculum
- Parents will be made aware of the dates when the lessons containing the sensitive issues will be taught.
- Teaching slides will be made available to parents on our school website and will be password protected.

### \*Teacher Choice/Staff Development

The teacher's right to choose is enshrined in the policy and if teachers do not wish to teach specific aspects of the programme or require additional resources, another staff member will take the lessons or a suitable speaker will be employed by the BoM.

## Children with Special Educational Needs:

Teachers will endeavour to adapt and modify activities and methodologies in RSE to encourage participation by children with special needs. The SET teachers will pre-teach terminology to SEN children and supplement the work of the class teachers where necessary. Esker ETNS will liaise with trained professionals/appropriate agencies when dealing with sensitive issues.

## Equality of Participation and Access:

Esker ETNS recognises and values diversity, and believes all children are entitled to access the services, facilities, or amenities that are available in the school environment. Esker Educate Together N.S is under the Patronage of Educate Together.

## Resources:

- RSE programme
- SPHE curriculum
- PDST website
- Different Families Same Love (INTO)
- Walk Tall
- PDST training resources
  - The Gestation Period
  - New Sensitive Language Grid
  - RSE resource list for children with learning difficulties
  - Children's books for wellbeing
- HSE publications
  - 'Making the big talk many small talks' (Parents of children age 4-7 and 8-12)
  - 'Busy Bodies' (Parents of 6<sup>th</sup>)
  - Tom's Flower Power (Parents J.1-2<sup>nd</sup>)

This policy was ratified by the Board of management on 28th March 2022. This policy will be reviewed again in 2025.

Signed:  Date: 28/3/22

Chairperson of the BOM