

**ST NESSAN'S COMMUNITY COLLEGE**  
(Pobal Choláiste Neasáin Naofa)



**Relationships and Sexuality Education (R.S.E.) Policy**

January 2008

# **ST NESSAN'S COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

## **Policy on Relationships and Sexuality Education (R.S.E.)**

### **SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY/MISSION STATEMENT**

St Nessian's Community College is a non-denominational, co-educational school. It is comprehensive in its intake and in its curricular provision.

St Nessian's Community College is committed to maintaining an educational environment where the growth, learning and development (Fás, Foghlaim, Forbairt – school motto) of our students can flourish.

To further the aims of St Nessian's as expressed in the mission statement:

- The pursuit of high standards in all endeavours will be expected and every effort will be directed towards the attainment of such standards.
- The school will do its utmost within its resources to provide appropriate opportunities so that every individual has the opportunity to gain maximum benefit from their experience in St Nessian's.
- The rights, responsibilities and dignity of all individuals within the school community will be respected. However, the Common Good takes precedence where there is a conflict between individuals.

### **RATIONALE**

The Social Political and Health Education (S.P.H.E.) course for Junior Certificate contains an optional section entitled Relationships and Sexuality Education (R.S.E.). It is the choice of both the parents/guardians and the students as to whether the student participates in this optional section. This choice might be determined by either a personal or a religious belief that the primary educators in the area of sexuality are the parents. The school acknowledges this right of choice and this policy is designed to reassure parents who chose to allow their son/daughter to participate in the option of the course content.

### **GOALS & OBJECTIVES**

The objective of this policy is to put in place a set of guidelines for the teaching of the Relationships and Sexuality Education (R.S.E.) component of the Social, Personal and Health Education (S.P.H.E.) course for the Junior Certificate.

## **ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES**

- The role of the school is to ensure that all teachers of S.P.H.E./R.S.E. are properly trained. The school is also responsible for making sure that all teachers teaching the course abide by the lesson plans.
- S.P.H.E./R.S.E. department are responsible for ensuring the suitability of resource material used in class.
- S.P.H.E./R.S.E. teachers are responsible for teaching the course as outlined in The lesson plans and as agreed by the R.S.E. teachers in consultation with the school Principal.
- Parents/guardians have a responsibility to check the course content to verify that they are in agreement with its content. The lesson plans will be available to view in the school office.
- Students are responsible for following a set of ground rules as signed and agreed by the parent/guardian and child.

## **IMPLEMENTATION**

- The R.S.E. section of the S.P.H.E. course is taught each year starting the week Immediately following the Mid-Term break in February.
- The rules for student participation in the R.S.E. section are distributed to each Student in early February of 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Year. To indicate that the student will be participating in the section and has agreed to abide by the rules, this form has to be signed by the parents/guardians and the student and returned to The S.P.H.E. teacher before the Mid-Term break.
- Any student who fails to return a form signed by a parent/guardian or who Returns a form indicating that the student will not be participating in the R.S.E Section is withdrawn from the S.P.H.E. class for the duration of the R.S.E. Section.
- A meeting of the S.P.H.E./R.S.E. teachers is held in the week before the Mid-Term to co-ordinate and synchronise resources, materials and to deal with any Queries or changes arising from previous experience of teaching the section.
- The topics to be covered in R.S.E. for each year are as follows:
  - 1<sup>st</sup> Year
    - The Reproductive System (2 classes)
    - Images of Male & Female (2 classes)
    - Respecting Myself and Others (2 classes)
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> Year
    - Conception to Birth (2 classes)
    - Recognising and expressing feelings and emotions (1 class)
    - Peer pressure and other influences (1 class)
    - Making responsible decisions/Health & personal safety (1 class)
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> Year
    - Body Image (1 class)
    - Relationships ( 1 – 2 classes)
    - Respect, Rights & Responsibilities (1 class)
    - Conflict (2 classes)
- Copies of the lesson plans for each of the topics will be available in the school office.

## **REVIEW PROCEDURE**

This policy will subject to regular review and will be updated as deemed necessary.

## EXAMPLE OF GROUND RULES/CLASS CONTRACT

### WE AGREE THAT THESE ARE WAYS IN WHICH WE CAN WORK FOR THE SUCCESS OF THIS GROUP

Confidentiality*	Personal details which may be revealed in the class are not discussed outside the group. I can talk about my learning in the class, the material being covered and the activities we are doing.
Responsibility	I will take responsibility for my own sharing and make <b>I STATEMENTS</b> . And I will share responsibility for the progress of the class group.
Freedom	I have the freedom to opt out or pass in discussions.
Participation	I will participate and not dominate.
Listening	I will listen when another person is speaking.
Respect	I will respect others' views even when it is different from mine.
Request	If I want something, I will ask for it.
Time-keeping	I will keep to the allotted time for the task.
Materials	I will bring the materials needed for the class and complete any home task so that the group can progress to the next stage of learning.
Punctuality	I will be punctual.

SIGNED \_\_\_\_\_

The teacher and students have their own individual signed copy of the Ground Rules/Class Contract that they have drawn up and agreed together. These will be referred to at various stages as the group progresses.

**\*Teachers should not give unconditional guarantees of confidentiality. It should be explained to students that in some circumstances, a teacher may need to seek advice on an issue raised in class or to tell someone what has been revealed in class.** In addition, teachers will need to be sensitive to the privacy of family circumstances and will need to draw clear boundaries for class discussions. Students need to be made aware of their own privacy and the privacy of their families.