



## 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 taught 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.

***Stay Safe*** - Dedicated time to be given to the teaching of Stay Safe before Easter holidays each year.

### **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/ren 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 his/her 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.

### **Sexuality education from Infants to Rang VI**

If the 6<sup>th</sup> class teacher so desires a guest speaker will be brought to cover Sex Education to 6<sup>th</sup> Class.



## **Overview of RELATIONSHIPS AND SEXUALITY PROGRAMME**

### **Content:**

#### **Junior Infants, Senior Infants, 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> class**

Naming parts of the body including parts of the male and female body using appropriate anatomical terms (10 minutes approx.).

#### **3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> classes**

Sequence of development of the human baby from conception to birth.  
(40 minutes approx.)

#### **5<sup>th</sup> /6<sup>th</sup> classes**

Changes in male and female bodies as they grow

Puberty

Reproductive system of male and female

Understanding sexual intercourse, conception and birth.

(3 hours approx.)

### **Dealing with Questions:**

Teachers do not cover content outside that of the DES curriculum or the school's religion programme. Topics excluded include contraception, same sex friendships etc.

Teachers should answer questions sensitively, aware that there are children in our school from many social backgrounds. No child should be made feel uncomfortable or embarrassed when these issues are raised.

Children, who ask questions in class on content outside the curriculum taught, will be talked to individually and discretely, as soon as is possible, by the teacher and encouraged to seek answers from their parents. If a child poses such a question the parents will be informed and asked not to ignore it but to deal with it as they see fit.

## **Overview of STAY SAFE PROGRAMME**

### **Aim:**

To teach children personal safety skills so they can look after themselves in situations which could be upsetting or dangerous.

### **Content:**

The lessons cover the following areas:

- Feeling Safe and Unsafe
- Friendship and Bullying
- Touches
- Secrets and Telling
- Strangers

Children participating in this programme will learn:

- To distinguish between safe and unsafe feelings
- What to do if lost
- What to do if the phone or doorbell rings when they are alone in the house
- The importance of friends in children's lives
- What to do if bullied
- Stay Safe Rules: Say No/ Get Away/ Tell



- Why not to bully others
- Appreciating normal, appropriate touches
- That unsafe touches should never be kept secret
- How to respond to inappropriate touches (Stay Safe Rules)
- Good and bad secrets
- That some secrets should not be kept
- Who and how to tell if in trouble
- About strangers and safety strategies