



Respect - Justice - Integrity - Honesty - Saothar

Coláiste na Mí

Relationship and Sexuality Education (RSE) Policy

Kindness - Honour - Teamwork - Responsibility



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1. Introductory Statement:

This RSE policy was developed in accordance with:

1. Our mission statement and the 9 values of Coláiste na Mí.
2. Guidelines as set out in Circular M4/95, M20/96, C23/10 *Social and Personal Health Education (SPHE) and Relationships and Sexuality Education-Best Practice Guidelines for Post Primary Schools* and C37/2010.
3. Guidance from SPHE Department
4. Consultation with the Care Team.
5. Consultation with the Students, Staff, Parents and Management of Coláiste na Mí.

All members of the school community are consulted during its development.

This RSE policy is a written statement of the aims of the RSE programme within Coláiste na Mí. The policy reflects the relationship of RSE to SPHE and other subjects e.g. Religious Education, Science, Biology and Home Economics and the organisation and management of RSE within Coláiste na Mí.

This policy applies to all aspects of teaching and learning about relationships and sexuality. It also applies to all school staff, students, parents /guardians, visiting speakers, invited guests, volunteers and members of the Board of Management.

2. Rationale:

It is necessary to have a Relationships and Sexuality Education policy as RSE is a key element of healthy social and personal development as:

Young people are exposed to a wide variety of messages about sexuality and sexual activity. Schools need to reflect on how to provide for the needs of their students.

The Education Act 1998 requires that schools should promote the social and personal development of students and provide health education for them. Section 4 of the Rules and Programme for Secondary schools requires schools to have an agreed policy for RSE and a suitable RSE programme in place for all students at both Junior and Senior cycle. At both Junior and Senior Cycle the RSE programme is part of Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE).

Circulars M4/95, M20/96, C23/2010 and C37/2010 request schools to commence a process of RSE policy development.

The effectiveness of an RSE programme is dependent on a collaborative policy process involving teachers, parents/guardians, members of the board of management and students.

The RSE policy of Coláiste na Mí must embrace the promotion of the 9 values and CNM Mission Statement as an intrinsic part of school life, adhered to by all parties involved.

3. School's Ethos and Vision

The RSE policy will guide teachers in the treatment of such issues in accordance with the ethos of the Coláiste. It is important that teachers of RSE understand that their role is to express the views of the whole school community on these sensitive issues and not their own personal views.

In this regard, it should be noted that:

Schools are required to deliver all aspects of the RSE curriculum, including those in relation to sexual orientation, contraception, sexually transmitted infections etc. This can be done within a context in which teaching of the programme is informed by the school's ethos.

A school can express its ethos while at the same time facilitating students in discussing a range of views in relation to topics within the RSE programme.

4. Coláiste na Mí Mission Statement

Colaiste na Mí is a child-centred, supportive learning environment where each student is encouraged and facilitated in realizing their full potential in a positive climate which is caring, respectful, fair and inclusive. The school community of Coláiste na Mí is a partnership of students, staff, parents and all members of our community. The promotion of personal development and learning through hard work, creativity and commitment is a priority in our school.

The Nine Values

The Coláiste na Mí nine values are the foundations on which our school culture is built, every member of our school community is expected to support these nine values of our Coláiste.

Coláiste na Mí Nine Values

1. Respect

2. Justice

Coláiste na Mí RSE Policy

3. Integrity
4. Honesty
5. Saothar
6. Kindness
7. Honour
8. Teamwork
9. Responsibility

5. Coláiste na Mí's Vision of RSE

In this age of intense social media, the access to personal devices and added peer pressure from various media forms students are vulnerable to forming false and ill-informed perceptions on Relationships, Sexuality and Human Reproduction. It is our belief in Coláiste na Mí that it is vital our students receive accurate, up to date and factual information about the natural development of humans as sexual beings. We promote the importance of developing positive, healthy, responsible and respectful relationships.

Through the deliverance of the RSE programme and by imparting this knowledge to our students, we envision that they in turn develop better self-esteem and raised levels of confidence. This inevitably results in our students being empowered to make mature, responsible and informed decisions within the relationships they develop.

6. Aims and Objectives of RSE:

The RSE programme intends to achieve the following:

- Promote knowledge and respect for reproduction.
- Provide an opportunity to learn about relationships and sexuality.
- Encourage students to think and act in a moral, caring and responsible way.
- Help students understand and develop friendships.
- Help student's understanding of sexuality.
- Develop a positive attitude towards one's own sexuality.

6.1. Aims and Objectives of RSE Policy:

The policy will ensure clarity and consensus on how RSE is taught in Coláiste na Mí.

- It will articulate the relationship of RSE to SPHE.
- It will articulate the aims of the RSE programme.

- It will clarify the rights, roles and responsibilities of all within the college community in relation to the RSE programme with particular reference to teaching staff, students, parents/guardians and the board of management/patron.
- It will ensure that teachers, parents/guardians and students understand how the teaching of RSE is linked to the school ethos.
- It will provide information on the practicalities of delivering the programme.

7. What the school currently provides

Coláiste na Mí currently provides the following:

RSE is provided at Junior Cycle and Senior Cycle as part of the SPHE programme.

6 classes of RSE are expected to be delivered throughout each year group.

See below table for sample calendar for RSE 2026.

Sample Dates of RSE Classes Commencing **February 23rd - April 17th 2026**

February 23rd - February 27th	Week 1
March 2nd - March 6th	Week 2
March 9th - March 13th	Week 3
March 16th - March 20th	Week 4
March 23rd - March 27th	Week 5
April 13th - April 17th	Week 6

8. Key Measures:

8.1. Provision of training and staff development:

The role of Caomhnóir is one of great importance in our school. In recognizing the strong pastoral link created between Caomhnóir and students, management have committed to placing the class Caomhnóir as their SPHE/RSE teacher, where possible within timetable constraints.

It is envisioned by management that teachers in the role of Caomhnóir also see their unique relationship with their class as a great opportunity to support the growth and development of students within SPHE/ RSE programmes, any teacher uncomfortable with the teaching of such programmes will be encouraged to consult with management to express such concerns.

Management is also committed to releasing teachers for appropriate TBL training for the teaching of RSE provided by the SPHE support service. Staff will be encouraged to attend by the Principal and the SPHE/RSE coordinator.

All teachers involved in this work do not have to be “experts” on the issues concerned. However, they do require sensitivity to the needs of the group, an ability to deal with questions openly/honestly and preparedness to refer to more expert advice if necessary. The skills acquired in general teaching apply also to RSE.

The appropriate teaching resources will be made available to staff subject to budget constraints.

8.2. Staff TPL:

Staff name	Title of TPL in SPHE and/or RSE	Date and Duration
A.B	‘A year of Restorative Practices’, online 1 hour webinar, hosted by the Navan Education Center.	January 2023-December 2023
	Irish Heart Foundation CPR for Schools Teacher training online. 2hour course. The Irish Heart Foundation.	November 2022
	The Science of Health and Happiness for Young People. RCSI. Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland., University of Medicine and Health Sciences. Completed 10 week Programme	October 2021- December 2021
	eLearning Mental Health Programme for Teachers. JIGSAW. ESCL. Completed course A & B	October 2020
C.B	An Introduction to Junior Cycle Social, Personal, Health Education Specification 2 day PLE	October 2024
	Planning and Preparing for Sensitive Issues in Junior Cycle and Senior Cycle SPHE	March 2026
	Teaching RSE across the Post-primary continuum	March 2026

C.McC.	Rainbows Facilitator and Coordinator	September 2024
	Working with Families	February 2025
	Nurture Room and Nurture Schools	March 2025
	Art Therapy 3 rd May (Merry Bower)	
L.D.	(taught Guidance this year not SPHE course)	September 2024 - May 2025
R.D.	Bullying Behaviour for PP teachers	March 2022
	Managing Exam stress webinar	September 2023
	Overcoming Fatigue and Burnout: Energy Boosting Habits for Busy School leaders, Teachers and SNAs	October 2025
	An Introduction to Junior Cycle Social, Personal, Health Education Specification 2 day PLE	October 2025
G.B.	An Introduction to Junior Cycle Social, Personal, Health Education Specification 2 day PLE.	October 2025

9. Inclusion of Parents/Guardians:

Parents /Guardians are the primary educators of their children and their role in education concerning Relationships and Sexuality Education is seen by Coláiste na Mí as very important. Relevant sections of this RSE policy will be included in the Parent's information pack on enrolment to our Coláiste, in the student's Dialann and on the school's website.

A letter will be sent home informing parents/guardians prior to the teaching of the 6 RSE lessons. This letter will inform parents of the general content of the programme, links to online resources relating to the topics that will be covered will also be present on said letter and it will also instruct parents/guardians on procedures for withdrawing their child if they so wish.

A copy of this policy will be made available to any parent/guardian on request to the general office as well as being available online via the school's website.

9.1. Classroom Withdrawal:

Please note: Throughout the school year, subjects pertaining to relationships and sexuality are integrated into various classroom discussions. Throughout the school year, teachers will naturally

and organically integrate themes from relationships and sexuality education into their lessons, as many aspects of RSE overlap with the other three strands: making healthy choices, understanding myself and others, and emotional wellbeing. Topics specific to the RSE Strand at junior cycle, such as puberty, reproduction, personal hygiene, sexual orientation, gender identity and romantic relationships are generally addressed in a concentrated timeframe later in the year. This timing allows teachers to ensure a safe and comfortable classroom environment has been established.

9.2. Procedure for Withdrawal:

1. Should a parent or guardian decide to exempt their child or children from the SPHE/RSE programme, they are required to notify the school as soon as they receive their letter announcing the upcoming commencement of the RSE program in February in the upcoming weeks to the program. The school needs prior notice to ensure that appropriate accommodations can be made for the student.
2. If a parent or guardian decides to exempt their child from certain SPHE/RSE lessons, they should reach out to the relevant Year Head who can in turn reach out to the SPHE co-ordinator/class teacher. The SPHE coordinator will then engage with the parent or guardian to discuss the specific topics covered in the program.
3. After this conversation, parents or guardians must furnish the school with a letter detailing that they wish to be removed from these RSE lessons.
4. Students will then in turn be reorganised to sit in the class of their Year Head during the period of RSE during these weeks.

Please note:

1. Coláiste na Mí is unable to assume responsibility for any information from the SPHE/RSE lesson that students might share with their peers after the lesson has concluded.
2. Parents'/ guardians are encouraged to have a conversation with their child/children about being withdrawn from parts of the SPHE/RSE programme. This discussion can help ensure that they understand the reasons for the withdrawal, preventing any unexpected confusion or surprise should they be directed to a different location during those class times.

10. Ethical/Moral Considerations:

RSE is a complex area of the curriculum. Coláiste na Mí's RSE policy will provide guidance for teachers on the moral and ethical framework within which the programme will be taught. The boundaries of the RSE programme will be delivered with due deference to:

- (a) The age, maturity level of the students as well as any additional needs of the student

- (b) The school ethos
- (c) Limits of confidentiality, limits to discussions and questions.
- (d) RSE curriculum guidelines Issues include the following:

Issues include the following:

10.1. Answering Questions:

While it is important to create an environment in SPHE/RSE in which students can discuss issues openly, teachers may not be able to answer all questions asked by students and can set appropriate limits. Students may ask questions about issues which are not included in the curriculum. On these, and on all questions, teachers will use their professional judgment, guided by the age of the students, the RSE curriculum and the RSE policy for the school. Students should be made aware at the beginning of the RSE programme that asking personal questions of staff and peers is inappropriate and unacceptable. It is suggested that teachers might make available a “question box” in the classroom (or via appropriate iPad Application), into which students may place questions of an embarrassing nature to be dealt with anonymously and in the strictest confidence. If a teacher becomes concerned about a matter that has been raised they should inform/seek advice from the Principal/Deputy Principal.

10.2. Confidentiality:

While students should not be encouraged to disclose personal or private information in SPHE/RSE classes, there may be times when they do talk about their own lives. Confidentiality should be respected unless a teacher becomes aware that a student is at risk, in which case the appropriate action should be taken e.g. follow the procedures set down in the Child Protection Procedures and Guidelines for Post-Primary Schools (2011). Teachers will make themselves familiar with all the latest and relevant Acts and Guidelines: Children First Act 2015, Children First, National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017 etc.

In cases of under-age sexual activity, the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (2011) state: *‘In all cases where a school becomes aware of underage sexual intercourse the school shall take appropriate steps to inform the child’s parents. (2.1.6)’*

It is important that the students must be made aware of the limits of confidentiality and that teachers do not give unconditional guarantees of confidentiality.

Teachers may refer to the ground rules agreed at the start of their SPHE programme. Students must be aware that any incident may be conveyed to the Principal and possibly the parents /guardian if the Principal decides that it is in the best interests of the child. Teachers will inform students when the content of a conversation can no longer be kept confidential.

11. Topics to be Discussed and Descriptions

11.1. Sexual Activity:

RSE classes will inform students of the age of consent which, following the passage of the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act, 2006, is 17 years of age for both males and females. Contraception will be addressed in an age-appropriate and transparent manner. The discussion on STIs will be conducted in an age-appropriate manner, emphasising education rather than resorting to fear-inducing tactics. It is important to note that visuals of STIs will not be presented in the SPHE/RSE classroom setting.

11.2. Family Planning/Contraception:

There is a lesson on family planning in the RSE Senior Cycle Resource Materials on P77 and also in the “*TRUST*” pack. The RSE programme requires that young people are provided with information about methods of contraception, including Natural Family Planning. Age-appropriate information is already taught as part of the Junior Certificate science curriculum. Schools can use their discretion with regard to the age at which students receive any aspect of the RSE programme.

11.3. Sexual Orientation:

The post-primary RSE Curriculum Guidelines include the subject of sexual orientation at Junior and Senior Cycle. RSE training courses delivered by the SPHE Support Service provide teachers with DES endorsed teaching materials to support the teaching of this module.

Teachers do not promote any one sexual orientation as the only acceptable one for society. Therefore, it is inevitable and natural that same sex relationships will be discussed during RSE lessons. The *Equal Status Act 2000* and the *Equality Act 2004* prohibit discrimination across nine grounds, including sexual orientation. Consideration needs to be given to the messages that are conveyed if the subject of same sex relationships is not discussed in schools.

11.4. Abortion:

This topic will be dealt with in an age appropriate, open manner, looking at all aspects of the issues in a non-directive way.

11.5. Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs):

While awareness of STIs is one of the objectives of the Junior Cycle SPHE/RSE syllabus, STIs are mainly addressed in Senior Cycle. There is a lesson on STIs in the RSE Senior Cycle

Resource Materials on P103 and also in the “*TRUST*” pack. Given that rates of STI transmission are increasing, it is important that the subject is addressed in schools.

11.6. Sexting and Sexual Imagery:

Sexting means sending or receiving sexual messages, photos, or videos using a phone or the internet. Once an image is shared, it can be copied and spread without your permission. Sharing or keeping sexual images of anyone under 18 is illegal in Ireland, even if it is sent willingly.

Everyone has the right to say no and to feel safe and respected online.

11.7. Pornography:

By discussing these topics, students are equipped with the tools to recognise harmful behaviours, set boundaries, and make informed decisions regarding their online activities. Discussing these topics empower them with the knowledge needed to protect their emotional and mental wellbeing. Through discussions on the portrayal of sexuality in media and the impact of explicit content on relationships and self-esteem, students gain a deeper understanding of the potential consequences of engaging in these activities.

12. Practical Issues

- All students in the Junior cycle have one period of SPHE per week. RSE will be included as a module (minimum of 6 lessons) in the third term of school as part of their SPHE programme which will run from the end of February to mid-April (eg. **23rd February - April 17, 2026**) which will see students receive **6 x 58 minute** periods of RSE in line with the RSE curriculum.
- Students in Senior Cycle will receive a minimum of 6 weeks tuition in RSE as part of their SPHE programme.
- Content of 6 RSE lessons are in the SPHE text books used by each year group as well as available through the live links available on the Schemes of Work for each year group linking to shared and open resources.
- The size of the class groups will be determined by the Caomhnóir class.
- Boys and girls will be taught all aspects of RSE together.
- The boundaries of the RSE programme will be delivered with due deference to:
 - (a) The age of the students
 - (b) The school ethos
 - (c) Limits of confidentiality, limits to discussions and questions.

- (d) Ensuring that the RSE classroom is a safe place for all, including students and teachers.
- (e) RSE curriculum guidelines
 - Visiting speakers must be made aware of the schools RSE policy, Mission statement and the SPHE visitor guidelines as laid down by the Department of Education in circular [0023/2010](#) to secondary schools. Thus, classroom teachers must remain in the classroom with the students; parents should be consulted and made aware of visiting people and agencies. All programmes and events delivered by visitors and external agencies must use appropriate evidence-based methodologies with clear educational outcomes. Such programmes are best delivered by those specifically qualified to work with young people for whom the programmes are designed.
 - Provision will be made for students with special needs as laid down by the NCCA guidelines. To comply with these guidelines, it will be necessary for the class teacher to consult with the special needs co-ordinator, prior to the programme, to discuss any students with special needs and to ascertain how they can be supported throughout the programme.
 - Consideration and sensitivity must be given to the needs of students with special circumstances. Teachers are informed to consult with the relevant Yearhead with regard to students they may be concerned about prior to commencing the RSE lessons.

13. Implementation, Arrangements, Roles and Responsibilities:

The RSE Coordinator & Principle are assigned the role of coordinating the policy and spearheading the implementation of the policy as well as communicating this delivery to the SPHE Department through the mediums of Email, SOW, TPL opportunities, Department meetings and in particular the development of the Coláiste na Mí SPHE Teams page.

Teaching Staff will have direct responsibility for delivering the RSE programme at Junior Cycle and Senior Cycle.

Year Heads and Caomhnoirs have a Pastoral Care role in liaising with students, parents/guardians, Guidance Dept, Special Education Needs Co-ordinator and SPHE/RSE Coordinator.

14. Ratification & Communication:

When the finalised draft policy is ratified by the Board of Management, it becomes the Coláiste na Mí's agreed RSE Policy. A copy of the RSE policy will be emailed to all staff as well as being made available on the SPHE subject specification Teams page available to all staff under the

Policy folder, the entire teaching staff will familiarise themselves with the policy and make themselves aware of any changes implied in curriculum delivery.

Parents/guardians will be informed of the RSE Policy from the time of acceptance of the student to Coláiste na Mí.

A copy of the RSE policy will be available at all times in the General Office and on the school's Website.

15. Reviewing and Evaluating the Policy:

Ongoing review and evaluation will take place cognisance of changing information, guidelines, legislation and feedback from parents/guardians, students, teachers and others.

The policy will be revised as necessary in the light of such reviews and evaluation and within the framework of school planning.

The policy will be reviewed at 6 Week intervals or sooner if necessary.

Some practical indicators will be used to gauge the impact and effectiveness of the policy. Such indicators include the following:

- A student /teacher evaluation form may be given to some classes at the end of the RSE module.
- The range of resource material available to teachers.
- The in-service training availed of by teachers.
- Students' awareness of the policy
- Parents and Guardians awareness of the policy.
- Positive feedback is received from teachers, students, parents/guardians and members of the Board of Management.

16. Appendix: Dialann Insert



RSE in Coláiste na Mí

16.1. Context

The Education Act 1998 requires that schools should promote the social and personal development of students and provide health education for them. Section 4 of the Rules and Programme for Secondary schools requires schools to have an agreed policy for Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) and a suitable RSE programme in place for all students at both Junior and Senior cycle. At both Junior and Senior Cycle the RSE programme is delivered as part of Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE).

Schools are required to deliver all aspects of the RSE curriculum. This can be done within a context in which teaching of the programme is informed by the school's ethos and vision.

A letter will be sent home informing parents/guardians prior to the teaching of the 6 RSE lessons. This letter will inform parents of the general content of the programme, and it will also instruct parents/guardians on procedures for withdrawing their child if they so wish.

16.2. Vision of RSE

In this age of intense social media, the access to personal devices and added peer pressure from various media forms, students are vulnerable to forming false and ill-informed perceptions on Relationships, Sexuality and Human Reproduction. It is our belief in CNM that it is vital our students receive accurate, up to date and factual information about the natural development of humans as sexual beings. We promote the importance of developing positive, healthy, responsible and respectful relationships.

A full copy of the RSE policy will be available at all times on the school's Website.

17. Resources

17.1. Junior Cycle:

- NCCA Toolkit of Resources
- SPHE ‘You’ve Got This!’ Series of SPHE Books (Junior Cycle)
- Webwise ‘Lockers’ Resource
- Webwise ‘BinCtrl’ Resource
- Webwise ‘Connected’ Resource
- Webwise ‘The Respect Effect’ Resource
- B4uDecide Resource
- University of Galway ‘Activating Social Empathy’
- Planet Youth – Sleep Lessons
- BodyWhys #morethanase selfie
- HSE SPHE Lessons

17.2. Senior Cycle

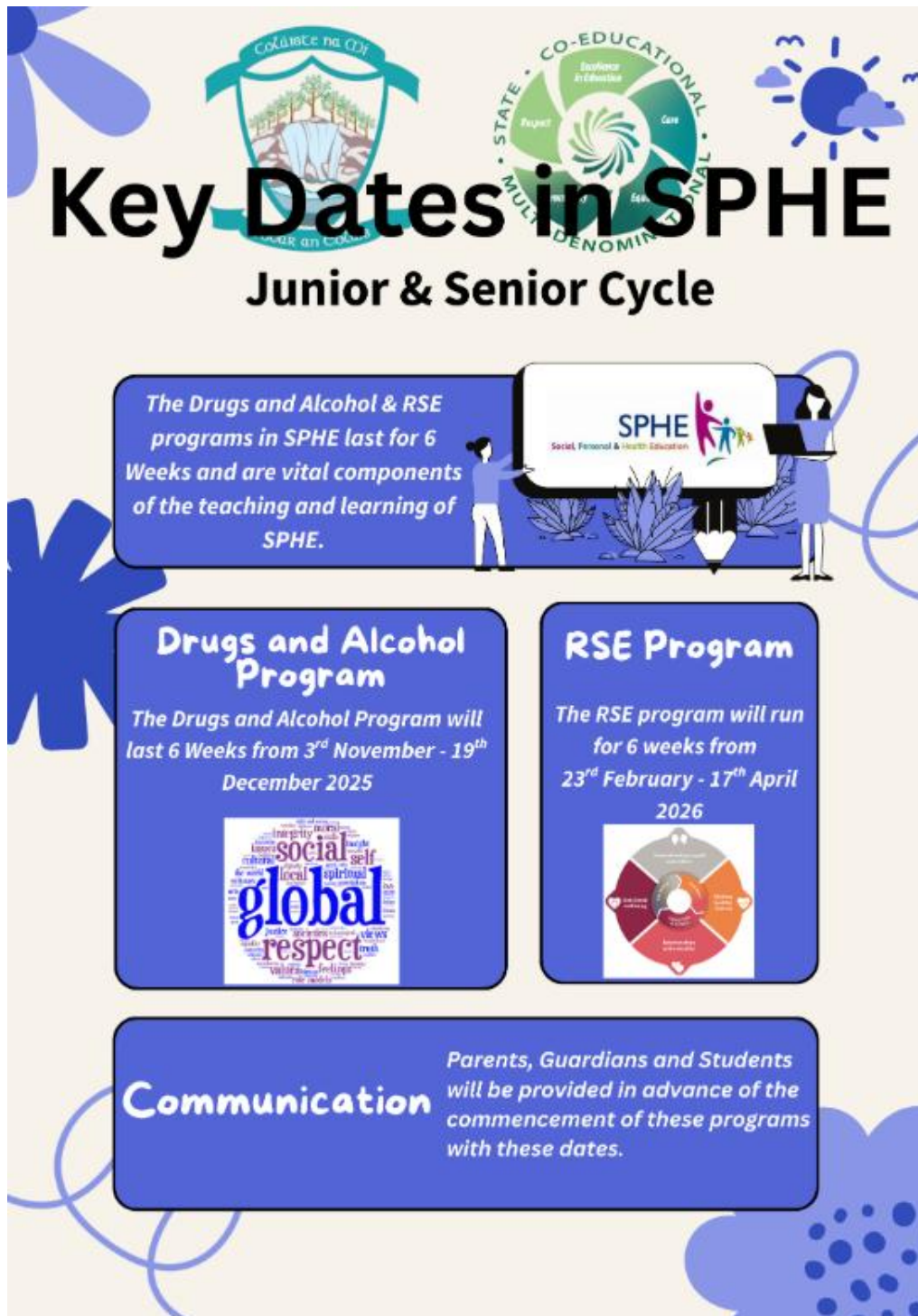
Senior SPHE class textbook.

- Some of these resources include:
- B4U Decide Resource Materials
- GLEN ‘BEING LGBT IN SCHOOL’
Coláiste na Mí RSE Policy

- Resource Materials for RSE: Senior Cycle (Dept of Education)
- Short Course Social, Personal & Health Education Specification for Junior Cycle
<https://www.pdst.ie/sites/default/files/catalogue-of-resources-for-post-primary-schools.pdf>
www.belongto.org
www.sphenetwork.ie/resources/
- NCCA Toolkit of Resources
- Mindout – Mental Health Resource
- Active Consent
- ConsentED
- Headstrong Mental Health Resources

Communications

Key Dates in SPHE Poster



The poster features a central title 'Key Dates in SPHE Junior & Senior Cycle' in large black font. Above the title are three logos: the Coláiste na Mí logo, a circular 'CO-EDUCATIONAL' logo with 'Excellence in Education' and 'Project', and a sun logo with the number '3'. Below the title, a blue box contains text about the 6-week duration of the Drugs and Alcohol & RSE programs. To the right of this box is an illustration of a person pointing at a whiteboard with the SPHE logo. Below this, two separate boxes detail the 'Drugs and Alcohol Program' (3rd Nov - 19th Dec 2025) and the 'RSE Program' (23rd Feb - 17th Apr 2026), each with a small graphic. At the bottom, a blue box titled 'Communication' states that parents, guardians, and students will be notified in advance.

Key Dates in SPHE

Junior & Senior Cycle

The Drugs and Alcohol & RSE programs in SPHE last for 6 Weeks and are vital components of the teaching and learning of SPHE.

Drugs and Alcohol Program

The Drugs and Alcohol Program will last 6 Weeks from 3rd November - 19th December 2025

RSE Program

The RSE program will run for 6 weeks from 23rd February - 17th April 2026

Communication

Parents, Guardians and Students will be provided in advance of the commencement of these programs with these dates.

RSE Program Letter



Dear Parent/Guardian,

We wish to inform you of the **6 week module** on the SPHE curriculum in RSE, for all year groups.

 *Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) helps students develop the skills needed for wellbeing, healthy relationships and informed decision-making. Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) is a core element of SPHE.*

Students will receive six timetabled RSE classes delivered from **23rd February to 17th April 2026**. We encourage parents and guardians to be aware of the RSE programme content. Some useful resources can be found at:

1. <https://www.sexualwellbeing.ie/>
2. <https://b4udecide.ie/>

In line with our Relationships and Sexuality Education Policy, you may request that your child does not participate in this RSE component. Any such request should be made in writing to the relevant Year Head by the 13th of February 2026, to allow alternative arrangements to be made for your son/daughter. If no request is received by the date above, students will take part as scheduled.

Yours sincerely,
Máistir C Byrne



Drugs and Alcohol Program Letter



Imetb
Bord Oideachais agus
Oiliúna Lú agus na Mí
Louth and Meath Education
and Training Board

Re: SPHE – Drugs and Alcohol Education Module

Dear Parent/Guardian,

I am writing to inform you about an important component of our **Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE)** Programme – the **Drugs and Alcohol Education Program**.

SPHE is a core part of the national post-primary curriculum and plays a vital role in supporting the personal development, health, and well-being of our students. One key element of this program is helping students make informed, responsible choices around the use of substances, including alcohol, tobacco, and drugs.

As part of the SPHE programme, **each year group from First to Sixth Year** will participate in classes focusing on **Drugs and Alcohol Education**. These classes are designed to:

- Provide accurate, age-appropriate information on drugs, alcohol, and related issues
- Encourage students to explore attitudes and values around substance use
- Develop students' decision-making, assertiveness, and refusal skills
- Highlight the impact of substance use on personal health, relationships, and society

This module will be delivered from **November 3rd - December 19th** over a series of **six timetabled class periods** as part of the regular SPHE timetable (One class per week).

As the primary educators of your children, we encourage you to discuss these topics at home and engage with the material being covered in class. You may find the following websites useful for accessing up-to-date, trustworthy resources:

- <https://www.drugs.ie>
- <https://www.hse.ie/wellbeing>

If you have any questions or concerns, or if you would like to review the content of the programme in more detail, please feel free to contact the relevant **Year Head** of the school.

RSE (RELATIONSHIPS & SEXUALITY EDUCATION)

OUR SCHOOL BELIEF

 We teach:

-  Kind relationships
-  Respect for others
-  Feeling good about yourself

 We help students:

- Feel confident
 - Make safe choices
 - Understand their bodies and feelings
-

WHAT IS RSE?

 Learning about:

-  Friendships
 -  Relationships
 -  Your body
 -  Feelings
 -  Making safe choices
-

WHAT STUDENTS LEARN

- ✓ Respect others
 - ✓ Be kind and caring
 - ✓ Understand feelings
 - ✓ Make good decisions
 - ✓ Build friendships
-

PARENTS

- ✓ You are the most important teacher
 - ✓ We work together with you
 - ✓ You will be told before lessons start
 - 👉 You can:
 - Talk to the school
 - Ask questions
 - Choose to withdraw your child
-

ASKING QUESTIONS

- 💬 Students can ask questions
 - 📦 Use a question box (private)
 - ✓ Teachers will answer safely and kindly
 - 🚫 No personal questions about others
-

PRIVACY & SAFETY

- 👉 We keep things private
- ! BUT if a student is at risk:
 - School must help
 - Adults must be told to keep you safe

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

-  Age of consent = 17 years
 -  Online behaviour must be safe
 -  Some actions can be against the law
-

SUPPORT IN SCHOOL

-  Teachers listen
 -  Support is given
 -  Guidance counsellor helps
 -  Care team supports you
-

HOW RSE IS TAUGHT

-  SPHE classes
 -  Junior & Senior cycle lessons
 -  Trusted teachers
 -  Boys and girls together
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OUR SCHOOL VALUES

-  Be kind
 -  Respect others
 -  Be responsible
 -  Stay safe
-

RSE: Important Information

RSE lessons help you learn about relationships, growing up and keeping yourself safe and healthy.



ASKING QUESTIONS

It is important to ask questions and learn.

- ✓ Teachers will do their best to answer your questions.
- ✓ Sometimes a question may be outside the lesson or not suitable for your age.
- ✓ Teachers will use their professional judgement.
- ✓ Do not ask personal questions about teachers or other students.



If a teacher is worried about something you say, they may get help to keep you safe.



CONFIDENTIALITY & SAFETY

Your privacy is important.

We keep things confidential unless we believe you or someone else is at risk.



If you are at risk, a teacher must get help.

Teachers may need to talk to:

- The Principal
- The Deputy Principal
- Your parents/guardians
- Support services



Teachers cannot promise to keep every secret. This is to keep you safe.

AGE OF CONSENT

17



The age of consent in Ireland is 17 years old.



This is the same for males and females.

FAMILY PLANNING / CONTRACEPTION

Older students will learn about:



Family planning



Contraception



Natural family planning



Information will be accurate, age appropriate and factual.

SEXUAL ORIENTATION



We learn about different types of relationships and sexual orientations.



- ♥ Everyone deserves respect.
- ♥ No one should be treated unfairly.
- ♥ We support equality, kindness and inclusion.



If you are exploring your identity, our Care Team is here to support you.

SEXUAL ORIENTATION CONTINUED...



We do not promote one sexual orientation as the only acceptable one.



Talking about same sex relationships helps correct false ideas and reduces prejudice.



The law protects everyone. The Equal Status Act 2000 and Equality Act 2004 protect people from discrimination.



No student should experience bullying, embarrassment or isolation. Support is available from the Care Team.



ABORTION

This topic will be discussed in an age-appropriate, open and respectful way.

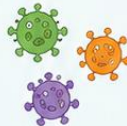


We look at all aspects of the topic in a non-directive way.

SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTIONS (STIs)



STIs are infections that can be passed on through sexual contact.



- ✓ We learn about STIs, how to protect yourself and where to get help.
- ✓ Most of this learning happens in Senior Cycle.
- ✓ It is important to learn accurate information to stay healthy and safe.



REMEMBER



Be Safe



Be Respectful



Be Kind



Be Informed



Make Good Choices



RSE is about helping you understand yourself and others, build healthy relationships and grow into confident, responsible and caring young adults.



We are here to support you. You are not alone. ♥