

2010



Coláiste Abbáin

# [RELATIONSHIPS AND SEXUALITY EDUCATION POLICY]

This document contains Coláiste Abbáin's Relationships and Sexuality Education Policy.

# COLAISTE ABBAIN

## RELATIONSHIPS AND SEXUALITY EDUCATION POLICY

### Colaiste Abbain is dedicated to:

- “ Providing a nurturing environment where each individual can develop self-esteem and a sense of his/her place in, and responsibility to, society
- “ Instructing the students in our care to foster mutual respect for all both within and outside the school community
- “ Promoting personal achievement and academic success
- “ Respecting the unique potential of every student and encouraging each student to maximise his/her potential

### Definition of RSE

Relationships and Sexuality Education is a lifelong process of acquiring knowledge and understanding and of developing attitudes, beliefs and values about sexual identity, relationships and intimacy.

Colaiste Abbain aims to provide young people with information and skills to evaluate the wide range of information, opinions, attitudes and values offered today, in order that they will make positive, responsible choices about themselves and the way they live their lives.

### Relationship of RSE to Social, Personal and health Education (SPHE)

The Department of Education and Science has approved the recommended syllabus for SPHE at Junior Cycle. SPHE, which is a lifeskills programme, aims:

- To enable students to develop personal and social skills
- To promote self-esteem and self-confidence
- To enable students to develop a framework for responsible decision-making
- To provide opportunities for reflection and discussion
- To promote physical, mental and emotional health and well-being

The RSE programme forms part of the SPHE programme. The content of the school's SPHE programme includes a wide range of topics (See SPHE Policy)

## **What the school currently provides**

Each class group to Junior Cert takes one class per week of SPHE. During each year to Junior Cert. RSE comprises one of the modules taught to students by the SPHE teachers.

The methodology includes discussion, group work, music, games, artwork and written work.

There will be visiting speakers organised to address the class groups if deemed appropriate.

All students are expected to obey the ground rules agreed at the beginning of the year and reiterated at the beginning of each class; these include co-operation, respect and confidentiality. The approach to topics is developmental and the content will be age appropriate.

## **Aims of the RSE Programme**

The Coláiste Abbáin programme aims:

- ” To help students to develop healthy friendships and relationships
- ” To promote an understanding of sexuality
- ” To promote a healthy attitude to sexuality and to relationships
- ” To promote knowledge of and respect for reproduction
- ” To enable young people to develop healthy attitudes and values towards their sexuality in a moral, spiritual and social framework

## **Guidelines for the Management and Organisation of RSE**

SPHE incorporating RSE is a Department of Education and Science approved course. All schools are obliged to introduce this course, initially at Junior Cycle and, by extension, throughout the school. In doing so, schools are obliged to follow DES guidelines and syllabi in conjunction with the ethos of the school.

Coláiste Abbáin acknowledges the right and duty of parents to provide for the religious, moral, intellectual, physical and social development of their children. Coláiste Abbáin will play a supportive and complementary role to the home in this task in its provision of SPHE. In doing so, our school will be mindful of conscientious or moral objections to the inclusion of elements of this programme; while striving to be sensitive to all, Coláiste Abbáin recognises the rights of parents, in consultation with the Principal, to act in accordance with their stated beliefs. Sensitive issues will be dealt with appropriately.

In so far as is possible there will be liaison with Science teachers/Religion teachers when subject areas overlap and consultation will take place with regard to covering the same material during these classes at the same time of the year. However, this may not always be possible.

It is envisaged that parents will be notified when sensitive issues will be discussed in class, so that they will be able to discuss any issues arising with their children at home.

### **Provision of Ongoing Support, Development and Review**

Coláiste Abbáin recognises the importance of having committed, trained staff in the implementation of its SPHE programme. It will encourage and facilitate participation in in-career development opportunities whenever possible. It also aims to provide relevant RSE school resources.

The role of parents in imparting SPHE is the primary one and Coláiste Abbáin will seek to support the efforts of parents to provide educational opportunities for other parents through the Parents' Association.

Finally, this policy statement will be reviewed by SPHE teachers on an annual basis and will be amended as necessary. Amended statements will be brought to the attention of all parents.

Proposed by: Annette Wall

Date: 18<sup>th</sup> May, 2007

Review date: May, 2009

**12th October 2007**

Dear Parent / Guardian,

Young people today are presented with many challenges that affect their health and well-being. As you are aware in this school we aim to address these challenges through our Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) course. Over the next six weeks approximately we intend to cover the Relationships and Sexuality module of this course and in the second year will be covering the following topics:-

- From conception to birth
- Recognising and expressing feelings and emotions
- Peer pressure and other influences
- Managing relationships
- Making responsible decisions
- Health and personal safety

We recognise that parents have the primary responsibility for the personal development of their children, and it is our wish to compliment that role. With the school and family working together, the programme can have greater success.

We would welcome any comments you might have on the programme and if you would like to discuss the programme further, please contact the school for an appointment.

Yours sincerely,

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Senan Lillis

Principal

