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## RELATIONSHIP AND SEXUALITY EDUCATION (RSE) PROGRAMME STAY SAFE PROGRAMME

In circular 2/95 issued by the Department of Education and Science the minister requested all schools to introduce Relationship Sexuality Education (RSE) as part of the curriculum. In the 1999 curriculum RSE and the *Stay Safe* programme were included in Social Personal and Health Education. The content of the school's SPHE programme includes a wide range of topics such as healthy eating, alcohol, drugs, environmental issues, safety and social responsibility as well as RSE.

RSE is a life long process of acquiring knowledge and understanding and of developing attitudes, beliefs and values about sexual identity, relationships and intimacy. In a school situation RSE, provides structured opportunities for pupils to acquire a knowledge and understanding of human relationships and sexuality through processes which enable them to form values and to establish behaviours within a moral, spiritual and social framework, **appropriate to their age**. RSE will be thought in accordance with the Department's directives and within the Philosophy framework of the school. The teaching methods used in the school are child centred and reflect the age and stage of development of each child. Sensitive issues will be dealt with appropriately.

### Aims:

In partnership with the home our aims are:

- To provide opportunities for our pupils to learn about relationships and sexuality, imparted in a loving and caring way, within a wholesome environment
- To help them think and act in a moral caring and responsible way
- To learn about their own development and about their friendships and relationships with others.
- To teach children personal safety skills so they can look after themselves in situations which could be upsetting or dangerous.

The development of relationships is an integral part of all curriculum subjects. Aspects of RSE and *Stay Safe* are taught during SPHE, Religion, Science, implementation of the Code of Behaviour etc. An integrative approach towards RSE and *Stay Safe* ensures that the children encounter RSE and *Stay Safe* in a holistic manner rather than in isolation.

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## **Policy for the Stay Safe Programme**

The Stay Safe Programme aims to teach children personal safety skills. It does this through nurturing children's self esteem, building their confidence, enabling them to be assertive and helping them to identify and express their feelings.

This policy should be read in the context of the Coill Dubh Mission Statement. The Stay Safe Programme will be delivered within the moral, spiritual and social frame work of Coill Dubh.

### **Policy Content**

1. The Stay Safe Programme in Coill Dubh.
2. Issues arising from the programme.
3. Staff and Parental development and training

#### **1. The Stay Safe Programme**

- The Stay Safe Programme is delivered in Coill Dubh within the subject SPHE (Social, Personal and Health Education). It is taught to all children regardless of sex, race or religious belief.
- The programme is taught every year from Senior Infants to Sixth class. The plan for teaching The Stay Safe Programme, outlining the lessons to be taught each year, has been drawn up to ensure the children cover all aspects of the programme during their school year career. This plan is available within the school plan for SPHE, which is available from the Principal.

#### **2. Issues arising from the Programme**

- On enrolment, all parents will be given a consent form, which allows them to withdraw their child from The Stay Safe Programme if they so wish.
- If a disclosure of abuse is made to a teacher by a child, then the teacher shall report it to the designated liaison person **Joe Leacy** who shall then follow the procedures as laid down by the Department Of Education and Science.

- Children with special educational needs will receive additional support from the resource teacher to ensure that they have reached an appropriate level of understanding of the lessons. This shall be with prior consent from the parents.

### **3. Staff training and development**

- The school co-ordinator **Evanna Linehan** shall be responsible for the staff development in The Stay Safe Programme.
- She shall inform staff of any relevant developments or training courses in Stay Safe.
- She will, where reasonable, attend training and feed back to the staff.
- The school shall, when available, organise guest speakers to address staff and parents about The Stay Safe Programme

#### **Request for withdrawal by parent of pupil/teacher:**

If parents are concerned about the more sensitive aspects of the programmes, they are welcome to visit the school to examine the content of the programmes and discuss their concerns with the principal. Following this meeting if parents wish to have their child/children withdrawn when sensitive issues are being taught, they are requested to submit this in writing to the Principal. Efforts will be made by the school, using the resources it has, to accommodate these children by providing supervision within another classroom.

A teacher who is concerned about teaching a particular topic within the RSE programme should talk to the principal about their concerns. Such concerns will be handled discreetly. The BOM will endeavour to accommodate such teachers. Resources outside the school profession will be availed of if considered appropriate.