

Fitzgerald, Aileen, 2000, *The training and preparation of teachers for the delivery of Relationships and Sexuality Education in the Context of the Changing Educational Climate in Ireland Today.*

ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION

This dissertation looks at the training and preparation of teachers for the delivery of the Relationships and Sexuality Education (R.S.E.) programme, introduced into Irish Post-Primary Schools in 1997, as a module in the wider Social, Personal and Health Education (S.P.H.E.) programme. In this study, the R.S.E. programme is placed within the wider context of many new programmes and innovations in the curriculum, which recognize the changing role of the school in a rapidly changing society.

The rationale for the introduction of the programme is first set out. Major areas of change impacting on the culture of schools, and impinging on the social and personal education of young people are examined. Demands on teachers arising from such developments are looked at. Philosophical perspectives on relationships and sexuality education are presented, followed by a description of the central educational principles underpinning the approach of the Department of Education and Science programme. Teacher skills and attitudes required for working within such an educational model are addressed.

The research, through the use of questionnaires and interviews, examines teachers' perceptions of the adequacy of the preparation they received for the delivery of the R.S.E. programme through the training offered and the supports put in place for its implementation.

The findings of the research are presented and discussed. Finally, based on these, some conclusions are reached, and recommendations made, which, it is hoped, may contribute to educational planning in the area of teacher education and development in the context of change and change management, as well as possibly opening up avenues for further research in these areas.