

# Scoil Ursula N.S.

## ■ Title

### SPHE PLAN

## ■ Introductory Statement

*The SPHE plan committee met to review current SPHE plan in the school and to formulate this revised policy. It was adapted to the current format in accordance with the guidelines of the School Development and Planning Support Service and is in line with the requirements of the Revised Curriculum. It was disseminated to the wider school community through the Board of Management and ratified by the board on 17<sup>th</sup> of January, 2011. This plan was reviewed by a PDST Advisor in December 2015 and re-ratified in March, 2016.*

## ■ Rationale

This policy was devised to benefit teaching and learning in our school. It was framed with a view to providing a coherent approach to the teaching of SPHE across the whole school and developed in order to ensure that our pupils are given adequate foundation in the basics of Social, Personal and Health Education as envisaged in the Primary School Curriculum.

## ■ Relationship to Characteristic Spirit of the School

In our mission statement which takes cognisance of our Ursuline ethos , we promote our wish to provide a learning environment, which is most conducive to the academic, social, physical, psychological and moral development of the children under our care. Moral development runs parallel to the spiritual development of the child We see the provision of SPHE as central to this aspiration .While the ethos of the school is essentially Catholic, the views of people of all faiths and none are accommodated and respected by teachers and pupils. SPHE fosters 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 own life.

## ■ Aims

- 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 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.

## ■ Content of the Plan:

### 1. Strands and strand units

Strands	Strand units	
<b>Myself</b>	<b>Self-identity</b>	<i>Self-awareness Developing self-confidence</i>
	<b>Taking care of my body</b>	<i>Health and well-being Knowing about my body Food and nutrition</i>
	<b>Growing and changing</b>	<i>As I grow I change New life Feelings and emotions</i>
	<b>Safety and protection</b>	<i>Personal safety Safety issues</i>
	<b>Making decisions</b>	
<b>Myself and others</b>	<b>Myself and my family</b>	
	<b>My friends and other people</b>	
	<b>Relating to others</b>	<i>Communicating Resolving conflict</i>

<b>Myself and the wider world</b>	<b>Developing citizenship</b>	<i>My school community Living in the local community National, European and wider communities†</i>
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- Teachers are responsible for familiarising themselves with the content objectives for their own classes by referring to the SPHE Curriculum.

## **The content is divided into a two year cycle: See appendix 1**

### **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

#### **Positive school climate and atmosphere**

- We endeavour to uphold the values and principles of our school community by putting into practice in our daily routine, high standards of courtesy and mutual respect between staff members, between staff and pupils and between the pupils themselves. These principles are communicated to families enrolling their children in the school through our enrolment forms and must be signed up to before enrolment can take place.
- The following strategies for creating a positive school climate and atmosphere are promoted:
  - Building effective communication within the school
  - Catering for individual needs of the children
  - Creating a health-promoting physical environment
  - Developing democratic processes
  - Enhancing self-esteem
  - Fostering respect for diversity
  - Fostering inclusive and respectful language
  - Developing appropriate communication between home and school

#### **Timetable**

- SPHE is timetabled as an integral part of curricular allocation. Thirty minutes for each class is allocated per week
- Discretionary time may also be allowed where appropriate.
- When drafting timetables for withdrawal of pupils for supplementary teaching, teachers endeavour to ensure that pupils do not miss out on the SPHE curricular time.

#### **Integration**

SPHE is a subject particularly suited to integration with other curricular areas. At each class level, teachers seek opportunities to integrate it with all other subjects. Many aspects of SPHE can be dealt with in the context of relevant subject areas.

- Many content objectives are addressed through integration with other subjects e.g. playing fair in P.E.
- Every effort is made to ensure this integration is meaningful while maintaining the integrity of individual subjects through appropriate timetabling.

### 3. Approaches and methodologies

Active learning is a key principle of the overall curriculum and is the principal learning and teaching approach used for SPHE. Within this framework the following active learning strategies are promoted in the school:

- Drama activities
- Co-operative games
- Pictures, photographs and visual images
- Discussion: in pairs, small groups, with whole class
- Written activities: surveys, questionnaires, lists, check-lists, projects, worksheets
- Media Studies
- Information and communication technologies
- Looking at children's work: portfolios, projects ...

A broad range of approaches and methodologies are employed to realise the aim of involving children in their own learning including

- Talk and discussion
- Skills through content
- Collaborative learning
- Problem-solving
- Use of the environment

### 4. 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. Assessment provides the teacher with information on how and what children are learning through the planned programme in SPHE. This knowledge will inform decisions regarding future learning experiences and give directions for planning, designing and adapting materials in SPHE and for adopting certain teaching approaches in the classroom. The teacher will be able to discern what the child knows and understands and how he/she transfers learning from one situation to another.

Three types of assessment are employed on a whole school basis:

- **Diagnostic assessment:** identifies areas of strength or difficulty that may be encountered by the child in his/her learning.
- **Summative assessment:** presents an overall picture of the child's progress in SPHE.
- **Evaluative assessment:** provides an opportunity to explore the extent to which the objectives of the curriculum have been achieved and the emphasis that is placed on the learning process and on the active engagement of children.

The school assesses the child's progress in SPHE using methods, which may include some of the following: teacher observation, teacher designed tests and tasks, portfolios, projects, self-assessment by pupils. Information regarding the child's abilities, strengths and overall progress in SPHE is shared with the parents through P-T meetings and School Reports.

## **5. Children with different needs**

- Teachers support and ensure the participation of children with special needs in all SPHE lessons.
- All children enabled to make an important contribution regardless of academic achievement.
- We adapt and modify activities so that all children in the class can participate. These arrangements are made in line with the school's Health and Safety policy.
- Occasionally, there are specific or sensitive issues which need to be considered in meeting the individual needs of children e.g. bereavement or loss, disability, illness... These are dealt with in a sensitive way appropriate to the needs of the affected child(ren).

## **6. Equality of participation and access**

- Equal opportunities are given to boys and girls to participate in discussion, debate, presentation etc.
- Diversity within the school community is recognised and valued and tolerance is reinforced in the school's ethos.
- All children have access to all services, facilities and amenities in the school environment.

## **7. Policies and programmes that support SPHE**

### **7.1 Policies/Programmes**

- SPHE is linked with school policies/programmes such as – Substance Use, RSE, Stay Safe, Child Protection, Enrolment, Code of Behaviour, Anti Bullying, Health and Safety Statement, Healthy Eating, Care of the Environment ... and is delivered in line with these.
- The school reviews these policies on an ongoing basis.

### **7.2 Substance Use Policy**

- The delivery of the SPHE curriculum is in line with the school's Substance Use policy.
- In the Senior Classes issues surrounding substance use and responsible attitudes are dealt with directly as part of the programme delivery.

### **7.3 Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE)**

- RSE is provided in the context of our SPHE curricular delivery.
- The sensitive areas of the RSE are dealt with in an age appropriate way during discretionary time and with the help of a trained professional.
- The content of this programme is in accordance with the school's ethos and Mission Statement.

### **Dealing with questions**

- In so far as possible all serious questions are answered.
- Children anonymously write their questions and those deemed appropriate are dealt with by the professional and the class teacher.
- Ground rules are set as to the seriousness of the issues and children are encouraged to ask responsible questions.
- Children, whose questions have not been deemed appropriate, are referred to their parents for answers to those issues.

### **Confidentiality**

- They are encouraged not to discuss the content of the day with the children from junior classes as it is suitable only for them because of their age and maturity. Emphasising this point generally has the effect of increasing their self-importance and making it less likely that inappropriate discussions will take place on the way home.

### **Parental concerns**

- If parents are concerned about any aspect of the school's programme for the RSE elements of SPHE they can discuss their concerns with their child's class teacher or the principal.
- If requested, a Parents' Information Evening may be arranged to be facilitated by the Health Professional.
- Parents must provide a written request to the school if they do not wish their children to participate in these lessons.

### **Teachers' concerns**

- If teachers are concerned about any aspect of the school's programme for the RSE elements of SPHE they can discuss this with the principal
  - Teachers have the right to withdraw from which RSE elements of SPHE, which deal with Human Reproduction and related matters.
  - In these circumstances, they may be asked to take class for another teacher while he/she manages these sessions.

## **7.4 Stay Safe Programme**

- The Stay Safe is provided every year from Senior Infants to 6<sup>th</sup> class.
- The content of this programme is in accordance with the school's ethos and Mission Statement.

### **Dealing with questions**

- In so far as possible all serious questions are answered?
- Ground rules are set as to the seriousness of the issues and children are encouraged to ask responsible questions.
- Children, whose questions have not been deemed appropriate, are referred to their parents for answers to those issues.

### **Confidentiality**

- Confidentiality is of paramount importance during these lessons and children are encouraged to talk to their teacher privately regarding sensitive issues.

### **Parental concerns**

- If parents are concerned about any aspect of the Stay Safe Programme they discuss their concerns with their child's class teacher or the principal.
- Parents must provide a written request to the school if they do not wish their children to participate in these lessons.

## **7.5 Child Protection**

This 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.

(Reference: *Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures, 2001, DES*)

- The Board of Management has designated the school principal to have specific responsibility for child protection.
- All staff members have access to a copy of the Child Protection Policy.
- All staff are familiar with the procedures for dealing with incidents relating to child protection *e.g. a child frequently presenting without adequate food/clothing or displaying inappropriate, sexualised behaviour ...*
- All parents have access to the Child Protection Policy through their representatives on the Board of Management.

## **8. Homework**

- SPHE homework is given regularly to reinforce and extend work covered during class lessons.
- The homework given reflects, where feasible, the active learning approach as described in the curriculum.
- SPHE homework is differentiated according to need.

## **9. Resources**

### **9.1 Programmes, ICT, Internet, Videos, Textbooks, Supplementary Materials**

- A variety of resources/materials are available in the school to be used by teachers in delivering SPHE including RSE Materials from the DES, Alive O, All around me, Stay Safe Programme, Walk Tall, Healthy Eating Programme, Trócaire Resources, Quality Circle Time plus various Health and Safety Programmes (e.g. Water Safety, Farm Safely, Electrical Safety Programme, Child Safety in Cars, Belt Up Safely etc.) These resources incorporate a multi-faceted approach to learning through reading materials, audio, video, CD-Rom, DVD, Internet as well as work sheets and cards for the pupils.
- These resources have been deemed by the staff to be appropriate for SPHE
- To ensure continuity, there is a consistent approach to the use of particular materials throughout the school.
- There is a safe Internet usage policy in the school.

### **9.2 Guest speakers**

- Some topics e.g. RSE may require an outside contribution.
- The criteria used in selecting guest speakers/facilitators includes appropriate qualifications and reliable references preferably from DES or HSE sources.
- Guest speakers are engaged and briefed by the principal.
- The class teacher may support or facilitate the presentation by the guest speaker in whatever way possible. Class teacher is responsible for his/her class and should remain with the class at all times.

## **10. Individual teachers' planning and reporting**

- Each teacher is responsible for his/her planning for SPHE
- Progress is reported as part of the Cúntais Míósúil each month.

## **11. Staff development**

- Teachers have access to reference books, resource materials, equipment and websites dealing with SPHE.
- School personnel are encouraged to research new methodologies and can arrange for demonstrations, opportunities to try out materials and assess whether or not they should be purchased.
- Information about in-service courses, school visits, SPHE events is communicated to all teachers through the staff notice-board.
- Teachers are encouraged to attend in-service courses after which there is a sharing of the expertise acquired at these courses.
- Time is allocated at staff meetings to discuss aspects of the SPHE Curriculum.

## **12. Parental involvement**

- Parents are made aware of the nature and purpose of the SPHE curriculum through their representatives on the Board of Management.
- They are encouraged to assist their child's learning through helping with homework and discussing the issues that arise as part of the SPHE curriculum.
- Home Link letters from RSE.

## **13. Community links**

- Where there are professionals in the locality, who could work with the children, these people may be invited to give talks where appropriate and work with the pupils sharing their expertise.
- Other agencies that could be of assistance to the school include the HSE, Gardaí, the local dentist, Environmental Awareness Officer and various facilitators of above-mentioned programmes.

## **■ Success Criteria**

Our success criteria will be based on the achievement of our objectives. We will use staff observation and parental feedback as our benchmark for success or otherwise of the policy.

## **■ Roles and Responsibilities**

The school principal and SPHE policy committee will be responsible for the implementation and evaluation of the policy. Any feedback received will be recorded and any problems that arise will be taken into account for the purposes of evaluation and review.



### ■ **Timeframe for Implementation**

This revised policy was implemented in September 2011.

### ■ **Timeframe for Review**

This policy was reviewed by PDST Advisor in 2015 and will be reviewed again in 2018.

### ■ **Responsibility for Review**

The principal and policy committee will be responsible for reviewing the policy.

### ■ **Ratification and Communication**

The Board of Management ratified this policy on the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_, (Chairperson, BOM)

Scoil Ursula N.S. does not have adequate resources to disseminate all of its policies to all the concerned members of the wider school community. The policy is communicated to the members of the BOM and is available to the wider school community through the parents' representatives on the BOM. All Scoil Ursula N.S. policies are available for inspection in the school and at [scoilursula.com](http://scoilursula.com)

## Appendix 1

<b>Strands</b>	<b>Strand Units (15-16)</b>	<b>Strand Units (16-17)</b>
Myself		Self Identity (Sept/Oct)
		Taking care of my body (Jan/Feb)
		Growing and Changing & Stay Safe (Mar/Apr)
	Safety and Protection & Stay Safe (Mar/Apr)	
	Making decisions (3 <sup>rd</sup> – 6 <sup>th</sup> Class) Jan/Feb.	
Myself and others	Myself and my family (Sept/Oct)	
		My friends and other people (Nov/Dec)
	Relating to others (May/June)	
Myself and the wider world		Developing Citizenship (May/June)
	Media Education (Nov/Dec)	