



Relationships and Sexuality Education Policy

School Name, Address and Roll Number:

Scoil Naomh Brid is a vertical single sex girls primary school under catholic management. It is situated in the parish of St. Patrick's Celbridge, Co. Kildare.

It has a current enrolment of 526 pupils and a teaching staff of 28 and 4 special needs assistants. The School Roll No. is : 16566Q.

The members of the Committee responsible for formulating the Relationships and Sexuality Education Policy were: Ann Manning (Parent, Parent Representative on the Board of Management), Mary O'Sullivan (Parent), Kathryn Keenan (Teacher Representative, Coordinator for S.P.HE) and Mary Pierce (Principal).

School Ethos/Philosophy /Mission Statement:

School Ethos:

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

Mission Statement:

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

We in Scoil Naomh Brid 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.

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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.

The following aspects of RSE are part of our current curriculum – both taught as discrete lessons and taught on an integrated, cross – curricular basis: Religious Education, Stay Safe Programme, Angela Mc. Namara Sex Education Video, Anti-Bullying as part of our school Discipline policy, Intercultural Material material has been compiled and made available to staff, Walk Tall programme, Group Work and Pair work, Circle Time and Co-operative P.E. Games.

We endeavour to continue this existing good practice.

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

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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.

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 or vulgar 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 / Senior Infants:

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 and Vagina. Term “breast feeding” may be used in conversation as a means of feeding a baby.

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First / Second Class:

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 / Fourth Class:

The development of the foetus. Term “Menstruation” / “Periods”. As Scoil Naomh Bríd is a single sex girls school Menstruation may be taught as a topic in 4th. Class. The decision to do so will be reviewed on a year to year basis. The decision being made in the light of the development and maturity of the class. 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 / Sixth Class:

Puberty, 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 for 5th / 6th. Classes. 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 5th. / 6th. Classes. 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 the 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.

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.

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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 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 she will be encouraged to ask these questions at home. The guiding principles at all times for the teacher being the school ethos and the age and stage appropriateness of the pupils.

The school will endeavour to accommodate the request of any teacher who does not wish to teach a particular topic.

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.

Alive O – Veritas Publications

Stay Safe Programme

Walk Tall Programme

Angela Mc. Namara Video.

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 S.P.HE Curriculum Document is available online.

Contact: www.curaclam.net.

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 and financial assistance. The Primary School Support Programme (P.C.S.P.) is a supporting

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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 be reviewed after 1 year and at regular intervals thereafter. All the partners will be informed of any amendments necessary after such a review.

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
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

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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.