



Relationships and Sexuality Education Policy

School Name, Address and Roll Number:

Scoil Naomh Bríd, is a vertical co-ed. primary school under catholic management. It is situated in the parish of St. Patrick, Celbridge, Co. Kildare. It has a current enrolment of 238 pupils and a teaching staff of 17 teachers, and two fulltime and one part time special needs assistants. The School Roll No. is: 16566Q

The members of the Committee responsible for formulating the Relationships and Sexuality Education Policy were: Maria Gannon, Sharon Brady, Breeda Meleady, Teresa Gillespie, Neasa Daly, Anne Carney and Delia O' Donnell (Principal).

School Ethos/Philosophy /Mission Statement:

School Ethos:

Scoil Naomh Bríd, is a Roman Catholic School which has been established in connection with the Minister for Education and Science. It aims at promoting the full and harmonious development of all aspects of the person of the pupil: intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual, including a living relationship with God and with other people. The school models and promotes a philosophy of life inspired by belief in God and in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Scoil Naomh Bríd, as a Catholic school provides Religious Education for the pupils in accordance with the doctrines, practices and tradition of the Roman Catholic Church and promotes the formation of the pupils in the Catholic Faith.

While Scoil Naomh Bríd, is a school with a Catholic Ethos it recognises and respects other religions and beliefs.

Mission Statement:

In Scoil Naomh Bríd, our mission is to enable each child to live a full life as a child and to realise his/her potential in all dimensions of their life – spiritual, moral, cognitive, emotional, imaginative, aesthetic, social and physical.

We in Scoil Naomh Bríd, are committed to the holistic development of all our pupils by creating a caring, enjoyable, respectful, inclusive and encouraging learning environment. We aspire to this vision in collaboration with all the partners in education, Parents, Teachers, Board of Management, Department of Education and Science and the wider community.

Definition of SPHE:

Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) provides particular opportunities to foster the personal development, health and well-being of the individual child, to help him/her to create and maintain supportive relationships and become an active and responsible citizen in society. Through an SPHE programme children can develop a framework of values, attitudes, understanding and skills that will inform their decisions and actions both now and in the future.

Definition of R.S.E.:

RSE is part of Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE). RSE provides children with structured opportunities to develop the knowledge, attitudes, values, beliefs and practical skills necessary to establish and sustain healthy personal relationships as children and subsequently, as adults. The children learn about themselves as sexual human beings, about their spiritual, social, emotional and physical growth and about the various changes that occur as they progress towards adolescence and adulthood.

Relationship of RSE to SPHE:

All of the Relationships and Sexuality Education will be delivered within the context of SPHE which is timetabled on our curriculum for the school year.

What the School currently provides:

Parents are acknowledged as the primary educators of their children and the school will work in a supportive role. At present in Scoil Naomh Bríd, we promote a positive school climate and atmosphere that respects and cherishes all our pupils equally.

RSE/SPHE are part of our current curriculum - taught as discrete lessons using the following resources- Relationships and Sexuality Education (DES programme), Stay Safe, Angela Mc. Namara Sex Education DVD (Menstruation section only), Busy Bodies Sex Education DVD, Walk Tall and Weaving Well-Being.

RSE/ SPHE are also taught on an integrated, cross-curricular basis for example through Religious Education, Physical Education and Science. It will also be supported and informed by the following policies – Anti- Bullying Policy, Intercultural/Inclusion Policy, Acceptable Use Policy and Special Educational Needs Policy and the Code of Behaviour.

Methodologies used will include Individual Work, Pair Work Group Work, Pair Work, Circle Time and Co-operative Games.

Aims:

The aims of RSE are:

- To enhance the personal development, self-esteem and well-being of the child.
- To help the child to develop healthy friendships and relationships.
- To foster an understanding of, and a healthy attitude to, human sexuality and relationships in a moral, spiritual and social framework.
- To enable the child to acquire an understanding of, and respect for, human love, sexual intercourse and reproduction.
- To develop and promote in the child a sense of wonder and awe at the process of birth and new life.
- To enable the child to be comfortable with the sexuality of oneself and others while growing and developing. **(Pg. 9 – D.E.S. - NCCA Interim Guidelines on RSE – White Document)**

For Overall Aims and Objectives of SPHE see Appendix: SPHE Primary School Curriculum Statement – Pages 9 and 10

Management and Organisation:

Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) is an integral part of Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) and will be taught in this context (see SPHE Plean Scoile). The curriculum is spiral in nature (i.e. similar content is revisited at different stages throughout the child's time at school) and all content will be delivered developmentally throughout the child's time in the primary school.

In planning for teaching RSE we will ensure that over a 2 year period children will study elements from all the strand units. All content objectives will be covered by the time the children leave 6th. Class.

RSE – Specific Education See Appendix – RSE – Specific Content

(Infants – 6th) will be covered as stand alone (discrete) lessons in the strand units “Taking Care of my Body” and “Growing and Changing” and “Safety and Protection” where time can be given so that the children can acquire knowledge, ask questions, clarify information and develop skills. Teachers will only teach topics and terms used in the Stay Safe Programme and RSE (DES) book for the year group.

However, as the school curriculum is integrated, references **may** be made to the **RSE – specific content** covered in the discrete lessons in other curricular subject areas. The teacher may take the opportunity, within the parameters of the policy, to clarify language or information.

Language:

The acquisition of appropriate language in RSE is crucially important to enable children to communicate confidently about themselves, about growing up and the physical changes they are experiencing, and about their sexuality and their relationships.

The use of proper terms for parts of the body and its functions are given a status and acceptability. Embarrassment is reduced and as children get older and become comfortable with these words, they can discuss aspects of their growth and development with greater ease. They are also less likely to resort to inappropriate language when referring to the body and bodily functions.

Therefore, we will give children the correct and appropriate language as outlined in RSE Resource Materials as follows:

- **Junior Infants:** Stay Safe Programme and RSE specific language associated with this programme
Private parts, penis, vagina/vulva, breast
- **Senior Infants:** Language associated with SHPE/RSE programme:
Children will be given biological terms for body parts in the context of hygiene and in the context of obvious bodily differences.
The following terms will be used: Womb, Penis, Vagina and Vulva.
Term “breast feeding” may be used in conversation as a means of feeding a baby.
- **First Class:** Stay Safe Programme and RSE specific language associated with this programme:
Language terms introduced in Junior and Senior Infants continued

- **Second Class: Language associated with SHPE/RSE programme**
Terms “penis” and “urethra” will be taught/revised in terms of passing urine.
Teachers will teach that the baby is in the womb for 9 months and may be breast or bottle fed.
No reference will be made to conception or delivery in the junior cycles.
- **Third Class: Stay Safe Programme and RSE specific language associated with this programme:**
The term ‘genitals’ will be introduced in the Stay Safe Programme.
Bullying (including cyberbullying, strangers online, bullying based on race, disability, religion, family background, appearance, identity/ gender based bullying/homophobic bullying) will be discussed.
- **Fourth Class: Language associated with SHPE/RSE programme:**

The development of the foetus.

Term “Menstruation”/“Periods”. Menstruation will be taught as a topic in 4th. Class (girls only).
In 4th Class a letter will be sent home to parents covering the practical issues relating to menstruation. The letter will contain information regarding the availability of sanitary towels in the school and the location of disposal bins.
- **Fifth Class: Stay Safe Programme and language associated with this programme:**
The term testicles will be introduced.
- **Sixth Class: RSE specific Language associated with SHPE/RSE programme:**
Puberty and The Reproductive Systems of both male and female adults will be taught every year in 6th class. Human reproduction and sexual intercourse in the context of a committed loving relationship will be taught using the language outlined in the D.E.S. RSE Resource Materials in 6th class every year.
A letter will be sent home to parents detailing how this aspect of RSE will be taught and parents will be invited to view the resources which will be used.
A suitable guest speaker may be invited to support and reinforce the contents of the programme for 6th class. All information delivered by such a speaker will be informed by the content objectives of the SPHE Curriculum.
- **Criteria for SPHE visitors:**
In advance of a visit, common objectives will be discussed with the visitor, to ensure that he/she is acquainted with the material to be presented and also to confirm that the material itself is age appropriate. The speaker will be made aware of the parameters of the school policies related to this area. A teacher will remain present for the duration of the presentation.

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- **Special Needs / Differentiation:**

Every child in Scoil Naomh Bríd, will be given the opportunity to participate in and benefit from the full range of experiences offered in RSE. Therefore, if necessary, the curriculum and resources will be suitably adapted so that all children will be given the opportunity to obtain maximum benefit from the programme.

In teaching RSE, teachers will be sensitive to differences in family and social backgrounds as well as cultural and religious differences while at the same time planning and teaching the programme in accordance with the catholic ethos of the school.

General Information:

- At the beginning of each school year, Parents will be informed of the RSE – Specific Topics that will be covered in their child’s class that year.
- A Parent’s right to withdraw a pupil from ‘RSE – Specific Lessons’ will be respected on the understanding that the parent is taking full responsibility for this aspect of education themselves. **It is the responsibility of the parent to inform the school in writing of this decision.**
- If a child is so withdrawn, the school cannot guarantee that other children will not inform the child in question of the content of the lesson from which the child was withdrawn or that the children will not refer incidentally in class to aspects of the lesson during subsequent days / weeks.
- Teachers will teach only the topics/curriculum objectives laid down for the class and will respond only to those questions on the programme for that year. If a child asks for information that is not in line with the curriculum content he/she will be encouraged to ask these questions at home. The guiding principles at all times for the teacher being the school ethos, the age and stage appropriateness of the pupils.
- In the event of receiving a request from a teacher who does not wish to teach a particular topic, the school will endeavour to accommodate this request.
- Everyone has a right to privacy. (See Universal Declaration of Human Rights and UN convention on the Rights of the Child) Teachers will not answer personal questions about themselves nor require the child to give information of a personal nature which they do not wish to share.

Resources to be used:

In our school the following Resource Material is being used:

- D.E.S. Relationships & Sexuality Education (RSE) Resource Materials.
- Grow in Love - Veritas Publications
- Stay Safe Programme
- Walk Tall Programme
- Angela Mc. Namara DVD.
- Busy Bodies?

From time to time new resources may be introduced which meet the criteria laid down on Pg. 103 SPHE Teacher Guidelines.

Parents will be informed that they are welcome to view RSE teaching materials at the school. The SPHE Curriculum Document is available online. Contact: www.curriculumonline.ie

Ongoing Support and Development:

Ongoing support and development will be provided for teachers, parents, Board of Management and ancillary school staff. At regular intervals, staff training needs in this curricular area will be audited. The support of the local Education Centre will be sought when required. The school Board of Management will also be a source of support. The Primary School Support Programme (P.C.S.P.) is a supporting agency for the SPHE programme in the school. Staff will be encouraged and facilitated to avail of further training and in-service courses provided by the D.E.S. and its supporting agencies.

Review:

Policy and programme will continue to be reviewed at regular intervals.

Overall Aims and Objectives of SPHE – SPHE Primary School Curriculum Statement – Pages 9 and 10

Aims:

The aims of social, personal and health education are

- to promote the personal development and well-being of the child
- to foster in the child a sense of care and respect for himself/herself and others and an appreciation of the dignity of every human being
- to promote the health of the child and provide a foundation for healthy living in all its aspects
- to enable the child to make informed decisions and choices about the social, personal and health dimensions of life both now and in the future
- to develop in the child a sense of social responsibility, a commitment to active and participative citizenship and an appreciation of the democratic way of life
- to enable the child to respect human and cultural diversity and to appreciate and understand the interdependent nature of the world.

Broad objectives:

When due account is taken of intrinsic abilities and varying circumstances, the SPHE curriculum should enable the child to:

- be self-confident and have a positive sense of self-esteem
- develop a sense of personal responsibility and come to understand his/her sexuality and the processes of growth, development and reproduction
- develop and enhance the social skills of communication, co-operation and conflict resolution
- create and maintain supportive relationships both now and in the future
- develop an understanding of healthy living, an ability to implement healthy behaviour and a willingness to participate in activities that promote and sustain health
- develop a sense of safety and an ability to protect himself/herself from danger and abuse
- make decisions, solve problems and take appropriate actions in various personal, social and health contexts

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- become aware of, and discerning about, the various influences on choices and decisions
- begin to identify, review and evaluate the values and attitudes that are held by individuals and society and to recognise that these affect thoughts and actions
- respect the environment and develop a sense of responsibility for its long-term care
- develop some of the skills and abilities necessary for participating fully in groups and in society
- become aware of some of the individual and community rights and responsibilities that come from living in a democracy
- begin to understand the concepts of personal, local, national, European and global identity
- appreciate and respect the diversity that exists in society and the positive contributions of various cultural, religious and social groups
- promote the values of a just and caring society in an age-appropriate manner and understand the importance of seeking truth and peace.

Wellbeing:

In Scoil Naomh Bríd we are committed to developing a sense of wellbeing in every member of the school community where everyone is valued as unique. As stated in our mission statement we seek to promote the emotional and social wellbeing of all.

RSE – specific content (Infants-2nd)

Pages listed refer to curriculum book

SENIOR INFANTS	2 ND CLASS
<u>Taking care of my body</u> p.17(knowing about my body 3,4)	<u>Taking care of my body</u> p.27 (knowing about my body 3,4,5,)
explore, discuss the different things the body can do, move, feel, think, grow, heal	explore the various things the body can do see, hear, move, breathe, make energy, feel think
name the parts of the male and female body using appropriate anatomical terms	name parts of the male and female body using appropriate anatomical terms and identify some of their functions
	develop and practice basic hygiene skills discussing and exploring the effects of poor personal hygiene, practicing and learning about hygiene eating habits, practicing effective dental care
<u>Growing and Changing</u> p. 18 (New Life, 1,2)	<u>Growing and Changing</u> p. 28 (As I Grow I Change/New Life, 1,2)
	begin to recognise the physical, emotional, social and spiritual factors that promote growth, <i>Love, food, warmth, shelter, communication, friendship, sleep</i>
become aware of new life and birth in the world	realise that growth takes place in many different

<p><i>new growth in spring time the baby animals being born</i></p>	<p>ways and is unique to each individual <u>Physical</u>: growing out of clothes and shoes <u>Social</u>: making new friends, joining club, playing or engaging in sports together, an increasing ability to communicate, <u>Intellectual</u>: improving mental skills and abilities <u>Spiritual</u>: becoming more reflective, enjoying quiet time for longer periods, experiencing wonder through the senses</p>
<p>develop an awareness of human birth <i>that a baby grows and is nurtured in the mother's womb until it is ready to be born</i></p>	<p>begin to understand that reproduction, birth life, growth and death are all part of a life cycle</p>
	<p>appreciate what is necessary in order to provide and care for new born babies in both the animal and human world <i>love, regular feeding, nappy changing, careful bathing medical check-ups</i></p>
<p>JUNIOR INFANTS</p>	<p>FIRST CLASS</p>
<p>Safety and Protection p.19 (Personal Safety 2,3) <i>[Stay Safe Programme and RSE book]</i></p>	<p>Safety and Protection p. 30 (Personal Safety 1,3,) <i>[Stay Safe Programme and RSE book]</i></p>
<p>identify situations and places that are safe and those where personal safety might be at risk <i>being in a supervised playground, going on an outing with family, going into unfamiliar places- feeling unsafe with people, being asked to keep a difficult secret (one that causes worry or makes him/her feel uncomfortable)</i></p>	<p>recognise and explore situations where children feel safe and those where safety may be at risk <i>getting lost, being left alone, coming in contact with unsafe or unknown substances, being with people who make me feel unsafe, inappropriate or unsafe touches, confusing touches, being asked to keep a difficult secret (one that causes worry or makes me feel unsafe), cyberbullying and strangers online</i></p>
<p>realise how other people can persuade him/ her to engage in unsafe behaviour</p>	<p>explore how other people persuade her to engage in unsafe behaviour and how this may be counteracted</p>

RSE – specific content (3rd-6th)

4 TH CLASS	6th CLASS
<p><u>Taking care of my body p. 39</u> <i>Knowing about my body Obj. 2,3,5,6,</i></p>	<p><u>Taking care of my body p. 56</u> <i>Knowing about my body Obj.2,3,6</i></p>
<p>Obj.2* Knowing about my body: understand the physical changes taking place in both the male and the female body <i>growing height and weight, increasing strength</i> <i>Changes related to puberty: growing from boy to man, growing from girl to woman</i></p>	<p>Obj.2 * Knowing about my body: identify and discuss the physical and other changes that occur in boys and girls with the onset of puberty and understand that these take place at different rates for everyone Female: <i>hormonal changes, changing body shape development of breasts, appearance of pubic hair, onset of menstruation (periods)</i> Male: <i>hormonal changes, physical growth enlargement of testicles and penis, appearance of pubic underarm and facial hair, breaking of voice, beginning of sperm production, erection, onset of nocturnal emissions (wet dreams), ejaculation.</i></p>
<p>Obj.3 Knowing about my body: realise that these changes do not occur at the same time but none the less are predictable and natural and that being different is normal <i>accepting his/her own body image being sensitive to the patterns of growth in himself/herself and other people</i></p>	
<p>Obj.6 Knowing about my body: recognise the adverse effects of sexual stereotyping and realise that these effects can become more exaggerated as the physical differences between males and females are more apparent</p>	
	<p>Obj.3 Knowing about my body: *understand the reproduction system of both male and female adults</p>
<p>Obj 5 Knowing about my body: understand and explore the relationship between health and hygiene <i>the transmission of bacteria and viruses, the spread of infection and disease</i></p>	<p>Obj.6 Knowing about my body: become aware of diseases and explore how diseases and infections are spread <i>some communicable diseases: chickenpox, rubella, HIV infection, hepatitis infections are spread through air, body fluids, direct contact, poor hygiene and sanitation</i></p>

<u>R.S.E – specific content (3rd -6th) continued</u>	
4th class	6th Class
<u>Growing and Changing p.41</u>	<u>Growing and Changing p. 57</u>
<p>4th Class: <i>As I grow I change</i> Obj: 1,2,3, 4,5, 4th Class: <i>Birth and new Life</i> Obj.s:1, 2, 3, 4th Class: <i>Feelings and Emotions</i> Obj.s 1,2,3,4,</p>	<p>6th Class: <i>As I grow I change</i> Obj.s:1,2,3 6th Class: <i>Birth and new Life</i> Obj.s:1,2 6th Class: <i>Feelings and Emotions</i> Obj.s 1,2,3,4,5,6,</p>
<p>Obj. 4*: <i>As I grow I change:</i> * recognise and discuss how feelings and emotions are affected by the physical changes that take place at puberty smiling when hurt or angry, being withdrawn when afraid)</p>	
	<p>Obj 6.As I Grow I change identify and discuss the changes that are experienced in growing from child to adult <i>changing interest and leisure activities, developing a widening circle of friends, increasing personal independence, increasing personal and community responsibility, coping with transfer from primary to post primary –school</i> This will include changes that take place at puberty</p>
<p>Obj.:1* <i>Birth and new Life</i> Obj.s:I discuss the stages and sequence of development of the human baby, from conception to birth</p>	<p>Obj.1 <i>Birth and new life:</i> * understand sexual intercourse, conception and birth within the context of a committed loving relationship</p>
<p>Obj 2 Birth and New Life identify the care that needs to be taken while waiting for a baby to be born (<i>diet, rest, love, support and role of other family members, medical interventions</i>)</p>	<p>Obj.2 <i>Birth and new life:</i> *Discuss and explore the responsibilities involved in becoming a parent and the emotional and physical maturity required to be a parent <i>preparing for the birth of a baby</i> <i>taking care of off spring from birth onwards</i> <i>emotional, psychological and practical provisions</i></p>
<p>*Menstruation: *4th class</p>	<p>Obj.5 <i>Feelings and emotions:</i> *discuss the different types of love that exist and explore how love is portrayed and defined in music, films books, magazines and other media</p>

<u>RSE – specific content (3rd-6th) continued</u>	
3 rd class	5 th class
Safety and Protection p.43 (Personal Safety 2, 4) <i>[Stay Safe Programme and RSE book]</i>	Safety and Protection p. 59 (Personal Safety 2, 4) <i>[Stay Safe Programme and RSE book]</i>
<p>identify people, places and situations that may threaten personal safety <i>Bullying (including cyberbullying , strangers online, bullying based on race, disability, religion, family background, appearance, identity/ gender based bullying/homophobic bullying), large gatherings, being touched inappropriately, confusing touches, being asked to keep a difficult secret(one that is worrying or makes him/ her feel uncomfortable)</i></p>	<p>identify situations and that may threaten personal safety <i>Bullying(including cyberbullying , strangers online, bullying based on race, disability, religion, family background, appearance, identity/ gender based bullying/homophobic bullying), seeing others being bullied, being asked to keep a ‘difficult secret’, large public gatherings, recognising inappropriate or unsafe touches, confusing touches, being with people who make me feel unsafe</i></p>
<p>realise that as independence increases, responsibility for personal safety increases and that a strategy for keeping safe with people has to be developed and adhered to by each individual <i>Being assertive, realizing how and when to get help, telling people who are trustworthy, becoming familiar with emergency services and how to contact them, telling someone where he/she is going at all times, adhering to rules about unsafe places, not accepting bribes from anyone or taking lifts from unauthorised people</i></p>	<p>realise that as independence increases, responsibility for personal safety increases and that a strategy for keeping safe with people has to be developed and adhered to by each individual <i>Being assertive, telling or confiding in people who are trustworthy, realising how and when to get help, being aware of policies in school and at home that provide support: for example, the child is aware of the procedure if someone is being bullied, or is not collected after school, contacting the emergency services, making his/her whereabouts known at all times</i></p>

Source: Social Personal and Health Education: Primary School Curriculum