



Delgany National School
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SPHE Policy

Mol an óige agus tiocfaidh sí

Introduction and Aims	2
Vision and Ethos	2
Aims and Objectives	3
Curriculum:	4
Making the Links	5
Timetabling	6
Approaches and Methodologies	6
Resources	6
Assessment	7
Programmes Taught as Part of the SPHE Curriculum	7
R.S.E. as part of S.P.H.E.	8
Dealing with Questions	9
Parental Involvement	9
Stay Safe	10
Children with Additional Needs	11
Child Protection	11
Homework	12
Integration (where appropriate)	12
Community Links	12
Role of the child	12
Resources	13
Staff and CPD	13

Success Criteria	13
Ratification and Communication	14

Introduction and Aims

Our school is a thirteen teacher school situated in North County Wicklow. The school is under Church of Ireland Patronage, with a range of Christian and other religions denominations represented within the school. We foster respect and tolerance for all beliefs. We encourage full involvement of parents and value parental input into the education of their children. We also value good communication between parents, children and the school. Our school values the uniqueness of all individuals within a caring school community. We recognize that SPHE is intrinsic to the learning and teaching that occurs both formally and informally in the school and in the classroom. We wish to assist children to develop feelings of self-worth and self-confidence while encouraging them to relate to others in a positive way. The SPHE programme encourages the children to be aware of their rights as individuals while accepting responsibility for their actions as members of the school and wider community. The school recognizes that 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. We wish to outline clearly our formal whole school policy for the teaching of SPHE.

Vision and Ethos

Delgany National School aspires to provide a positive, secure environment, which fosters independent, confident pupils who think responsibly and critically. We aim to achieve this by providing opportunities for learning, interaction and development of life skills, within a Christian setting. Each child will be recognised, valued and enabled to reach their full potential.

Delgany School is a school under Church of Ireland management. As such it is a school where the traditions and teaching of the Church of Ireland form the basis of the position taken in regard to moral issues without in any way restricting freedom of thought and expression.

The Church of Ireland School is a community where all pupils are equally valued and respected – irrespective of sex, social background, family circumstances, educational achievement, physical characteristics or intellectual functioning. Pupils experience a sense of caring and belonging, they are treated fairly and their spiritual, moral and religious development is encouraged, as is their intellectual, social and academic development.

It is our belief that SPHE should permeate throughout the school day and should be taught in a climate and atmosphere of openness and tolerance. Classrooms should be warm, welcoming, spacious and visually stimulating. Children are encouraged to act in a positive way in their day to day interactions with staff and other pupils. Appropriate policies and strategies for resolving conflict and rewarding positive behaviour have been developed and are implemented. Children and adults are cognisant of whole school policies that reflect and endorse our SPHE policy and school culture.

Such policies include:

- Code of Behaviour
- Child Safeguarding Statement
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Supervision
- School Tour and Outings
- Health and Safety
- Acceptance Use Policy
- Smart Devices Policy
- Administration of Medication Policy
- Teaching of RSE as part of the SPHE policy
- Religious Education Policy/ Critical incident policy/ Substance use/Misuse Policy /Green Schools programme/ Active Schools programme /Healthy School Lunch Policy/ Food Dudes programme.

Aims and Objectives

We endorse the aims and objectives of the curriculum for Social, Personal and Health Education and in addition we strive to achieve the following :

- 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

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. In Delgany NS we have integrated a wellness programme into the SPHE curriculum which is taught to all classes.

Delgany N.S. 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 over a two year period.

Overview of the content for SPHE (Two *year* period)

We need to edit the months accordingly...

Month	Year 1	Year 2
September/October	Self identity (Myself) Weaving Wellbeing	Myself and my Family (Myself and others) Weaving Wellbeing
November/December	My friends and other people (Myself and others) Weaving Wellbeing	Relating to others (Myself and others) Weaving Wellbeing
January/February	Safety and Protection (Myself)	Growing and changing (Myself) Stay Safe
March/April	Making decisions (Myself)	Taking care of my body (Myself)
May/June	Media Education (Myself & The Wider World) PAWS - Water Safety	Developing Citizenship (Myself & The Wider World) PAWS - Water Safety

Making the Links

Teachers are encouraged to utilise the Making the Links Document when planning lessons from the RSE, Walk Tall and Stay Safe Programmes. This document shows where lessons are similar and can be taught within the same period of time.

<https://www.staysafe.ie/PDFs/MakingTheLinks.pdf>

<https://www.pdst.ie/primary/health-wellbeing>

Timetabling

SPHE is allocated 30 minutes 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. SPHE can also be taught during discretionary time where need arises.

Parents will be informed prior to the teaching of sensitive areas and will actively be encouraged to be the primary educators of their children in these areas. From time to time outside agencies may be invited to give talks to the children. Children with Additional Educational Needs will be supported in accessing the SPHE curriculum by the SET team. This will include the major concepts of the Stay Safe and RSE programmes

Approaches and Methodologies

Active learning is the principal learning and teaching approach used in our SPHE programme
e.g:

<https://pdst.ie/SPHE-Approaches-and-Methodologies>

- drama activities
- cooperative games
- use of pictures
- Use of social stories
- photographs and visual images
- written activities
- use of media
- information technologies and looking at children's work
- Talk and discussion?

Resources

A selection of resources suitable for use in SPHE are available in the school eg. Books, posters, on-line resources. These resources are stored in individual classrooms, the staff room and communal storage areas such as the teachers' section in the library. Teachers chose appropriate

resources to use in their classroom which assist in teaching the curriculum as set out by the Department.

Assessment

Children's progress in SPHE is assessed through :

- Teacher observations
- Teacher designed tasks.
- Portfolio and project work
- Personal notebooks / folders/ textbook exercises

Programmes Taught as Part of the SPHE Curriculum

- The Stay Safe Programme
- The Walk Tall Programme
- The RSE Programme <https://pdst.ie/primary/health-wellbeing/RSE>
- Weaving Wellbeing Programme
- Active Schools Flag
- Food Dudes (on occasion)
- Participation in the Walk in My Shoes Initiative

Many aspects of these programmes overlap eg Road, water and fire safety, Healthy eating, diet and exercise, Bullying, self esteem and resilience, Friendship and family, Caring for the environment , Healthy lifestyles/ eating /exercise etc. This overlap allows for flexibility as to which lessons are being covered from which scheme and when they are being covered.

A comprehensive statement on R.S.E and the Stay Safe Programme is included in this policy

R.S.E. as part of S.P.H.E.

R.S.E is an integral part of the overall SPHE curriculum. The other areas being - Walk Tall- Drug and Substance Abuse Prevention and Stay Safe- The Child Abuse Prevention Programme and the Weaving Well Being Programme.

R.S.E within SPHE should:

Foster and support the personal, moral and social development of each child. Enhance the personal development, self-esteem and well-being of the child. Help the child to develop healthy friendships and relationships. Empower each child to enjoy relationships based on mutual respect, dignity and responsibility, free from abuse. Enable each child to accept his/her own sexuality and that of others in positive ways. Enable those children in senior classes to acquire an understanding of, and respect for, human love. To be sensitive to the concerns and interests of children i.e self, family, home and friends. To encourage respect for self and others in the school and wider community. To help children to develop confidence in their relationships. a) at home b) at school c) with peers d) the wider community. To enable pupils to develop an understanding of themselves, their own bodies and their feelings as they grow and change. To develop in each child a positive sense of wonder, respect and delight in his/her own particular stage of growth and development. To explain the process of procreation appropriate to the stage of development of the child. To enable the children to recognize the importance of the choices they make, and to accept responsibility for the decisions they take. To help pupils to resist peer, social and media pressure where appropriate.

To provide opportunities where pupils can share concerns in a forum where they can expect to be listened to sensitively, and where support is available.

Guidelines for the Management and Organisation of RSE in our School

Curriculum Matters and the role of the teachers

The curriculum as published by the DES/NCCA will be followed. All content objectives will be covered by the time each pupil leaves 6th class -The curriculum will be taught from Infants to 6th class. It will be taught by the teaching staff. Occasionally an outside speaker may be invited to address the "sexually sensitive issues" i.e. personal hygiene, menstruation and growing and changing/puberty, reproductive system, conception, birth and sexual intercourse, on the curriculum. Parents and guardians will be informed at least one week in advance as to what and when sensitive issues are to be covered in class. The sensitive issues are usually covered in the

third term and form part of the 4th, 5th and 6th class curriculum. All resources used will be in keeping with the ethos of the school and this policy. Teachers will only use NCCA/HSE approved publications to support the teaching of the programme. When an outside speaker is used, the class teacher/principal will make them fully aware of school policy regarding RSE. Parents/guardians will be notified of the name and qualifications of this speaker in advance of the lesson. The class teacher will remain with the class during the lesson.

Dealing with Questions

It is natural that children should wish to ask questions in the area of RSE. However, this area is treated somewhat differently from other subjects due to its sensitive nature. The RSE programme recognizes that the primary responsibility for relationships and sexuality education lies with the child's parents/guardians and that as the primary educators of their children they should be the people to answer sensitive questions that may arise during the course of teaching the RSE programme. Therefore teachers will only answer factual questions about the content of the lessons taught and will not give their opinions on homosexuality, masturbation, abortion, contraception etc; If any questions asked by the children are judged to be inappropriate, the teacher will refer the child to their parents, or state that this information may be available at a later stage of the curriculum. The school cannot guarantee confidentiality if a child asks a question of a personal nature or discloses personal information. At all times the child's and teacher's right to privacy will be maintained.

Parental Involvement

Parents/Guardians are the primary educators of their children and as such the school supports them in this role. The Parents Association may on occasion arrange for speakers/meetings to help them in the task of communicating with their children on their development. Parents/Guardians may access copies of the policy from the school office, or school website. Appropriate materials supplied by the NCCA and HSE may be distributed to parents to assist them in discussing the content of the HSE programme at home. E.g. Busy Bodies, Tom's Power Flower, or Talking to young people about relationships, Sexuality and Growing Up - (all available from the HSE)

The programme will be subject to ongoing review and development and parents will be advised of the content of the programme to be taught at each level. Parents will have the right if they have conscientious or moral objections, to withdraw their children from the more sensitive aspects of the programme. However issues surrounding supervision would have to be clarified with the

Principal in such events. Parents must confirm in writing if they wish for their child to be withdrawn from the R.S.E. lessons and while provisions will be made, the school cannot ensure that a child won't be exposed to some content of the R.S.E. programme.

The following document outlines the specific vocabulary to be taught at each class level.

<https://www.pdst.ie/sites/default/files/NEW%20Sensitive%20Language%20Grid%2011.18.pdf>

Stay Safe

The Stay Safe Programme is taught as part of SPHE.

‘All primary schools are required to fully implement the Stay Safe programme. The Stay Safe programme for primary schools plays a valuable role in helping children develop the skills necessary to enable them to recognise and resist abuse and potentially abusive situations’. (Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017, P. 67)

Information for parents regarding the Stay Safe Programme is available at

https://www.staysafe.ie/parent_ss_prog.htm

The Stay Safe Programme as part of the SPHE Curriculum

Delgany N.S. teaches the Stay Safe Programme, a teaching package designed for use in Irish primary schools. It was researched and developed by the Child Abuse Prevention Programme. The principal aim of the programme is to prevent both physical and sexual abuse of children.

Stay Safe is taught as part of the SPHE (Social Personal and Health Education) curriculum and as per best practice recommendations it will be taught on a rolling two-year cycle in the second term of the year. In alternate years the RSE (Relationships and Sexuality Education) programme will be taught except in 6th Class where the sensitive topics are covered every year.

Children from Junior Infants to Sixth Class participate in formal lessons on the Stay Safe Programme.

Parents/Guardians are encouraged to become involved by discussing each lesson with their child and helping their child to complete each worksheet based on the lessons in the programme.

Parents are informed in advance of commencement of teaching the Stay Safe Programme. They are directed to www.pdst.ie/staysafe to see the content of the lessons and for any further information they might need.

In the event that a parent informs the school that they wish to withdraw their child from the Stay Safe Programme, a written record of their reasons for doing so is required from the parent. This is retained on the child's school file. The supervision aspect of withdrawal will be discussed with the Principal,

Staff will be facilitated to attend CPD training where appropriate.

Individual Teacher Planning and Reporting.

This plan, along with curriculum documents will inform and guide the teachers in their long and short term planning for SPHE. Each teacher will record progress and needs in their Cuntas Miosúil and this will inform future development of the programme

Children with Additional Needs

Teachers will endeavor to adapt and modify activities and methodologies in SPHE to encourage participation by children with special needs. The learning support and resource teachers will collaborate with class teachers to support and supplement the work done in the classroom where necessary. Delgany NS 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.

Child Protection

The school implements, without change, 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 and Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary schools 2017. The Principal is the Designated Liaison Person (Mrs.Ovington) and Mrs.McCormack is the Deputy Designated Liaison Person. The Safeguarding Trust risk assessment is considered a living document and it is reviewed and updated as the need arises but in any case these procedures are reviewed, updated and ratified by the BOM on an annual basis. This statement is displayed on the wall in each classroom and on the school website.

<https://pdst.ie/Child-Protection>

Homework

Homework will reflect the active learning approach to SPHE. Parents are encouraged to become active participants and to engage as appropriate with their child in assigned homework. Usually, the children will be set homework when the Stay Safe & Weaving Wellbeing Programmes are being taught. Parents are encouraged to supervise and sign this homework.

Integration (where appropriate)

- Literacy
- Gaeilge - Mé Féin
- Visual Arts
- Science
- Drama

Community Links

We welcome the community guards, the HSE, local fire service, coast guard, RNLI, dental hygienist, pregnant Mums and newborn babies to our school on a regular basis to share their knowledge with the children.

Role of the child

The child will be encouraged to have a mature attitude to topics discussed in class and to treat information taught with maturity. Playground gossip will be discouraged. Questions from children in class will be answered within the agreed programme for that age group and a child may be advised to discuss at home personal concerns which are outside this programme. The right to the child's privacy will be respected at all times by the teacher and other pupils in the class.

For children with additional needs, involvement in the class will be following discussion with parents, SET Teachers and class teacher/principal.

Resources

- NCCA/ DES Relationships and Sexuality Education lesson plans junior infants to sixth
- DES Stay Safe Programme
- Child Abuse Prevention Programme (CAPP)
- Be Safe - Allianz Insurance Busy Bodies booklet and Video - This programme can be used in schools but it is recommended that the booklet is not sent home.
- - HSE Tom's Power Flower Talking to your child about Relationships , Sexuality Growing up -
- HSE Walk Tall -
- DES SPHE curriculum statements - DES
- PAWS water Safety Programme
- Weaving Well Being Programme and support materials
- Webwise
- NCTE Hotmail Heroes - NCTE

Staff and CPD

- Staff CPD and Training Staff will actively pursue CPD in areas relevant to the SPHE Programme including:
- Child protection - through Túsla - <https://pdst.ie/Child-Protection>
- Stay Safe through -CAPP
- RSE - Blackrock Education Centre . Well being
- Mindfulness
- Active schools
- Green schools
- Food Dudes

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.

Ratification and Communication

The Board of Management of NS ratified this plan on May 15th 2023

This plan is available to view at the school by the parents on request.

Policy review date:	Updates made:	Future review date:
April 2023	Added in changes with relation to written consent when not participating in Stay Safe. Busy Bodies Programme can be used in schools but resources are not sent home.	April 2026 (or as required)