



## **Beech Hill College**

### **Relationships and Sexuality Education Policy**

Enacted after consultation between staff, parent representatives, Principal and Board of Management.

#### **A. School**

Beech Hill College is an all –inclusive, co –educational democratically administered second level College under Cavan & Monaghan Education and Training Board (CMETB).

We provide a quality learning environment within which our students can achieve their full potential as competent citizens in today’s modern society.

Our students participate in comprehensive courses of learning incorporating both formal and informal curricular activities in a safe and caring environment.

We are committed to a partnership role within our wider community involving a mutual exchange of resources and expertise.

Our students are challenged and engage in stimulus to promote their intellectual, moral, emotional, spiritual, social and physical development.

In Beech Hill College we encourage every student to be the best they can be.

#### **B. Our Philosophy**

Our school welcomes and celebrates the individuality and diversity of our student population. We seek to create an environment where all students are valued and supported. Everyone in our school community is encouraged to recognise the enrichment that this brings to school life.

We give students the opportunity to explore formal and informal curricular opportunities. In addition to formal subjects which are assessed within an examination context we also provide opportunities for students to explore issues relating to value formation, Social

Personal and Health education, Religious Education and Relationship and Sexuality education.

Our code of behaviour is formulated in consultation with stake holders and is framed within the context of an overriding principle of respect for oneself and respect for others. Bullying of all forms is rejected. This specifically includes the following types of bullying

- Cyberbullying
- Identity based bullying
- Homophobic and Transgender based bullying
- Relational Bullying
- Sexual bullying
- Bullying related to SEN or disability.

### **C. Definition of Relationships and Sexuality Education**

“Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) is a lifelong process of acquiring knowledge and understanding and of developing attitudes, beliefs and values about sexual identity, relationships and intimacy. This education is delivered consciously and unconsciously by parents, teachers, peers, adults and the media”  
(Department of Education)

We recognise that the programme is spiral and developmental in nature and age appropriate in content and methodology. We are mindful of the importance of positive framing Relationship and Sexuality Education. We understand that this is a lifelong process and therefore a broad interpretation of the meaning of sexual expression and sexual values is necessary

### **D. Relationships and Sexuality Education within a whole school context**

A whole school approach is necessary to support the delivery of RSE in the school. While delivery of such subjects as SPHE, Science, Biology etc. can support the overall programme all staff play a role in supporting the objectives of the programme and creating a positive and inclusive environment for students. We are careful to ensure that the hidden curriculum is underpinned by, and reflective of our school philosophy

### **E. Aims of Relationship and Sexuality Education.**

- To help students understand and develop friendships and relationships.
- To promote a positive attitude towards one’s own sexuality and the sexuality of others.
- To understand the legal context for making decisions around ones sexual expression
- To have a clear understanding of consent

- To support students to develop healthy attitudes and values towards their sexuality and to recognise the attitudes and values of others.
- To support students in setting boundaries and being assertive in line with their personal values.
- To provide clear, accurate and objective information.
- To promote an understanding of the importance of sexual health.

## **F. Guidelines for the management and organisation of relationships and Sexuality Education in Beech Hill College.**

**1. Staffing & Delivery:** Arrangements regarding the teaching of the program and deployment of the staff will be made by the Principal. Teachers will follow content agreed with management.

- Junior Cycle – RSE is delivered for 10 weeks during SPHE classes
- Senior Cycle - RSE is delivered for 10 weeks during RE
- Leaving Certificate Applied – RSE is delivered for 10 weeks during Social Education

**2. Informing and Involving Parents:** Parents are the primary educators of their children and their role in education relating to Relationships and Sexuality education is very important. A copy of this policy will be available on line or by request to the school office.

**3. Confidentiality:** RSE will be conducted within a context of classroom respect and confidentiality. However limits apply to confidentiality where there is a concern about child safety and welfare and this will be explained to students. Child protection guidelines and protocols will be followed in line with Department of education procedures and Beech Hill College child protection policy.

**4. Withdrawing pupils from RSE:** The school recognises the right of parents to withdraw their children from RSE lessons. Should a parent wish to do so they will be invited in to discuss this with school management and their wishes will be facilitated.

**5. Use of Visiting Speakers:** Outside speakers will only be permitted where the information they present is in line with the overall aims and objectives of our RSE policy and programme. A teacher from Beech Hill College will be present at all times.

**6. Heteronormativity:** In line with our Mission Statement, school philosophy and equality legislation the RSE programme will be delivered in a context of supporting students regardless of gender identity or sexual orientation.

**7. Contraception, Fertility & Sexually Transmitted Infections:** Will be addressed so as to ensure that students are well informed and capable of making decisions which are appropriate, healthy and safe for them in the context of life long development.

**8. SEN:** It is recognised that students with Special Educational Needs might need more support in understanding the programme. We believe it is important to support them in

achieving this understanding and are committed to providing the resources to help them do so.

**G. On- Going support, Development and Review.**

**1. Training:** Beech Hill College recognises the importance of staff having appropriate and ongoing training to address the issues concerned in a sensitive and skilled manner.

The school will facilitate teachers in obtaining expert training in this area bearing in mind overall budgetary frameworks.

**2. Resources:** Beech Hill College is committed to providing appropriate RSE teaching materials which have been identified by staff and approved by management.

**3. Monitoring evaluating and reviewing the programme:** We are committed to ongoing evaluation of the efficacy of the programme. Specifically this will be done through

A) Pupil Feedback

B) Staff Planning and Professional Conversations

**Ratification**

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management of Beech Hill College on

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**Signature of the Chairperson of the Board of Management**

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