



ST. BRIGID'S NATIONAL SCHOOL KILLYGARRY



RELATIONSHIP AND SEXUALITY EDUCATION POLICY

Introductory statement:

This policy was first drawn up in September 2005 by an RSE committee. The draft was issued to parents and approved by the Board of Management. It was reviewed in March 2009 by a new RSE committee and some changes were made to it. It was reviewed again in January 2015 and further changes were made. It was ratified by the Board of Management on the 15th January 2015. Further changes were made in April 2016 in light of new formed Board of Management. This policy was again reviewed in September 2017 and ratified by the Board of Management. The policy was again reviewed in September 2020 as some members of the committee were no longer part of our school community.

Rationale:

This policy was drawn up in response to guidelines set out in Circulars 2/95 and 9/96.

Link to School Philosophy and Ethos:

St Brigid's National School is a Roman Catholic primary school under the patronage of Dr Leo O'Reilly, Bishop of Kilmore. We believe in the intellectual, moral, aesthetic, social and spiritual education of the whole child. We aim to provide a learning environment in which each pupil is encouraged to develop his/her capabilities to the fullest possible extent.

We aim also to nurture a sense of personal identity and self-esteem combined with respect for the rights and beliefs of others.

The Relationships and Sexuality Education Programme:

The R.S.E programme helps children learn, at home and in school, about their own development and about their friendships and relationships with others. This work will be based on developing a good self-image, promoting respect for themselves and others and providing them with appropriate information.

Aims:

- To enhance the personal development, self esteem and well being of the child.
- To help the child develop and sustain 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.

Social Personal and Health Education Programme:

S.P.H.E. provides particular opportunities to foster the personal development, health and well being of the individual child, to help him/her create and maintain supportive relationships and become an active and responsible member of society. Since S.P.H.E. has a moral and spiritual dimension, its development and implementation are influenced significantly by the ethos of the school. The R.S.E. programme is an integral part of the S.P.H.E. programme.

Resources for the implementation of S.P.H.E.

As many of the objectives of the S.P.H.E. programme are similar to those in other curricular areas, much of the content can be treated in a cross-curricular manner.

The school already provides elements of S.P.H.E through:

- Grow in Love and Alive-O: Religious Education Programme
- Stay Safe Programme (developing social skills, identifying and expressing emotions, safety strategies)
- Walk Tall Programme (for prevention of substance misuse)
- P.E. (how to keep your body healthy through exercise, and co-operative team work)
- Be Safe National Safety Council (road, fire and water safety)
- Health Prim-Ed (physical, social and emotional awareness)
- Stand up for Yourself (anti-bullying programme)
- To enable the child to be comfortable with the sexuality of oneself and others while growing and developing.

Management and organisation of R.S.E. in our school:

As a parent you are the first teacher of your child. You hand on important values and attitudes to our children. We aim to work together with you in this important task.

R.S.E will be provided throughout the school from junior infants to sixth class. It will be a spiral curriculum. This means it will return to similar topics each year. It will develop this topic to suit the age and maturity of the children.

All the R.S.E. content will be presented in a sensitive manner, having due regard for the age, experience and prior knowledge of the child.

An outline of the lessons/sensitive issues will be available to parents before they are taught, so that they can prepare the child before it is dealt with in school, if they so wish.

A parent's right to withdraw a pupil from the process will be honoured on the understanding that the parent is taking full responsibility for this aspect of education. It is the responsibility of the parent to inform the school in writing of this decision.

If a child is withdrawn for the teaching of sensitive issues we cannot guarantee that the other children will not tell him/her about what happened.

If, as a parent you choose to expand on the information discussed in a particular class session, please stress to your child that this should not be disclosed to classmates.

At each level:

Junior Infants & Senior Infants:	Junior & Senior Infant Programme
First & Second Class:	First & Second Class Programme
Third & Fourth Class:	Third & Fourth Class Programme
Fifth & Sixth Class:	Fifth & Sixth Class Programme

Each class teacher will teach the S.P.H.E. programme including the sensitive issues. All information delivered will be informed by the content objectives of the S.P.H.E. Curriculum. See Whole School Plan for S.P.H.E.

Provision for ongoing support, development and review:

The policy of the school is to offer support to the teachers and parents in educating the child in the R.S.E. Programme. This will be achieved through:

- R.S.E. in-service for teaching staff.
- Provision for outside speakers for 6th class and their parents
- Review of programme and policy after 2 years by an R.S.E. policy committee, which has representatives from the Board of Management, parents and teachers.

R.S.E. Committee

Serena Prior	Board of Management
Paula O'Neill	Board of Management
Clare Keaney	Parent's Representative
June Neylon	Parent's Representative
Teresa Dunne	Teacher
Carmel Keogh	Class Teacher

Sensitive issues in the R.S.E programme:

Infant Classes & First Class

My body

- Identify external parts of the male and female body
head, eyes, ears, nose, skin, hips, navel, breast, bottom, penis, vagina, knee, leg, foot
- Become aware that growth is unique for each individual; that John is taller than Mary

New life

- Become aware of new life in the world; new growth in springtime, children and animals being born, baby animals being fed.
- Explore birth in the animal world.
- Develop an awareness of human birth.
'that a baby grows and is nurtured in the mother's womb until ready to be born'.

- Identify what babies need to help them grow
'Love, regular food and water, warmth, nappy changing, careful bathing, medical checkups'

Second & Third Class

My body

- Name and identify external parts of the male and female body and their associated functions
Head, eyes, nose, skin, hips, navel, penis, vagina, breast, bottom, knee, leg, foot.
Nose: breathing, smelling
Vagina: opening where a baby leaves a mother's womb
Penis: passing urine
Urethra: passing urine
Breasts: feeding a baby
Navel: where a baby was joined to its mother before being born
- Appreciate the need to care for the body in order to keep it strong and healthy
- Become aware of how infections spread easily from one person to another
common cold, verruca, athlete's foot.

Fourth & Fifth Class

Birth and new life

- Sequence and discuss the stages of development of the human body from conception to birth.
Identify objects which coincide with the size of the foetus at different stages
Week 2: the size of a full stop
Week 6: the size of a baked bean/would fit neatly on a 2c coin
Week 8: The size of an adult thumbnail/would cover a 20c coin
Week 14: the length of an adult hand/size of a grapefruit
- Identify the care that needs to be taken while waiting for the baby to be born:
Diet, rest, love support of other family members, medical interventions
- Recognise the changes in a foetus as it develops in the mother's womb
- Develop an appreciation of the wonder of the birth of a baby
After 9 months the baby is ready to be born
- Explore the roles of other members of the family during pregnancy and birth
- Compare and contrast the gestation period in animals and humans

Sixth Class

Physical development

- Identify and explore the physical changes that occur in males and females with the onset of puberty

Female:

Hormonal changes, changing body shape, development of breasts, appearance of pubic hair, onset of menstruation (periods), beginning of ovulation.

Male:

Hormonal changes, physical growth, growth of testicles and penis, appearance of pubic hair, underarm and facial hair, breaking of the voice, beginning of sperm production, onset of nocturnal emissions (wet dreams)

- Become familiar with the reproductive systems of both male and female
- Understand how sexual intercourse, conception and birth take place within the context of a committed and loving relationship.
- Recognise the physical changes as part of the ongoing process of growth and development which is common to everyone.

Becoming an adult

- Accept that puberty changes occur at different times for different people and that it is natural.
- Understand that mood and emotions are often affected by physical and hormonal changes.
- Recognise and begin to understand strong emotions and desires
- Identify and discuss the changes that are experienced in growing from a child to an adult

Changes in interest and leisure activities

Development of a widening social network

Increase in personal independence as one grows older

Increase in personal and community responsibility

Coping with transfer from primary to post-primary school

Signed: _____ **Date:** _____

Chairperson of the BoM