**Relationships & Sexuality Education (RSE)**

**Galbally National School Whole School Policy**

**Introductory Statement & Rationale**

This policy statement is an approved approach to the teaching of RSE in Galbally National School.  It was developed by the staff and Board of Management of Galbally National School and was developed to inform teachers and parents as to what material is covered in the RSE programme within SPHE.

**School Philosophy:**

Galbally National School operates within a Catholic ethos, we endeavor to implement all policies developed in ways which are in keeping with the ethos of the school.  The ethos of the school is characterised by the following:

* *Sensitive to reality of our children’s lives in a changing world*
* *Mutual respect between all partners in education*
* *Child-centred*
* *Aims to ensure each child reaches full potential in the holistic sense*
* *Hopes that children are equipped with high self-esteem to enable them to go to live happy and fulfilled live*

**Galbally National School Vision:**

Our school values the uniqueness of all individuals within a caring school community. We recognise that SPHE is intrinsic to the learning and teaching that occurs both formally and informally in the school and in the classroom. Through our SPHE programme, 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 programme also encourages children to be aware of their rights as individuals while at the same time accepting responsibility for their actions as members of the school and the wider 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.

**Definition of RSE**

RSE is an integral part of Social, Personal and Health Education 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.  (p. 5 NCCA - *Interim Curriculum and Guidelines for RSE*)

**Relationship of RSE to Wider Curriculum**

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. The “Life Processes” strand unit within the “Living Things” strand of the Science curriculum also integrates with RSE, in relation to the male and female body and reproductive systems.

All primary schools are required to fully implement the Stay Safe Programme (DES Circular 65/2011) within the context of the Social Personal and Health Education curriculum.

**Aims of our RSE Programme**

* *To help young people develop healthy friendships and relationships*
* *To promote a healthy attitude to sexuality and to relationships*
* *To enhance the personal development, self-esteem and well-being of the child*
* *To foster the development of, and a healthy attitude to, human sexuality and relationships in a moral, spiritual and social framework*
* *To enable the child to acquire an understanding of, and respect for, human love, sexual intercourse and reproduction*
* *To develop and promote in the child a sense of wonder and awe at the process of birth and new life*
* *To enable the child to be comfortable with the sexuality of oneself and others while growing and developing*

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

*Curriculum Matters:*

* Curriculum Content – The curriculum will be followed as recommended, and will be taught in junior infants to 6th. It will be taught by the teaching staff.  All resources used will be in keeping with the ethos of the school and the policy

*Organisational Matters:*

* If parents wish for their children to be withdrawn while particular content is covered, they will be accommodated in another teacher’s classroom.
* While any teacher has the right to opt-out from teaching the sexually sensitive issues in RSE. It is the responsibility of Board of Management to ensure that the curriculum will be taught to the children by another teacher or an outside speaker.
* Parents are invited/welcome to view topics/content covered and may speak to the class teacher if they have any concerns. Home/school links pages (located at the end of the relevant RSE lessons) will provide further information, where necessary.
* Parents are advised of where to find content covered online.

*Dealing with Questions:*

All questions answered will reflect the parameters of the curriculum. Questions to the teacher may be written or oral within the group setting and answered within the boundaries of the curriculum and policy.  If any questions asked by the children are deemed inappropriate to answer as they are outside the scope of the curriculum, the teacher will refer the child to their parents.  **The school cannot guarantee confidentiality if a child asks a question of a personal nature to them or discloses personal information???**

**Provision for Ongoing Support**

* Parents are welcome to view the curricular objectives/units of work/lesson content if they wish.
* The school will avail of the services of the RSE support programme as and when necessary. Busy Bodies Books and DVD’s are available in the school should parents wish to borrow them.

**Review**

This policy will be reviewed after the initial 12th month period has passed, and every two years thereafter.  This policy will also be reviewed should a need arise.  Parents and staff will be informed of any amendments made by relevant Board of Management Representatives.

**Ratification and Review**

This policy was ratified by the Board on \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signed……………………………………………. ……………………………………

CHAIRPERSON PRINCIPAL

Date …………………………………………… ……………………………………