

S.P.H.E (SOCIAL, PERSONAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION)

Introductory Statement

We in Sandymount School believe that social, personal, and health education (SPHE) must provide particular opportunities to foster the personal development, health and well-being of each individual student. The SPHE curriculum will enable the student to develop an understanding of values, attitudes, and skills that will guide and inform him/her in decision making now and in the future.

Rationale

- To conform with the principles outlined in the Revised SPHE Curriculum 1999 and the NCCA Guidelines for students with special needs
- To benefit teaching and learning in our school
- To provide a coherent approach to the teaching of SPHE across the whole school
- To conform with legislation
- To differentiate the SPHE programme according to the learning needs of our students

Vision and Aims

Our school values the uniqueness of all individuals within a caring school community. We recognise that SPHE addresses areas that are particularly important for our students. The development of positive self-esteem, social and communication skills, appropriate expression of feelings, and safety and protection skills are particularly important for our students.

We endorse the aims of the Curriculum for Social, Personal, and Health Education

- 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
- to promote the health of the child and provide a foundation for healthy living in all 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 and 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

Ref. Primary School Curriculum SPHE p.9

Our Aims

We aim to provide a broad and balanced programme through the three strands of the revised curriculum.

The aims of our SPHE curriculum are to enable the student:

- to be self-confident and to have a positive sense of self-esteem
- to develop a sense of personal responsibility and come to understand his/her sexuality and the processes of growth, development and reproduction



- to develop and enhance the social skills of communication, co-operation and conflict resolution
- to create and maintain supportive relationships both now and in the future
- to develop an understanding of healthy living
- to develop a sense of safety and an ability to protect himself/herself from danger and abuse
- to make decisions, solve problems and take appropriate actions in various personal, social and health contexts
- to become aware of, and discerning about the various influences on choices and decisions
- to begin to identify, review and evaluate the values and attitudes that are held by individuals and society and to recognize that these affect thoughts and actions
- to respect the environment and develop a sense of responsibility for its long term care
- to develop some of the skills and abilities necessary for participating fully in groups and in society
- to become aware of some of the individual and community rights and responsibilities that come from living in a democracy
- to begin to understand the concepts of personal, local, national, European and global identity
- to appreciate and respect the diversity that exists in society and the positive contributions of various cultural, religious and social groups
- to promote the values of a just and caring society in an age-appropriate manner and understand the importance of seeking truth and peace

Ref. Primary School Curriculum pg10

Assessment

Assessment is a central part of the everyday learning and teaching process in SPHE. It can provide valuable information on the child's progress and on the effectiveness and suitability of the programme and the teaching methods being used.

Enable Ireland Sandymount School use the following recommended informal tools for assessment in SPHE:

- Teacher observation
 - Ability of the child to co-operate and work in groups or work independently
 - Informal interactions between the child and adults and between the child and other children
 - Participation and interest of the child in a variety of activities
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- Teacher-designed tasks and tests
 - SPHE includes areas of knowledge and understanding that will need to be assessed at regular intervals. Specific tasks can be used to ascertain a child's ability in a variety of activities
- Portfolios and projects
 - Teachers may decide to keep or display children's work, or children will keep personal folders of their work



Policies and Programmes that support SPHE:

Policies:

- Child Safe Guarding Statement + Risk Assessment
- Anti-Bullying
- Relationships and Sexuality Education
- Code of Behaviour
- Substance Use
- Enrolment & Admissions
- Safety Statement
- Health and Safety
- Internet Acceptable Usage
- **Programmes:**
- Stay Safe (Appendix 1)
- Food Dudes
- Junior Certificate Level 1 Learning Programme: Personal Care and Wellbeing

Curriculum

Content of Plan

The strands and strand units will vary according to the individual needs of the students. We are familiar with the Strands that comprise the curriculum at all levels and we adapt and use them according to our individual student's needs and abilities.

Skills and concepts development:

Teachers will aim to enable the students to develop the skills relevant to the strands and strand units taking their individual needs into account.

Active learning is the principal teaching and learning approach recommended for SPHE. The SPHE programme reflects a spiral approach, where similar aspects are revisited in different ways according to the age, stage of development and readiness of the child. SPHE is intrinsic to the learning and teaching that occurs both formally and informally in the school and in the classroom.

SPHE must be planned in such a way that the child will receive a comprehensive programme in SPHE over a two year period. Some strand units should be chosen from each of the strands in any one year. The strand units not covered in year one must be included in the teacher's planning for the following year.

Context for SPHE

SPHE will be taught through a combination of contexts

- Positive school climate and atmosphere
- Discrete time
- Integration with other subject areas

1. Strands and Strand Units

These are the Strands and the Strand Units of the revised curriculum.

Strands	Strand Units
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Myself	Self-identity Taking care of my body Growing and changing Safety and protection
Myself and others	Myself and my family My friends and other people Relating to others
Myself and the wider world	Developing citizenship Media education

2. *Students with Different Needs*

We will provide opportunities for students with different educational needs. We will enable them to take greater control of their personal lives as individuals and to develop an awareness of their responsibilities to others in a caring community. Their stages of development should always be acknowledged. Teachers will vary the pace, content and methodologies to ensure learning for all pupils.

- Activities are adapted or modified so that all children have the opportunity to participate
- Work cards/sheets are adapted to suit children of all abilities
- Children are given the opportunity to work independently where possible
- Computer programmes can be used so children can work at their own pace at different levels

3. *Linkage and Integration*

Activities that integrate the SPHE with other subjects should be planned to help extend students understanding of both SPHE and the other subjects. Such integration can include most subject areas, for example; music, S.E.S.E., English.

4. *Assessment and Record Keeping*

We will assess SPHE in various ways, which will include:

- Teacher observation
- Teacher designed tasks
- Work samples, portfolios and projects
- Curriculum Profiles
- Photographic records
- Circle Time
- Display, where looking at the work of others can take place
- Student feedback/level of enjoyment and participation
- Parent feedback
- Achievement of IEP goals

5. *Equality of Participation & Access*

Students may be restricted in performing social skills in a classroom environment only. Opportunities for practising social skills should be facilitated through peer tutoring and activity-based learning that promotes social interaction. SPHE is a shared responsibility. Close liaison with parents and clinic staff



is necessary to provide opportunities for students to interact socially in the community.

Organisation

1. Timetables

Formal SPHE time will be timetabled for 30 minutes per week. SPHE will be integrated throughout the curriculum at other times during the week.

SPHE RSE and Stay Safe ([appendix 1](#)) are addressed in the context of SPHE and teachers will decide the timetabling of RSE/Stay Safe lessons. The lessons will be spread throughout the year in order to allow the children the time to absorb the values within which this knowledge is presented.

2. Communication with Parents on RSE and Stay Safe Matters/ Parents choices

Parents will be given the choice to withdraw their child from the RSE (Relationships and Sexuality Education) and Stay Safe programme ([appendix 1](#)). Where a child is being withdrawn arrangements will be made with the principal for the child to be supervised elsewhere and every effort will be made to minimize attention being brought to these children.

3. Teachers' Choices

Teachers have a right to choose whether or not to give instruction in the areas covered by the RSE objectives. A guest speaker will be invited to deal with RSE issues at the senior end of the school. The teacher/teachers concerned will make the guest speaker aware of the objectives to be covered and the policy and ethos within which they will be discussed. The class teacher will remain with the class group while the guest speaker is present.

4. Child Protection

The school follows the Department of Education and Science Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures, which are based on Children First, National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children. Each September teachers and SNAs will be reminded of the school's Child Protection Policy and the procedures to be followed in dealing with incidents related to child protection.

(Reference: [Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures, 2001, DES and Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2011](#)).

The BoM has designated a senior member of staff to have specific responsibility for child protection. The Designated Liaison Person (DLP) for our school is our Principal Jennifer Doyle. The Deputy DLP is the Deputy Principal Sarah Arntz who is charged to act in the absence of the DLP.

5. Resources

Our SPHE resources materials are:

- Textbooks
- Reference Books
- Charts and Photographs
- Dvds
- RSE
- Body boards
- Stay Safe
- Links with other schools
- Songs and music



- Visitors

We will select resources/materials that are:

- Reflective of our school’s ethos
- In line with the principles of the SPHE Curriculum
- Age appropriate
- Closely matched to specific objectives
- Free of bias, racial or sexual stereotyping

6. Individual Teachers’ Planning and Reporting

Teachers should base their yearly and short term plans on the approaches set out in the whole school plan for SPHE. Work covered will be outlined in the monthly reports, which will be submitted to the principal.

7. Staff Development

Staff development will occur through staff planning days, staff meetings, organised talks and sharing of ideas. Teachers will be made aware of any opportunities for further professional development through participation in courses available in education centres or other venues.

8. Parental Involvement

SPHE is a shared responsibility between family and school. Copies of the school plan for SPHE are available from the office. The SPHE programme will be outlined at IEP meetings and opportunities for shared involvement between home and school will be explored at these meetings. Parents will be made aware of content objectives that deal with ‘sensitive’ issues at the senior end of the school when a guest speaker is invited to speak to the students.

9. Implementation

Class teachers are responsible for the implementation of the SPHE programme for their own classes. A guest speaker will be invited to cover the implementation of the RSE programme for the senior section of the school.

10. Policies and Programmes that support SPHE

SPHE links with other policies/programmes used in the school- Substance Use, Stay Safe, Child Protection, Enrolment, Code of Behaviour, Anti Bullying, Health and Safety Statement, Healthy Eating, Care of the Environment, Dealing with Challenging Behaviour. Teachers are expected to be familiar with these policies and ensure that the schools agreed policy is followed when addressing these issues. Where possible, members of the community will be brought into the school, to work with or talk to the children.

Content for SPHE in Sandymount School over two years:

Strands	Strand Units (Year 1)	Strand Units (Year 2)
Myself	Self-identity (Sep/Oct) Taking care of my body (Jan/Feb) Growing and Changing (Mar/Apr)	Safety and Protection (May/Jun) Making decisions [Senior Classes] (Jan/Feb)
Myself and others		Myself and my family (Sept/ Oct.)



	My friends and other people (Nov/Dec) <i>Myself and my family (Jan/Feb)</i>	Relating to others (Mar/Apr)
Myself and the wider world	Developing Citizenship (May/Jun)	Media Education [Senior classes] (Nov/Dec)

Classroom Planning for SPHE

Myself: Self-Identity

The student should be enabled to:

- Develop body awareness
- Become aware of the features that make a person special and unique
- Develop an awareness of personal abilities, skills and talents
- Recognise and communicate personal preferences
- Develop awareness of routine activities
- Become more self-reliant and independent
- Accept that making mistakes and trying again are part of the learning process
- Have opportunities to take increasing personal responsibility for himself/herself
- Begin to learn how to cope with various changes as they occur
- Make real choices
- Begin to develop some awareness of factors that may influence decisions or choices taken

Myself: Taking Care of My Body

The student should be enabled to:

- Show awareness of the basic needs of his/her own body
- Explore and discuss the different things the body can do
- Identify parts of the body and develop awareness of the private parts of his/her own body
- Recognise and practise basic hygiene and social skills
- Take some responsibility for self-care
- Become aware of the importance of food for growth and development
- Explore a wide range of food
- Explore food preferences and their role in a balanced diet
- Discuss and explore some qualities and categories of food
- Realise the importance of hygiene when preparing food to eat

Myself: Growing and Changing

The student should be enabled to:

- Develop awareness that he/she is growing
- Identify new skills and abilities acquired
- Develop increasing responsibility
- Become aware of new life and birth in the world



- Identify and explore a range of feelings
- Develop awareness of the feelings of others
- Express feelings in an appropriate way

Myself: Safety and Protection

The student should be enabled to:

- Develop awareness of people/places that are safe/unsafe
- Identify people in his/her close environment whom he/she can trust
- Develop strategies for keeping safe
- Show understanding of safety rules when travelling/ out and about
- Show understanding of safety rules within the school/ work- place
- Develop awareness of possible dangers in the environment
- Develop awareness of basic safety with regard to medicine and unfamiliar substances

Myself: Making Decisions

The student should be enabled to:

- Become aware of and think about choices and decisions that he/she makes every day
- Explore and discuss the factors that influence personal decisions and choices and the different levels of thought involved in making a decision
- Discuss why and how adults can make decisions and set boundaries for young people
- Recognise that opportunities to exercise choice can increase as responsibilities are accepted and as the trust of others is earned
- Recognise and explore that risks and the consequences of making a particular decision
- Discuss and practise a simple decision-making strategy
- Recognise and explore how the views, opinions, expectations and responses of others can influence personal decisions or actions
- Identify sources of help in solving problems

Myself and Others: Myself and my Family

The student should be enabled to:

- Communicate about his/her own family
- Explore the things that families do together
- Realise that each person has a place and role within the family
- Identify behaviour that is important for harmony in families

Myself and Others: My Friends and Other People

The student should be enabled to:

- Communicate about his/her friends
- Identify/become aware of the different aspects of friendship
- Develop awareness that friends and other people must be treated with consideration and respect



- Recognise and explore bullying behaviour

Myself and Others: Relating to Others

The student should be enabled to:

- Form relationships with other students/adults
- Develop effective communication skills
- Use verbal and non-verbal behaviour to perform social functions
- Work co-operatively with others
- Practise care and consideration, courtesy and good manners when interacting with others
- Resolve conflicts with others

Myself and the Wider World: Developing Citizenship

The student should be enabled to:

- Identify the groups outside the family to which he/she belongs
- Realise that each person is important and has a unique and valuable contribution to make to the class/school
- Develop understanding of the necessity for adhering to the class and school rules
- Explore and respect the diversity of students in the class and school
- Develop a sense of belonging to his/her local community
- Begin to become aware of local identity and to participate in and enjoy celebrating local events
- Use facilities in his/her local community
- Become aware of rules in the community that apply to him/her
- Recognise those who have special responsibilities for looking after people in the community
- Develop awareness of the different forms of media

Success Criteria

The aim of this plan is to enhance the teaching, learning and understanding of SPHE in our school.

How will we know that we are reaching our aims?

- Teachers should plan their year's work based on this plan
- Procedures outlined in this plan should be consistently followed
- Feedback from teachers, pupils and parents indicate the success of the plan
- Teacher observation and testing should indicate if the plan has enhanced pupils learning

Implementation

Class teachers are responsible for the implantation for the SPHE programme for their own classes. In some cases team teaching will be employed.



Review

It will be necessary to review this plan on a regular basis to ensure optimum implementation of the SPHE curriculum in the school. Progress made during the forthcoming school year will be reviewed.

Reference Section

- Curriculum documents for SPHE
- Primary School Curriculum, Your child's learning, Guidelines for Parents
- NCCA Draft Guidelines for Teachers of Students with General Learning Disabilities, 2002
- Equal Status Act 2000
- Looking at our School, 2003, DES
- Map of SPHE Resources for Primary Schools, North Eastern Health Board
- Relationships and Sexuality Education, A Partnership Between Home and School, DES
- Guidelines for developing a School Substance Use Policy, DES
- Walk Tall, Programme for the Prevention of Substance Misuse
- Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures, 2001, DES
- Children First, National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children, , Dept. of Health and Children
- Our Duty to Care, Dept. of Health and Children
- Stay Safe Programme, Health Promotion Unit, Dept. of Health & Children; CAPP, Cherry Orchard Hospital, Dublin 10
- Be Safe - Road Safety, Fire Safety, Water Safety. National Safety Council
- Responding to Bullying, First Steps for Teachers, The Cool School Programme. NEHB
- Investigating and Resolving Bullying in School, Further Steps for Teachers, NEHB
- INTO Intercultural Guidelines for Schools
- Trócaire – Development Education resources
- Bereavement Counselling for Children, Barnardos
- Intercultural Education in the Primary School, NCCA

Websites

PCSP	www.pcsp.ie
SDPS	www.sdps.ie
NCTE	www.ncte.ie/internetsafety
DES	www.education.ie
NCCA	www.ncca.ie
INTO	www.into.ie
IPPN	www.ippn.ie
NPC Primary	www.npc.ie

Other useful websites

www.kidshealth.org

Excellent site, topics include, staying healthy, dealing with feelings, growing up, glossary of medical terms and lots more



www.iws.ie	Irish water safety site
http://www.ottoclub.org	Road safety
www.araskids.ie	The official website of the President of Ireland for kids. Visit Phoenix park and meet the President
www.colgate.com	Resources for teachers, games for children and interesting articles to read
www.mouthpower.org	Oral Health: Games and information
http://www.ottoclub.org/	Stories and activities about road safety
http://www.bbc.co.uk/northernireland/schools/4_11/uptoyou	Healthy eating info
http://www.foodafactoflife.org.uk/section.aspx?siteId=13&sectionId=52	

Review and Ratification

This policy was reviewed and ratified by the Board of Management.

Signed:



Sé Goulding
Chairperson of Board of Management



Jennifer Doyle
Principal

Date: 16 October 2024



Appendix 1

The Stay Safe Programme

To meet the requirements of the Department of Education & Science Child Protection Guidelines and procedures, the Stay Safe Programme should be taught in its entirety under “Personal Safety”. All the content objectives for child protection under the “Personal Safety” can be met by teaching the Stay Safe Programme.

Stay Safe Revised Edition 2016

Class	Strand	Stand Unit	Topic	Lessons	Page
Junior & Senior Infants	Myself	Safety & Protection	1. Feeling Safe and Unsafe	3	17
			2. Friendship & Bullying	3	31
			3. Touches	2	45
			4. Secrets & Telling	1	55
			5. Strangers	1	61
1 st & 2 nd Class	Myself	Safety & Protection	1. Feeling Safe and Unsafe	3	17
			2. Friendship & Bullying	5	31
			3. Touches	2	49
			4. Secrets & Telling	1	63
			5. Strangers	1	71
3 rd & 4 th Class	Myself	Safety & Protection	1. Feeling Safe and Unsafe	3	17
			2. Friendship & Bullying	6	31
			3. Touches	2	55
			4. Secrets & Telling	1	67
			5. Strangers	1	73
5 th & 6 th Class	Myself	Safety & Protection	1. Feeling Safe and Unsafe	3	17
			2. Friendship & Bullying	6	29
			3. Touches	2	51
			4. Secrets & Telling	1	61
			5. Strangers	1	69

The content of the programme is in accordance with the School’s Ethos and Mission Statement.

