

Enfield Community College



Relationship and Sexuality Education Policy

	Date	Signature
Ratification Date	15/1/2024	<i>[Signature]</i>
Chairperson BOM	15/1/2024. <i>[Signature]</i>	<i>[Signature]</i> Acting Chair...
Principal		<i>[Signature]</i>
Review Time Scale	Jan 2025	
Notes		

Purpose of this Policy:

This policy was drawn up to inform parents/guardians of the curriculum and provision of Relationships and Sexuality Education in Enfield Community College. Enfield Community College wishes to support parents/guardians in this important aspect of a young person's education and preparation for life.

The school, underpinned by the core values of Excellence in Education, Care, Respect, Equality and Community, has a complementary role in preparing young people for their place in society. The policy was drawn up in consultation with staff, parents, students, and the Board of Management of the school.

Regular monitoring, evaluating and reviewing of the RSE programme is facilitated by the SPHE and Wellbeing Coordinator and involves students, parents, staff and the Board of Management.

Rationale:

The teaching of RSE is mandatory at second level. Schools have an obligation to teach both Junior and Senior Cycle RSE.

This policy operates within a legislative framework and takes into account the following:

- The Education Act, 1998
- The Education Welfare Act, 2000
- Equal Status Act, 2000
- The Equality Act, 2010
- Child Protection Guidelines
- Children First Act
- SPHE guidelines for Teachers 2004
- SPHE guidelines for Teachers 2023
- Oide SPHE Support Service.

Scope of this Policy

RSE is a lifelong process of acquiring knowledge and understanding, and developing attitudes, beliefs and values about sexual identity, relationships, and intimacy. It builds on the work done in primary school. RSE at post-primary level seeks to provide opportunities for young people to learn about relationships and sexuality in ways that will enable them to think and act in a moral, caring, and responsible way.

Definition of Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE)

Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) is a lifelong process of acquiring knowledge, understanding and skills which enable students to develop attitudes, beliefs

and values about sexual identity, relationships and intimacy.

RSE Module as part of the SPHE Specification

At Junior Cycle, the RSE programme is a module within the SPHE programme. The NCCA Guidelines for RSE state that SPHE is "spiral, developmental in nature and age-appropriate in content and methodology". The RSE programme is designed to follow this principle and pattern. SPHE supports the development of self-esteem, assertive communication, and decision-making skills, all of which complement the RSE programme.

RSE Aims and Objectives

RSE Aims:

RSE, which is in the overall framework of SPHE, has as its specific aims:

- To help young people understand and develop friendships and relationships;
- To promote an understanding of sexuality;
- To promote a positive attitude towards one's sexuality and in one's relationships with others;
- To promote knowledge of and respect for reproduction;
- To enable young people to develop attitudes and values towards their sexuality in a moral, spiritual and social framework.

RSE Objectives

RSE should enable students to:

- Acquire the understanding and skills necessary to form healthy friendships and relationships;
- Develop a positive sense of self-awareness, and the skills for building and maintaining self-esteem;
- Become aware of the variety of ways in which individuals grow and change, especially during adolescence, and to develop respect for difference between individuals;
- Understand human physiology with particular reference to the reproductive cycle, human fertility and sexually transmitted infections (STIs);
- Understand sexual development and identity and explore aspects of sexuality including sex roles, stereotyping, gender issues and cultural influences on sexuality;

- Value family life and appreciate the responsibilities of parenthood;
- Develop strategies for decisions and actions consistent with personal moral integrity and respectful of the rights and dignity of others;

RSE Provision

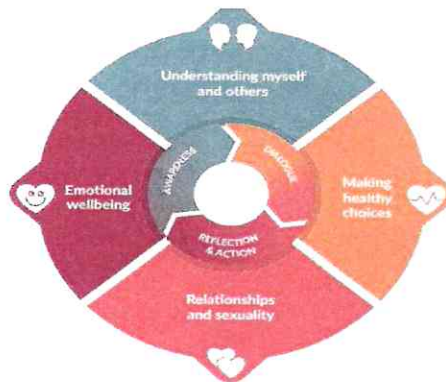
The Board of Management recognises its responsibility to ensure that the RSE programme is taught throughout Junior and Senior cycle, (Circular M495/M496). It is school policy that the RSE programme is taught by the trained SPHE/RSE teachers on our staff.

Section 1.5.1 of the Child Protection Procedures states, “All post-primary schools are also required to have a Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) programme at senior cycle.” Schools have an obligation to teach RSE (6 classes a year), even in the absence of a timetabled SPHE class. The time allocation recommended is six periods of 40-minute classes per year according to Circular M0037/201. The school adopts and adheres to the DES child protection procedures, Children First Legislation (2017) and has a Child protection policy/ Child safeguarding statement, with the Principal as Designated Liaison person (DLP) and the Deputy Principal as the Deputy DLP. Where a child protection concern is raised, the procedures outlined in the school’s Child protection Policy/Child safeguarding statement are followed.

LMETB recognises its responsibility in relation to Circular 0028/2023, with First Year Students in 2023 following the newly developed NCCA Short Course Specification. Future incoming students in 1st Year will continue to follow the same 2023 Short Course Specification. 2023 2nd and 3rd Year Students will continue to follow the 2016 Specification until completed. The RSE Programme will be undertaken at Senior Cycle.

RSE First Year Students 2023

Students enrolled in the College in 2023 will be following the newly designed SPHE specification with four Modules, Relationships and sexuality are one of these modules.



The following are the Learning outcomes that SPHE/RSE teachers will cover across the 3 years of Junior Cycle RSE in SPHE for students enrolled in 2023 in ECC.

Strand 3: Relationships and sexuality

Students should be able to:

- 3.1 reflect on the values, behaviours and skills that help to make, sustain and end relationships respectfully with friends, family and romantic/intimate relationships
- 3.2 examine benefits and difficulties experienced by young people in a range of relationships - friendships, family relationships, and romantic/intimate relationships
- 3.3 identify signs of healthy, unhealthy and abusive relationships
- 3.4 appreciate the importance of setting healthy boundaries in relationships and consider how to show respect for the boundaries of others
- 3.5 consider the importance of taking care of their reproductive health
- 3.6 appreciate the breadth of what constitutes human sexuality, and how sexual orientation and gender identity are experienced and expressed in diverse ways
- 3.7 explore the pressures to become sexually intimate and discuss ways to show respect for people's choices
- 3.8 appreciate the importance of seeking, giving and receiving consent in sexual relationships, from the perspective of building caring relationships and from a legal perspective
- 3.9 explain the importance of safer sexual activity with reference to methods of contraception and protection against sexually transmitted infections (STIs)
- 3.10 discuss the influence of popular culture and the online world, in particular, the influence of pornography, on young people's understanding, expectations and social norms in relation to sexual expression
- 3.11 demonstrate how to access and appraise appropriate and trustworthy advice, support and services related to relationships and sexual health.

In **Enfield Community College** the provision of RSE includes mandatory Child Protection lessons. This is referred to as RSE+.

- All Junior Cycle students study 8 hours of RSE+ per year within their SPHE classes.
- Transition Year students study a stand-alone 10 week RSE+ module.
- Senior Cycle students will follow the RSE Senior Cycle Programme.

Management and Organisation of RSE

The school has a coordinator of SPHE and Wellbeing
The SPHE and RSE Teams:

- are given time to meet on school planning days.
- are given opportunities to attend relevant Continuing Professional Development (CPD) courses and an updated record of CPD training is maintained by the SPHE Coordinator.
- deliver in-school CPD.
- have access to a structured programme and a library of appropriate core and supplementary resources.
- share information received at CPD via Share point/SPHE/RSE Padlet.

Informing and Involving Parents

The Parents Association is consulted on the design and review of the SPHE/RSE policy. The views expressed by parents will be considered when reviewing the policy.

Parents have a responsibility to inform themselves of the SPHE/RSE programme content as it will enable them to discuss with their son(s)/daughter(s) at home various topics or issues that will be taught in RSE class. All school policies are available to parents / guardians and students on the Compass portal, MIS.

Parents are given adequate notice via compass in advance of the RSE module commencement.

The school acknowledges the right of a parent or guardian to withdraw their son(s) or daughter(s) from the RSE module.

Withdrawing students from the RSE Programme:

- The RSE+ programme incorporates mandatory Child Protection lessons. Parents are not permitted to withdraw students from the Child Protection lessons.
- If parents wish to withdraw their child from RSE lessons, they will be invited

by the school to discuss the matter with a member of The Senior Management Team/SPHE Coordinator.

- Where a student has been withdrawn from RSE alternative arrangements for the supervision of the student will be agreed with the parents/guardians.

Links to other Policies:

- SPHE Policy
- Guidance Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Sen/AEN Policy
- AUP
- Substance Use
- Code of Behaviour
- Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment

Teaching

In organising the learning environment, the teacher will be careful to create an atmosphere which respects the privacy of each individual student and treats all students with due sensitivity and care. Active learning methods will be used to ensure that students actively participate in their own learning. Contemporary topics and issues, which may emerge in this class, will be dealt with at a level appropriate to the age and stage of the student and within a moral framework. All teachers of RSE will have the relevant CPD training for the delivery of the RSE programme. Parents have the primary responsibility for the teaching of sexuality to their children and RSE is a support to the family in this regard. A link will be made available to access the course content.

Giving of Advice:

Teachers may provide students with education and guidance about where they can receive further relevant information related to RSE. Where appropriate, parents will be informed as well as a member of the guidance department.

Students with Additional Needs

It is school policy that students will not be removed from RSE classes to receive learning support. Students with Additional Needs may need more help than others in coping with the physical and emotional aspects of growing up. The teacher will provide differentiation for students with additional needs where necessary.

Confidentiality and Child Protection:

All teachers are Mandated personnel.

Disclosures will be treated confidentially subject to the limitations and requirements of the Children First National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children. Child protection concerns must be reported to the DLP / DDLP / Tusla. Students in all years receive information on the age of consent within RSE which, under the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act, 2006, is 17 years for both males and females.

Policy Review:

The RSE Policy will be reviewed on a regular basis.