

Sonas

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Roll No. 201620

Relationships and Sexuality in Education Policy

Sonas Special Junior Primary School enrolls boys and girls aged 3-6 years old who have a diagnosis of Autistic Spectrum Disorder and a learning ability within the Moderate, Mild and above range.

The aim in drawing up this statement is to indicate how Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) will be implemented in Sonas.

Our school's RES programme will be drawn up by all staff and will be based on this policy statement and the RSE/SPHE curriculum guidelines.

What is Relationship and Sexuality Education

Relationships and Sexuality Education seeks to provide students with opportunities to acquire knowledge and understanding of relationships and human sexuality, through a process which will enable them to form values and establish behaviours within a moral, spiritual and social framework.

Relationship and Sexuality Education is concerned with the acquisition of knowledge and understanding and the development of attitudes, beliefs and values about relationships, sexual identity and intimacy.

The RSE curriculum, which is an integral part of the Social Personal and Health Education (SPHE) curriculum, has been developed by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) for the Department of Education and Science (DES).

Why it is important to teach RSE in the context of SPHE

Sonas Special Junior Primary School believes that RSE is part of the educational entitlement of all students. All young people, whatever their ability, develop physically and emotionally and need to be helped to understand their bodies and feelings. RSE helps our students' overall development, confidence and self-esteem.

Social, Personal and Health Education is intrinsic to all areas of the curriculum and to every facet of school life. Through the teaching and learning experiences in all subjects explore many themes and topics that have a social, personal or health perspective and learn ways of communicating with others. Equally the variety of incidental happenings in everyday life of the school can provide opportunities to address issues that are also relevant to SPHE. Similarly, students will learn from their relationships with others in their school and the practice of particular values and attitudes that they witness every day.

As students progress through a school-based programme in SPHE they may encounter a wide range of issues. These include substance misuse, relationships, sexuality, citizenship, student abuse prevention, prejudice and discrimination. The curriculum is structured in such a way that these issues are not explored in isolation, rather it places the emphasis on the development of a set of appropriate skills, attitudes, values and understanding that students can apply as required.

RSE is an integral part of SPHE and must be taught in this context. It provides structured opportunities for students to acquire knowledge and understanding of human sexuality and relationships through process, which will enable them to form values and establish behaviours within a moral, spiritual and social framework. In particular, it addresses the meaning of human sexuality, relationships, growth and development, relevant personal and social skills and aspects of parenting.

Central to RSE is the fostering of self-esteem, through which the student becomes more responsible in making choices and decisions in all aspects of life and particularly in those relating to sexuality and relationships. The children in Sonas are aged 3-6 years old, therefore the RSE Policy in our school will reflect this.

The Aims of the Programme

- To develop skills of communication and social interaction
- To enhance the personal development, self-esteem and well-being of the student
- To develop an understanding and appreciation of other people's feelings
- To help the student develop healthy friendships and relationships
- To develop and promote in the student a sense of wonder and awe at the process of birth and new life
- To enable the student to acquire an understanding of and respect and love for others

- To value family life and to develop an awareness of differing family patterns.
- To develop self confidence and self awareness. To promote the skills necessary to stay safe.

Guidelines for the Management and Organisation of RSE in our School

- The RSE programme within the school has been carefully planned to take account of the childrens' young age, maturity, physical, Social and emotional development. It will develop slowly throughout the student's time in school using well-proven methods, which allow time for repetition, practise of relevant skills and reflection. It will be fully and continually evaluated. RSE will be taught to all students. Each class will have its own particular programme, which will be implemented throughout the year, both formally and informally. Taking into account students social and emotional development, instruction will be based on individual needs. Parents will be consulted around sensitive issues before they are included in the student's IEP
- All teachers will be responsible for teaching the RSE programme within their own class and they will work in tandem with other school staff. The environment in which RSE is taught will be safe and secure and will ensure that each student will be treated with dignity and respect. Teachers will be aware of setting boundaries around class discussions. Teachers, with the Principal's prior knowledge, may consult with other disciplines and outside agencies that may be of assistance to them in the teaching of RSE.
- Sonas will provide access to in Career development for Teachers and other staff should such opportunities arise.
- Students are taught communication skills and social skills around relationships/making friendship. Students are taught decision making skills. Education in these skill areas will be considered as important as the topics taught.
- If teachers are aware of students at risk from sexual abuse they are obliged to inform the Principal (DLP) as laid out in Sonas Child Protection Policy.

Teaching Relationships and Sexuality Education

- Teachers will decide upon the most effective methods to use in the classroom, taking into consideration the student's stage of development and maturity. Some of the following methods will be used:
Direct teaching

Role play
Visual
Modelling
Discussion
Group Project
Questions and Answer
Worksheet
Art Work
Music, Songs and Poems
Educational DVD's
Social stories

- Teaching resources used must fall within the RSE Policy Guidelines Some of the following resources will be used.
 - Pictures – Emotions, Relationships, Body Parts
 - Zones of Regulation Programme
 - Lesson plans we have adapted from DES RSE Lesson Plans
 - Educational DVDs
 - Websites

How this Policy will be Evaluated

The Principal and staff will be responsible for evaluating the RSE Policy:

- Through discussion with and feedback from students
- Through discussion with and feedback from parents
- Through discussion with and feedback from staff
- Through formal and informal teacher assessment and observation
- Through discussion with and feedback from SNA observations
- Through discussions with other discipline or outside agencies who have been involved in the process
- The principal will report on this evaluation to the school management authority.

Reviewed and ratified by the Board of Management on November 9th 2017