

Social Personal and Health Education



Whole School Plan

Scoil Bhréanainn

Introductory statement:

The staff of Scoil Bhréanainn formulated this school plan for SPHE in consultation with our Board of Management and parent representatives. It is a whole staff effort drafted during Croke Park hours to meet the needs of our school environment.

Rationale:

Aspects of SPHE are being taught in Scoil Bhréanainn for many years through various programmes and initiatives such as Stay safe, Walk Tall, Bí Folláin etc. It has also been taught through integration with other subjects particularly Religion, Physical Education and SESE. This plan is a record of whole school decisions in relation to SPHE in line with the Primary school Curriculum 1999. Its purpose is to guide the teachers in adopting a consistent and coherent approach to the teaching and learning of SPHE in our school. It is intended to guide teachers in their individual planning for SPHE to ensure appropriate coverage of all aspects of the curriculum from Infants to Sixth class.

Vision:

Our school values the uniqueness of all individuals within a caring, happy, secure school environment where the intellectual, spiritual, physical, moral and cultural needs of the pupils are identified and addressed. 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 our 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. We aim to promote 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. The programme also encourages children to be aware of their rights as individual 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 & Objectives:

The aims of Social Personal and Health education are

- 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.

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 an 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

Content of plan

Curriculum strands and strand units:

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
- Making decisions

Myself and the wider world

- Developing citizenship
- Media education

SPHE is planned in such a way that the child will receive a comprehensive programme in SPHE over a two-year period. SPHE will be taught in class groupings of junior/senior infants, 1st/2nd, 3rd/4th and 5th/6th.

The strand units not covered in year one must be included in the teachers planning for the following year. In some cases, it may be necessary to revise specific objectives from the previous year.

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.

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

Teachers are aware of the importance of promoting a positive school climate. Our key messages are:

We cater for the individual needs of the children. Individual needs may be social, emotional, spiritual, physical or intellectual. Through assessment, observation and discussion with parents we strive to identify and meet individual needs.

We provide opportunities to enhance the self-esteem of all members of the school community. The staff is aware that their role in helping children to develop their self-esteem is to create an environment within the school that is as positive as possible for all concerned. At Scoil Bhreanainn we strive to deal with issues as they arise face to face promoting self confidence, self awareness and assertiveness. We feel that dealing with issues straight away stops them from growing and the children feel a sense of justice being served.

We aim to actively value diversity and to prioritise inclusive and respectful language. 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 with the school and between school and home. To this end in the senior room their SPHE copy is only to be seen by the pupil/the teacher/parents. It is a place where the children can confidentially voice their opinions to their teacher and the teacher often conducts a “how do you feel you are getting on?” class where they write anything they are anxious about as well as successes they feel they have achieved recently. They talk about school work/home life and peer relationships.

We support a health-promoting physical environment. Emphasis on healthy lunches, healthy lifestyle, road safety, water safety, and regular fire drills are some of the areas 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 habits required for maintaining a clean 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:

- o Negotiating the class rules at the start of the year
- o Sharing responsibility
- o Valuing the opinion of others
- o Experiencing a sense of belonging to their own class group and the wider school community
- o Developing a sense of commitment to common goals.

Discrete time

SPHE may be timetabled for ½ hour per week. One hour per fortnight or blocks of 1 – 2 hours per month where feasible or appropriate. Children who are withdrawn for supplementary teaching must be included for as much of the SPHE programme as possible. The 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. Content objectives dealing with RSE and child protection are addressed through discrete time.

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 Religion, English, Gaeilge, SESE, Visual Arts, Drama.

Relationship of R.S.E to S.P.H.E

Social, Personal and Health Education (S.P.H.E) provides opportunities for pupils to learn basic personal and social skills which foster integrity, self – confidence and self-esteem while nurturing sensitivity to the feelings and rights of others.

Relationships and Sexuality Education (R.S.E) is an integral part of S.P.H.E 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 that will enable them to form values and establish behaviours within a moral, spiritual and social

framework. In particular, it addresses the meaning of human sexuality, relationships, growth and development, relevant personal and social skills and aspects of parenting.

Relationships and Sexuality Education

Relationships will be a key part in the SPHE programme.

The child within the family and their relationship to parents / guardians and siblings – their unique place within the family

The child in school – relationships with their friends – showing friendship – returning friendship – spoiling friendship – forgiving – reconciliation – their sense of belonging within the class.

Boy / Girl relationships – recognition and respect for others' feelings – uniqueness and value of each person – covering all ages – language that describes these feelings.

R.S.E also deals with the issue of human growth and development, human sexuality and human relationships.

In the Senior cycle (5th and 6th classes) some very sensitive issues will be dealt with but the children will have been prepared for these issues by the cyclical nature of the syllabus. Each year their awareness and knowledge is growing and expanding and they now have reached a very important stage in their development.

Content and language are carefully selected so that children get the necessary factual knowledge in the context of Catholic moral teaching as befits the ethos of the school.

Pupils are expected to be able to understand conception and birth within the context of a committed loving relationship.

Parents are informed fully about the content of these lessons and are required to prepare their child prior to the lessons and discuss any issues arising afterwards.

Parents will be informed about the specific names for the body parts which will be used. Typically the programme will be covered in 3-4 sessions depending on the size / maturity etc... of the class.

For procedures regarding the communicating of child protection issues including the reporting of child abuse please see child protection policy.

Approaches and methodologies

Teachers know 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
- 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 ...
- Other strategies as devised by the class teacher

RSE is a life long process of acquiring knowledge and understanding and of developing attitudes, beliefs and values about sexual identity, relationships and intimacy. In a school situation RSE, provides structured opportunities for pupils to acquire a knowledge and understanding of human relationships and sexuality through processes which enable them to form values and to establish behaviours within a moral, spiritual and social framework, **appropriate to their age**. RSE will be taught in accordance with the Department's directives and within the Philosophy framework of the school. Teachers will not teach any content outside the Religion programme used by the school or the DES curriculum. The teaching methods used in the school are child centred and reflect the age and stage of development of each child. Sensitive issues will be dealt with appropriately.

Overview of RSE PROGRAMME

Aims:

In partnership with the home our aims are:

- To provide opportunities for our pupils to learn about relationships and sexuality, imparted in a loving and caring way, within a wholesome environment
- To help them think and act in a moral caring and responsible way
- To learn about their own development and about their friendships and relationships with others.

The development of relationships is an integral part of all curriculum subjects. Aspects of RSE are taught during SPHE, Religion, Science, implementation of the Code of Behaviour etc. An integrative approach towards RSE ensures that the children encounter RSE in a holistic manner rather than in isolation.

Dealing with Questions:

Teachers do not cover content outside that of the DES curriculum or the school's religion programme. Topics excluded include contraception, same sex friendships, abortion etc. Answers to questions must be in line with the Catholic Church's teaching i.e. sexual intercourse will be discussed within the context of marriage. At the same time teachers should answer questions sensitively aware that there are children in our school from many social backgrounds. No child should be made feel uncomfortable or embarrassed when these issues are raised.

Assessment

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

- The ability of the child to co-operate 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.

Children with different needs

The requirements of children with special needs will be taken into consideration when planning class lessons and related activities. Children who experience bereavement or loss, serious illness or other major personal situations are supported and consideration is given to meeting their individual needs in the most appropriate manner.

Equality of participation and access

We view the SPHE programme as playing a key role in ensuring equality of opportunities for all children.

Policies and programmes that support the SPHE programme:

Policies: Substance use policy, child protection policy, anti-bullying policy, code of behaviour policy, enrolment policy, health and safety statement, healthy eating policy.

Programmes: Walk tall programme, Stay safe programme, Green schools programme, Bí follán, Relationships and sexuality programme, be safe programme

Relationships and Sexuality in Education and Stay Safe Programme

In circular 2/95 issued by the Department of Education and Science the minister requested all schools to introduce Relationship Sexuality Education (RSE) as part of the curriculum. In the 1999 curriculum RSE was included in Social Personal and Health Education. Circular 0065/2011 on Stay Safe being taught in schools. All schools must fully implement Stay Safe Programme.

Children, who ask questions in class on content outside the curriculum taught, should be talked to individually and discretely, as soon as is possible, by the teacher and encouraged to seek answers from their parents. If a child poses such a question the parents will be informed and asked not to ignore it but to deal with it as they see fit.

Over view of STAY SAFE PROGRAMME

Aim:

To teach children personal safety skills so they can look after themselves in situations which could be upsetting or dangerous.

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 in the house
- 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 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 if in trouble
- About strangers and safety strategies

Request for withdrawal by parent of pupil or teacher:

It is a requirement of schools to teach the stay safe programme as part of SPHE. If parents are concerned about the more sensitive aspects of the RSE or Stay Safe programmes, they are welcome to visit the school to examine the content of the programmes and discuss their concerns with the principal. Following this meeting if parents wish to have their child/children withdrawn when sensitive issues are being taught, they are requested to submit this in writing to the Principal and the parents must sign a waiver to state they will teach the information being taught to their children themselves. Parents will be expected to make their wishes known each year to the new class teacher.

A teacher who is concerned about teaching a particular topic within the RSE or Stay Safe programme should talk to the principal about his/her concerns. Such concerns will be handled discreetly. The BOM will endeavour to accommodate such teachers. Resources outside the school profession will be availed of if considered appropriate.

Timetable:

Teachers will decide the timetabling of RSE/Stay Safe lessons and a letter will be sent to parents prior to the commencement of these lessons (APPENDIX A). If there is no request for the withdrawal of a child from this work the lessons should be spread through the term/s rather than taught within a concentrated timeframe. This allows the children the time to absorb the values within which this knowledge is presented.

Child Protection:

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. The principal is the designated liaison person (DLP). Each teacher has a copy of our policy on Child Protection and a copy is available to parents, through the secretary, if they request one.

Substance Use Policy:

The National Drugs Strategy, 'Building on Experience', requires schools to have a drugs policy in place (*Action 43, Ireland's National Drugs Strategy 2001-2008*)

Substance use/abuse is dealt with in the SPHE curriculum. It is spiral in nature dealing with teaching the children not to drink/taste anything they don't know/from a stranger in junior/senior infants to teaching them about drugs/alcohol/smoking in 5th/6th class.

Anti Bullying Policy

In accordance with DES guidelines, Scoil Bhreanainn has an up to date Anti-Bullying Policy which is rigorously enforces. We have a bullying awareness campaign each year and all children are taught to look out for it and to report it immediately if they feel that they are being bullied or are concerned about someone else being bullied.

Confidentiality:

Teachers will make themselves available to talk to children who have concerns regarding any of the topics in SPHE.

Teachers will talk to children guided by the child protection guidelines.

Children who are concerned about something can alert the teacher by coming to them before school/after school /at breaks or can leave a note on the teacher's desk.

All information regarding concerns of possible abuse will be shared on a need to know basis

Giving information to those who need to have that information, for the protection of a child who may have been or has been abused is not a breach of confidentiality.

Homework:

Homework in this subject is usually informal. However, if prescribed in SPHE, homework will reflect the active learning approach and will reinforce information already taught in class, e.g. relevant RSE/Stay safe worksheets used as homework, project work/questionnaires.

Resources:

Interactive PowerPoint lessons from the internet/ put together by teachers.

Resource books: Stay safe programme, Walk tall, Relationships and Sexuality programme, Making the links, Bi Folain, Be safe, Friends for Life.

Media: Busy Bodied DVD

Variety of SESE books.

Guest speakers:

Guest speakers may be used to enhance the work being done by the class teacher in SPHE. When a guest speaker addresses the children in SPHE the class teacher will remain in the

classroom. The speaker will be made aware of this school plan and attached policies and work accordingly. Criteria for selecting guest speakers will be in accordance with the recommendations on pg 32 of the teacher's guidelines.

Individual teacher planning and reporting:

This plan in SPHE and the curriculum documents will keep consistency and ensure all aspects of SPHE curriculum is covered. We have devised a two-year rota in line with this plan and curriculum documents for each class level to inform and guide teachers in their long and short term planning in SPHE. Each teacher will keep a cuntas míosúil and this will inform our progress and needs when evaluating and reviewing our progress in SPHE. Teachers may make observations on children progress which may be recorded in the child's file.

Staff development:

Teachers are encouraged to attend SPHE related courses and will share information/skills acquired at these courses with other members of staff during croke park hours.

Parental involvement:

Parental involvement is considered an integral part to effectively implement SPHE as Scoil Bhreanainn believes that SPHE is a shared responsibility. This plan and the curriculum documents are available for parents to inform them of the programme for SPHE.

Community Links:

Scoil Bhreanainn believe that the local community has a very important role to play in supporting the programme in SPHE and endeavour to liaise with the members such as the dental hygienist/dentist, health nurse, fireman, vet, new parent, sports clubs, credit union, gardai, coastguard, credit union, Environmental officer with Kerry County council etc.

Success Criteria:

The success of this plan will be evaluated through teachers planning and preparation and is dependent upon the procedures outlined in this plan having being consistently followed. We will also judge its success if the children have been enabled to achieve the aims outlined in this plan. Other success criteria might be Atmosphere of the school, feedback from parents, quality of social interactions, positive changes in behaviours and attitudes e.g. litter, language used etc.

Implementation

Roles and responsibilities


Scoil Bhréanainn believes that the school community must be involved to successfully implement SPHE. Therefore the teaching staff will implement this plan with the support of the Board of Management, parents and the local community.

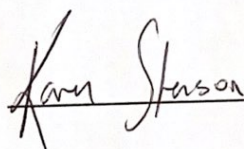
Review:

It will be necessary to review this plan on a regular basis to ensure optimum implementation of the SPHE curriculum in the school. Laura Nugent is responsible for co-ordinating this review.

Ratification

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management of Scoil Bhréanainn at a meeting on the 29 April 2013

Signed  (Chairperson BOM)

 Karen Stinson (Principal)



SCOIL BHRÉANAINN

Portmagee, Co. Kerry V23 RX48

Tel: 066 9477211 Email: portmageens@gmail.com

This policy was reviewed by staff and ratified at Board of Management meeting on:

Date: 15th May 2023

Chairperson: 