

R.S.E. POLICY

St. David's B.N.S. is a Catholic school under the Patronage of the Archbishop of Dublin, which caters for Infants to Sixth class.

During the years the children spend in the school we aim:

- To teach the curriculum effectively in order to enable them to achieve their full potential and to equip them to avail of further education.
- To create an atmosphere where the children can enjoy school while developing spiritually, morally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and physically.
- To place an immense value on each child as an individual and to foster a sense of self worth through developing self-confidence, self-expression and the ability to relate to other children and adults.
- To promote respect for self and family, for other members of the school community, the wider parish community and the environment.

Relationship and Sexuality Education

R.S.E. is a programme which helps children to learn, at home and at school, about their own development and about their friendships and relationships with others. It is based on developing a good self-image, promoting respect for themselves and others and providing them with appropriate information, which will enable them to make responsible choices in life.

Relationship and Sexuality Education as a part of S.P.H.E.

R.S.E. is taught in the context of S.P.H.E.

S.P.H.E. is the process which enables pupils to :

- develop an understanding of themselves.
- choose and follow a healthy lifestyle.
- play responsible roles as individuals and as members of society.

S.P.H.E. has a moral and spiritual dimension and is always developed within the context of the ethos or characteristic spirit of the school. S.P.H.E. is a shared responsibility and the involvement of parents at all stages of the programme is essential for its development and success. R.S.E. which deals with specific aspects of S.P.H.E. such as human growth and development, human sexuality, personal and social skills and relationships, will be presented in the context of a supportive school environment whose aspirations are the holistic all round development of the child.

Current Practice in the school

Our school policy and curriculum currently provide many opportunities both formal and informal in the areas of R.S.E. and S.P.H.E.

Informal

Our school policy places great emphasis on the importance of the child within the school community. Children are encouraged to participate openly in all discussions and to treat one another with care, courtesy and respect at all times.

Formal

- Our religion programme, 'The Alive O' series provides many opportunities for discussion and participation by pupils.
- The 'Stay Safe' programme is taught in Senior Infants, 1st , 3rd and 5th classes.
- Social and Environmental Studies provides pupils with opportunities to learn how their bodies work and how we need to care for them. Issues such as smoking, alcohol and drug abuse are dealt with in Senior classes.
- The H.S.E. Booklet and D.V.D. 'Busy Bodies' will be used in 5th and 6th classes.
- The school arranges for Sixth class to avail of the Accord - Dublin Schools Programme, a 'Relationship Programme for Primary Schools'
- Teachers are provided with the necessary resources to implement the programme such as teacher manuals and 'Making the Links' booklet in order to address the content objectives of the S.P.H.E. curriculum.
- Occasionally ,the Board of Management and /or the Parents Council will arrange information nights on related topics e.g. Drug Awareness, Coping with Adolescence.

Aims of the R.S.E. Programme

- To enhance the child's own personal development, self-esteem and well -being.
- To help develop healthy friendships and relationships.
- To promote respect for themselves and others.
- To provide appropriate information.
- To enable the pupil to make responsible choices in life.
- To promote an understanding of, and respect for, human love, sexuality and relationships in a moral, spiritual and social context.

Management of the programme

- The development of a policy for Relationships and Sexuality Education will include the views of parents, teachers and the Board of Management.
- Opportunities will be given to parents to advise them of the content of the programme to be taught at each level. The content of the course will be available for parental viewing on request.
- Home-school links will ensure that parents are aware of the introduction of sensitive issues.
- Should an issue arise which is deemed to be inappropriate to the subject matter at that class level, children will be advised to raise this particular issue at home.
- Parents will have the right, if they have conscientious or moral objections to withdraw their children from the more sensitive aspects of the programme on the basis of the prior agreement between the parent and the teacher. Parents should inform the school in writing of their decision to withdraw their child. Arrangements for the supervision of such children will be made by the Principal.
- Teachers have the right to withdraw from the programme. In such cases the Principal will make arrangements for the subject to be taught.
- The privacy of the individual, both teacher and pupil will be respected.

Provision for on-going support and review

- Saint David's school is committed to the provision of all relevant and necessary resources for the successful implementation of the programme.
- Saint David's school is committed to providing access to in-career development opportunities for teaching staff to acquire further skills in the area of Relationship and Sexuality Education.
- The success of the R.S.E. programme will require that opportunities be provided for ongoing and regular review of the programme by the Board of Management, representatives of the Parent Body and the Teaching Staff. To this end a review of the schools R.S.E. programme will be undertaken at regular intervals.
- The R.S.E. policy committee will consist of two Parents' Representatives, two Teachers' Representatives and two representatives of the Board of Management.