

# **R.S.E. Policy. - S.P.H.E.** **Dunderrow N.S.**

*(S.P.H.E – Social, Personal, Health Education.)*

*(R.S.E. – Relationships and Sexuality Education.)*

## **Introductory Statement**

The school has a responsibility to put in place an R.S.E. policy as part of the wider, Social, Personal + Health Education strand of the curriculum.

R.S.E. is part of Social, Personal and Health Education. It provides a cross-curricular structured programme, which addresses the needs of the whole child. It provides children with structured opportunities to develop the knowledge, attitudes, values, beliefs and practical skills needed to establish and sustain healthy personal relationships as children and, subsequently as adults. It specifically addresses growth, development, relationships with others, development of self-esteem, the meaning of human sexuality, relevant personal and social skills.

## **Relationships to School Philosophy and Ethos**

The school ethos and philosophy affirms and supports close links between school and home. The process of introducing an R.S.E programme was initiated in Dunderrow N.S. in 2007 when a policy was drafted by members of staff, members of B.O.M, and members of Parents Association charged with setting parameters for the organization and management of R.S.E. in the school.

Parents are encouraged to play a meaningful role in the R.S.E. policy formation, through discussion, thus allowing for full representation on the drafting and the ratification of the finished product in conjunction with the teaching staff principal and B.O.M. We must remember that--

- *The school will seek to communicate the Christian vision of human life and human relationships.*
- *The school recognizes that, in the area of R.S.E. its role is subsidiary to that of parents.*
- *It will reflect the school's spirit of respect and tolerance of all families and children in an inclusive and Christian manner.*
- *The dignity, privacy and modesty of each individual child and family will always be respected.*
- *Parents have the right to withhold their children from participating in R.S.E classes.*

## **Rationale**

The need for this policy arises from our schools obligation to provide for all the needs of the student body and respond appropriately to sensitive and emotive issues relating to emerging sexuality.

## **Aims of R.S.E. Programme.**

- R.S.E. aims to help children learn, at home and at school, about their own development and about their friendships and relationships with others.
- To foster in the child a sense of care and respect for oneself and others and an appreciation of the dignity of every human being by:
  - Developing a good self-image.
  - Promoting respect for oneself and others.
  - Fostering a healthy attitude to human sexuality.
  - Providing the children with age-appropriate information.
- To develop all aspects of the individual, including the aesthetic, creative, critical, cultural, emotional, intellectual, moral, physical, social and spiritual development for personal and family life, for working life, for living in the community and for leisure.

## **The organisation and management of RSE in this school.**

- The R.S.E. programme will be facilitated in three ways within the school:
  - In the context of a positive school climate and atmosphere.
  - As part of a timetabled S.P.H.E. programme.
  - On an integrated cross-curricular basis.

ie. English, Maths, Environmental Studies, Music, Drama, Art.

A wide variety of teaching strategies will be used - including:

Stories and poems  
Classroom discussion  
Group work.  
Games.  
Art activities.  
Visitors to the classroom.  
Quiet time.  
Videos.  
Educational drama.  
Role-play.

Occasionally the school may invite speakers into the school to teach certain aspects of this programme.

## **Parental/Guardian Involvement:**

The RSE programme acknowledges parents/guardians as the primary educators of their children and provides assistance to teachers in their supportive role. Parents/guardians will have access to resource materials. Opportunities will be afforded to parents/guardians to engage with their children on the content at various stages throughout the programme. Each theme will have worksheet activities, home school links etc. that invites the participation of parents

## **Guidelines for Management**

Parents have the primary responsibility for educating their children in sexual matters. The school R.S.E. programme acts as a support only to parents, and parents retain the right to withdraw their children from classes. The programme is taught within the ethos of the school and contemporary issues/topics are dealt with by the teacher at a level appropriate to the age and stage of development of pupils within a moral and spiritual framework. Teachers are present at all times when guest speakers are visiting a class.

## **Child Protection**

The school follows the D.E.S. child protection guidelines and has a Child Protection policy with the Principal as Designated Liaison Person. In cases of disclosure; the D.L.P. will follow the procedures as set out in Children First.

## **Teacher Choice/Staff Development**

The teacher's right to choose is enshrined in the policy and if teachers do not wish to teach specific aspects of the programme or require additional resources, a suitable speaker will be employed by the B.O.M... The teacher may need to plan the specific material to be covered and should be present during the talk

- ***In fifth/ sixth class the section on sex education, changes from boy to man / girl to woman and puberty will be covered by an outside expert. Parents will be invited to participate with their children in this section.***

## **Relationships & Sexuality Education-Table of contents**

- **Topics covered up to 2<sup>nd</sup> class include:-**
  - Naming bodily parts using correct terminology.(1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> class)
  - Bodily changes during growth and development.
  - Making and keeping friends.
  - Making age appropriate choices.
  - Appreciating family life.

- Recognizing and expressing feelings.
- Self care, hygiene, diet, exercise and sleep (link with P.E. Healthy Eating Policy and S.P.H.E.)
- Expressing opinions and listening to others.

- **Topics covered from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> Classes include:-**

- Bodily changes.
- Healthy eating, personal hygiene, exercise.
- Keeping safe.
- Expressing feelings.
- Family relationships.
- Making healthy and responsible decisions.
- Forming friendships.
- The wonder of new life-baby in the womb(3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup>)
- Reproduction, conception (5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Classes-parents will be invited to attend with their children a discussion/information evening given by Ms .Margaret Dinneen.This can be followed up with further discussion at home and in class.

### **See lesson plans for all classes**

Teachers do not cover topics such as contraception and same sex friendships. Children who ask questions in class on content outside the curriculum are talked to individually and discreetly. Parents are usually informed and asked to talk to their child.

Circle time is used extensively in Junior Classes to build confidence and address fears. Boys and girls are taught together in all classes. Senior pupils are treated in a mature way and are encouraged to discuss issues that arise with their parents. The Alive O 8 resource materials are used extensively in Senior Classes.

## **The Stay Safe and Walk Tall programmes.**

The Stay Safe programme is taught to all classes

As part of the education act each school is obliged to teach a “Safety and Protection” programme (Giving children safety skills).

The personal safety programme adopted by Dunderrow N.S. is the “Stay Safe” programme. The programme aims to teach children safety skills so they can look after themselves in situations that could be dangerous and upsetting.

This programme will be delivered on year two of the overall S.P.H.E. programme.

### **Review and Assessment:**

#### **Evaluation**

Teacher observation.

Inventory of what needs to be changed.

Ensuring all strands are covered.

Teacher designed tasks and tests and self-evaluation.

Community feedback.

This policy will be reviewed, in not less than three years and not more than five years. The school teaching staff will carry out continual assessment. This assessment will involve:

Teacher observation.

Teacher designed tasks and tests.

#### **Roles and Responsibilities**

The whole school community of B.O.M., staff, pupils and parents play a key role in the formulation and implementation of the plan.

## **Ratification**

This policy was ratified by the B.O.M. in April 2007.

## **Implementation**

Implementation is on a phased basis from May 2007

## **Review**

This policy will be reviewed in 2011

**S.P.H.E. / R.S.E. programme content is available for viewing at school.**

***This policy has been ratified by the B.O.M on-26-04-2007----***

***Signed –Joseph O Leary---***  
***Chairperson B.O.M***