

# **Scoil Bhríde, Cill Bhríde**

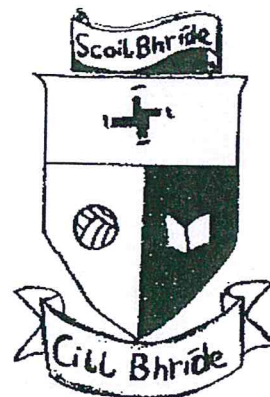
## **Clonee, Co. Meath.**

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## **Relationship & Sexuality Education Policy**

### **A. Introductory Statement**

1. Scoil Bhríde, Cill Bhríde is a Catholic School which operates under the auspices of the Department of Education and under the patronage of the Bishop of Meath. The school has an enrolment of 338 pupils boys and girls from junior infants to sixth class, including a special needs unit 'Coisceimeanna'. The school community collaborated and agreed this policy.
2. The school has a responsibility to put in place an R.S.E. policy as part of the wider Social, Personal and Health strand of the curriculum.
3. R.S.E. 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.

### **Rationale**

The R.S.E. curriculum provided by the Department of Education and Science is spiral in content with central themes being revisited in a developmental manner from Junior Infants to 6<sup>th</sup> Class.

### **B. School Ethos**

1. The school recognizes parents as the primary educators of their children and fully supports this role. In the area of R.S.E. the school's role is subsidiary to that of parents and supports and complements their work. The school ethos is one which values the contribution of the entire community, parents, teachers, children and management. Opportunities for open communication and collaboration are provided for in the school's welcoming ethos.
2. Our R.S.E. policy, which has been drawn up by representatives of the parents, teachers and Board of Management, reflects the ethos of the school and ensures that the content and delivery is presented within a moral and spiritual framework.

### **C. Aims**

- To enhance the personal development, well being and self-esteem of each child.
- To enable each child to gain an understanding of 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 of 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.

#### **D. Strategy.**

R.S.E. will be facilitated in our school

- Informally – in the context of a caring, positive school climate and atmosphere.
- As part of an integrated cross-curriculum basis.
- As an integral part of the Social, Personal and Health Education Programme – as laid out in the curriculum and in “Making the Link and Beyond’ revised edition 2018 set down by N.C.C.A.
- Some stand alone lessons in 4<sup>th</sup> class 5<sup>th</sup> class and 6<sup>th</sup> Class ,in order to teach sensitive areas of the programme , may be facilitated by Accord, or other external facilitators.
- Teaching approaches will include:

Stories, poems, DVD’s e.g. HSE Busy Bodies

HSE resources

Classroom discussion

Group work

Games

Art Activities

Circle time

Drama/Role play

Writing/Specifically designed worksheets.

#### **E. Content (Junior Infants – 6<sup>th</sup> Class)**

Topics covered up to 2<sup>nd</sup> class include:

- Keeping Safe
- Bodily Changes
- Making age appropriate choices
- Appreciating family life
- Recognising and expressing feeling
- Self-care, hygiene, diet, exercise and sleep
- Expressing opinions and listening to others
- Naming the parts of the male/female body using appropriate anatomical terms and identifying some of their functions



Topics covered 3<sup>rd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> class include:

- Bodily changes
- Healthy eating, personal hygiene, exercise
- Keeping Safe
- Expressing Feelings
- Family relationships
- Making healthy and responsible decisions
- Forming Friendships
- Discuss the stages and sequence of development of the human baby in the womb
- Changes that occur in boys and girls with the onset of puberty
- Reproductive system of male/female adults
- Understanding sexual intercourse, conception and birth within the context of a committed loving relationship

#### **F. Classroom Strategy**

- Teachers will adhere to the content of the R.S.E. programme in accordance with the curriculum and guidelines provided by the N.C.C.A. – set out for each class level.
- Teachers will only answer questions within the programme for that particular age group
- If the question is a moral question, teachers will adhere to Catholic Church teaching and always reflect the ethos of our school
- If a question is asked beyond the parameters of the programme AND it is felt to be genuine, the teacher will...
  - a) Advise the child to ask at home
  - b) Explain to the child that the particular topic will be introduced at a later stage.
- Thus, it is hoped **not** to compromise the special bond that exists between child and parent or to breach the trust between parent, teacher and child.
- It will be our policy not to answer personal questions about ourselves

#### **G. Relationships of RSE to Social, Personal & Health Education.**

In the school setting, R.S.E. will be part of a wider programme of Social, Personal and Health Education (S.P.H.E.). The content of the S.P.H.E. programme includes a wide range of topics such as healthy eating, substance abuse, environmental issues, safety and social responsibility as well as R.S.E. The core framework will consist of Myself; Myself and Others; Myself and the Wider World.

#### **Current Provisions:**

##### *(i) Religious Instruction*

The Grow in Love Programme is taught in all classes. This programme deals with many of the topics of S.P.H.E. and R.S.E., particularly in the area of self esteem and personal relationships.

*(ii) Stay Safe Programme*

This programme has been taught in our school since 1991. It is taught to every class. It is implemented in full in compliance with the reviewed Child Safeguarding Statement). The programme is also referred to cross curricularly from Junior Infants to 6<sup>th</sup> Class.

*(iii) Physical/Health Education*

Topics of exercise, hygiene, diet, sleep etc. are dealt with informally in class in the context of Physical Education and other Strand Units of S.P.H.E

*(iv) Relationships and Sexuality*

This programme is taught in our school. Visiting speakers such as Accord may be invited to the school to assist in teaching this programme to senior classes. (4<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> Classes)

*(v) Information on Drugs and Alcohol*

The Walk Tall Programme is used in our school to provide education on drugs and alcohol use at an appropriate level.

See Substance Use Policy

*(vi) Code of Discipline*

The school has a code of discipline and an anti-bullying policy which encourage good behaviour and respect for self and others. The underlying philosophy of these codes supports many of the aims of S.P.H.E. and R.S.E.

*(vii) Child Safeguarding*

The school at all times will follow child protection guidelines as laid out in the school “Child Safeguarding Statement” and the guidelines set out by “Children First”.

*(viii) Weaving Wellbeing Programme*

*(ix) Web Wise Resources*

*(x) Rainbows Programme*

*(xi) All Together Now* – lessons on homophobic and transphobic bullying.

*(xii) RESPECT Guidelines* – Suggested approaches to teaching about different families

## **H. Guidelines for Managing the R.S.E Programme**

Much of the content of R.S.E will be taught in a cross curricular manner, as many of the topics fall naturally into other subject areas. This integrated approach ensures that the children will encounter R.S.E in a holistic manner rather than in isolation.



For certain topics on the R.S.E. programme it may be deemed appropriate to invite visiting speakers to the school. They will be approved by the Board of Management. The classroom teacher or an alternative staff member arranged by the principal will be present at all such deliveries

Parents have a right to:

- Be fully consulted and informed about the R.S.E. programme.
- View resources.
- Withdraw their child from all or part of the R.S.E. programme. This will be dealt with as sensitively and as confidentially as possible without embarrassment to parent or child.

If a parent wishes to withdraw their child from all or part of RSE Programme they must do so in writing. They must also supervise their child.

The Child has a right to:

- Privacy which must be respected at all times by both the teachers and all other pupils in the class.
- Not to feel pressured to reveal or discuss private matters.
- Discuss the contents of the R.S.E. lessons at home.

The Teacher has a right to:

- Opt out of delivery of sensitive issues within the R.S.E./S.P.H.E. curriculum.

It is the principals' responsibility to make suitable alternative arrangements for the delivery of these elements of the programme.

Provision for ongoing Support, Development and Review

The policy is committed to

- ensuring access to in-career development opportunities for teachers
- supporting the Parents' Council in the provision of information on the R.S.E. programme
- providing relevant R.S.E. school resources
- being reviewed on a yearly basis to ensure all new members will have had R.S.E training and existing staff have update of training as required.

## **I. Evaluation/Review**

It is proposed that this policy will be reviewed every second year.

It is also proposed that this policy will be available on our website.

This policy was reviewed in January 2019

This policy was approved by the Board of Management in 6.02 2019.

*Eileen Flynn*  
Chairperson