



# St. Mary's Diocesan School

Beamore Road, Drogheda, Co. Louth, A92TF24

Telephone Office: 041 983 7581 • Fax: 041 984 1151 • Email: office@stmarysds.ie

Principal: Catherina McNicholas

Deputy Principals: Cerrie Byrne, Lorraine Noone, Helen Martin

Dear Parents/Guardians,

I am writing to you to inform you that as part of our SPHE curriculum at junior and senior cycle your son will be provided with a minimum of six relationship and sexuality lessons. These lessons will be taught during the school year.

These six lessons are being taught in SPHE class at junior cycle and during non exam time at senior cycle to complement the relationship and sexuality education that takes place in the home. These lessons are not intended as a replacement.

## SPHE

The general aim of SPHE in our school is to contribute towards the development of all aspects of the individual, including the aesthetic, cultural, emotional, intellectual, moral, physical, social, religious and spiritual development. The four strands that first year students study over 3 years will be 1. Understanding myself and others, 2. Making Healthy Choices, 3. Relationships and Sexuality, and 4. Emotional Wellbeing.

There are also four strands within the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> year Junior Cycle SPHE course. These include 'Who Am I?', 'Minding Myself and Others', 'Team Up' and 'My Mental Health'.

There are three different themes within the RSE strand. These include

1. Human Growth and Development
2. Human Sexuality
3. Human Relationships

These themes are neither sequential nor discrete; they merge and overlap with each other and the teaching strategies reflect this.

RSE is set firmly within a moral, spiritual and social framework. A positive attitude to sexuality will be expressed in a responsible and respectful manner. RSE will be taught with reference to the school's RSE policy, available on our website and will be consistent with the core values and ethos of the school.

RSE education will

- Help young people understand and develop healthy friendships and relationships.
- Promote an understanding of sexuality
- Promote a positive attitude towards one's own sexuality and that of others
- Promote knowledge and respect for reproduction
- Enable young people to develop attitudes and values to make responsible decisions

In order to ensure that young people are receiving comprehensive RSE education, we would highlight the importance of openly discussing topics with your child in advance to these lessons. If you have any concerns about your son engaging in these lessons, please contact reception by Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> October where you can make an appointment to meet with the Principal of the school. If you want your child withdrawn from RSE class, a meeting must be arranged in advance to the commencement of the lessons.

Yours sincerely

Catherina McNicholas  
Principal