



RSE Policy

SCHOOL ETHOS

Darver N.S is a co-educational, Catholic primary school which strives to provide children with the basic training they need, so that they will grow up to be an integrated member of the community and self-reliant individuals. This training is spiritual, moral, intellectual, emotional, physical and social.

Darver N.S will strive to promote, both individually and collectively, the professional development of teachers through staff development programmes. We aim to create in our school a climate of trust and love, with staff supportive of each other and each child, valued as an individual.

We welcome involvement in all aspects of school life from pupils, parents, parish, Board of Management, the school inspector, and the Department of Education and Science. We particularly value the role that Darver N.S Parents' Association have in the overall running of the school.

RELATIONSHIPS AND SEXUALITY EDUCATION

Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) is an integral part of Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) and must be taught in this context. It provides structured opportunities for pupils to acquire knowledge and understanding of human sexuality and relationships through processes which will enable them to form values and establish behaviours within a moral, spiritual and social framework. In particular, it addresses the meaning of human sexuality, relationships, growth and development, relevant personal and social skills and aspects of parenting.

Central to Relationships and Sexuality Education is the fostering of self-esteem, through which the pupil becomes more responsible in making choices and decisions in all aspects of life, and particularly in those relating to sexuality and relationships.

AIMS

The aims of Social, Personal and Health Education are:

- to promote the personal development and well-being of the child
- to foster in the child a sense of care and respect for himself/herself and others and an appreciation of the dignity of every human being
- to promote the health of the child and provide a foundation for healthy living in all its aspects
- to enable the child to make informed decisions and choices about the social, personal and health dimensions of life both now and in the future
- to develop in the child a sense of social responsibility, a commitment to active and participative citizenship and an appreciation of the democratic way of life
- to enable the child to respect human and cultural diversity and to appreciate and understand the interdependent nature of the world

CONTEXT

All of the sexually sensitive issues will be delivered within the context of SPHE which will be time-tabled on our curriculum. Sensitive issues will be covered within the strand units: Taking Care of My Body, Growing and Changing and Safety and Protection.

RELATIONSHIP OF RSE TO SPHE

Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) provides opportunities for pupils to learn basic personal and social skills which foster integrity, self-confidence and self-esteem while nurturing sensitivity to the feelings and rights of others.

Current provision included in the school curriculum is:

- SPHE lessons (provided through discrete curricular time and integration)
- Use of the RSE Manuals and Busy Body resources
- Stay safe Programme / Walk Tall Programme
- Religious Education

POLICIES WHICH SUPPORT SPHE/RSE

- Child Protection
- Code of Behaviour
- Anti-Bully Policy
- Admissions Policy
- Healthy Eating Policy
- Substance Use Policy (In development)
- Safety Statement
- Acceptable Use Policy (AUP)

GUIDELINES FOR THE MANAGEMENT AND ORGANISATION OF RSE IN OUR SCHOOL – CURRICULUM MATTERS

Curriculum Content –The curriculum by NCCA will be followed as published and will be taught from infants to 6th class. All resources used will be in keeping with the ethos of the school, the whole school plan for SPHE and the RSE policy. Each class teacher will teach the content for their class level each year as laid out in the curriculum, utilizing the RSE manuals to complement their teaching.

ORGANISATION MATTERS

Parents will be informed that the school fully implements the RSE strands of the SPHE programme at enrolment.

Parents will be informed in advance of lessons on the sensitive areas of the RSE programme.

The letter [Appendix 1](#) will be issued in advance, giving parents an opportunity to meet with relevant class teachers to discuss what is covered and to prepare their children. It also gives parents an opportunity to become involved, to inform themselves of the programme content and to prepare children for the information they will acquire around the sensitive areas and discuss areas covered in RSE/SPHE.

Parents are invited/welcome to view the curriculum and may speak to the class teacher if they have any concerns at any time during the year.

Special consideration will be taken to ensure that the needs of children with additional educational needs (AEN) are met. Taking into account the pupil's social and emotional development, instruction will be based on individual needs where possible. Parents will be consulted around sensitive issues.

CURRICULUM PLANNING

Darver NS Overview of RSE lessons, language & resources (Sensitive Areas)

Class	Lessons RSE Manual	Language	Walk Tall Lessons	Supplementary Resources
Junior / Senior Infants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● New Life p.68 ● My Body p.147 ● Caring for New Life p.137 ● At the beach or swimming pool p.153 	Womb Breast feeding Penis Vulva Vagina	Our amazing bodies p.94 (Sen Inf Book)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Anatomically correct dolls ● Picture books of new babies ● Visit of new baby to class
1 st / 2 nd Class	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The wonder of new life p.59/151 ● How my body works p.68/161 ● Growing means change p.77/171 ● A visit to the doctor p.164 	Womb Breast feeding Penis Vulva Vagina Urethra Navel	Our Amazing bodies pg 37 (2nd class book)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Tom's Power Flower ● Picture books of going to the doctors ● Books/activities on Life cycles ● Birth and new life in nature
3 rd / 4 th Class	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Preparing for new life p.69 ● The wonder of new life p.169 ● As I grow I change p.93 ● Growing and changing p.195 	Revise language from previous classes Umbilical cord Changes in puberty (4th class - general changes, not in detail until 5th) Menstruation (4th class girls only)	As I grow I change p.175 (3rd class book) Changing & growing p.140 (4 th class book) The Wonder of new life p.150	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Body systems ● Picture books on Growing and Changing ● Busy bodies booklet ● Question box
5 th / 6 th Class	Topics: Puberty Hormones Body Changes	Revise above in addition to the below:	My amazing body p.345	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Busy bodies ● Power point recap presentation ● Question box

	<p>Skin Care Naming Body Parts Naming Reproductive Parts Menstruation Conception Babies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● My Body Grows and Changes p.81 ● The Wonder of New Life p.92 ● Caring for New Life p.103 ● Different Kinds of Love p.141 	<p>puberty/ reproduction/ hormones (oestrogen, testosterone), genitals (penis, testicles, breasts, pubic hair), blackheads/ pimples.</p> <p>Menstruation (period, ovaries, ovum, menstrual fluid, vagina fallopian tubes, uterus)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Naming parts of male and female body. - Puberty: Changes - Naming male and female reproductive parts. - Menstruation: What happens and why. - Making a baby: Conception - How babies are born - What a baby needs in the first year of life 	<p>(5th class book)</p> <p>Creation p.121 (6th class book)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Puberty Quiz
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APPROACHES & METHODOLOGIES

When implementing the programme, staff at Darver NS will endeavor to display respect for and sensitivity towards the different cultural family backgrounds experienced by the children. The curriculum will be taught in an age-appropriate manner at all times. The curriculum will be taught from Junior Infants to 6th class. It will be taught through a spiral curriculum (key topics will be revisited in a developmental manner at regular intervals). The materials taught will reflect the needs of the children.

CALENDAR

In Darver NS we are adopting a standard approach to the teaching of RSE sensitive lessons. These are the lessons covered within the Strand Units – Growing and changing and Taking care of my body. Within this standard approach all teachers are covering the same strand units at the same time. The following grid illustrates this further.

Strands	Strand Units Year 1 (Stay Safe)	Strand Units Year 2 (RSE)
Myself	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Self-identity ❖ Safety and Protection *SS ❖ Making decisions (3rd-6th) *SS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Taking care of my body *RSE ❖ Growing and changing *RSE
Myself and others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ My friends and other people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Myself and my family ❖ Relating to others
Myself and the wider world	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Media education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Developing citizenship

***SS = Stay Safe**

***RSE – Relationships and Sexuality Education**

☐ **Stay Safe (*SS)** will begin in January of year 1 and run until all lessons are completed.

☐ **Relationships and Sexuality Education (*RSE)** will begin in January of year 2 and will run until all lessons are completed.

THE RSE CURRICULUM WILL BE TAUGHT THROUGH:

- Stories and poems, classroom discussion, group work, games, art activities, reflection, Circle Time.
- The approach in school is child-centered and will always take the age and stage of development of the children into account. Appropriate vocabulary relating to sexuality, growing up, physical changes, parts of the body and feelings will be used. The use of slang will be discouraged.

QUESTIONS

- Questions arising from lesson content will be answered in an age-appropriate manner.
- The class teacher cannot answer questions which do not relate to the particular curriculum objectives for a class.
- Pupils will be informed if a question/issue is not on the programme and they will be advised to talk with their parents.

- Teachers may exercise discretion to contact parents themselves if they feel that a question is very inappropriate.

Staff should not invalidate questions but use limits.

When deciding whether it is appropriate to answer a question or not the teacher should consider:

- If the question is a moral one, while being sensitive of different religious and non-religious backgrounds will refer the child to speak to their parents or guardians or to the Catholic teaching.
- It will be our policy not to answer personal questions about ourselves.
- A question is an opportunity to clarify, to teach and to reassure and in line with the SPHE curriculum which aims to equip children with attributes and skills necessary to live a democratic way of life with individual and group rights and responsibilities.

Teachers may respond in some of the following ways:

- I'll do my best to answer your questions but I may not be able to answer all of them.
- That's something you'll learn about as you get older.
- Is that something you could talk to your parents / guardians / family about?
- We agreed that we wouldn't ask anyone personal questions.

If issues arise which might be seen to contravene Children's First Guidelines, the teacher will notify the designated liaison person (DLP) in the school.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

- Parents will be expected to follow up and discuss topics covered in school and this will be facilitated through communication around programmes and homework.
- Regular contact will be made with parents prior to the teaching of lessons involving the 'sensitive elements' of the RSE programme.
- The school acknowledges that parents have the primary responsibility for educating their children about growing and changing.

CONFIDENTIALITY

If a child is withdrawn from the teaching of sensitive issues we cannot Guarantee that the other children will not tell or inform him/her about what has been covered in class.

RESOURCES

Relationships and Sexuality Education Manuals (DES)

Each class teacher has a copy of the appropriate manual or access to it in online / pdf format.

Other resources that support the broader aims of RSE include:

- Stay Safe programme
- Walk Tall Programme.
- Busy Bodies DVD and booklet. This DVD and booklet were developed to support the teaching of the 5th and 6th class component of RSE within the context of SPHE.
- All resources are available for parents/guardians to view if they so request prior to the delivery of the lesson.

Appendix 1

RSE LETTER TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS

Dear parents/guardians,

Relationships and Sexuality Education is an integral part of the S.P.H.E programme. The sensitive elements of the Relationships and Sexuality education programme are covered under the Strand Units, 'Growing and Changing' and 'Taking Care of my Body'. The language and content covered is in line with RSE guidelines from the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) and the Professional Development Service for Teachers (PDST). We will be completing these Strand Units with all class levels in the forthcoming weeks.

Please see below for the topics covered throughout the classes:

<u>Topics covered from infants to 2nd class:</u>	<u>Topics covered from 3rd to 6th class:</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Keeping Safe ● Bodily changes from birth (birth – 9 years old) ● Making age-appropriate choices ● Appreciating the variety of family types and a variety of family life that exists in our school and community ● Recognising and expressing feelings ● Self-care, hygiene, diet, exercise and sleep ● Expressing opinions and listening to others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Bodily changes ● Healthy eating, personal hygiene, exercise ● Keeping Safe ● Expressing Feelings ● Appreciating the variety of family types within our school and community and how these family relationships shape us ● Making healthy and responsible decisions ● Forming Friendships ● Discuss the stages and sequence of development of the human baby in the womb (3rd, 4th class)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Naming the parts of the male/ female body using appropriate anatomical terms (Junior/ Senior Infants) • Naming the parts of the male/ female body using appropriate anatomical terms and identify some of their functions (1st/2nd) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to puberty and changes (3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th class) • Changes that occur in boys and girls with the onset of puberty (5th and 6th Class) • Reproductive system of male/female adults (5th and 6th class) • Understanding sexual intercourse, conception and birth within the context of a committed loving relationship (5th and 6th class)
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Please see below for the specific language and terminology which will be covered at each class level:

Class	Language
Junior/Senior Infants	Womb Breast feeding Penis Vulva Vagina
1st/2nd Class	Womb Breast feeding Penis Vulva Vagina Urethra Navel
3rd/4th Class	Revise language from previous classes Umbilical cord Changes in puberty (4th class - general changes, not in detail until

	5th) Menstruation (4th class girls only)
5th/6th Class	<p>Revise above in addition to the below:</p> <p>puberty/ reproduction/ hormones (oestrogen, testosterone), genitals (penis, testicles, breasts, pubic hair), blackheads/ pimples.</p> <p>Menstruation (period, ovaries, ovum, menstrual fluid, vagina fallopian tubes, uterus)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Naming parts of male and female body. - Puberty: Changes - Naming male and female reproductive parts. - Menstruation: What happens and why. - Making a baby: Conception - How babies are born - What a baby needs in the first year of life

GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND CLASS-APPROPRIATE EXPLANATIONS

	JUNIOR INFANTS TO 2ND CLASS	3RD CLASS TO 6TH CLASS
LESBIAN	A woman who loves another woman and they can be a family together.	A woman who has or wants to have a loving relationship with another woman.
GAY	A man who loves another man and they can be a family together.	A man who has or wants to have a loving relationship with another man. Sometimes this term is also used to refer to lesbians.
BISEXUAL	A person who can love a man or a woman and form a family with a person of either gender.	A person who can have or wants to have a loving relationship with either a man or a woman.
TRANSGENDER (or TRANS for short)	A girl who feels like they are a boy/A woman who feels like they are a man. A boy who feels like they are a girl/A man who feels like they are a woman	A person who was born with the physical characteristics of a boy/girl but deep inside they feel like they are a different gender and want to live their life as that gender.

<p>HETROSEXUAL (STRAIGHT)</p>	<p>A man who loves a woman or a woman who loves a man and they can be a family together.</p>	<p>A man who has or wants to have a loving relationship with a woman or a woman who has or wants to have a loving relationship with a man.</p>
<p>HOMOPHOBIC BULLYING</p>	<p>When people are hurtful to others because they are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender or because people think they are.</p>	<p>When people hurt others (verbally, psychologically, physically, cyber bullying etc.) because they are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender or because people think they are.</p>
<p>TRANSPHOBIC BULLYING</p>	<p>When people are hurtful to others because they are transgender or because people think they are.</p>	<p>When people hurt others (verbally, psychologically, physically, cyber bullying etc.) because they are transgender or because people think they are.</p>
<p>LGBT</p>	<p>A short way to say lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender.</p>	<p>An acronym used to refer to the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender communities.</p>

<p>HOMOSEXUAL</p>	<p>This is another term for gay or lesbian, sometimes used by scientists or doctors. LGB people generally prefer the terms lesbian, gay or bisexual to be used.</p>	<p>This is another term for gay or lesbian, usually used in scientific or medical references. LGB people generally prefer the terms lesbian, gay or bisexual to be used.</p>
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This policy was revised during the school year 2021/2022. It was finalised in April 2022 and presented to the Board of Management for ratification.

Signed:

Chairperson BOM.

Date _____

Principal.

Date _____