

Relationships and Sexuality Education Policy

Gaelscoil Bhaile Brigín.

Fís na Scoile:

Gaelscoil Bhaile Brigín's vision is to create a positive, caring, open learning environment, where each child's individuality is celebrated, encouraged and nurtured.

As a Gaelscoil, we foster a love and respect of the Irish Language, culture and traditions. Irish is the language of the school and is promoted in a positive way throughout the whole community.

Our school creates an environment where a love of learning inspires and motivates both students and teachers alike.

Parents, as partners in education are welcomed and encouraged to participate openly in all aspects of school life.

GSBB promotes a care and respect of the environment in all members of it's community

GSBB is an interdenominational school and a respect and understanding of both Catholic and Protestant traditions will be promoted.

Definition of RSE:

- SPHE provides opportunities for pupils to learn basic personal and social skills to foster integrity, self-confidence and self-esteem while nurturing sensitivity to the feelings and rights of others.
- RSE is an integral part of SPHE and will be taught in this context. It provides structured opportunities for pupils to acquire knowledge and understanding of human sexuality and relationships through processes which will enable them to form values and establish behaviours within a moral, spiritual and social framework. Central to RSE is the fostering of self-esteem, through which the pupil becomes more responsible in making choices and decisions in all aspects of life and particularly in those relating to sexuality and relationships.
- It also addresses the meaning of human sexuality, relationships, growth and development, relevant personal and social skills and aspects of parenting.
- As a committee, we have identified the most important aspects of this programme to be the fostering of self-esteem in the students, also the development of language in these areas, which combined will help the students deal appropriately with this aspect of their lives.

Also, as a committee, we realise that parents are the primary educators of their children - especially in this area - to this end we will be working closely with you when dealing with the sensitive issues which arise in this subject

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Currently being provided:

At present, as a new school we do not have a full policy in this area, hence we are formulating one at present. It is however referred to in different curricular areas eg RE, PE, SESE, and as part of the Stay-Safe programme. We do not presently have the most senior classes, and therefore we would like to coordinate this policy to ensure continuity from Jun Infants to 6th from the beginning.

This programme will provide a structured and organised way to do this.

Aims of RSE:

- To help the child 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 gain 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.
- To develop an awareness of differing family patterns.
- Come to value family life and appreciate the responsibilities of parenthood
- To develop some coping strategies to protect self and others from various forms of abuse
- Gain and improve skills of communication and social interaction
- Gain and use an appropriate vocabulary to discuss feelings, sexuality, growth and development.

Guidelines for Implementation of RSE:

These guidelines were drawn up by the school RSE committee, who met a number of times to work on this area. Members of the committee were Clodagh Ní Mhaolchiaráin (Principal - staff rep and board rep), Neasa Ní Bhriain (staff rep), Lisa de Nais (board and parent rep), Regina Ward (parents' rep) and Emer Mallon (parents' rep). The committee met in the 3rd term of 2008 and the draft was sent out to parents and members of the board. All parents were given an opportunity to make suggestions at this point. The committee met again and different aspects of the course content were discussed.

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- As already stated, the committee and staff recognise the rights and responsibilities of the parents as the primary educator of the students in this area.
- There is, however, a duty on the teachers' part to ensure that this area of the curriculum is taught.
- Thus, if you, as a parent are unwilling for your child to partake in this lesson (only sensitive issues) it is your responsibility to inform the school of your decision. However, if you do decide to withdraw your child from this class, you must sign a letter saying that you accept responsibility to teach this subject to your child.
- Any teacher has a right to withdraw from teaching this subject. If this happens, either another teacher from the school or a guest speaker will cover this topic.
- . . .
- It is the responsibility of everyone - parents and teachers alike to foster an atmosphere whereby there is an openness and understanding of this topic in the whole school community.
- A glossary of terms in both English and Irish will be sent home before this subject is taught
- A copy of the letter in the RSE teacher's handbook will be sent home before the subject is taught. This will be sent home at the start of the year in order to help parents deal with this topic. A letter will be sent home a few weeks before hand to remind parents that it will be taught. This will give parents an opportunity to discuss this topic at home.

- This subject will be taught through Irish, in keeping with our Labhairt na Gaeilge policy - however, teachers will ensure that the students will also have the English terminology
- The relationship in which a child is conceived will be referred to as a "loving relationship" as opposed to a marriage.
- The idea of having a guest speaker to the school on this topic has been passed on to the parents' committee

Roles and Responsibilities:

- The principal has a responsibility to ensure that this policy is carried out and that a copy is given to new parents.
- Class teachers have a responsibility to ensure that this topic is taught to his/her class.
- The Board has a responsibility to ensure that the necessary equipment and resources are provided.
- Parents have a responsibility to support the school in the implementation of this policy by discussing it with their children.

Review:

This policy will be reviewed from time to time as necessary or as new guidelines are sent out by the Department.

Ratification:

This policy was ratified at the June 08 board of Management meeting.

Daingníodh an polasaí seo ag Cruinniú Boird Meitheamh 08.

