

Scoil Phádraig

School Policy RSE

Relationships and Sexuality Education

1. Introductory Statement

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Scoil Phádraig is a primary school under Catholic Patronage, located on Prosperous Road, Clane. It is an all-boys mainstream school with an enrolment of 484 pupils comprising of 19 classes from Junior Infants to Sixth Class and 2 ASD classes.

This Policy on RSE Provision in Scoil Phádraig was reviewed in 2025.

The Policy was discussed and further developed by the teaching staff of Scoil Phádraig.

The Policy was discussed, accepted and ratified by the Board of Management of Scoil Phádraig on 12/05/26.

2. Rationale

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. Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) is an integral part of the Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) curriculum and must be delivered on an annual basis in accordance with the Primary School Curriculum (NCCA).

3. Mission, Ethos and Values

The school's mission, ethos and values are set out in the School Policy SPHE and underpin all aspects of RSE provision in Scoil Phádraig.

4. Relationship to Characteristic Spirit of the School

This policy is in accordance with our Mission Statement, Vision and Philosophy. We seek to celebrate the uniqueness and importance of each child. We seek to create an environment that is welcoming and inclusive for all so that each pupil feels valued, can enhance his self-esteem, can accept difference and can grow and develop academically, socially, spiritually, emotionally and physically.

5. Definition of RSE

Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) is an integral part of the Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) curriculum. RSE aims to provide opportunities for our pupils to develop the skills and competence to learn about themselves and their development, their relationship with others and their sexuality. This is achieved in ways that help them to think and act in a moral, caring and responsible manner.

Respecting the ethos of the school and sensitive to the needs and wishes of parents and pupils, the school management will provide an RSE programme as part of the SPHE curriculum already being taught in our school for some years; thus providing 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 later as adults.

6. Relationship of RSE to SPHE

RSE is an integral part of Social, Personal and Health Education and must be taught in this context. SPHE and RSE will be taught throughout the school from Infants to Sixth Class in a spiral curriculum and will be formally timetabled.

RSE is also offered informally to pupils through a caring and supportive school atmosphere. It is fostered in positive relationships between home, school and community.

7. Aims of the RSE Programme

The aims of the RSE programme in Scoil Phádraig are:

1. To assist parents in their role as primary educators so that they may guide their child's development physically, socially and emotionally.
2. To enhance the personal development, self-esteem and well-being of the child.
3. To help the child to develop healthy friendships and relationships.
4. To foster an understanding of, and a healthy attitude to, relationships and sexuality in a moral, spiritual and social framework.

5. To develop an appreciation of the dignity, uniqueness and well-being of others.
6. To acquire and develop knowledge and understanding of self.
7. To understand the nature, growth and development of relationships within families, in friendships and in wider contexts.
8. To acquire and improve skills of communication and social interaction.
9. To develop and promote in the child a sense of understanding of and respect for the process of birth and new life.
10. To develop some coping strategies to protect oneself and others from various forms of abuse.
11. To enable the child to acquire an understanding of, and respect for, human love, sexual intercourse and reproduction, in the Senior Classes.

8. Roles and Responsibilities

Parents are the primary educators of their child. The school has a role to play in supporting and complementing parents in this work, helping to communicate the Christian vision of human life and relationships through the RSE programme. It is the policy of our school to nurture Catholic values.

RSE is an integral part of the SPHE programme and will be taught in this context. The curriculum is spiral in nature and all content will be delivered developmentally throughout the child's time in Scoil Phádraig. RSE will be taught in the normal classroom situation by the class teacher, in accordance with the Whole School SPHE Plan. All information delivered will be informed by the content objectives of the SPHE Curriculum.

9. Sensitive Issues

- Sensitive issues include lessons on naming the body parts and their functions, changes in their bodies as they grow and develop, and lessons on conception and birth.
- Information on the content of lessons taught in Fifth and Sixth Classes will be available to parents so they can prepare their child if they so wish. A parent's right to withdraw a pupil from the process will be honoured on the understanding that the parent is taking full responsibility for this aspect of education.
- It is the responsibility of the parent to inform the school in writing of their decision to withdraw and their willingness to cover sensitive issues with their child outside of school hours. A child who has been withdrawn from class for the duration of a discrete RSE lesson will be accommodated in another classroom under the supervision of another teacher. If a child is withdrawn from the class for the teaching of sensitive issues we cannot guarantee that the other children will not inform him about what has been taught. The teacher

may also need to make incidental reference to the issue at another time while that child is present.

- Teachers will teach only the topics laid down for the class and will only answer those questions which are relevant to the programme for that year. Questions arising from curriculum content will be addressed in a sensible, sensitive and age-appropriate manner. Should a pupil require information that is not in line with the curriculum content and not considered to be age-appropriate, the school will not give such information and will refer the question back to the parents. Teachers will not answer personal questions about themselves nor require the child to give information of a personal nature which he does not wish to share.
- Language will, at all times, reflect respect for those involved and for educational content. In Scoil Phádraig we will give children the correct and appropriate language to communicate confidently about themselves, their sexuality and their relationships.
- The school holds no responsibility for any information which the pupil may receive outside the direct teaching of the RSE lessons.

10. Staff Support and Training

Scoil Phádraig will offer ongoing training for teachers and the policy committee where necessary to help them implement the RSE programme. Relevant RSE school resources will be sourced, stored and updated by the school SPHE coordinator.

Teachers will be supported to access professional development in SPHE/RSE as provided by Oide Support Services, the Department of Education CPD, and relevant diocesan guidance where applicable.

11. Policy Review

This policy was reviewed on 12/05/2025. It will be updated as required and in line with Department of Education updates. Following consultation with staff and the Board of Management, those involved in the review may include:

- Teachers
- Pupils
- Parents
- Post Holders / SPHE Co-ordinator

Review Date	Reviewed By	Next Review Due
_____	_____	_____

12. Success Criteria

The following criteria will be used to evaluate the effectiveness of RSE provision in Scoil Phádraig:

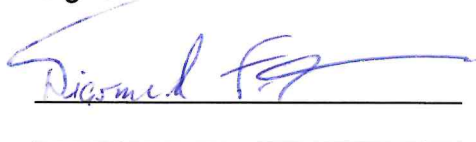
- All teachers plan and deliver the RSE programme in accordance with this policy and the Whole School SPHE Plan, ensuring age-appropriate, developmentally sequenced content is provided at all class levels. Evidence of this is visible in short-term recorded preparation and in the Cuntas Míosúil.
- Sensitive issues within the RSE programme are handled with care and professionalism, in accordance with the agreed procedures set out in this policy, and parents are informed in advance of relevant lessons.
- Pupil voice, gathered through SSE surveys and informal feedback, reflects a positive and safe experience of RSE within the broader SPHE programme.
- Parent feedback indicates awareness of and confidence in the school's approach to RSE, including the procedures for parental notification and the right to withdraw.
- The RSE programme is reviewed regularly by the principal, SPHE post holder and staff, with updates recorded in the review table.

13. Ratification

This policy is available to view on our school website.

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management of Scoil Phádraig Boys National School on 12/5/2026.

Signed:



Chairperson, Board of Management



Principal