



Guest Speaker Policy

Scoil San Carlo S.N.S

National and international research has consistently shown that the qualified classroom teacher is the best placed professional to work sensitively and consistently with students and that s/he can have a powerful impact on influencing students' attitudes, values and behaviour in all aspects of health education.

The SPHE/RSE programme should have a substantial skills development element and should not merely be information based. Such skills are developed over time and founded on an ongoing relationship based on trust, understanding and mutual respect.

Young people flourish in an environment where there is a whole-school approach to the holistic growth of students and where there is a shared belief in their potential for development, learning and wellbeing.

RESPONSIBILITY OF SCHOOLS

The Education Act (1998) states that:

“A recognised school shall promote the moral, spiritual, social and personal development of students and provide health education for them, in consultation with their parents, having regard to the characteristic spirit of the school.”

School management, principals and teachers have a duty to provide the best quality and most appropriate social, personal and health education for their students. They also have a duty to protect students in their care at all times from any potentially harmful, inappropriate or misguided resources, interventions or programmes.

Guest Speakers

Outside facilitators who contribute to the SPHE/RSE programme can play a valuable role in supplementing, complementing and supporting a planned, comprehensive and established SPHE/RSE programme. Any such visitor or visiting group should adhere to the guidelines of good practice as set out in DES circulars

- Visitors to the classroom or school, particularly those engaging directly with students, should be aware of relevant school policies including the school's child protection statement, RSE policy and substance misuse policy. Any such visit must be carefully planned in advance in line with the relevant whole-school SPHE/RSE programme(s) and policies.
- Talks/programmes delivered by outside agencies or speakers must be consistent with and complementary to the school's ethos and SPHE/RSE programme. Visits should be planned, researched and implemented in partnership with school personnel.
- Relevant teachers need to liaise with and be involved with all visitors and external agencies working with the school and the whole staff needs to be made aware of same.
- It is strongly recommended that parents should be consulted and made aware of any such visiting people or agencies to classrooms / schools.
- It is of the utmost importance that classroom teachers remain in the classroom with the students and retain a central role in delivery of the core subject matter of the SPHE/RSE programme. The presence of the classroom teacher should ensure that the school follows appropriate procedures for dealing with any issue(s) that may arise as a result of the external input(s).
- All programmes and events delivered by visitors and external agencies must use appropriate, evidence based methodologies with clear educational outcomes. Such programmes are best delivered by those specifically qualified to work with the young people for whom the programmes are designed.

- All programmes, talks, interventions and events should be evaluated by students and teachers in terms of the subject matter, messages, structure, methodology and proposed learning outcomes.

Research findings indicate that the following teaching approaches have limited effect and are counterproductive to the effective implementation of SPHE. In light of this, Scoil San Carlo S.N.S. will avoid the following approaches:

Scare tactics

Information that induces fear, and exaggerates negative consequences, is inappropriate and counterproductive.

Sensationalist interventions

Interventions that glamorise or portray risky behaviour in an exciting way are inappropriate and can encourage inappropriate risk taking.

Testimonials

Stories focused on previous dangerous lifestyles can encourage the behaviour they were designed to prevent by creating heroes/heroines of individuals who give testimony.

Information only interventions

Programmes which are based on information alone are very limited in the learning outcomes they can achieve and can in fact be counter productive in influencing values, attitudes and behaviour.

Information that is not age appropriate

Giving information to students about behaviours they are unlikely to engage in can be counterproductive in influencing values, attitudes and behaviour.

Once off/short term interventions

Short-term interventions, whether planned or in reaction to a crisis, are ineffective.

Normalising young people's risky behaviour

Giving the impression to young people, directly or indirectly, that all their peers will engage/are engaging in risky behaviours could put pressure on them to do things they would not otherwise do

Success Criteria

A visiting speaker input will be deemed successful if there is:

- positive and constructive feedback from teachers, pupils and parents.
- a positive contribution to the learning environment of the school.
- a positive contribution to the quality of learning by pupils in class.

Communication of the Student Teacher Placement Policy to the school community

A copy of the Student Teacher Placement Policy is made available to school personnel and to the Parents' Association. The policy is readily accessible to parents on request.

A copy of the Policy is also published on the school website (www.scoilsancarlo.ie).

Policy review

This policy will be reviewed by the school management authority periodically.

Date of Policy Adoption

This Policy was adopted by the Board of Management on **26/02/2018**

Signed: **A. Ni Ghallchobhair**
Chairperson of Board of Management

Signed: **Geraldine Convery**
Principal

Date: **26/02/2018**

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