

Presentation Secondary School Listowel

Co. Kerry



RSE POLICY

Date of policy adoption

This Policy was ratified by the Board of Management of Presentation Secondary School, Listowel

Signed Shane O'Donoghue Date 9-5-2023
Chairperson, Board of Management

Relationships and Sexuality Education ("RSE") Policy Statement

(to be read in conjunction with the School policy on SPHE)



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Introduction

Presentation Secondary School, Listowel is a Catholic all girls voluntary secondary school with a Catholic ethos under the trusteeship of CEIST (Catholic Education An Irish Schools' Trust). The School draws on the richness of the religious and cultural heritage of the past, interpreted and lived out for students living in today's world. The School ethos is based on Nano Nagle's vision of bringing God's love to all people and is dedicated to an all-round Christian education based on gospel values.

Presentation Listowel provides a programme of RSE to all students. The RSE policy is developed within the context of our Mission Statement:

OUR MISSION

Context

Ours is a Presentation secondary school, inspired by the vision of Nano Nagle, and in response to her we welcome and cherish all our students irrespective of ability or background.

We aim to develop a vibrant community based on Gospel values such as justice, truth and honesty, in accordance with the ethos of the school and our agreed Code of Behaviour.

Mission

We aim to assist in the development of the full potential of each person in a vibrant, inclusive, and safe environment, where the dignity of each member of our school community is recognised, affirmed and valued.

Inspired by these values we dedicate ourselves to the continued development of our Presentation School.

RSE Definition & Aims

RSE is a life-long developmental process of acquiring knowledge and an understanding of human relationships and sexuality. It is primarily the responsibility of parents and family. The RSE class gives students formal opportunities, through experiential learning, to cultivate healthy attitudes and values towards themselves and others, promoting the overall development of the person and the integration of sexuality into personal life.

The aims of RSE include:

- To build on the primary school programme which strives to help young people learn at home and at school about their own development and about their friendships and relationships with others.
- To promote an understanding of sexuality.
- To promote a positive attitude towards one's own sexuality and one's relationships with others.
- To enable students to develop attitudes and values towards their sexuality in a moral, spiritual and social framework.
- To promote knowledge of and respect for human reproduction.
- To provide young people with information and skills to evaluate critically the wide range of information, opinions, attitudes and values offered today, in order that they

will make positive, responsible, moral and caring decisions about themselves and the way they live their lives, while also respecting the dignity of others.

The School recognises that parents are the primary educators and home is the natural and primary environment in which RSE should take place.

The following themes are discussed in a spiral manner in the provision of RSE, as outlined by the NCCA Guidelines:

- Human Growth and Development
- Human Sexuality
- Human Relationships

RSE Policy Context

Presentation Listowel's programme of RSE is provided in the context of the guidelines set out in Circular M4/95 *Relationships and Sexuality Education*, M20/96 *Relationships and Sexuality Education*, C23/10 *Social and Personal Health Education (SPHE) and Relationships and Sexuality Education-Best Practice Guidelines for Post Primary Schools* and C37/2010 *Relationships and Sexuality Education*.

This policy applies to all aspects of teaching and learning about relationships and sexuality. It applies to all School staff, students, parents /guardians, visiting speakers, invited guests, volunteers and members of the Board of Management.

Some aspects of RSE are approached during subjects such as Biology, CSPE, Guidance and Counselling, Home Economics, Physical Education, Religious Education and Science. Where there are cross-curricular links with RSE, the School ethos is respected at all times and informs what is taught. The RSE programme is supported by the Pastoral Care system and by the Management and Staff of the School.

Relationship of RSE to SPHE

In Presentation Listowel, the RSE programme is principally delivered within the context of the School's SPHE programme. It is designed to be spiral and developmental in nature, and age-appropriate in content and methodology. SPHE provides students with a unique opportunity to develop skills and competencies, to learn about themselves, to care for themselves and others and to make informed decisions about their health, their personal lives and their social development. SPHE covers other areas which are pertinent to the development of a healthy attitude to sexuality in oneself and one's relationship with others, including self-esteem, assertiveness, communication and decision-making.

As a result, this RSE policy should be read in conjunction with the School's overall SPHE Policy. In particular, attention is drawn to the following paragraphs of the SPHE policy:

- Delivery and teaching
- Staff development and subject development
- Participation
- Sensitive issues
- Referral
- Confidentiality
- Guidelines for use of external agencies
- Assessment, record keeping and reporting
- Whole school support

School Ethos and RSE

In accordance with S.15 (2) (b) of the Education Act, 1998, the Board of Management of Presentation Secondary School, Listowel, shall uphold, and be accountable to the patron for so upholding, the characteristic spirit of the school as determined by the cultural, educational, moral, religious, social, linguistic and spiritual values and traditions which inform and are characteristic of the objectives and conduct of the school. "Catholic Ethos" in the context of a Catholic voluntary secondary school means the ethos and characteristic spirit of the Roman Catholic Church which aims to promote: (a) the full and harmonious development of all aspects of the person, including the intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual aspects; (b) a living relationship with God and with other people; (c) a philosophy of life inspired by belief in God and in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus; and (d) the formation of the students in the Catholic faith in accordance with the doctrines, practices and traditions of the Roman Catholic Church, and/or such ethos and/or characteristic spirit as may be determined or interpreted from time to time by the Irish Episcopal Conference.

Schools are required to deliver all aspects of the RSE curriculum, including those in relation to sexual orientation, contraception, sexually transmitted infections etc. This can be done within a context in which teaching of the programme is informed by the school's ethos. A school can express its ethos while at the same time facilitating students in discussing a range of views in relation to topics within the RSE programme.

The School's RSE policy guides teachers in the treatment of issues in accordance with the ethos of the School. It is important that teachers of RSE understand that their role is to express the views of the whole school community on these sensitive issues, and not their own personal views.

Class Organisation and Timetabling

RSE is covered for all Junior Cycle students during SPHE classes. R.S.E is covered for all Senior Cycle students through Religious Education classes. These classes are typically held in the final term of the school year.

Some aspects of RSE are approached during subjects such as Biology, CSPE, Guidance and Counselling, Home Economics, Physical Education, Religious Education and Science. Some are taught informally using a cross curricular approach and support what is taught in Junior Cycle SPHE (see SPHE Policy) e.g. CSPE / RE - values, rights and responsibilities. Where

there are cross-curricular links with SPHE / RSE, the School ethos is respected at all times and informs what is taught. The RSE programme is supported by the Pastoral Care system and by the Management and Staff of the School.

The boundaries of the RSE programme will be delivered with due deference to the age of the students, the School ethos, RSE curriculum guidelines, limits of confidentiality and discussion, ensuring the RSE classroom is a safe place for all.

Other issues

The School adopts and adheres to the DES Child Protection Procedures, Children First Legislation (2017) and has a Child Protection Policy / Child Safeguarding Statement in place, with the Principal as the Designated Liaison Person (DLP) and the Deputy Principal as the Deputy DLP. All staff personnel are aware of their responsibilities as mandated persons under the child protection legislation. The School recognises that child protection and welfare considerations permeate all aspects of school life. This RSE Policy is cognisant of all aspects of our current Child Protection Policy and Child Safeguarding Statement, including the reporting of child protection concerns to Tusla where necessary.

Appendix A:

Sample wording for notification to parents on RSE

10th March, 2023

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s),

This term as part of our Junior Cycle Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) Programme your daughter will have the opportunity to participate in Relationship and Sexuality Education (RSE). RSE will be delivered mainly in class by the teachers of Junior Cycle SPHE and may at times be supported by external guest speakers and agencies.

Outline of First Year RSE Programme:
Friendship; tips for making friends
Stand Up Awareness Week
Gender Stereotyping
Sexual and Gender Identity
Sexual Orientation
LGBTQ+ terminology
Being an Adolescent
Definition of Adolescence and puberty
Changes during adolescence for males and female
Reproductive Systems males and females
What's happening inside your body
Pregnancy; sexual intercourse, ovulation, conception, fertilisation, menstruation
Age of Consent

We also want to acknowledge that parents/guardians are the primary educators of their children and the school respects the values of each family. The RSE component of your daughter's SPHE Programme will be conducted in accordance with the ethos of the school. The RSE Programme will be taught in the coming weeks. While we assume that all students will want to participate in the RSE classes, if you do not wish your daughter to attend these classes, please advise the principal.

The school's RSE policy is available for inspection.

If you have any questions or queries please do not hesitate to contact the school and we will be happy to help.

Yours sincerely,

K. Broderick

Principal

Appendix B

Outline of RSE Programme

Outline of First Year RSE Programme:
Friendship; tips for making friends
Stand Up Awareness Week Gender Stereotyping Sexual and Gender Identity Sexual Orientation LGBTQ+ terminology
Being an Adolescent Definition of Adolescence and puberty Changes during adolescence for males and female Reproductive Systems males and females
What's happening inside your body Pregnancy; sexual intercourse, ovulation, conception, fertilisation, menstruation Age of Consent

Outline of Second Year RSE Programme:

Having a Friend and Being a Friend - Changes in friendships

The Relationship Spectrum - Managing relationships

Stages of Pregnancy

Sexuality and Sexual Orientation

Media Influences on Relationships and Sexuality

Outline of Third Year RSE Programme:

Sexuality and gender identity

Being an adolescent

Having a friend & being a friend

The Relationship spectrum

Lockers Programme – Lesson 1, 2 and 3. Lockers is an educational resource developed to support schools as they address the issue of non-consensual sharing of intimate images in the context of the SPHE class.

Sexuality, sexual health and age of consent

Media influences on relationships and sexuality

	Outline of Transition Year RSE Programme:
	The Manuela Programme
	Learning Outcomes Participants will be able to:
Session 1 Introduction & consent	State the names of the other participants and facilitators Demonstrate a clear understanding of the purpose of the Manuela Programme Describe what consent is Recognise that consent has to be negotiated Respect boundaries and the fact that people have a right to say no
Session 2 Sexual violence	Define sexual violence Develop confidence in talking about sexual violence and sexual activity Describe the impact of sexual violence on the victim, the perpetrator and the wider community Know the legal consequences associated with sexual violence Increase skills, knowledge, attitudes to decrease the possibility of perpetration Know how to respond to a disclosure and refer to RCC
Session 3 Lucy's House Party	Recognise what constitutes a healthy and unhealthy friendly or romantic relationship Challenge the inappropriate behaviour of others Develop healthy and enjoyable sexual relationships
Session 4 The world you live in	Explore the various influences that impact sexual health and sexual violence Critically interrogate the culture and/or behaviour they encounter regarding sexual health and violence Make healthier choices in the context of influences in the world around them
Session 5 Prevention	Respect each individual's boundaries, bodily integrity and their right to say no Increase skills, knowledge, attitudes to decrease the possibility of perpetration Integrate healthier options when dealing with challenging behaviour and preventing sexual violence
Session 6 Action, learning & integration	Apply their learning about sexual violence prevention through a medium that is relevant to them Access relevant services and support structures Facilitate an ongoing dialogue, change and openness to the prevention of sexual violence in school culture and adolescent relationships

Outline of Fifth Year RSE Programme:
Values Coco's Law – Understanding the Harassment, Harmful Communication and Related Offences Act 2020 Active Consent Teenage pregnancy and parenthood Understanding sexual orientation and gender identity Sexual harassment
Outline of Sixth Year RSE Programme:
The influence of the media Active Consent Sexually transmitted infections Contraceptive methods Understanding same sex attraction and relationships Healthy boundaries Dating violence and rape