

**Scoil Triest Special School**

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***Policy:* Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) Policy Scoil Triest:**

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| ***Date*** | ***Reviewed / Ratified*** | ***Chairperson’s Signature*** | ***Principal’s Signature*** |
|  *24/04/2018*  | *Ratified* | *Liam Murphy* | *Geraldine Bond* |
| ***November 2023*** | ***Reviewed*** | ***Yvonne Cummins*** | ***Jerry Ryan*** |
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***Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) Policy Scoil Triest:***

School Details:

Scoil Triest Special School is a mixed school for students aged 12 to 18 who have a dual diagnosis of autism and mild-moderate intellectual disability. The school caters for a maximum of 72 students.

School Philosophy:

We recognise that SPHE is intrinsic to the teaching and learning that occurs both formally and informally in our school and in the classroom. Through our Junior Cycle programme and subsequently through RSE, we wish to assist children to develop feelings of self-worth and self-confidence while encouraging their ability to relate to others in a positive way. The curriculum also encourages children to be aware of their rights as an individual while at the same time accepting responsibility for their actions as members of school and the wider community. Our school values the uniqueness of all individuals within a caring school community. Our ethos means that we value respect, tolerance and openness through the lived experience of the children and school community. Parents have the primary role in the social, personal and health education of their children so their involvement will be encouraged as much as possible. RSE is a key component in supporting our school and children to develop into healthy young adults.

Definition of Relationships & Sexuality Education in Scoil Triest:

RSE provides structured opportunities for students with special needs to explore the various relationships in their lives and to learn to develop those relationships based on responsibility and mutual respect, in a manner which is appropriate for their level of development. The spiritual, emotional, social & physical growth of each student will be catered for.

RSE aims to help our students to learn about themselves & their friendships & relationships in the secure environment of the school with the involvement and co-operation of Parents/Guardians. This collaborative & positive approach will be central to the success of the RSE programme, leading to the development of a good self-image promoting respect for themselves and others and providing them with appropriate information having regard to the wishes of parents and the needs of the individual student. Central to RSE is the fostering of self-esteem through which our pupils can be guided in making appropriate choices and decisions in all aspects of life including those relating to relationships and sexuality.

Aims of our RSE Programme:

We support the aims on which RSE is modelled. We encourage good behaviour, open communication, understanding and tolerance of differences, and respect for self and others. We recognise that both students and staff have rights and responsibilities in our school. A sense of responsibility is fostered, and attention is paid to the wellbeing of all the members of the school community.

The staff will respect and cater for the individuality of all the students, and in consultation with their parents, as primary carers, enable each student to:

* Acquire and develop knowledge and understanding of self, their own needs and the needs of others.
* Encourage sensitivity & tolerance towards the uniqueness of others and appreciation of their dignity.
* Develop a positive sense of self-awareness, self-esteem and self-worth & well-being.
* Develop an understanding of the behaviour and skills required to establish and maintain healthy relationships & friendships.
* Develop an awareness of personal safety.
* Cope with changes in their own bodies associated with maturation.
* To foster an understanding of and a healthy attitude to the nature of sexuality & its place in human relationships with a moral, spiritual & social framework.
* To become comfortable with their own sexuality and that of others while growing and developing.
* To understand the nature, growth and development of relationships within families, in friendships and wider contexts.
* To develop an awareness of differing family patterns.
* To acquire the use of appropriate vocabulary to discuss feelings, sexuality, growth and development.

Guidelines for the management & organisation of RSE in Scoil Triest:

The Relationships and Sexuality Education Programme is provided as an important part of the Junior Cycle Programme in Scoil Triest. RSE forms part of the national curriculum for SPHE. RSE will be covered under the following strands and strand units of the SPHE curriculum;

**MYSELF**

Growing & Changing

Taking Care of my Body

The RSE programme is divided into 2 main parts:

1. The general programme which contains content covered through SPHE strands & strand units and compliments the aims and objectives of RSE
* Friendship
* Self-Identity
* Family
* Self Esteem
* Growing Up
1. The second section will deal with any sensitive/specific content covered through RSE strands & strand units.

Sensitive/Specific Content is taught in a structured, formal approach during the final term every year in a 2-year cycle. Year 1 – Lessons Growing and Changing; Taking Care of My Body. Year 2 - gender specific lessons relating to growing and changing and taking care of my body. Each student will access each lesson 3 times during their education in Scoil Triest. The programme is differentiated to cater for the individual needs of each student. In some cases, students require additional individual support which may be provided in consultation with parents and multi-disciplinary personnel on request. Resources can be provided by school to parents. Parents must sign a letter confirming that they have requested resources. Letter must be counter signed by parents & principal. Resources must be delivered confidentially.

* The Board of Management is responsible for establishing behaviour standards & rules for all students.
* Arrangements for the teaching of RSE lessons will be made by the Principal in consultation with the teaching staff.
* A Teacher may withdraw from aspects of the programme if he/she so wishes, in which case alternative arrangements for members of that class will be made.
* Access to in-career development for school staff should be facilitated.
* All students should be taught socially appropriate behaviour. Social stories™ may be used to teach appropriate behaviour.
* Clear limits for individual behaviour should be established.
* Counselling by the Psychologist may be requested to help certain individuals understand and deal with their sexuality, in consultation with parents.
* Certain elements of the RSE programme may be most effectively delivered on a one-to-one basis, or in small groups depending on the level of understanding, ability and maturity of each student as determined by the teachers.

Parental Involvement:

* Parents are the primary educators of their children & their role is RSE is seen as very important by the school.
* Parents will be informed that the school fully implements the RSE strands if the SPHE programme including sensitive aspects of the programme at enrolment.
* Parents will be informed in advance of lessons on the sensitive areas of the RSE programme, with a letter relevant to what will be taught at their child’s class level.
* The letter will be issued in advance, **giving parents an opportunity to meet with relevant class teachers if they so wish, to discuss or clarify what is covered and to prepare their children,** it also gives parents an opportunity to become involved, to inform themselves of the programme content and to prepare children for the information they will acquire around the sensitive areas and discuss areas covered in RSE/SPHE. Parents will be requested to sign “A student participation agreement” slip prior to commencement of sensitive RSE lessons.
* Parents are invited/welcome to view the curriculum and may speak to the class teacher if they have any concerns at any time during the year. The school acknowledges that parents have the primary responsibility for educating their children about growing and changing.
* Following discussion with Principal and Class Teacher, if a parent wishes to withdraw their child from the sensitive lessons it should be given in writing stating their reason for doing so and this will be centrally filed.
* If a student has been withdrawn from the sensitive RSE lessons, the school takes no responsibility for what the child may hear following on from the teaching of the lessons, e.g. what they may hear in the yard.

***School Standards Re Sexually Active Behaviour.***

* Scoil Triest operates a policy of zero tolerance of sexually active behaviour in the school context.
* All sexually active behaviour should be regarded as inappropriate behaviour in the school context and where it occurs, a plan to eliminate it should be put in place immediately by the teacher in consultation with parents and Multi D team members.
* If a student is engaging in self-touching behaviour, which is not believed to be of a sexualised nature, the verbal instruction “Hands out” will be given to be supported by a visual prompt card where appropriate. The student should be redirected to another task and / or provided with a fidget toy from the class ‘fidget box’&/or encouraged to take part in physical activity.
* If a student is attempting to engage in self-touching behaviour of a sexualised nature (masturbation), the following practices should be observed:
	+ Staff will look at the environment to ensure there are no environmental triggers for masturbation.
	+ Students clothing can sometimes contribute to sexually active behaviour. Consultation with family is necessary on this issue, e.g. trousers with a belt may be more suitable than tracksuits.
	+ Hands Out instruction and visual prompt card should be used.
	+ Student should immediately be re-directed to another task.
	+ Provide immediate opportunity for manual tasks i.e. carry large box.
	+ Encourage students to engage in physical activities commensurate with their abilities and level of fitness. Consult with P.E. teacher, O.T. and Physiotherapist as required for relevant activities.
	+ Principal should be informed.
	+ Parents should be informed.

Organization and Curriculum Planning:

***Lesson I - Introduction***

* Establish group rules – listen – take turns – no messing – keeping our session private except for named people. *(sheet 1)*
* Make a red “Private” sign and put it on the door.
* Establish why we are here. *(sheet 2)*
* Write and have a visual representation of why we’re here.

***Lesson 1 contd. - Growing Up and Changing***

Learning Objective

To enable the student to recognise that his or her body changes as he/she grows

Resources Needed

* Bodyboard *(sheet 3)*
* Mark’s Story and Mo’s Story about growing up *(sheet 4 &5)*
* Jenny’s Story and Benni’s story if appropriate to the group being taught. *(sheet 6&7)*
* Student’s workbook/folder containing photocopies from lesson 1
* Vocabulary list *(sheet 9)*

Brief Outline of Lesson

* Label parts of the body *(sheet 8-please laminate and cut out)*
* Using photos of their own of the 3 stages of development – baby – middle – now, discuss in general how they have changed i.e. I am bigger, I don’t wear nappies anymore. I don’t have a baby’s bottle, I can look after myself, I can go to discos etc.
* Discuss Mark &Mo’s stories *(sheet 4&5)*
* Introduce more specific changes to body using Bodyboard *(sheet 3)* – (body hair, spots, and growth of breast for girls and body hair, growth of penis, spots and shaving for boys)
* Use Jenny’s story or Benni’s story if appropriate with the group.
* Circle or colour the picture of the grown up person. *(sheet 6&7)*

***Lesson II – Private Body Parts***

Learning Objective:

* To enable student to identify private and not private body parts

Resources Needed:

* Body board *(sheet 3 from Lesson 1)*
* Laundry basket
* Stay Safe Sheet. *(in your classroom)*
* Student’s workbook /folder/ worksheets

Outline of Lesson: Using body board, and sheet 1:

* Decide on gender
* Parts of body that are not private
* Private parts of body *(booklets)*

 Using laundry basket:

Show clothing item:

* What does this cover?
* Who wears it?
* Older / younger person to wear item?
* Pick out clothing to cover private parts
* Pick out clothing to cover not private parts.
* Teach the word ‘Private’ i.e. this part of your body is nearly always covered even when you go swimming or on very hot days. Discuss the times when this part of the body might not be covered i.e in the bath, shower. *(booklets and sheets 2,3,&4)*
* Teach which parts of the body are Private. *(sheets 2&3)*
* Parts of body that are not private
* Identify our own body – our private parts (i.e. where our underwear covers). *(sheet 4)*
* Identify who can touch our private parts – ourselves / doctor. *(booklet)*
* When can others touch us. *(booklet)*
* Use Stay Safe sheet to discuss what to do if someone is hurting us or touching us in a private place.

***Lesson III – Recap Booklet***

Learning Objective: Assessment of lessons 1 &2

[Find list of objectives on first page of booklet]

***Lesson IV – Private and Public Places and Belongings***

Learning Objective: To enable student to identify and establish the meaning of public v. private.

* Public v private places
* Public v private conversations.

Resources Needed:

* Public v private conversations worksheet *(sheet 1)*
* Pictures of public / private places (*Boardmaker sheet 2)*
* A sign for private. *(sheet 4)*
* Pictures of private belongings. (*Boardmaker sheet 3)*
* Items of private belongings – schoolbags – purses – phones.
* Student’s workbook/folder

Outline of Lesson:

* Use all of the above discuss private and public places in the home and around the school.
* Identify private belongings – schoolbags, purses, phones etc. – Who can use these? Who shouldn’t touch them?
* Revise the word Private and discuss when or where we might use this sign. Match the words private / public to places around the school.
* Draw or colour in a worksheet with public and private places on it.

***Lesson V (for girls) – Periods***

Learning Objective

* To enable the students to recognise and tell when they have a period
* To assist the students to take care of their personal hygiene during a period
* To recognise the privacy of menstruation

Resources needed

* Underwear
* Sanitary Pads
* Student’s workbook/folder
* Feelings-visuals *(sheet 1)*
* Social Stories
* “Changes in my body” *(sheet 2a)*
* “What do I do when there is blood in my panties” *(sheet 2b)*
* “My tummy ache” *(sheet 2c)*
* Cara’s Story *(sheet 3)*
* Menstrual Feelings booklet *(sheet 4)*
* Visual Sequences- Handwashing *(sheet 5)*

 -Showering *(sheet 6)*

* “What’s happening to me?” Usborne book, as appropriate [Find in ‘Master Copy’ folder in Principal’s office]

Brief Outline of Lesson

* What is a period? When does it happen? What do we do? Who gets them? Who do we tell?
* Showing and naming appropriate items – pads and pants.
* Shopping trip to buy same if appropriate.
* Demonstration on how to put a pad in a pants – Demo by teacher in class using a pad and pants. Pass items around and let each student try -emphasising that we only do this in the toilet. (Individual practice in the toilet with SNA as needed).
* Practice at home with mother, sister, aunt, Granny etc.
* Disposal of pads in school and at home – where?
* Washing of hands afterwards.
* Shower every day of period.
* No swimming.

***Lesson V (for boys) Erections and Private Touching***

Learning Objective:

* To enable the student to know the term erection and what it is
* To enable the student to recognise appropriate and inappropriate touching.

Resources

* Bodyboard *(sheet 3 from Lesson 1)*
* Students’ workbook/folder
* “I’m getting older” boardmaker sheet *(sheet 1)*
* Visual Sequences- Handwashing *(sheet 2)*

 -Showering *(sheet 3)*

* Social Stories
* “I learn about keeping my penis private” *(sheet 4a)*
* “Where can I masturbate?” *(sheet 4b)*
* “What’s happening to me?” Usborne book, as appropriate [Find in ‘Master Copy’ folder in Principal’s office]

Brief Outline of Lesson

* Revise body parts and changes to your body as you grow up
* Identify the penis on the body board. (Adapt as necessary depending on the students’ ability to understand).
* ‘Sometimes your penis gets hard. This is called an erection. This makes your penis stick out. This is a nice feeling, but it can be embarrassing if there are other people nearby. It happens to all grown up boys and men. You might want to touch your penis when this happens. This is OK but you can only do this in a private place. After a while your penis will go soft again. It is important to always wash your hands after touching your penis’.

**Conclusion of Programme**

Revise all lessons by going through work sheets again and congratulate pupils on completing the programme successfully.

**Language Grid for R.S.E:**

Womb

Breasts

Breast-feeding

Penis

Vagina

Semen

Sperm

Periods

Erections

Pubic hair

Assessment:

**Assessment in RSE is important to enable the teacher to pitch the lessons correctly to their respective class group.**

The Teacher uses;

* Observation and questions to assess the children’s engagement and interest
* Use of teacher-designed tasks such as worksheets, quizzes or games
* Use of reflection or learning log

Confidentiality:

The school follows Children First Guidelines 2017 and The Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017.

If a child is withdrawn from the teaching of sensitive issues, we cannot guarantee that the other children will not tell or inform him/her about what happened.

Review:

The policy will be reviewed after two years. The policy may also be reviewed at an earlier time should a need arise.

Parents and staff will be informed of any amendments made.

This plan was ratified by the Board of Management at a meeting.

Resources:

* Scoil Triest RSE Resource Pack:
* Curriculum guidelines (SPHE).
* Learning disability guidelines for students with mild GLD
* Learning disability guidelines for students with moderate GLD.
* Level 2 learning programme – learning unit personal care.
* RSE programme DES.
* Stay safe programme DES.
* Puberty programme for boys/girls Scoil Triest.
* Personal & Sexual awareness programme (compiled by Brenda Hutton, Senior Psychologist & Caitriona White, Educational Psychologist, Psychology Dept., Brothers of Charity, Southern Services).
* A PHSE programme for learners with Autism Spectrum Disorders (Fiona Speirs).
* Talking together about growing up (Lorna Scott & Lesley Kerr-Edwards)
* Written permission for lessons.
* Sign out letter for resources.
* Healthpromotions.ie
* Twinkl.com
* Busy bodies
* What’s happening to me – Usborne

Policies to Support SPHE/RSE:

* Child Safeguarding Statement
* Code of Behaviour
* Anti-bullying Policy
* Enrolment Policy
* Acceptable Use Policy
* Healthy Eating Policy
* Confidentiality