

New Ross Educate Together National School

SPHE Policy

Introduction

Aspects of SPHE are taught in our school through various programmes and initiatives such as Stay Safe, Walk Tall, Relationships and Sexuality Education. It is also integrated with other subject areas such as Physical Education, Learn Together, Geography, etc.

Our school believes that the social, personal, health and well being of each and every member of the school community is important and that education flourishes in an environment where good relationships are encouraged. We strive to promote a sense of belonging, which is nurtured in an atmosphere of mutual respect and tolerance and supported by a positive democratic environment of discussion, listening and review. We are happy to embrace the SPHE programme as a means of promoting and sustaining this vision for our children and our community.

Aims

The aims of social, personal and health education are:

- To promote the personal 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 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 independent nature of the world. (Ref: SPHE Primary Curriculum)

The SPHE Policy will be addressed under the following headings:

1. Content
2. Methodologies
3. Classroom Management/Strategies
4. Integration
5. Children with Special/Additional Needs
6. Individual Teacher Planning
7. Timetabling
8. Parental/Community Involvement
9. Assessment
10. Resources

Because SPHE permeates all aspects of school life, the content outlined in the curriculum should be implemented in a combination of formal and informal approaches.

1. Content

The school will follow the curriculum as laid down by the Department:

Strand: Myself

- a) Self Identity
- b) Taking care of my Body
- c) Growing and Changing
- d) Safety and Protection
- e) Making Decisions

Strand: Myself & Others

- a) Myself and my Family
- b) My Friends and Other People
- c) Relating to Others

Strand: Myself & The Wider World

- a) Developing Citizenship
- b) Media Education

The Key Programmes used are:

- *Stay Safe Programme* is taught at the following levels: Senior Infants, second, fourth and sixth classes
- *Relationship and Sexuality Education* programme is taught at all levels
- *Walk Tall Programme* is taught at all levels

A Standard Approach to Whole school Teaching of SPHE

A standard approach to whole school planning for the content in SPHE helps our school develop consistency around the teaching of SPHE. This approach offers a guide to teachers in school around what to teach and when. This standard approach involves;

- Teaching 5 Strand units in year 1
- Teaching 5 Strand units in year 2
- Ensuring each year at least one Strand unit is taught from each of the three strands
- Each Strand unit is allocated two months of teaching time
- The timing of these two month blocks are mapped across each school year

With this standard approach all teachers are covering the same Strand units at the same time. This supports the whole school atmosphere and integration with planned school activities. It also enables the teachers to anticipate what will be covered and when, therefore increasing the scope for planned integration or thematic planning with other curricular areas.

Month	Year 1	Year 2
September / October	Self-identity (Myself)	Myself and my family (Myself and others)
November / December	My friends and other people (Myself and others)	Relating to others (Myself and others)
January / February	Safety and Protection (Myself)	Growing and Changing (Myself)
March / April	Making decisions * (Myself)	Taking Care of my Body (Myself)
May / June	Media education (Myself and the wider world)	Developing citizenship (Myself and the wider world)

*Making Decisions is only a strand unit from 3rd – 6th, Juniors – Second may complete the Safety Issues section of Safety and protection at this time. Due to the increased amount of lessons in the Stay Safe Programme from 3rd – 6th class, placing the strand unit *Making Decisions* after the *Safety and Protection* in a standard two-year plan will enable the teacher to achieve some of the content objectives of *Making Decisions* through the Stay Safe programme.

Additional SPHE topics Schedule

Strands	Topics
Myself	Class Rules Healthy Eating Road Safety (Sept)
Myself	Fire Safety (Nov)
Myself and Others	Anti-Bullying week first week of March
Myself and the Wider World	Water/Farm Safety (June)

Friends Programme

Zippy's Friends, Fun Friends and Friends for Life are school based anxiety prevention and resilience building programmes. The Friends programme helps students to develop resilience by teaching them effective strategies to cope with, problem solve and manage all kinds of emotional distress, including worry, stress, change and anxiety. The programmes are taught in the following classes:

Programme	Class
Zippy's Friends	Senior Infants
Fun Friends	First Class
Friends for Life	Fifth Class

The SPHE programme will be taught in a variety of ways through a positive school climate, discrete time and integration with other subjects. Topics will not be dealt with in discrete time. For the strand units *Growing and Changing* and *Taking Care of my Body* refer to **RSE Policy**.

2. Methodologies

The focus in SPHE is on active learning for each pupil and will involve a combination of the following activities:

- Drama activities
- Co-operative games
- Visual resources
- Discussion
- Debates
- Written activities
- Analysing Advertisements
- Newspaper articles
- Types of newspapers

3. Classroom Management and Strategies

The following Classroom Management strategies will be employed:

- Whole class activities
- Group activities
- Pair/Partner activities
- Individual Work

4. Integration

Integration with other subject areas and Linkage within SPHE will be developed throughout this programme. Teachers will endeavour to adopt a thematic approach to SPHE by integrating it with other subject areas such as:

- Language (Media Education)
- Science (Living Things)
- Geography (Citizenship)
- History (Myself and my Family)
- Ethical Education (Human Rights)
- Visual Arts
- Physical Education (Water Safety)
- Themes/Projects such as Healthy Eating Week, Friendship Week, International Day etc.
(some themes will be explored by the whole school community through Assemblies)

5. Children with Special/Additional Needs:

Teachers will endeavour to adapt and modify activities and methodologies in SPHE to encourage participation by children with special or additional needs. The learning support and resource teachers will supplement the work of the class teachers where necessary. We will liaise with trained professionals/appropriate agencies where appropriate, when dealing with sensitive issues e.g. bereavement/separation to ensure that the children involved are fully supported.

6. Individual Teacher Planning

As required by the Rules for National Schools, all teachers in New Ross Educate Together N.S. will prepare a yearly scheme for all subjects including SPHE. A brief monthly review will also be submitted to the Principal. Following whole staff planning, each teacher's classroom planning will be done individually.

7. Timetabling

The discrete allocation for SPHE is 30 minutes per week with hour blocking being used at teachers' discretion. Certain themes will also be time tabled at a whole school level where appropriate e.g. in the first term Road Safety, Healthy Eating and Fire Safety will be addressed. In the second term Anti-Bullying and in the final term Farm Safety and Water Safety.

8. Parental/Community Involvement

We encourage active participants in SPHE homework by parents. There will be more specific areas where parental involvement is necessary *cf* RSE policy.

We 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, Fire people, Garda, Vet, Sports clubs etc.

9. Assessment

Children will be assessed by teacher observation, written activities and project work. More support will be given, where needed, to children in the form of support and supplementary activities.

10. Resources

- Walk Tall Programme
- Stay Safe Programme
- Friends for Life
- RSE Manual
- Busy Bodies
- My Selfie
- Webwise
- Making the Links
- PDST wellbeing hub

Success Criteria

Each lesson will contain an active learning element that can be assessed as follows:

At the end of each year, each child will have a portfolio or work reflecting the Strand Units covered that year. The programme for any given school year will be based on the Walk Tall, Stay Safe and RSE Programmes.

Review

It will be necessary to review this plan once every two years school years or as required to ensure optimum implementation of the SPHE curriculum in the school.

Roles and Responsibilities

The development, implementation and review of this plan will be shared by the staff of New Ross Educate Together N.S. in consultation with the Parents and the BOM who ultimately have responsibility for this policy.

Ratification and Communication

This policy is available to all parents **on the school website**. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department if requested.

Signed: _____ **Date:** _____