



Dear Parent(s)/ Guardian(s)

Social Personal and Health Education (S.P.H.E) is a very important element of the school curriculum. S.P.H.E covers a wide range of topics such as self-identity, making decisions, citizenship and relationships which equipped children with many of the skills and knowledge needed in today's world.

The Relationship and Sexuality element of the program (R.S.E) includes the learning, understanding and the development of attitudes, beliefs and values about relationships, sexual identity and intimacy.

The main aims of R.S.E. are:

- To enhance the personal development, well-being and self-esteem of each child
- To enable each child to gain an understanding of and respect for human love, reproduction and sexual activity in a sensitive and measured way
- To enable the child to develop healthy friendships and relationships
- To develop and promote a sense of wonder and awe at the process of birth and new life

The content of the program falls under the following headings:

- **Myself** – self-identity, taking care of my body, growing and changing and safety
- **Myself and others** - myself and the family and relating to other people
- **Taking care of my body** - naming parts of the male and female body using appropriate terminology (lower and middle classes), identifying physical changes understanding puberty and the reproductive system (senior classes)
- **Growing and changing** - the stages of development of a baby from conception to birth (middle classes) understanding sexual relations within the context of a committed loving relationship (senior classes)

This content will be covered in the month of February. We are now advising parents in advance of this taking place. We encourage you to talk to your child about what they will learn through R.S.E in a mature and respectful way. Attached are some guidelines to help guide you through the R.S.E programme.

We are aware of the importance and sensitivity of teaching the R.S.E program to our pupils and we thank you for your ongoing support in ensuring your child will have received a balanced education in Naas Community National School which will prepare them not only for secondary school but for life if you have any concerns please contact us.

Yours sincerely,

Mr. Paul Ennis

Guidelines for Parents Regarding the Relationships and Sexuality Education Programme at
Naas Community National School

The following guidelines have been put in place to ensure everyone is informed about the delivery of the R.S.E programme. These are taken from our R.S.E policy which along with other school policies is available to parents on request from the office. Please read through the guidelines and do not hesitate to contact staff should you have any queries or comments.

- The sections within the R.S.E programme which have been identified as sensitive issues will be taught in February in each class
- The program is taught within the ethos of the school and contemporary issues or topics are dealt with by the teacher at a level appropriate to the age and stage of development of pupils within a moral framework
- Relationships and Sexuality Education is an ongoing process throughout life. The child's first experience of love, of intimacy and of relationships takes place in the family. Parents and the family are acknowledged as primary educators of their children. We work in a supportive role with parents by complementing their role with a school based program in R.S.E.
- All the content objectives of the R.S.E programme will be covered by the time the child leaves 6th class
- The teacher's right to opt-out will be honored which will not affect the teaching of the subject
- Parents will be informed one week prior to the teaching of sensitive issues this will allow time for parents to discuss topics with the child, meet the teacher or follow the appropriate procedure for opting out of the R.S.E program
- If a visitor or guest speaker is invited to a class to enhance the delivery of the R.S.E program the class teacher will remain present in the class. Parents will be informed of such a visit and the content be addressed in advance of the visit. Parents are encouraged to use this opportunity to discuss these topics with their children beforehand. Parents are advised to inform childminders etc. that the sensitive topics are going to be discussed
- A parent's right to withdraw people from sensitive issues lessons will be honored on the understanding that parents are taking full responsibility for this aspect of education themselves. Parents are obliged to inform the school in writing of their decision to withdraw the child from the sensitive issues classes.
- Children who ask questions in class on content outside the designated curriculum are encouraged to discuss the issue with their parents. Parents are informed and asked to talk to their child
- Support is offered to parents in the form of information sources and support agencies to assist the parents to inform the child in an accurate and suitable way
- Parents may find the following resources helpful:
<https://www.sexualwellbeing.ie/for-parents/resources/talking-to-your-child.pdf>
<https://www.pdst.ie/sites/default/files/Toms%20Flower%20Power.pdf>
<https://www.pdst.ie/sites/default/files/RSE%20in%20Primary%20School%20Parent%20Tips.pdf>
[Busy Bodies - English language version \(hse.ie\)](https://www.hse.ie/eng/health/relationships/relationships_and_sexuality_education/relationships_and_sexuality_education.htm)
- The school has no responsibility for any information which the pupil may receive outside the direct teaching of R.S.E. lessons