

St. Eoghan's P.S. Moneyneena



Health Education Policy

Reviewed February 2017

In St Eoghan's school our central aim is to provide a caring and effective education in which each pupil will be encouraged to reach full physical, moral, cultural, intellectual, emotional and social development. We feel that Health Education will make an important contribution to the overall development of each child.

The Governors, Principal and Staff of St Eoghan's School believe that Health Education is the process whereby we ensure children are aware of the choices leading to a healthy lifestyle and encourage them to develop as much self-esteem and independence as possible. Under Article 24 UNCRC:

All children have the right to the best health care possible, safe water to drink, nutritious food, a clean and safe environment, and information to help them stay well.

RATIONALE FOR HEALTH EDUCATION IN ST EOGHAN'S SCHOOL

We believe that the school has a responsibility to work with parents to encourage young people to develop a healthy lifestyle, to give them the opportunity to form clear values and to develop responsible attitudes with regard to health.

Through Health Education we can equip young people to make informed decisions about health. We can also adopt a preventative approach in terms of young peoples' health.

St Eoghan's Primary School aims to:

'Preparing today's children to be tomorrow's answer'

St. Eoghan's Primary School, Moneyneena promotes high achievement and learning for life by working with children to:

- Grow and live in the Catholic Faith.
- Develop enquiring minds and a spirit of curiosity.
- Achieve their full potential in all curriculum areas, embracing opportunities and developing skills necessary for our ever-changing world.
- Celebrate their self-worth and realise their abilities, achievements, strengths and personal preferences.
- Instil in pupils a love for life-long learning by motivating pupils to become independent learners.
- Recognise and respect the feelings and attitudes of others.
- Take ownership of their environment both locally and globally.

We believe that each child will achieve success through experiencing:

- A broad, balanced and challenging curriculum.
- A stimulating and motivating learning environment.
- A varied programme of extra curricular activities and school visits.
- An ethos that is supportive, encouraging and friendly.
- An effective partnership between school, home and the wider community.
- A variety of teaching approaches and strategies to meet the learning needs and styles of pupils.
- Access to a range of varied and up-to-date resources.

We demonstrate our commitment to working as a learning community by:

- Ongoing self-evaluation to improve on our previous best.
- Working collaboratively with all our stakeholders.

We feel that the following paragraph headings embrace the significant areas of Health Education and that the paragraphs which follow contain important principles which have major implications for the kind of education offered to our children.

- 1 *The School Environment/School Ethos*
- 2 *Staff*
- 3 *Parents*
- 4 *Present Youth Culture/Pupils*
- 5 *The Curriculum*
- 6 *Teaching Methods*
- 7 *Healthy Eating and Drinking Policy*
- 8 *Heartstart*
- 9 *Compulsory Nutritional Standards*
- 10 *Positive playground experiences and Prefect System*
- 11 *Health Promoting School*
- 12 *Outside Agencies*
- 13 *Evaluation*
- 14 *Additional Policies*

1. The School Environment/School Ethos

Health Education should be reinforced within the wider school environment where all aspects of school life reflect the positive health messages promoted in the classroom. In so far as is possible, the school building will be kept clean, tidy and safe and classroom appearance planned to stimulate pupils' interest. The concept of the health-promoting school should be applied; therefore the Board of Governors, staff and relevant agencies will work together in a planned way to promote the health of everyone in the school community. This approach should include: building good relationships, promoting equal opportunity, shared responsibility and partnership, promoting self-esteem and reducing stress for pupils and staff alike. Adherence to such criteria should help to ensure that young people are taught in an environment where there is maximum opportunity to develop a healthy lifestyle.

2. Staff

Health Education should be taught by all class teachers. It is therefore important that all teachers are committed to the concept of the health-promoting school and that they are regularly updated on new initiatives, findings and strategies in Health Education. Where possible, staff should be given training in specialist areas of the subject e.g. drugs education. On occasions teachers may involve outside speakers to complement the planned programme for Health Education.

3. Parents

Parents have a vital role in encouraging and contributing to the promotion of good health. Good home/school links recognise the important protective effects which strong social support networks provide in terms of children's health. Pupils should be encouraged to communicate with their parents about emotional and health matters, as research shows that this is an important factor in young people's feeling of well-being and self-esteem.

4. Present Youth Culture/Pupils

Health Education should take account of the present youth culture within which our pupils are growing up. It should recognise the pressures exerted on young people by youth culture and modern living.

5. The Curriculum

Promotion of health is an essential strand of the Revised Curriculum in P.D.M.U. Health Education should be coordinated, planned and integrated into the school development plan. It should be evenly balanced in content - there should not be an over-emphasis on knowledge, understanding and cognitive skills at the expense of attitudes, values and interpersonal skills. It should be accessible to all pupils and take account of their emotional, social and physical development.

6. Teaching Methods

Health Education should use classroom methodology which emphasises child-centred activities and a participatory approach. It should include all those planned or incidental learning opportunities which can be used to develop behaviour which is conducive to good health. It should involve the planned development of pupils' personal and social needs. It should contribute to the improvement of pupils' communication skills. As research has shown that the level of such skills influences young peoples' self-esteem and can also reduce the likelihood of taking cigarettes, alcohol and drugs. It should provide opportunities for pupils to develop responsible attitudes and the knowledge and skills necessary to make informed decisions in matters relating to health.

7. Healthy Eating and Drinking Policy

St. Eoghan's Primary School aims to present consistent healthy eating and drinking messages through:-

- The taught curriculum
- The provision and promotion of healthy food and drink during the school day and on school trips.
- The school environment

Why is a Healthy Eating Policy needed?

A healthy diet is one of the best ways of maintaining young people's health, both now and in the future. Recent research has shown that the diets of the

young people are not meeting healthy eating recommendations for optimum growth and development.

8 Heartstart

Most teachers in St Eoghan's P. S. are qualified Heartstart trainers. The programme is co-ordinated by Mr P. Diamond. There is a Heartstart After Schools Club in Term 3. Each year a number of KS2 pupils successfully complete Heartstart accreditation.

9. Compulsory Nutritional Standards

Our school canteen has a healthy approach to all food sold either at break or lunchtime. The cook in charge Mrs E. Watson has attended training and meets regularly with EA (North Eastern Region) staff and other cooks in Cluster Meetings devoted to promoting good nutritional standards in schools.

10. Positive Playgrounds and Buddy Systems

The school is committed to providing a safe and exciting outdoor playground environment for all children. Currently we have 2 playgrounds one for P1-3 and the other for P4-7. P7 pupils are trained as Prefects and they set up games and activities for younger children. They also care for those children in need of a friend through the designated 'friendship stop'.

11. Health Promoting School

St Eoghan's P.S. is a Health Promoting School. Health Promoting School initiative aims to enable schools to provide an environment where the physical and mental well being, health and safety of staff and pupils are supported in partnership with family, community and external agencies.

Health Promoting School aims to develop good practice and in St Eoghan's we have developed policies, practices and structures that underpin and facilitate our health promotion programme. The whole school is involved in the process and it features work in 3 key areas:

- The ethos and environment of the school.
- The quality of Teaching and Learning (in health-related areas of the curriculum).

□ The quality of management (including links with the family, community and health agencies).

12. Outside Agencies

Health Education should be facilitated by outside agencies which share the school's approach to Health Education and be taught by speakers who can communicate at a level appropriate to the emotional and intellectual development of the pupils. It should be reinforced by appropriate follow-up work after a visit of the outside speaker.

13. Evaluation

Health Education should be designed to inform teaching programmes. It should include strategies for pupil self-evaluation. Teachers should evaluate their own delivery of the Health Education programme.

The Role of the Health Education coordinator

The Health Education coordinator (Mr P. Diamond) will give Health Education a high profile in school. He will ensure that the school health policy is being implemented and reviewed as the need arises. He will in so far as is possible ensure that all aspects of the wider school community are in harmony with the objectives of Health Education and promote the health and well-being of staff and pupils.

Through liaison with education and health professionals he will be able to access up-to-date resources and methodologies which would then be disseminated to appropriate staff.

Organisation

The Health Education programme will be delivered by each teacher across the curriculum, but more specifically in P.D.M.U.

Signed: _____

Chairman – Mr Brian McGuigan

Date: _____