

St. Margaret's National School

Whole School Plan for SPHE

1. Introductory Statement

This Whole School Plan was formulated by the Teaching Staff of St. Margaret's National School and reviewed in 2019.

Rationale

The formulation of the Social Personal and Health Education Whole School Policy was regarded as a priority within our school because of its benefit to teaching and learning in our classes. In addition, it is viewed as an integral element to the development of positive attitudes, practices and values among all members of the school community. Finally, it was considered valuable to record the current good practice ongoing in the school that already contributes to the development of a positive school climate.

2. Vision and Aims

2.1. Vision

The vision for SPHE in our school is to foster and promote positive attitudes and self-esteem in a safe and healthy environment for all members of the school community. This will enable the children to develop respect for and an awareness of themselves, others and the wider world. It is hoped that this will have the effect of empowering and equipping them to face and manage a variety of challenging and changing situations that will occur during their lives.

2.2. Aims

- To foster in the child a sense of care and respect for himself/ herself and others an appreciation of the dignity of every human being.
- 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 enable the child to respect human and cultural diversity and appreciate and understand the interdependent nature of the world.
- To promote the health of the child and provide a foundation for healthy living in all its aspects.
- To promote the personal development and well-being of the child.
- 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 foster and support the ethos of Educate Together.
- To encourage the children to value and take pride in their national, European and global identities.
- To provide the children with opportunities to explore the various communities in which they live.
- To provide the children with opportunities to learn about their own culture and traditions.
- To make the children more aware of the need to care for the environment and keep in trust for future generations.

3. Content of Plan

3.1. Curriculum

Strands and Strand Units

The curriculum is delineated at Infants, First and Second, Third and Fourth classes, and Fifth and Sixth classes—and is divided into three strands: Myself, Myself and others, and Myself and the wider world. Each of these strands is further subdivided into a number of strand units or topic areas that contain particular objectives.

will teach aspects of all three major strand units each year and strand units have been chosen in such a way that the child will receive a comprehensive programme in SPHE over a two- yearly cycle.

The following timetable has been created to reflect this approach:

Overview of Content for SPHE

S.P.H.E. and RSE Plan

Junior Infants- Sixth Class

Curriculum:

Strands and Strand Units:

The curriculum is delineated at four levels—infant classes, first and second classes, third and fourth classes, and fifth and sixth classes—and is divided into three strands: Myself, Myself and Others, and Myself and the Wider World.

Each of these strands is further subdivided into a number of strand units or topic areas that contain particular objectives.

Ashbourne ETNS will teach aspects of all three major strand units each year and strand units will be chosen in such a way that the child will receive a comprehensive programme in SPHE and RSE over a two year period.

Programmes include:	www.pdst.ie
Walk Tall	Webwise
Stay Safe	All Together Now
Weaving Well-being	Busy Bodies
RSE Manuals	RESPECT Guidelines

A combination of all programmes should be used for lessons.

Overview of Content of S.P.H.E.

Strands	Strand Units (Year 1) Seniors, 1st, 3rd, 5th	Strand Units (Year 2) Juniors, 2nd, 4th, 6th
Myself	Self- Identity	Safety and Protection
	Taking Care of my Body	
	Growing and Changing	
	Safety and Protection	Making Decisions (3 rd -6 th)
Myself and Others	Myself and My Family	My Friends and Others
		Relating to Others
Myself and the Wider World	Developing Citizenship	Media Education

Overview of Content of RSE

Life Cycles	These 5 topics will be covered each year.
Emotions and Feelings	
Body Parts	
Body Systems	
Families	

4. Contexts for SPHE

SPHE will be taught through a combination of contexts

- Positive school climate and atmosphere
- Discrete time
- Integration with other subject areas

4.1. Positive school climate and atmosphere

Our school aims to create a welcoming, and stimulating environment where children are enabled to develop as part of a team that support and respect one another. Children, parents and all staff are on a first name basis, which establishes a relaxed and informal atmosphere for everyone.

The following guidelines may act as a checklist for identifying and extending the schools strategies for creating a positive school climate

(Ref. Teacher Guidelines, p.22)

- Building effective communication within the school
- Catering for individual needs
- 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
- Developing a school approach to assessment
- Developing skills for appropriate use of the internet.

Whole School Strategies presently in use that support the formation of a positive school environment

- Garda Vetting of non-staff members working directly with children in school.
- Parent/ teacher meetings.
- Welcoming staff.
- Displays of children's work and achievements on corridors and in classrooms.
- Promotion and use of positive language in classes and around the school environment.
- School involvement in various projects, both local and national.
- School concerts.
- Extra-curricular activities.

- An emphasis on effective communication to staff.

4.2. Discrete time

SPHE is allocated a half an hour per week on each teacher's timetable. However, teachers may allocate 1 hour per fortnight to allow for more in-depth exploration of a strand unit.

4.3. Integration with other subject areas

Teachers may endeavour to adopt a thematic approach to SPHE by integrating it with other subject areas such as Language (Media Education), Geography (Citizenship), History (Myself and my Family), Religious education Visual Arts, Physical Education (Water Safety), etc. Projects may also be explored.

5. Approaches and Methodologies

The approaches and methods used in SPHE are crucial to the effectiveness of the programme. Active learning is the principal learning and teaching approach recommended for SPHE. St. Margaret's National School staff will endeavor to teach SPHE using a variety of strategies which include:

- Children are afforded **opportunities to interact** with others, their environment and to learn to co-operate with their peers.
- Learning opportunities are provided in the context of a **positive school climate** and atmosphere integrated into the ethos of the school.
- Teachers will endeavour to provide an **integrated approach** which will allow for many aspects of S.P.H.E. to be dealt with in the context of relevant subject areas.
- **Discrete timetables** class either weekly or in block periods when required (e.g. Stay Safe Programme)
- A broad range of approaches and methods are suggested in the curriculum guidelines
 - Talk and discussion
 - Skills through content
 - Collaborative learning
 - Problem-solving
 - Use of the environment
- Provide a wide **variety of active learning strategies** to take account of **individual needs** and the wide range of objectives of the curriculum:
 - e.g. Play
 - discussion and drama activities
 - co-operative games
 - multimedia programmes
 - use of the environment
 - accessing the internet and e-mail

exploring television, video extracts or photographs
carrying out surveys and interpreting data.

6. 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.

The following are recommended informal tools for assessment in SPHE:

6.1. Teacher Observation

Teacher observation might focus on

- 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
- the quality of presentation of work
- particular interests or aptitudes displayed by the child
- the participation and interest of the child in a variety of activities
- the level of personal or social responsibility exhibited by the child
- the reliability of the child in carrying out established routines
- the perseverance of the child in carrying out a task
- the child's awareness of the difficulties of others and his/her willingness to help
- the questions the child asks and the responses the child makes to questions and suggestions made by the teacher
- various behaviours, for example shyness, leadership ability, level of self-confidence
- the tendency to be anxious, sense of fair play
- assertiveness, aggression, readiness to take risks and meet challenges
- physical and emotional maturity
- the ability of the child to engage in assessing his/her progress and reflect on his/her learning.

6.2. Tasks

They mirror the type of activities required by the objectives of the curriculum and so create a link between objectives, methodologies and assessment. Specific tasks can be used to ascertain a child's ability to apply particular skills in different situations e.g. assertiveness, persuasiveness, safety skills etc.

6.3. Activities

Simple activities e.g. worksheets provided in the various packs or those devised by the teacher allow the teacher to ascertain the knowledge that has been acquired at the end of a strand unit or natural end to a particular theme.

(See SPHE Curriculum pp. 70-77 and the school's Assessment Policy)

6.4. Scrap Books

A personal scrap book can be kept by each child. This contains a wide variety of evidence of achievement. This will be used to assess a child's progress in SPHE. Furthermore, it can enhance the self esteem of the child by showing that everyone has some success in school.

6.5. Projects

Illustrates how much a child has learned and shows their information gathering, collating and presentation skills.

6.6. Displays and presentations

Allows a child to use and develop their creative and presentation skills.

7. Children with Different Needs

Teachers will endeavour to adapt and modify activities and methodologies in SPHE to encourage participation by children with special needs. The learning support and resource teachers will supplement the work of the class teachers where necessary. St. Margaret's National School will liaise with trained professionals/appropriate agencies when dealing with sensitive issues such as bereavement or loss to ensure that the children involved are fully supported. There is also a School Counselor available for children with specific needs.

8. Equality of Participation and Access

As a school we value and recognise diversity, and believe all children are entitled to access the services, facilities, or amenities that are available in the school environment. Castaheany is a *mixed-sex* school and we endeavour to challenge traditional stereotypes and ensure that equal opportunities are given to boys and girls to participate in discussion, debate, presentation, etc. St. Margaret's National School is under the patronage of the Archdiocese of Dublin and we endeavor to provide for the participation and access of *Members of the Travelling community, Children with disabilities, and children of different nationalities, religion, culture, skin colour and ethnic origin.*

9. Organisation

9.1. Policies and Programmes that support SPHE

- **Code of Behaviour**
- **Enrolment Policy**
- **Health and Safety Policy**
- **Child Protection Policy**
- **RSE Policy**
- **Anti-Bullying Policy.**

9.2. Substance Use Policy

(See Substance Use Policy)

9.3. Relationships and Sexuality Education

(See Relationships and Sexuality Education Policy)

9.4. Child Protection

(See Child Protection Statement)

10. Homework

SPHE homework, if prescribed in SPHE, will reflect the active learning approach and will reinforce information already taught during class.

11. Resource

All resources will be selected in accordance with the criteria laid down on page 103 of the teacher guidelines.

11.1. Programmes and Other Materials

Stay Safe Programme: See Child Protection Statement

Books for Teacher	Online Resources	Media and ICT
Walk Tall The Stay Safe Programme R.S.E. Books Fun Friends Friends for Life Making the Links(Walk Tall) The Right Start/ Lift- Off/Me,You & Everyone Weaving Well-being	www.staysafe.ie www.webwise.ie www.drugs.ie www.classresources.ie www.teachnet.ie www.seomranga.com www.education.ie	Busy Bodies DVD Safe Cross Code DVD

11.2. Guest Speakers:

Guest speakers may be used to enhance the work being done by the class teacher. 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. Criteria for selecting guest speakers will be in accordance with the recommendations on page 32 of the Teacher Guidelines and circular 22/10.

12. Individual Teachers' Planning and Reporting:

This plan and the SPHE curriculum documents will inform and guide teachers in their long and short term planning. This planning should reflect the two-yearly cycle evident in the SPHE grid detailed earlier in this document. Each teacher will keep a Cuntas Míósúil and this will inform our progress and needs when evaluating and reviewing our progress in SPHE.

13. Staff Development

Some of the staff may have attended training in the following areas and this training will support an effective implementation of the SPHE programme:

- training in the Stay Safe programme
- training in the Relationships and Sexuality Education programme /R.S.E.

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

14. Parental Involvement

SPHE is a shared responsibility. Parental and community involvement is valued and encouraged at school level and within classes where deemed appropriate by the teacher. In addition, parental involvement is considered an integral element in the effective implementation of the SPHE programme. This plan and the curriculum documents are available for parents to inform them of the programme for SPHE.

15. Community Links:

St. Margaret's National School 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, Health Nurse, Fireman, Vet, Parents, Sports clubs, credit union, etc.

16. Success Criteria

The success of this plan will be evaluated through teacher's planning and preparation, and if the procedures outlined in this plan have been consistently followed. We will also judge its success if the children have been enabled to achieve the aims outlined in this plan.

17. Implementation

17.1. Roles and Responsibilities:

St. Margaret's National School 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.

18. Ratification and Communication

The Board of Management of St. Margaret's National School ratified this plan in Term 3 of 2019
This plan is available to view at the school office by the parents.