



Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) Curriculum Plan

This curriculum plan was developed by the staff to provide guidance for all teachers and to ensure whole-school collaboration in relation to the SPHE curriculum.

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1. Introductory Statement

This curriculum plan for Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) was developed by staff members and is aligned with the SPHE curriculum documents. As the school is developing, currently with classes only up to second class, the plan is aspirational and will be modified and updated regularly over the coming years.

2. Rationale

As an Educate Together national school, the school plan's vision and mission statements demonstrate the importance of developing confidence and mutual respect in our school community. The SPHE curriculum has a central role to play in helping children understand themselves as well as develop positive relationships within the school community and to support children to become empowered and active citizens of their families, Galway, Ireland and the world.

3. Vision

Recalling the school's ethos that strives to develop the whole child, this SPHE plan seeks to develop pupils' social and emotional competencies by providing the necessary aptitudes and attitudes so that pupils:

- reflect on their own knowledge and experiences;
- are empowered to make thoughtful, caring, safe and informed decisions;
- are able to communicate their needs, ideas and opinions with confidence;
- establish and practice relationships with their peers and within their families;
- and develop an awareness of and an appreciation of others experiences.

4. Aims

- To provide opportunities for pupils to become aware of and apply knowledge of appropriate personal care related to hygiene, healthy living and safety.
- To practice making decisions that support self-care and personal development.
- To ensure children understand the life cycle of humans including an age-appropriate awareness of growth and development, puberty and human reproduction.
- To establish a learning environment based on mutual respect, honest sharing of feelings and empathy through discrete lessons as well as managing conflicts and disagreements within the school community.
- To use discussion, reflective writing and other expressive activities to help children develop a sense of self as well as an understanding of a shared responsibility to others.
- To help children value and strengthen relationships with family members, peers and others in their communities.
- To engage pupils in an active and well-rounded consideration of others experiences while also striving towards developing a shared set of values related to justice, fairness and equality.
- To present opportunities for applying a critical analysis of ideas, opinions and information presented in all forms of mass communication.

5. Approaches, Methodologies and Content

A very helpful resource for planning is the newly revised [Making the Links](#), which summarises the topics addressed in various SPHE resources and connects them to specific objectives in the curriculum.

5.1 Whole-School Plan for Delivering Strands and Strand Units

Myself Self-identity Taking care of my body Growing and Changing Safety and Protection Making decisions (3 rd – 6 th Class)	Myself and Others Myself and My Family My friends and other people Relating to others Developing Citizenship	Myself and the Wider World Developing Citizenship Media Education
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	Year One (Junior Infants, 1 st , 3 rd and 5 th)		Year Two (Senior Infants, 2 nd , 4 th , 6 th)	
	Strand	Strand Unit	Strand	Strand Unit
Sept/Oct	Myself Myself and Others	Self-Identity Myself and My Family	Myself Myself and Others	Self-Identity Myself and My Family
Nov/Dec	Myself	Taking care of my body	Myself and Others	My Friends and Other People
Jan/Feb	Myself	Growing and Changing	Myself and the Wider World	Developing Citizenship
March/April	Myself and the Wider World	Media Education Developing Citizenship	Myself	Safety and Protection (Stay Safe)
May/June	Myself	Safety and Protection (Stay Safe review & Internet Usage) Making Decisions	Myself and the Wider World	Media Education

5.2 Self-Reflection

From the very earliest learning experiences in the school, a focus on self-reflection is integrated across the curriculum. One of the primary tools for supporting this process is the use of portfolios in which children choose examples of their work, and in an age-appropriate manner, reflect on their personal knowledge and learning. These portfolios are maintained in two-year groupings, and annually children meet formally with their parents to share their portfolios. In addition, discussion-based or written reflection is a regular feature of lessons across the curriculum.

5.3 Stay Safe

Stay Safe, as explained in the Risk-Taking Assessment and Child Safeguarding Statement, is delivered in its entirety. It is presented to every other class group: Senior Infants and even-numbered classes (2nd, 4th and 6th classes) in March during the second term. Five topics are presented each year in a spiral approach: Feeling Safe and Unsafe, Friendship and Bullying, Strangers, Touches and Secrets and Telling. These topics will be reviewed in odd-numbered years (1st, 3rd and 5th classes) in two short lessons during the third term, with the previous year's concepts presented briefly.

5.4 Walk Tall

The Walk Tall Programme, developed by the Department of Education and Skills, is an excellent resource for delivering the SPHE curriculum. It has a particular focus on substance use. While not all lessons must be delivered in their entirety, those in bold are required. A copy of each book is available in the school, and they can be accessed [online](#).

Junior Infants	Senior Infants	1 st Class	2 nd Class
- Myself and My World	- Self-Identity	- Self-Identity	- Me and My Decisions
- My Five Senses	- My Five Senses	- Taking Care of My Body	- Looking After Our Bodies
- Belonging and Companionship	- Belonging	- Growing and Changing	- Managing Feelings
- Taking Care of My Body	- Taking Care of My Body	- Keeping Safe	- Standing Tall
- Feelings	- Feelings	- Media	- Being Good Citizens
	- Myself and the Wider World		- Advertising

3 rd Class	4 th Class	5 th Class	6 th Class
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Setting the Scene - Valuing Self and Others - Feelings and Friendships - Relating to Others - Safety and Protection - Media 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Self-Identity - Myself and My Family - Feelings - Making Decisions - My Friends and Other People - Taking Care of My Body - Changing and Growing - Communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Self-Identity - Taking Care of My Body: Health and Well-Being - Taking Care of My Body: Food and Nutrition - Feelings and Emotions - Safety and Protection - Making Decisions - Myself and Others - My Friends and Other People - Relating to Others - Developing Citizenship - Media Education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Self-Identity - Taking Care of My Body: Health and Well-Being - Taking Care of My Body: Food and Nutrition - Growing and Changing - Safety and Protection - Making Decisions - Myself and Others - My Friends and Other People - Relating to Others - Developing Citizenship - Media Education

5.4 Relationship and Sexuality Education (RSE)

The main resource for teaching this aspect of the curriculum is the Relationships and Sexuality Education series produced by the Department of Education and Skills. It is available [online](#), and a hard copy of each book is available for teachers. The topics addressed in each year are summarised below. While teachers are not expected to deliver every lesson in its entirety, like with the Walk Tall programme it is important to refer to the *Making the Links* document to ensure curriculum objectives are met as outlined above in section 5.1. Of note, the lessons in bold must be delivered. Additional resources may be used to support the presentation of these topics. In addition, a series of special lessons for children in 5th class and their parents will be organised. Some of these sessions will take place outside of the teaching day and will be delivered by specialist visiting teachers. A key task to be completed before 2019 is to complete a Relationships and Sexuality Education Policy, in collaboration with the Parent-Teacher Association.

Junior Infants	Senior Infants	1 st Class	2 nd Class
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This Is Me - Who Are You - We Are Friends - This Is My Family - People Who Teach Us About Keeping Safe - We Have Feelings - New Life - I Grow - Making Choices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Look What I Can Do - These Are My Friends - This Is My Family - I Can Be Safe - Other People Have Feelings Too - Caring for New Life My Body - I Grow and Change - Making Decisions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Things I Like to Do - My Friends - My Family - Keeping Safe - Showing our Feelings - The Wonder of New Life - How My Body Works - Growing Means Changing - Decisions and their Consequences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Other People are Special - Being Friends - My Family - Keeping Safe - Coping with Our Feelings - The Wonder of New Life - When my Body needs Special Care - Growing and Changing - Personal Decisions

3 rd Class	4 th Class	5 th Class	6 th Class
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Special Gifts - Sometimes Friends - Fight - My Family - Keeping Safe - Expressing Feelings - Preparing for New Life - Our Senses - As I Grow I Change - Making Decisions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Myself and Others - Bullying Behaviour - My Family - Reasons for Rules - Feelings and Emotions - The Wonder of New Life - Being Clean-Keeping Healthy - Growing and Changing - Problem-Solving 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Person I Am - Different Kinds of Friends - My Family - Keeping Safe - Feelings and Emotions - My Body Grows and Changes - The Wonder of New Life - Caring for New Life - Making Healthy Decisions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Me and My Aspirations - Different Kinds of Love - Families - Keeping Safe and Healthy - Feelings and Emotions - Growing and Changing Relationships and New Life - A Baby is a Miracle - Choices and Decision-Making

5.5 Anti-Bullying

The Stay Safe, RSE and Walk Tall Programmes include many excellent lessons on preventing and reporting bullying behaviour. In addition, the school's Anti-Bullying Policy demonstrates clearly the school's focus on establishing and, as required, repairing relationships through a process of Restorative Justice. Regular learning opportunities for teachers and parents are provided. Cyber Bullying is specifically addressed as part of Safe Internet Use in the classes where Stay Safe is not presented. In addition, the following resources will be available and used as required.

- Bullying (three-book series from PrimEd)
- Online resources from the [Anti-Bullying Campaign](#)
- A range of picture books such as *Chrysanthemum*, *The Hundred Dresses*, *The Invisible Boy*, *Made by Raffi*, *Bully*, *You and Me and Empathy*, *The Juice Box Bully*, etc.

5.6 Safe Internet Use (including Cyber Bullying)

In the years (Junior Infants, 1st, 3rd and 5th classes) when Stay Safe is not delivered, the series *Bullying in a Cyber World* will be used. In addition, the [Webwise](#) resources are used in 1st, 3rd and 5th classes to promote safe internet use.

5.7 Positive School Culture and Climate

In addition to discrete SPHE lessons as well as integrating these concepts across the curriculum, the culture and climate in each classroom and the school as a whole has an integral influence on children's personal and social growth. This "hidden curriculum" includes all the procedures and shared values that underpin the establishment of a safe, caring and responsive school community. The following list, though not exhaustive, highlights the various initiatives and approaches that establish and maintain positive relationships that promote individual and collective development.

- Follow a Code of Behaviour that emphasises kindness and respect and seeks to link behaviour to the maintenance of relationships
- Implement a robust Anti-Bullying Policy
- Use Restorative Practice when addressing breakdowns in relationships
- Involve children in making decisions for themselves, their classes and the school as a whole
- Establish a Student Council in 2019
- Introduce peer-led conflict resolution beginning in 2020
- Encourage and provide opportunities for children to celebrate each other's achievements
- Gather the whole school together for an assembly on Fridays to share learning
- Use mindfulness, meditation and personal reflection practices
- Allow for potential conflicts to be addressed in a manner that encourages the sharing of viewpoints and seeking common understandings
- Actively involve parents in the life of the school
- Provide adequate supervision
- Use circle time and class meetings
- Model positive, caring relationships among staff members
- Ensure regular communication between the various stakeholders in the school community as explained in the school's Communication Policy

5.8 Linkage with the Learn Together Curriculum

Of note, there are many ways in which the SPHE objectives can be linked with the Learn Together Curriculum. Two very important ways are using the Moral and Spiritual Development objectives to support the Myself and Others Strand as well as using the Equality and Justice objectives to support the Myself and the Wider World Strand. Therefore, much of the activities and lessons delivered in the Learn Together Curriculum actively contribute to meeting SPHE objectives.

5.9 Other Resources Available

A number of other key resources are available in the school or online:

- Busy Bodies (5th Class RSE)
- Respect Guidelines from GLEN (learning about different types of families)
- Zippy's Friends (for infants)
- Road Safety Authority Resources
- Conflict Resolution resources (<http://cncr.rutgers.edu/conflict-resolution-at-school-on-the-playground/>)
- *Quality Circle Time* and other Jenny Mosley resources
- *Conflict Resolution* series from Prim-Ed
- *Bia Folláin* (available from MICE)
- Teaching resources from the Ombudsman for Children
- Teaching materials from Amnesty International
- The Learn Together Resource Bank
- Visitors to the school such as nurses, dentists, authors, sports coaches, parents, grandparents, city council officials and gardaí

6. Timetabling

Timetabling for SPHE will follow the guidelines which specifies a minimum of 30 minutes per week. As an Educate Together school, there is significant overlap between the SPHE and Learn Together Curriculums. Likewise, it is acknowledged that SPHE objectives are often addressed throughout the curriculum, particularly Oral English, and the staff will look for opportunities for development of SPHE in an interdisciplinary approach.

7. Homework

Discrete homework is not typically assigned for the SPHE curriculum, though information sheets to prompt discussion with parents at home as part of the Stay Safe programme will be used. Occasionally, projects involving discussion or activities to be completed related to understanding families will be included in homework.

8. ICT

Aligned with curriculum resources, such as the Stay Safe and Walk Tall programmes, suitable online material will be used to supplement discussion and project-based lessons. Only materials that have been assessed prior to the lesson for suitability will be used.

9. Teacher's Planning and Reporting

All teachers will develop yearly and fortnightly/weekly schemes that are based on the objectives of the Primary School Curriculum and this plan. These plans will not only indicate discrete SPHE lessons and activities but also show the connections between SPHE and the wider curriculum. Cuntaisí míosúla will also indicate the types of SPHE lessons completed over the period. These cuntaisí will be reviewed by the principal and stored for a two-year period.

10. Assessment

A variety of methods are used to assess SPHE skills. At the heart of ongoing assessment is observation, particularly as much of the SPHE curriculum seeks to promote attitudes and aptitudes rather than purely cognitive knowledge. Of particular importance for the assessment of SPHE, the use of reflective portfolios is an essential assessment activity. On occasion, teacher-created and directed assessment is used to formally monitor students' mastery of specific content.

11. Equality of Participation/Access

We are committed to the provision of equal opportunities for all our pupils in the implementation of the SPHE programme. Equal opportunities are provided to all pupils to participate in discussions, debates, reading and writing opportunities. We encourage awareness of difference and preventing discrimination related to the nine grounds specified in the Equal Status Act, and this informs all lessons.

12. Children with Exceptional Ability and with Special Educational Needs

As much of the SPHE curriculum is focused on personal awareness and understanding, teaching approaches will naturally allow children to engage with SPHE according to their ability. Children with exceptional ability will be able to make contributions to discussions that reflect their skills and knowledge. Equally, children with learning difficulties, language learning needs and special educational needs are helped to achieve their potential by receiving suitable supports to help them engage meaningfully in lessons.

13. Continuing Professional Development

Teachers are encouraged to avail of suitable professional development experiences. The seminars and resources from the PDST are invaluable, and all opportunities will be pursued. SPHE topics will be addressed on a regular basis through staff meetings, other whole-staff professional development experiences and all curriculum planning exercises. A particular focus will be on ensuring a uniform approach to implementing the SPHE curriculum as well as careful attention to ensure that the school climate is safe, welcoming and conducive to learning for all.

14. Roles and Responsibilities

Overall responsibility for implementing, supporting and evaluating this Curriculum plan rests with the principal as supported by the In-school Management Team. In addition, all class teachers are responsible for becoming familiar with and applying this plan when completing long- and short-term plans.

15. Review

The plan will be reviewed by the staff and amended as required, and it will be reviewed formally no later than 2021.

16. Ratification and Communication

This SPHE curricular plan was ratified by the Board of Management as indicated below. It is included in An Plean Scoile. The plan is distributed electronically to all teachers and a hard copy is kept in the office.

Louise Shields, chairperson

Date of ratification: 07/03/2018