

Scoil Náisiúnta Ghlinse

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Glinsk N.S.



Glinsk,
Via Castlereau,
Co. Galway

R.S.E Policy

Introduction

Glinsk N.S. is a co-educational mainstream primary school catering for pupils from infants to sixth class. The school is a catholic primary school under the patronage of the Diocese of Elphin. The ethos of our school is founded on Christian principles where tolerance and respect for others are paramount. It is our intention that everyone feels valued and our pupils are encouraged to develop their full potential in a caring and supportive environment. Relationships and Sexuality Education (R.S.E.) encompasses the acquisition of knowledge and understanding and the development of attitudes, beliefs and values about relationships and sexual identity. In Glinsk N.S. we seek to promote the overall development of the child which involves the integration of Relationships and Sexuality into personal understanding, growth and development within the context of our Catholic ethos.

Development of this policy

Consultations between parents, staff and the Board of Management combine in the writing of this policy.

Rationale

Glinsk N.S. is committed to the education of children regardless of race, religion, gender or status. Relationships and Sexuality are integral parts of the human personality and impact biologically, psychologically, culturally, socially and spiritually. The Christian ethos of the school is the cornerstone of our Relationships and Sexuality Policy. RSE is a lifelong process that involves the acquisition of knowledge, understanding and skills, and the development of attitudes, beliefs, morals and values. While we believe that the primary responsibility for addressing these issues rest with parents, we acknowledge the vital part the school can play in supporting and complimenting this.

Definition of R.S.E

In school, R.S.E will seek to provide structured opportunities for pupils to acquire a knowledge and understanding of human relationships and sexuality through processes which will enable them to form values and establish behaviours within a moral, spiritual and social framework.

This approach gives opportunities to children and young people to learn about relationships and sexuality in ways that help them think and act in a moral, caring and responsible manner. In Glinsk N.S. RSE aims to help children learn, at home and in school, about their friendships and relationships with others. This work will be based on developing a good self-image, promoting respect for themselves and for others, and providing them with appropriate information.

Relationship of R.S.E to S.P.H.E. (Social Personal Health Education)

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.

Existing Provision for RSE

Glinsk N.S. provides R.S.E. through the formal and informal activities of the school, which include:

1. The S.P.H.E. programme (Walk Tall, Be Safe etc)
2. The promotion of a caring atmosphere on a daily basis
3. Lessons dealing with enhancement of self-esteem
4. The Stay Safe Programme
5. Health Education lessons
6. The P.E. programme
7. Stay Safe signs & rules displayed around the school
8. The Alive-O Programme
9. Behaviour Management (Anti-Bullying Policy)

The aims of our RSE Programme

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.

Guidelines for the Management and Organisation of RSE in our School

The RSE programme will be delivered as follows:

General Management and Organisation

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 visions of human life and relationships through the RSE programme. It is the policy of our school to nurture Catholic values in relation to love, marriage, parenthood and family life.

- RSE is an integral part of the S.P.H.E. (Social Personal Health Education) 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 Glinsk N.S. RSE will be taught in the normal classroom situation by the class teacher. All information delivered will be informed by the content objectives of the S.P.H.E Curriculum.
- R.S.E specific education will be covered in the strand *Myself* under the strand units:
 - Self Identity
 - Taking Care of my Body
 - Growing & Change
 - Safety & Protection
- R.S.E specific education will be covered in the strand *Myself and Others* under the strand units:
 - Myself & the Family

- My Friends & Others
- Relating to Others

- **Sensitive Issues**

Sensitive issues include lessons on naming the body parts (Senior Infants) and their functions (2nd Class); changes in their bodies as they grow and develop and lessons on conception and birth (5th & 6th Class).

An outline of the content of lessons specific to each class level will be available to parents before they are taught, so that they can prepare the child, if they so wish.

- The home-school links letters from the DES R.S.E Resource Books may be sent home upon completion of lessons.
- 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 R.S.E 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.
- Each class teacher will teach the R.S.E programme including the sensitive issues unless they choose to opt out. A teacher's right to opt out from teaching the sensitive issues will be honoured. In this case, arrangements regarding the teaching of the programme will be made by the principal.
- 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 s/he does not wish to share.
- Language will, at all times, reflect respect for those involved and for educational content. In Glinsk N.S. we will give children the correct and appropriate language to communicate confidently about themselves, their sexuality and their relationships.

- A trained facilitator may be invited to the school to cover sensitive issues with 6th class annually which involves two sessions. The first session is for parents only and the second session is for parent & child. Parents will be invited to an information evening regarding this visit beforehand and the content & programme for pupils will be fully presented to parents. Parents then decide if this presentation is for their child. A parent must accompany the child to the second evening.
- The school holds no responsibility for any information which the pupil may receive outside the direct teaching of the R.S.E lessons.

Provision for ongoing support and development

Glinsk N.S. will offer ongoing training for teachers where necessary to help them implement the RSE programme. Information regarding courses or training for parents will be offered and may be organised by the Parents' Association/BOM/school.

This policy will be circulated to parents, teachers and the BOM and amended when consensus has been reached by all parties. The final agreed policy will be presented to the BOM, to be ratified and then circulated to all parties involved.

Success Criteria

The success of this plan will be evaluated through teachers' planning and preparation, and if the procedures outlined in this plan have been consistently followed. We will also deem it to be a success if the children have been enabled to achieve the aims as outlined.

Annual Review

The policy will be reviewed annually

Signed _____ Chairperson _____ Date _____

Review

Signed _____ Chairperson _____ Date _____

Signed _____ Chairperson _____ Date _____

Signed _____ Chairperson _____ Date _____