

<p>ST FARNAN'S POST PRIMARY SCHOOL, PROSPEROUS</p> <p>RELATIONSHIPS AND SEXUALITY EDUCATION POLICY</p>
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OUR SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY

1. Education may be defined as the ongoing social, cultural, physical, mental and moral development of each person, leading them to be fully human, fully alive, and to make maximum use of their potential.
2. As a school, we aim at being a community whose values are communicated through the interpersonal relationships of pupils and staff, and through the commitment of each member of the school community to the life of the school. In this community interaction we hope that the pupil will develop as a person in soul, mind and body, and in the light of well-defined truths and values.
3. As teachers we must be watchful that the dehumanisation of life in a technological and materialistic world does not obscure our vision of the dignity of each individual person, regardless of his or her ability. More and more is being demanded of school nevertheless we hope that each of our pupils will be enabled to live happy and satisfying lives while still struggling with their development.
4. We will endeavour to prepare pupils, not alone to make maximum use of their school time, but also to prepare them for life of work, or the lack of it, for leisure and for a changing society, which demands a capacity for adaptation and adjustment.
5. We will prepare pupils for examinations and help them to achieve grades, which will reflect their true ability, realising their importance of academic qualifications for admission to further education and vocational training.
6. We encourage full participation in pastoral care programmes and extra-curricular events, conscious of their importance in human development; to this end we have introduced SPHE which includes RSE.

7. We recognise the important role of parents in education and hope to involve them in the school whenever possible. We will also try to be aware of home problems and act in a sympathetic and supportive manner towards pupils in such circumstances.
8. We recognise the importance of the community in which the pupil lives. We will seek to involve the pupils in development of their local communities, while making use of community resources for the development of the pupils.

DEFINITION OF SPHE

SPHE provides students with an opportunity to develop the skills and competencies to learn about themselves and others, and to make informed decisions about their health, personal lives and social development.

This course should enable the students to participate as active and responsible adults in the personal and social dimensions of society and to make responsible decisions, which respect their dignity and that of others.

DEFINITION OF RSE

Relationships and sexuality are key elements of a healthy social and personal development in all our lives but particularly in the life of the adolescent. RSE will provide young people with information and skills to evaluate critically the wide range of information, opinions, attitudes and values offered today, in order that they make positive, responsible choices about themselves and the way they live their lives.

Relationships give the opportunity to love and be loved, to share thoughts and feelings and to belong.

Relationships can range in intensity/closeness from parents or close family to acquaintances.

Sexuality is not simply about sex. Sexuality includes all aspects of the human person that relate to being male and female and is subject to change and development throughout life. Sexuality is an integral part of the human personality and has biological, psychological, emotional, cultural, social and spiritual dimensions.

RELATIONSHIP OF RSE TO SPHE

RSE will be taught as part of a wider programme SPHE within the school.

SPHE will be offered to students for one class per week through out the year, six classes of which will be RSE.

SPHE is age appropriate in content and methodology. The RSE programme follows the same pattern, and will be taught as part of SPHE.

Apart from these specific lessons, SPHE covers other areas, which would be pertinent to the development of a healthy attitude to sexuality in oneself and ones relationships with others. SPHE deals with issues such as self-esteem, assertiveness, communication and decision making skills -all of which can contribute to the effectiveness of the RSE programme.

THE AIMS OF OUR RSE PROGRAMME

1. To help young people develop healthy friendships and relationships.
2. To promote an understanding of sexuality.
3. To promote a healthy attitude to sexuality and relationships.
4. To promote knowledge of and respect for reproduction.
5. To enable young people to develop healthy attitudes and values towards their sexuality in a moral, spiritual and social framework. (See paragraph 3 in important points to note).

THE MANAGEMENT AND ORGANISATION OF RSE

IN OUR SCHOOL

As already stated RSE will be part of a wider programme of social, personal and health education.

The learning process in RSE for our students has already begun through the 'Stay Safe' programme at primary level. We will continue the process informally through certain subjects as outlined and more formally through RSE.

Informally, the school philosophy will also convey many aspects of RSE to pupils.

The school principal and staff will decide the practical day-to-day organisation of the teaching of the programme. To date, sample lessons have been drawn up and published by the Department of Education and Science for all classes from first year to sixth year.

WHAT THE SCHOOL CURRENTLY PROVIDES

Many of the topics outlined in the SPHE programme are currently covered within the school, through the following:

- a) Religion -friendship, communication, relationships, sex ed. Substance abuse, self esteem, social questions;
- b) Science/biology -physical ed. human growth and development, physical health, sex education;
- c) Home Economics -physical and emotional health, personal hygiene, personal safety, decision making, substance abuse, relationships, marriage, human growth and development;
- d) LCA: Social education -substance abuse" growth and development, relationships, sexuality;

- e) CSPE- Self-esteem, family relationships, community and peer pressure;
- f) PE-body care, physical hygiene;
- g) Career Guidance and counselling;
- h) Informal provisions -Counsellor- free service to students
 -Speakers-on related topics.

IMPORTANT POINTS TO NOTE

Details of the RSE programme will be distributed to each household in advance of classes. If parents feel uncomfortable with any aspect of the RSE programme, they can discuss the concerns with the class teacher or principal.

It is the parents right to withdraw a student from any class lesson if he or she still feels that the topic of the day is unsuitable for the said student.

The caring inclusive, tolerant ethos of the school will ensure that the discussion of such topics as marriage, separation, divorce, teenage pregnancy etc., will be dealt with sensitively and sympathetically.

At all times the privacy of the individual and the family will be respected.

SUPPORT, DEVELOPMENT AND REVIEW

1. The school will make available to all Teachers, the appropriate resources such as books, posters, videos etc. to ensure the efficient operation of the programme.

2. Provision is made for ongoing evaluation. This evaluation should involve those who took part in the initial consultation process of policy development.
3. Development of the course will be continuous. The course will be reviewed regularly, along with an ongoing review of resources and additions to the library. Meetings will take place each year to assess the programme.

Approved by B.O.M. 4th June '03.