



Social, Personal and Health Education.

This SPHE Policy was reviewed on Oct. 3rd 2022 by the BoM. The SPHE curriculum is a lifelong process and as such begins before the child comes to school. At Caherleaheen National School, we aim to provide a supportive foundation that will inform the child's actions and decisions and provide a basis for further development and well-being.

Rationale

In developing this policy, the school seeks:

- To benefit teaching and learning and enhance well-being in our school.
- To conform to principles of social, personal and health education as outlined in the curriculum.
- To review the existing work in SPHE.
- To establish a formal structure for teaching SPHE.

Vision & Aims

In line with our school ethos, Social, Personal and Health Education will provide opportunities for the individual child to develop a framework of values, attitudes, relationships, understanding and skills that will inform her/his decisions and actions now and in the future –enabling the child to respect and relate to their personal development, others and to become an active and responsible citizen in society. Our school values the uniqueness of all individuals, within our caring school community. We recognise that SPHE is intrinsic to the learning and teaching that occurs both formally and informally in the school and in the classroom. The programme also 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. The parents have the primary role in the social, personal and health education of their children so their role will be encouraged as much as possible. We endorse the aims and objectives of the National Curriculum for SPHE and in addition we emphasise the following:

- To enable the children to develop an awareness of their responsibilities to others in a caring community
- To enable the children to take greater control of their personal lives as individuals
- To encourage the children to be active in determining their own learning and to celebrate their personal achievements, big and small.

Content of the SPHE Plan.

There are three main Strands to the SPHE curriculum

- **Myself**
- **Myself and Others**
- **Myself and the Wider World.**

These three Strands of SPHE are divided into various Strand Units which are linked across the following three programmes:

1. Stay Safe Programme (Prevention of Child Abuse)
2. RSE (Relationships and Sexuality Education)
3. Walk Tall Programme (Prevent use of Dangerous Substances)

Strands and Strand Units in the SPHE Programme: Since SPHE is spiral in nature we will cover the following content at each level throughout the school over a two year period, referring to 'Making the Links' which maps the strand units horizontally and vertically through the Stay Safe, Walk Tall and RSE programmes.

The teachers have allocated and arranged these strand units from each of the three main strands to each class. This ensures that the strand units not covered in one year are included in the programme of work for the following year. It is a two-year cycle. Guidance from the DoES has recommended that the Stay Safe Programme (two year cycles) should be re-taught / revised in each alternate year (Year 2 or 'odd year'). Therefore, all classes will engage in the Stay Safe programme, simultaneously, each year.

We also believe that **Media Education** is more pressing than it was a few years ago, so we aim to revise new content each year.

Programmes that support our SPHE Programme

- Walk Tall, (First-Sixth Class)
- Stay Safe (all classes from Jun Infants to Sixth during Nov. Dec. Jan.)
- Webwise (Second Class to Sixth during Feb and March)
- Cool, Calm and Confident (Fifth Class)
- Busy Bodies (Fifth/Sixth Class)
- Bucket Filling (All Junior Classes)

Other resources include An Trócaire packs, Grow in Love religious programme, Zeeko (Internet Safety), Fire Safety presentation, annual Garda presentation on safety, nurses' presentation on health, DCU health studies, RSA (Road Safety Authority) materials, Swim Ireland resources and others as they become available.

Strands	Strand Units (Year 1) 2022/23 'Even years'	Strand Units (Year 2) 23/24' Odd Years'
Myself (Sept-Oct)	Self-Identity New Life Personal Safety and Protection Feelings and Emotions	Taking Care of my Body Hygiene Walk Tall-Substances Growing and Changing
Myself and Others Myself (Nov/Dec)	Sixth-Friends for Life Programme All: Stay Safe. (Block) (Full Programme-Juniors,First, Third , Fifth (ReviseProgramme–Seniors,Second, Fourth, Sixth) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Topic 1 Feeling Safe and Unsafe Topic 2 Friendship and Bullying Topic 3 Touches 	Stay Safe. (Block) (Full Programme-Juniors,First, Third , Fifth (ReviseProgramme–Seniors,Second, Fourth, Sixth) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Topic 1 Feeling Safe and Unsafe Topic 2 Friendship and Bullying Topic 3 Touches
Myself and Others (Jan)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Topic 4 Secrets and Telling Topic 5 Strangers Myself and My Family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Topic 4 Secrets and Telling Topic 5 Strangers My Friends and Other People <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cool Calm and Confident (Fifth) Bucket Filling (First)
Myself and the Wider World (Feb-March)	#Media Education (Webwise and External facilitator)	# Media Education (Webwise)
Myself and others (April)	My friends and other people Relating to others <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bucket-Filling (First) 	Relating to Others <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changing Families Walk Tall-Peer Pressure Groups
Myself Myself and the wider world (May/June)	TAKING CARE of MY BODY *Hygiene *Walk Tall Substances Growing and Changing.(Staff teach Busy Bodies Programme+Sexuality and Relationships (Sixth) Making Decisions (Second-Sixth) Citizenship	Sexuality and Relationships Talk with External Speaker (Sixth & Fifth) Making Decisions (Second-Sixth) Citizenship

Definition of RSE (Relationships and Sexuality Education)

The definition of RSE which we adhere to, is from the Interim RSE Guidelines 1996 and Going Forward Together Parents Information Booklet. *'RSE is an important part of the education of young people, and schools provide a safe context within which young people can learn about themselves and the wider world. This makes access to RSE in schools all the more important'* – (Mayock, Kitching and Morgan 2007). The policy guidelines state that schools can develop a working definition within the context of both the NCCA's and the policy guidelines definitions. This definition correlates with the Irish SPHE Curriculum and other relevant policy documents.

Relationship of RSE to SPHE

RSE is an integral part of Social, Personal and Health Education 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. (p. 5 NCCA and guidelines for RSE). RSE is the formal approach to educating children in:

- Relationships with others – parents, siblings, friends & community in general
- Respect for themselves and others
- Physical development – bodily functions and changes, and personal hygiene
- Emotional development – maturing in societal groups
- Parenting, personal and social skills and relationships
- Sexuality in context – part of a loving and respectful relationship.

It is therefore very clear that the Relationships and Sexuality Programme is correctly defined as being an integral part of the programme outlined above. Sexually sensitive issues will be covered within the following strand units:

- Taking care of my body
- Growing and changing
- Safety and protection.

Current Provision for RSE

The educational and emotional needs of the children in our care are central to our planning and policy making processes. We have always, and will always continue to put the welfare of the children first.

All parents will be made aware in advance, of upcoming sensitive RSE and Stay Safe topics which will be covered each school year and the ethos within which they will be delivered. Any parent who has concerns should discuss them with the class teacher. A parent who asks to have his/her child withdrawn from specific lessons or

programmes should do so in person and in writing.

An R.S.E Talk is organised for the more sensitive areas of the RSE elements of the SPHE programme in 5th and 6th Classes. It is provided by an external professional from the HSE or Accord (May/June, every second year.) Parents and 5th/6th class teachers are alerted well in advance of the external expert's talk and the specific content, by the speaker. Please note that senior class teachers also teach these areas on other alternate years, thus ensuring that there is continuity and revision for both Fifth and Sixth classes each calendar year.

Contexts for SPHE: We aim to teach SPHE in a combination of the following contexts:

For a scheduled period of 30+ minutes each week. Discrete time for SPHE is daily and unquantifiable. Discrete time will be used to develop and practice particular skills and to deal with sensitive issues or to explore issues that are not addressed in other areas of the scheduled, time-tabled curriculum.

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

The following strategies will be adopted:

- Building effective and regular communication within the school and between school and home.
- Attention will be paid to encouraging everyone to express opinions and concerns in a safe, receptive environment and to respond to the opinions and concerns of others as part of classroom work and general school life.
- Catering for individual needs (individual needs may be social, emotional, spiritual, physical or intellectual). These are also supported by SETs and their pupils' Individual Educational Plans
- Through assessment, observation and discussion with parents, we strive to identify and meet individual needs.
- Creating a health-promoting physical environment (healthy lunches, healthy lifestyle, safety on roads, fire drills are just some of the areas promoted)
- Promoting democratic processes in certain levels of school life while balancing roles, rights and responsibilities. Children experience and practice the democratic processes by sharing responsibilities, by valuing the opinions of others, by experiencing a sense of belonging to one's own class/project group and the wider school community and by developing a sense of commitment to common goals. Our Student Council, Green Committee and our Active School Committee are typical forums that enable children to express and enjoy the fruits of their input in daily school life.
- Enhancing the self-esteem of all members of the school community. The staff is aware that its role in helping children develop their self-esteem, is to create an environment within the school that is as positive as possible for all concerned.

- Taking responsibility and pride in the school environment by promotion of behaviour and habits required for maintaining a clean and cared for environment, which enhances the esteem and pride of all the school community.
- We provide an equal educational experience for all boys and girls as we recognise that stereotyped expectations of gender roles can inhibit children's educational achievements and their developing personal identity and well-being.

The five building blocks of self-esteem as outlined in the curriculum have been adopted as our approach to self-esteem development. They are

1. sense of identity,
2. sense of belonging,
3. sense of security,
4. a sense of purpose
5. sense of competence.

Approaches & Methodologies

We will adopt the following approaches and methodologies (considering the school facilities and the children's needs).

- Talk and discussion (pairs, small groups, with public-speaking presentation and whole class debates)
- Skills through lesson content
- Collaborative learning
- Problem-solving and team-work with staff/pupils
- Use of our school/local environment
- Active, engaged learning which includes the following: drama activities, co-operative games, use of, photographs and visual images, art, and crafts, written activities, use of media and information technologies and looking at and recognising everyone's effort and passion.

Assessment

Children's progress in SPHE is assessed through teacher observation of:

- The ability of children to cooperate and work in groups, circle-time or to work independently.
- The quality and presentation of their work, projects, initiatives and activities.
- Pupils' voice and expression
- The informal interaction between the child and adults and between the child and other children
- Emotional development and the ability to revisit and self-assess one's behaviour and social learning.

Children with Additional Needs

In line with the ethos of our school ,we aim to be sensitive to and respectful of the emotional, physical and academic needs of our pupils. Activities will be used considering the special needs of our pupils. Children who experience bereavement or loss, serious illness or other major personal situations are supported, and consideration is given to meeting their individual and personal needs in the most appropriate manner. The programme at each class level will be flexible so that the learning requirements of all children may be addressed. Children with special needs will be included and heard in all activities. The Learning Support team will meet the Social . Personal or Health needs of those who are in most need, by using the Continuum of Support and/or Whole School Plus Support.

Child Protection and other School Policies that support S.P.H.E.

The following organisational and behavioural policies have been developed by teachers in consultation with the Parent Association and they have been ratified by our B.O.M. They will be reviewed every year or biannually, or when required.

Child Protection Policy:

The school follows the DES Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures which are based on Children First, National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children. Each year at staff meetings, and informally throughout the year, teachers are reminded of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement and the procedures to be followed in dealing with incidents related to child protection or disclosures of abuse or neglect by a child. All teachers are mandated to report concerns to the DLP. The DLP (Designated Liaison Person) for all child protection procedures is Mary Connolly (Principal). Claire Murphy is the Deputy Designated Liaison Person (DDL P)

Parents are also informed and reminded of these and other important policies (see below) from time to time. Each teacher has a copy of our Child Safeguarding Statement displayed in her/his room and a copy is available to parents in hard or soft copy. The CS Statement and Risk Assessment is reviewed by the BoM annually. Parents are reminded to familiarise themselves with these documents, which are all available on our website or in hard-copy to borrow from the school office:

- Child Safeguarding Statement (All Class and SET rooms, main entrance and office)
- Code of Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy (main entrance and website)
- Healthy Food Policy (website, office)
- Critical Incident Policy (website, office)
- ICT and Acceptable Usage Policy (website, office)
- Mobile Phone/Devices Policy (website, office)
- Data Protection Policy (website, office)

- Attendance Policy (website, office)
- Enrolment Policy (website, office)
- Health and Safety Policy (main entrance, website, office)
- First Aid and Intimate Care Needs Policy (website, office)
- School Outings (website, office)

Guest Speakers:

Suitably qualified and garda-vetted guest speakers may be invited to complement the work of the class teachers. They will be briefed on school policy as related to their subject matter. A class teacher will be present at all times. We select resources/materials that are reflective of our school ethos, in line with the principles of the SPHE Curriculum, age appropriateness and closely matching to specific learning objectives.

Staff Development:

Teachers are made aware of any opportunities for further professional development through participation in courses available in Education Centres or other venues. Skills and expertise within the school are shared and developed through input at staff meetings. The DLP has attended: Training in the Child Abuse Prevention Programme (Stay Safe). All staff are following the new Stay Safe Programme (2018) and the substance abuse programme (Walk Tall). All teaching, secretarial, assistive staff have been trained in Child Protection hosted by the PDST, TUSLA, DoES, and/or HSE. The principal has also attended 'Signs of Safety Partner Briefing' (TUSLA 2019)

The following list sets out the agreement reached by the teachers and the Board of Management:

- Copies of this school plan for SPHE are available from the school and on our website
- Teachers are required to use Making the Links (PDST) to ensure that objectives, outcomes, units and strands in our biannual plan are achieved
- Key elements of the SPHE plan will be outlined in the school's information booklet given to families
- Parents of senior pupils will be made aware of content objectives/timetables that deal with sensitive issues and will be asked to discuss these issues with their children prior to and during lessons in school.
- 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
- The principal, BoM and teaching staff believe that SPHE is a shared responsibility between family, school, health professionals and the community. We see ourselves supporting the home (parents/guardians) in this lifelong process and will seek at all times to develop positive relations with all these parties. The whole staff will co-ordinate the progress of the plan, encourage and accept feedback on its implementation and report back to the principal on their findings or concerns as appropriate.

- The principal, as part of her duties will ensure that the SPHE curriculum is followed and will take responsibility for guest speakers (sourcing, booking, briefing, assessing).

Timeframe:

The school principal and teaching staff will endeavour to implement the SPHE curriculum comprehensively in a spiral nature. The BoM will oversee that the statutory Stay Safe Programme is being taught and that all Child Protection Procedures and Statements are being adhered to at all times.

This SPHE Policy and content plan will be re- evaluated by staff and reviewed by the Board in October, 2023 or earlier, if required.

Ratification:

This SPHE policy was reviewed and approved by the Board of Management of Caherleaheen N.S.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Vivian Nolan

Oct 3rd, 2022

(Chairperson, Board of Management)