

# St. Aidan's National School

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## Whole School Development Plan for SPHE

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## **Introductory Statement and Rationale**

### **(a) Introductory Statement**

This plan was devised by the staff of St. Aidan's N.S. Clonroche, in June 2003 and implemented in September 2003. The most recent review of this policy was carried out in September 2020.

### **(b) Rationale**

In line with The Education Act 1998 and Circular 0042/2018 our SPHE plan takes a whole school approach to wellbeing promotion.

*"A recognised school shall promote the moral, spiritual, social and personal development of students and provide health education for them, in consultation with the parents, having regard to the characteristic of the school." (Education Act 1998)*

Social, Personal and Health Education provides particular opportunities to foster the personal development, health and well-being of the child and to help him/her to create and maintain supportive relationships and become an active and responsible citizen in society. Through the SPHE programme, children can develop a framework of values, attitudes, understanding and skills that will inform their actions and decisions in these areas of their lives both now and in the future.

SPHE aims to foster self-worth and self-confidence and places a particular emphasis on developing a sense of personal responsibility for one's own behaviour and actions. SPHE promotes self-awareness and understanding by helping children to name and manage their own feelings, to recognise and appreciate individual abilities, and to cope with change of various kinds. They can learn how to manage their own behaviour and to set and review personal goals within a safe and supportive environment. Such intrapersonal development will increase the child's sense of self-efficacy and help him/her to be more in control of his/her life. The purpose of this plan is to provide practical guidance for teachers, parents and other relevant persons.

## **Vision and Aims**

### **(a) Vision:**

St. Aidan's National School cherishes the uniqueness of all individuals within a caring school environment. We recognise that SPHE is intrinsic to the learning and teaching that occurs both formally and informally in the school and in the classroom. Through the SPHE programme we wish to assist children to develop feelings of self-worth and self-confidence while encouraging their ability to relate to others in a positive way. The SPHE Programme should foster personal development, health and wellbeing of the child and help him/her create and maintain supportive relationships and to become active and responsible citizens in society.

## **(b) Aims:**

The aims of the SPHE Plan of St. Aidan's National School are:

- To promote the personal development and wellbeing of the child.
- To enable the children to develop an awareness of their responsibilities to others in a caring community.
- To enable the child to make informed decisions 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.
- To promote the health of the child and provide a foundation for healthy living in all its aspects.
- To encourage the children to be active in determining their own learning.

## **Content of Plan**

### **Curriculum:**

#### **1. Strands and Strand Units:**

The SPHE programme is implemented on a 2 year cycle indicated in the table below (Ref: Making the Links Booklet)

<b>Strands</b>	<b>Strand Units Year 1</b>	<b>Strand Units Year 2</b>
Myself	Self- Identity	
	Taking care of my body	
	Growing and changing	
		Safety and Protection
		Making Decisions
Myself and Others	Myself and my family	
		My friends and other people
		Relating to others
Myself and the World	Developing citizenship	
		Media Education

All teachers are familiar with the strands, strand units and content objectives for their class levels. Curriculum objectives are at the core of each SPHE lesson, and teachers consider this in their own planning. The Stay Safe programme will be taught at each class level during the first term of each school year.

RSE: This programme will be taught in a variety of ways through a positive school climate, discrete SPHE time and integration with other subjects. RSE lessons will be taught in the second term of each school year.

St. Aidan's National School is divided into dual classes. The topics will be taught simultaneously to all classes e.g. 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> classes will be taught the same lessons. For the Strand Units *Growing and Changing* and *Taking Care of my Body*, refer to St. Aidan's N.S. RSE Policy.

## **2. Contexts for SPHE:**

SPHE will be taught through a combination of contexts:

Positive school climate and atmosphere.

Discrete time.

Integration with other subject areas.

*(See SPHE Curriculum p.11, Teacher Guidelines: SPHE p.5, pp.31 – 32, 36 - 41)*

### 3. Approaches and Methodologies:

SPHE is a lifelong process. SPHE begins before the child comes to school and will continue long after he/she has left school. The emphasis in the primary school is on providing a foundation in SPHE that will inform the child's actions and decisions and provide a basis for further development.

SPHE is a shared responsibility. Parents, teachers, health professionals and members of the community all have a responsibility for the social, personal and health development of the child. Their contributions and involvement will be important to the effective implementation of the SPHE programme in the school.

SPHE is a generic approach. Rather than treating topics in isolation, SPHE aims to develop in the child a generic set of skills, attitudes, values and understanding relevant to a range of social, personal and health issues.

SPHE is based on the needs of the child. It is essential in planning an SPHE programme, that priority is given to the needs of the child and his/her environment is taken into consideration. Appropriate adaptations should be made within the curriculum to suit individual requirements and individual school situations.

SPHE is spiral in nature. Similar content is revisited at different stages throughout the child's time in school. This provides opportunities to consolidate and build on previous learning and allows for issues and topics to be explored and treated in a manner appropriate to the children's needs, abilities and levels of maturity.

SPHE teaching occurs both formally and informally in the school. To be effective it should be implemented in a combination of ways, through:

- The context of a positive school climate and atmosphere
- Discrete time
- Integrated learning

SPHE requires children to be engaged in activity-based learning. Children need to be actively engaged in the learning process in order to use what they have learned in a variety of situations. Through active learning children can make sense of what they have learned and take increasing ownership and responsibility for their own learning.

The following learning strategies are promoted for SPHE:

▪ Drama activities	▪ Looking at children's work
▪ Co-operative games	▪ Talk and discussion
▪ Pictures, photographs and visual images	▪ Skills through content
▪ Discussion: in pairs, small groups and whole class	▪ Collaborative learning
▪ Written activities: surveys, questionnaires, lists, checklists, projects, worksheets	▪ Problem solving
▪ Media studies	▪ Use of the environment
▪ ICT	▪ Use of iPads and laptops

## **4. Assessment:**

### **Assessment and Recording Keeping**

- Assessment in SPHE cannot be seen in isolation, as it will be directly related to the assessment in other subjects and to any assessment that may take place of the school climate and atmosphere.
- The assessment will provide information on how and what children are learning through the planned programme in SPHE. Assessment will also play a significant role in helping the teacher to evaluate the programme and monitor its suitability and effectiveness.
- Assessment will help teachers to make decisions regarding future learning experiences, planning, adaption of materials and teaching approaches.
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### **Assessment Tools:**

- Displays of children's work
- Projects and presentations of their work
- Checklists (PDST: School Self- Evaluation in SPHE p.13)
- Teacher observation
- Teacher-designed tasks

## **5. Children with Different Needs:**

At St. Aidan's N.S. all children will have equal access to SPHE education. The requirements of children with special needs will be taken into consideration when planning class lessons and related activities.

For the sensitive issues in the RSE programme, boys and girls in 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> class are taken in separate sessions.

## **6. Equality of Participation and Access:**

Children will have the opportunity to participate in and benefit from the full range of experiences offered in SPHE. In planning for SPHE account will be taken of the range of difference in the school so that all children will be given the opportunity to obtain maximum benefit from the programme. SNA and resource teachers may be asked to assist in teaching some aspects of the SPHE programme. Provision will be made for members of the travelling community, children experiencing any form of disadvantage, children with disabilities, families with literacy problems and families for whom English is not their first language.

## **Organisation**

### **7. Policies and Programmes that support SPHE:**

The following policies and programmes are used and consulted with planning, organising and implementing the SPHE curriculum:

- Substance Use Policy
- Code of Behaviour
- Anti- bullying Policy
- Relationships and Sexuality Education
- Child Protection
- Child Safeguarding Statement
- Walk Tall
- Stay Safe Programme
- Well- being in Primary Schools- Guidelines for Mental Health Promotion

### **8. Homework:**

On occasion parents will be asked to participate in SPHE activities at home.

## 9. Resources

- Resources are class and school based
- Resources are accessed in individual classrooms and in the resource room located beside the assembly/ PE hall.
- The health promotion unit will provide guidelines as to how best to deal with health issues that may arise in our area/school.
- To support the implementation of the programme links with other community organizations will be established e.g. Tidy Towns, Clonroche Development Association.
- Outside speakers will be engaged to support the implementation of the SPHE programme
- Walk Tall
- Stay Safe (Revised edition 2016)
- RSE manuals
- Busy Bodies
- Well- being in Primary Schools- Guidelines for Mental Health Promotion
- Grow in Love (Infants to 2<sup>nd</sup> class)
- WebWise
- Friends for Life (5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Class)
- Safer Internet Day (3<sup>rd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> Class)
- Co-operative games
- Photographs
- Posters
- Workcards
- DVD
- Stories
- Media and internet
- Guest Speakers (Guidelines in Circular 0042/2018)

## **10. Individual Teachers' Planning and Reporting:**

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 is planned in such a way that the child will receive a comprehensive programme in SPHE over a two- year period. Some strand units are chosen from each of the strands in any one year. The strand units not covered in year one must be included in teacher's planning for the following year. (See section 1)

## **11. Staff Development:**

Staff have access to reference books, resource material and websites when dealing with SPHE. Teachers can relay content of courses attended during staff meetings/ Croke Park hours. Available courses are displayed in the staffroom and teachers are encouraged to attend courses which would benefit them and the school as a whole. Staff can avail of external/ internal expertise to inform and upskill the school community.

## **12. Parental Involvement:**

- Parents have a responsibility to encourage their children to participate in all strands of the SPHE curriculum.
- Parents may view the SPHE policy in the school.
- We propose to make parents aware of the main emphasis in our revised SPHE programme at a meeting in September.
- On occasion we will encourage parents to participate in SPHE activities in the home.
- Any opportunities to encourage parents or community members to assist or share their knowledge and expertise at class based activities will be given consideration.

## **13. Community Links:**

Local organisations may be invited to provide information on the services that they provide. We are very aware of the school's role in the community and we are also conscious of the fact that the expertise of people in the community is an invaluable resource to any school. There are a number of people in the local community who can support the SPHE curriculum in very significant way.

## **14. Success Criteria**

The implementation of the SPHE plan will lead to differences in:

- A child's sense of care and respect for himself/herself and others, his/her attitude towards healthy living and personal well being.
- The ability of the child to make informed decisions and choices about the social, personal and health dimensions of life both now and in the future.
- An increased sense of social responsibility and commitment to active and participative citizenship and an appreciation of the democratic way of life.
- The child's ability to respect human and cultural diversity and to appreciate and understand the interdependent nature of the world.

These differences will be assessed as outlined under the heading assessment.

## **15. Implementation and Review**

### **(a) Roles and Responsibilities:**

- The plan will be supported, developed and implemented by the staff as a whole.
- Guidance will be sought from key members of the local community where deemed necessary.
- The plan will be monitored and evaluated by the staff as a whole.
- A review of the SPHE plan will be carried out bi-annually and it will be modified accordingly at a staff meeting/s.

### **(b) Timeframe:**

- The Whole School Plan for SPHE was initially introduced in 2003 and was fully implemented in September 2004.
- The plan will be reviewed biennially.
- The most recent review was carried out in September 2020.
- Means of assessing the outcomes of and changes to the plan may include:
  - Teacher/parent/ community feedback
  - Department Circulars and Legislation
  - Children's feedback
  - WSE recommendations

## 16. Ratification and Communication

- This plan was ratified by the Board of Management on 25/04/07.
- Each member of staff has access to this plan via SugarSync, school website and there is a hard copy stored in the school office.
- This plan is available through the school office and school website for parental perusal.
- This plan will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure optimum implementation of the SPHE curriculum.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Chairperson BOM

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Principal

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_