



# SPHE PLAN

First written: October 2010  
Reviewed May 2020

## **Introductory Statement**

The original plan for SPHE was developed by the school in 2010. Many developments have taken place since then and this policy required a review and revisions based on our school experiences to date. This SPHE plan was reviewed again in 2020 with some changes made.

## **Rationale**

- To foster the personal development, health and wellbeing of all the children in our care, in line with our school's ongoing commitment to wellbeing.
- To help them to create and maintain positive and supportive relationships.
- To help them to become active and responsible members of society.
- To help them develop a framework of values, attitudes and skills which will enable pupils to make informed and responsible choices now and in the future.
- To benefit the teaching and learning experiences of the S.P.H.E Curriculum.
- To conform to the principles of learning outlined in the Primary School Curriculum.

## **Vision**

Glasnevin ETNS values the uniqueness of all individuals within a caring school community. We recognise that SPHE is intrinsic in the learning and teaching that occurs both formally and informally in the school and in the classroom. Through our SPHE programme we wish to assist children develop feelings of self-worth and self-confidence while encouraging their ability to relate to others in a positive way. The programme encourages children to be aware of their rights as individuals while at the same time accepting responsibility for their actions as members of the school and the wider community. Parents have the primary role in the Social, Personal and Health Education of their children so their involvement will be encouraged as much as possible.

## **Aims**

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

- To promote the personal development and wellbeing 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.

## **Objectives**

When due account is taken of intrinsic abilities and varying circumstances, the SPHE curriculum should enable the child to:

- Be self-confident and have a positive sense of self-esteem.
- Develop a sense of personal responsibility and come to understand his/her sexuality and the processes of growth, development and reproduction.
- Develop and enhance the social skills of communication, co-operation and conflict resolution.
- Create and maintain supportive relationships both now and in the future.
- Develop an understanding of healthy living, an ability to implement healthy behaviour and a willingness to participate in activities that promote and sustain health.
- Develop a sense of safety and ability to protect himself/herself from danger and abuse.
- Make decisions, solve problems and take appropriate actions in various personal, social and health contexts.
- Become aware of, and discerning about, the various influences on choices and decisions.
- Begin to identify, review and evaluate the values and attitudes that are held by individuals and society and to recognise that these affect thoughts and actions.
- Respect the environment and develop a sense of responsibility for its long-term care.
- Develop some of the skills and abilities necessary for participating fully in groups and in society.
- Become aware of some of the individual and community rights and responsibilities that come from living in a democracy.
- Begin to understand the concepts of personal, local, national, European and global identity.

- Appreciate and respect the diversity that exists in society and the positive contributions of various cultural, religious and social groups.
- Promote the values of a just and caring society in an age-appropriate manner and understand the importance of seeking truth and peace.

## SPHE CURRICULUM - Curriculum planning

(Year one: JI, 1st, 3rd, 5th Year Two: SI, 2nd, 4th, 6th)

	Year One		Year Two	
	Strand	Strand Unit	Strand	Strand Unit
September/ October	Myself	Self Identity	Myself and others	My Friends and Other People
November/December	Myself	Taking Care of My Body	Myself	Self Identity (JI - 2 <sup>nd</sup> )
	Myself and my Family	Myself and Others		Making Decisions (3 <sup>rd</sup> -6 <sup>th</sup> )
January/February	Myself	Safety and Protection	Myself	Safety and Protection
March/April	Myself	Growing and Changing	Myself	Growing and Changing
May/June	Myself and the Wider World	Developing Citizenship	Myself and Others	Relating to Others
			Myself and the Wider World	Media Education

- Safety & Protection (Stay Safe programme) must be taught in its entirety every year. (+ Internet Safety immediately after or in conjunction with the Stay Safe programme)
- RSE lessons containing sensitive content must be taught immediately the week starting after the Easter Break each & every year.

## Context for SPHE:

### **Positive School Climate and Atmosphere:**

Our key messages in *Glasnevin Educate Together*:

- We cater for the individual social, emotional, spiritual, physical and intellectual needs of each child through teacher designed tasks and assessment.
- We strive to provide opportunities where children can enhance their self-esteem. This is achieved by the whole school community providing an environment which is positive and allows for the five building blocks of self-esteem development. They are:
  1. A sense of identity
  2. A sense of belonging
  3. A sense of security
  4. A sense of purpose
  5. A sense of competence
- We aim to actively value diversity and to prioritise inclusive and respectful language. We will prioritise both racial and gender equality and respect for those with special needs. We believe that children learn to respect themselves and others through experiencing respect in their own lives and through witnessing respect being shown to others.
- We work to develop an effective communication system within the school and home. Attention will be paid to encouraging everyone to express opinions and concerns and to respond to the opinions and concerns of others as a dimension of classroom work and general school life.
- We support a health promoting physical environment. Through our Health and Safety policy and the health education section of our PE programme. We have set out how we will promote health and safety awareness and how we intend to deal with unsatisfactory aspects of our environment. Emphasis on healthy lunches, healthy lifestyle, road, water and regular fire drill (minimum of one per term) are some of the areas being promoted. Taking responsibility and pride in the school environment is encouraged through our litter prevention programme, our involvement in the Green Schools programme and through constant review and promotion of behaviour and habits required for maintaining a clean environment, this is also supported by our Learn Together Curriculum strand: Ethics and the Environment.
- We promote democratic processes in all levels of school life while balancing roles, rights and responsibilities. Children experience and practice the democratic process by:
  1. Negotiating the class rules at the start of the year
  2. Sharing responsibility
  3. Valuing the opinions of others
  4. Experiencing a sense of belonging to their class group and the wider school community

5. Developing a sense of commitment to common goals.
6. An opportunity to be a member of the Student council.

We have agreed that we will prioritise care in our own behaviour as adults and in our expectations of children. We will help children to learn to care for each other through actively building relationships within each class. We will seek to build identity, security and belonging, competence and purpose through:

1. Discussion, promotion of and valuing difference
2. Agreeing ground rules for responsible behaviour and clarifying values on an ongoing basis
3. Caring for and promoting inclusion of others
4. Promoting inclusive and respectful language
5. Promoting support and co-operation
6. Respecting individual strengths
7. Supporting individual needs through teacher support and buddy systems
8. Creating meaningful differentiated learning opportunities
9. Celebrating the wide range of children's strengths at assemblies
10. Communicating regularly about learning and general development with the home

### **Discrete Time**

SPHE may be timetabled for  $\frac{1}{2}$  hour per week, one hour per fortnight or blocks of 1-2 hours per month where feasible or appropriate. Children who are withdrawn from supplementary teaching must be included for as much of the SPHE programme as possible. This discrete time is used to develop and practise particular skills, deal with sensitive issues or explore issues that are not addressed in other areas of the curriculum. It has been agreed that content objectives dealing with RSE and child protection are addressed through discrete time. Our SEN team facilitates supplementary social skill groups in conjunction with the mainstream teacher's plan for SPHE where necessary

### **Integration**

At each class level, teachers should seek to integrate SPHE with other curricular areas. Many aspects of SPHE can be dealt with in the context of English, Gaeilge, LT, SESE, Visual Arts and Drama. Teachers have identified the objectives that can be acquired through cross-curricular work. In order to ensure that these are being adequately covered, teachers will make specific provision in their short term planning and will use the cuntas míosúil as a form of self assessment for these and other objectives.

In line with our Ethos, the teaching of SPHE will link with our Learn Together Curriculum . Children will be supported and encouraged to have open discussions about different families, non traditional couples and alternative gender identities. Please see Appendix 1 for a list of children's books that could be used to support the teaching of this topic.

Children will be supported and encouraged to learn about consent and bodily autonomy. See Appendix 2 for list of children's books to support this.

## **Approaches and Methodologies**

Teachers are in agreement that active learning is the principal learning and teaching approach used in the SPHE programme. The following active learning strategies are promoted for SPHE.

- Drama activities e.g. roleplay
- Co-operative games
- Discussion in pairs, small groups and with whole class.
- Media studies
- Looking at children's work: copies and scrapbooks
- Pictures, photographs and visual images
- Written activities
- Other strategies as devised by the class teacher

## **Assessment**

Children's progress in SPHE is assessed through:

### (a) Teacher Observation

- The ability of the child to cooperate and work in groups or to work independently.
- The informal interactions between the child and adults and between the child and other children.
- Physical and emotional maturity.
- The quality of presentation of work
- The participation and interest of the child in a variety of activities.
- Dispositions and attitudes of the child.

### (b) Teacher Designed Tests and Tasks

- SPHE includes areas of knowledge and understanding that will need to be assessed at regular intervals. Specific tasks can be used to ascertain a certain child's ability to apply particular skills in different situations.

### (c) Portfolios and Projects

- Teachers may decide that children will keep personal folders of their work.

### (d) Self Assessment by children

- Children are encouraged to engage in assessing their own progress in SPHE and to reflect on their learning.
- Recording data from these methods of assessment can contribute to the overall picture of a child's development and can be used as a reference for the teacher when planning for SPHE and in communicating with the child, parents, other teachers or the principal. Copies, scrapbooks or IT will be used to record their progress in SPHE.

## **Children with different needs:**

The SPHE programme aims to meet the needs of all children in the school. This will be achieved by teachers varying the pace, content and methodologies to ensure

learning for all pupils. The requirements of children with special needs will be taken into consideration when planning class lessons and related activities. The SNA supports particular children or groups as directed by the class teacher. Children who experience bereavement of loss, serious illness or other major personal situations are supported and consideration is given to meeting their individual needs in the most appropriate manner. The SEN team will support the SPHE curriculum through social group work.

### **Equality of Participation and Access**

We view the SPHE programme as playing a key role in ensuring quality of opportunities for all children. The programme at each level will be flexible so that learning requirements of all children may be addressed. We provide an equal educational experience for both boys and girls as we recognize that stereotyped expectations of gender roles can inhibit children's educational achievements. Gender equality is also a strand unit in our Learn Together Curriculum (Equality and Justice Strand). Children with special needs will be included in all activities. In consultation with the Assisted Learning Class Teachers children from the ALC may be integrated for SPHE lessons as suits their needs, maturity, social development and abilities.

### **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 (Green School) Weaving Wellbeing. Teachers are expected to be familiar with these policies and ensure that the school agreed policy is followed when addressing these issues.

1. Walk Tall
2. Stay Safe
3. RSE

#### Aims of Walk Tall:

- To avert or at least delay experimentation with substances
- To reduce the demand for legal and illegal drugs
- To give primary school children the confidence, skills and knowledge to make healthy choices.

### **Overview of Stay Safe**

#### Aims of Stay Safe:

- To prevent child abuse by giving children the skills and strategies necessary to enable them to respond safely to any dangerous, upsetting or abusive situation.
- To teach children how to deal with unsafe or inappropriate touch and never to keep touch a secret.
- To teach children the importance of telling.
- To give children safety strategies to deal with strangers

#### Content:

The lessons cover the following areas:

- Feeling safe and unsafe
- Friendship and bullying
- Touches
- Secrets and telling
- Strangers

Children participating in this programme will learn:

- To distinguish between safe and unsafe feelings,
- What to do if lost
- What to do if the phone or doorbell rings when they are alone at home
- The importance of friends in children's lives
- What to do if bullied
- Stay Safe Rules; Say no, get away, tell
- Why not to bully others
- Appreciating normal appropriate touches
- That unsafe touches should never be kept a secret
- How to respond to inappropriate touches (Stay Safe Rules)
- Good and bad secrets
- That some secrets should not be kept
- Who and how to tell when in trouble
- About strangers and safety strategies

### **Overview of RSE**

Aims of RSE:

- To promote an understanding of and a healthy attitude to sexuality and relationships
- To promote knowledge of and respect for reproduction
- To promote a sense of wonder and awe at the process of birth and new life
- To enable the child to feel comfortable with his or her sexuality and that of others.

### **Specific Content Details**

**Infants:**

Name parts of the male and female body using appropriate anatomical terms:

- Penis in the context of passing urine
- Urethra in the context of passing urine

Awareness of human birth:

- A baby grows inside the mother's womb until ready to be born
- Vulva - opening where a baby leaves the mother's womb

### **First and Second Class**

Name parts of the male and female body using appropriate anatomical terms and identifying some of their functions:

- Penis in the context of passing urine
- Urethra in the context of passing urine
- Vulva - opening where a baby leaves the mother's womb
- Breasts - for feeding the baby
- Navel/bellybutton where a baby was joined to its mother before birth



### **Third and fourth class**

Understand the physical changes taking place in both the male and female body.

Realising that these changes do not occur at the same time but none the less are predictable and natural and that being different is normal

- Growing in height, weight and strength
- Growing from boy to man and girl to woman (mention menstruation)
- Accepting own body shape, size and rate of development

The Stages and sequence foetal development from conception to birth:

- Identifying objects which coincide with the size of the foetus at different stages
- Changes in foetus, development of limbs, more recognizable shape
- Baby emerges from womb through vagina (internal) and vulva (opening where baby leaves mother's womb) when ready after nine months

### **Fifth and Sixth**

Identify and discuss the physical and other changes that occur in boys and girls with the onset of puberty and understand that these changes take place at different rates for everyone. Both boys and girls will learn about changes in both sexes.

- Female: hormonal changes, changing body shape, development of breasts, appearance of underarm and pubic hair, onset of menstruation (periods)
- Male: hormonal changes, oily skin, spots, physical growth, enlargement of testicles and penis, appearance of underarm, pubic and facial hair, breaking of voice, beginning of sperm production, involuntary erections, nocturnal emissions (wet dreams).

The reproductive system of male and female adults

- Male reproductive organs: penis, scrotum, sperm, sperm tube, testis
- Female reproductive systems: vulva, vagina, cervix, uterus, ovary, fallopian tubes, ovum (egg)

Sexual intercourse, conception and birth

The penis penetrates the vagina when erect. Sperm is ejaculated. A sperm penetrates an egg inside the female and so fertilises the egg. The egg splits in two and then in four and so on (cell growth/multiplication). Foetal development begins as covered previously (3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> class). After nine months, when the baby is ready, muscles begin to contract and start pushing the baby out. When the baby is born the umbilical cord is cut as it is not needed and the baby begins life outside the womb.

### **Guidelines for the management and organisation of RSE**

1. The RSE programme will be taught in harmony with and in support of the school ethos.
2. Parents/Guardians will be informed beforehand of lessons dealing with sensitive issues and will be encouraged to discuss the content of such lessons with the class teacher when queries arise and with their own children

in support of the lesson. In 5th/6th class the Busy Bodies DVD will be sent home in advance of the lessons and parents are encouraged to watch this with their children ahead of in class lessons.

3. Certain sensitive areas will be gender specific and will be dealt with in a single gender setting before being dealt with in a whole class setting.
4. The teacher will only teach the specified curriculum content for each class. Children will be encouraged to talk to his/her Parents/Guardians and teacher will follow this up with Parents/Guardians
5. All teaching aids and resources will be viewed by teachers prior to classroom use and all such resources will be available to Parents and Guardians to view.
6. Where possible the class teacher will deliver the content in the RSE programme. He/she is best placed to know their class and generally children will feel most comfortable discussing these topics with him/her in the security of the class setting. Teachers may make a question box available in the classroom during RSE lessons. A member of the SET team may support the class teacher if the class teacher wants additional help.

### **Timetable**

Timetabling will be informed by our School Plan and the Making the Links document (A practical guide to the use of programmes supported by the DES in the implementation of SPHE)

### **Homework**

Homework will reflect the active learning approach to SPHE as described in this plan. Parents are encouraged to become active participants and engage as appropriate with their child in assigned homework.

### **Resources**

We will select resources/materials that are:

- Reflective of our school ethos
- In line with the principles of the SPHE curriculum
- Age appropriate
- Closely matched to specific objectives
- Free of bias, racial or sexual stereotyping
- Produced by a reputable agency

Resources for specific classes are stored in those classrooms. If a teacher does not have the necessary resources, they can ask the post holder to help source the relevant resources.

Materials purchased with school funds remain the property of the school. Relevant materials related to the Learn Together Curriculum and SPHE are stored in the central store room and library.

### **ICT**

Teachers should not use computer programmes or internet sites for SPHE without consulting the principal. When using the internet, teachers must adhere to school procedures for safe internet usage (see school policy) or ICT post holder.

## **DVDs**

DVDs are stored in the relevant classrooms. Teachers should not use other DVDs or TV programmes for SPHE without consulting the principal. The choice of video will be reviewed from time to time and may be changed with the agreement of parents and BOM.

## **Textbooks**

At present our school has decided not to select a textbook for SPHE. A decision to adopt any future texts will be taken with due regard to the spirit of this plan and general agreements regarding textbooks selection in the school.

## **Individual Teachers' Planning and Reporting**

Teachers should base their yearly and short term plans on the approaches set out in this whole school plan for SPHE. Work covered will be outlined in the Cúntais Míosúil which will be submitted to the principal. In particular the Stay Safe programme in its entirety must be taught each year and recorded in the Cúntas Míosúil. The specific content taught in RSE outlined in this plan should also be recorded in the Cúntas Míosúil when it is taught.

## **Staff Development**

Teachers are made aware of any opportunities for further professional development through the participation in courses available in Education Centres or other venues. Skills and expertise within the school are shared and developed through inputs at staff meetings.

## **Parental Involvement**

SPHE is a shared responsibility between family and school. The following list sets out the agreement reached by the teachers, the parent teacher association and the BOM:

- Copies of the school plan for SPHE are available from the office and are available also on the school website.
- Opportunities for shared involvement between home and school will be encouraged throughout the year.
- Parents will be made aware of content objectives that deal with sensitive issues and will be asked to discuss these issues with their child prior to the lessons in school.
- When aspects of the SPHE plan (substance use, child protection, relationships and sexuality education, nutrition) are reviewed, parent representatives will form part of the review group
- A link to the stay safe programme is shared with parents each year so that they are aware of the content covered in their child's class.

## **Community Links:**

We will liaise with the HSE, Gardai, Drumcondra Education Centre, NEPS, and other relevant authorities and agencies as appropriate to assist in the delivery of the school programme for SPHE.

### **Success Criteria**

The success of this plan will be measured using the following criteria:

- Implementation of the SPHE curriculum will be evident in teachers' work.
- Continuity of content and methodology will be evident in teachers' preparation and monthly reports
- Ongoing assessment will show that pupils are acquiring and understanding of concepts taught and an ability to engage with others in a manner appropriate to their age and personality

### **Implementation**

(a) Roles and Responsibilities: Class teachers are responsible for the implementation of the SPHE programme for their own classes. The current Post Holder supports the implementation of the SPHE programme and is responsible for ensuring teachers have the necessary resources.

(b) Timeframe: School years 2020-2023

### **Review**

Progress made during the school year will be reviewed at ISM and Staff meetings. This plan will be reviewed after three years.

### **Ratification and Communication**

This plan was ratified by the BOM on

The plan was communicated to teachers and implanted in classes from September 2020

## **Appendix 1**

Books to support the teaching about different families, non traditional couples and alternative gender identities.

*And Tango Makes Three*

*Mommy, Mama and Me*

*Daddy, Papa and Me*

*A Tale of Two Mommies*

*A Tale of Two Daddies*

*Pearl Power*

*Pearl Power and the Girl with Two Dads*

*Jerome By Heart*

*King and King*

*The Family Book*

*Pride: The Story of Harvey Milk and the Rainbow Flag*

*I am Jazz*

*Red, a Crayon's Story*

*Introducing Teddy*

## Appendix 2

Books to support the Teaching of Consent and Bodily Autonomy

*C is for Consent*

*Don't Touch My Hair!*

*My Body Belongs to Me from My Head to My Toes*

*No Means No!*

*Your Body Belongs To You'*

*My Body, What I say Goes*