



ST. MAC DARA'S COMMUNITY COLLEGE

SPHE Policy

Audrey Delaney (SPHE Coordinator)

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Definition of SPHE

The world we live in presents young people with both opportunities and challenges which affect their health and wellbeing. The SPHE programme is designed (and regularly adjusted) to address the needs of students to cope with these.

SPHE Policy

The whole school approach to the education of our students is supported by the SPHE/RSE programme as follows:

- That people feel valued
- Self-esteem is fostered
- Everybody deserves respect, tolerance and fairness
- Students have high expectations and standards for themselves
- Students value their own uniqueness and difference

Aims

Building on the aims of SPHE in the primary school, at post-primary level SPHE aims:

- To enable the students to develop personal and social skills
- To promote self- esteem and self-confidence
- To enable the students to develop a framework for responsible decision making
- To provide opportunities for reflection and discussion
- To promote physical, mental and emotional health and wellbeing

Allocation of Time

One class period (40minutes) is allocated per week to all first, second, third and fourth year students. The topic contained within each lesson may take a whole class period or may require a number of classes based on the specific needs of the class. At senior level, fifth year students are allocated two class periods, one for SPHE and one for RSE. This extra time provides flexibility here for individual teachers to spend more time in their own areas of excellence. This double class period usually takes place concurrently with other SPHE teachers to allow for team teaching or guest speakers. Sixth year RSE/SPHE usually takes place after the fifth year double period to facilitate guest speakers. All senior LCVP Students also receive RSE/SPHE (usually after Christmas) with the collaboration of the LCVP teaching team.

Cross-Curricular Links

- Random Acts of Kindness Week - (October)

Sixth Year Mentors promote this by going into First Year Students during registration on Fridays. The Student Council participate by collecting First Year recorded Acts of Kindness Post-Its and displaying them in the Assembly Hall. Whole school involvement across ALL of the subjects (i.e. Prose and poems of an anti-bullying nature in English etc.) The Wellbeing Committee facilitates Teacher Wellbeing during this week in the form of a cake morning / Random Acts of Kindness Compliment Notes etc.

- Science Department - Anatomy and Physiology of the Human Body (All First, Second and Third Years study science).
- European Week Against Racism - Religion, English (NEW)
- Home Economics - Study of proper diet for nutritional purposes. All First Years students study Home Economics. (Connected, Respected, Responsible, Resilient, Aware, and Active)
- Deals with Loss, Moral and Spiritual issues – Religion (Responsible, Resilient, Aware)
- Get Active, Stay Healthy Week (May) Whole school involvement (Especially PE and Home Economics)
- Anti-Litter and Graffiti Competitions - Geography, Green Schools (Aware, Responsible, Connected)
- Garda Youth Awards – PE, General Teaching Body, to include SNAs
- Development Education - Religion, Geography (Connected, Respected, Responsible, Aware)
- The Wellbeing Wall – The Art Department. All extra-curricular activities are to be included on this wall (Connected, Respected, Responsible, Resilient, Aware, and Active). Also support services will be displayed.
- ‘Mind Your Buddy Award’ – An annual award for positive and caring behaviour is voted on by the staff body and presented on Awards Night.
- LGBTQI+ Awareness through staff education (Belong to) and secularism in Religion Class.

Whole School Involvement

Teachers from other departments have kindly allowed classes to be freed up when an outside speaker makes a presentation if needed. Where possible the class teacher will remain with the class and will follow on with relevant material to reinforce learning. Email addresses or personal student contact details are not to be exchanged with any guest speaker. Tutors, year head, chaplain and our DLP all provide support should a sensitive disclosure or issue arise following the talk. Talks usually take place in the morning.

Links to School Ethos

As is clear in our Mission Statement:

We, the Community of this college, through a caring and collective approach, aspire to provide a broad-based education for all, to foster respect and dignity and to promote a safe and just environment by positively encouraging all to realise their full potential.

As part of the College's holistic approach to adolescent development the combined programme provides students with an opportunity to develop skills and competence

- To understand themselves and their adolescent development
- To care for themselves and others
- To make informed decisions about their health, their personal lives and their social development

As a result, students are enabled to participate as active and responsible adults in the personal and social dimensions of society and to make responsible decisions which respect their dignity and the dignity of others.

The whole school environment supports this programme in that:

- The student feels valued
- Self-esteem is fostered
- Respect, tolerance and fairness is evident
- High expectations and standards are promoted
- There is support for those with difficulty
- Open communication is the norm
- Effort is recognised and rewarded

- Uniqueness and difference are valued
- Conflict is handled constructively
- Initiative and creativity are encouraged
- Social, moral and civic values are promoted
- The content of each year is age-appropriate way

SPHE and the New Junior Cycle - Wellbeing

The new Junior Cycle Framework is based on the following areas

- Managing Myself
- Staying Well
- Communicating
- Being Creative
- Working with others
- Managing Information and Thinking

SPHE ties in closely with the following statements of learning as set out in the JC Framework

- Communicates effectively using a variety of means in a range of contexts in the school's language medium.
- Has an awareness of personal values and an understanding of the process of moral decision-making.
- Has the awareness, knowledge, skills, values and motivation to live sustainably.
- Takes action to safeguard and promote his/her wellbeing and that of others.
- Is a confident and competent participant in physical activity and is motivated to be physically active.
- Understands the importance of food and diet in making healthy lifestyle choices
- Recognises the potential uses of mathematical knowledge, skills and understanding in all areas of learning.
- Values the role and contribution of science and technology to society, and their personal, social and global importance.

Senior SPHE Curriculum Framework

The curriculum framework for SPHE in Senior Cycle is built around five areas of learning

- Mental Health
- Gender Studies
- Substance Use
- Relationships and Sexuality Education
- Physical Activity and Nutrition

Relationship and Sexuality Education (RSE)

The principles on which the Relationships and Sexuality Education is based is that the school programme should complement the education given at home by the parents/guardians, towards the formation of sound attitudes and values so that the students are not relying on the media/television for information especially on sexual matters. LGBTQi + awareness and education is highlighted as part of body image and in anti-bullying classes.

SPHE Coordinator's Role

- Ensure staff have access to and are aware of location of all resource material.
- Update Senior Resources to be distributed to teachers. Collect same at the end of the year.
- Attend weekly Care Team meetings and follow up when needed with SPHE team.
- Inform team of relevant competitions so as to allow our students to become involved and be creative.
- Ensure all staff of Junior Cert Wellbeing have access to a teacher-copy of the book, sample class contract and lesson plans at the start of the year.
- Coordinate and manage the planning of external and internal surveys.
- Facilitate guest speakers and manage the planning of same.
- Liaise with HSE with vaccinations. Advise all staff, domestic and teaching, about the upcoming event. Manage the distribution and collection of consent forms.
- Advise staff of CPD by displaying all notifications in the staffroom and on Google Classroom.
- Be available for teachers when they need support on an issue (especially new staff).

The Role of the Class Teacher

The SPHE teacher, at Junior Level is, where possible, the class tutor and therefore has regular contact with the class. He/she might also be aware of sensitive information regarding the health and care of the pupils. This allows for the lessons to be person-centred rather than subject centred. The SPHE team, at Senior Level, are usually highly trained in most/all areas of SPHE and RSE. Management usually allows and encourages ongoing training.

Saint Mac Dara's endeavours to provide an environment where

- Students are respected and valued in their uniqueness
- Students are understood and their views are accepted rather than judged
- Teachers are seen as real and genuine people by the students
- Adequate preparation and planning has taken place prior to the lesson
- The student voice and gender inclusion are also at the heart of the lesson.

Teaching Methodologies / Assessment for Learning (AFL)

Teachers of SPHE may use a variety of teaching techniques so as to enhance the learning experience. For example, Icebreakers may be used at the beginning of class to relax the students and allow for a greater awareness of personal involvement. Learning Intentions are usually displayed at the start of class, with a particular emphasis to key words. Think, Pair and Share are useful in generating curiosity behind the topic. Role-play, Written Assignments and Table Quizzes or Personal Reflections are also an effective way to assess learning. Debates and entering competitions allow for creativity in student's experience of learning. Students may also be encouraged to self-assess their work or simply peer assess. Self-assessment could be done when they grade their involvement in class for example. Peer assessment happens when they are encouraged to highlight positive attributes a student displayed when he/she introduced a lesson or simply as a team leader in a task, for example.

Homework

Skilled-based homework is only given usually so as to reduce the weight of the books in the schoolbag. Written homework may however be given to assess the learning, to complete a task or if students partake in a competition.

SEN

Teachers are advised to consult with the SEN department to discover the individual needs of each of the students. This material is also available in teacher-common. The teacher is then responsible for adapting the class to suit their needs. Material relating to teaching RSE to students with SEN is made available in teacher-common under SPHE. If a student is withdrawn for SPHE he/she is welcome to join the class at times of a guest speaker or material that would assist in the development of the student.

SPHE Resources – Junior Level

At the beginning of the academic year the coordinator meets individually with each teacher and gives them their Text Book, Yearly Plans and information on the Class Contract and general guidelines. Power Points, extra resources and official documentation are available for use under Teacher/Common, SPHE. The Coordinator is available all year round to assist the SPHE team.

The following workbooks are used

First Year – Health and Wellbeing 1 - Edco

Second Year - Health and Wellbeing 2 – Edco

Third Year - Health and Wellbeing 3 – Edco

Workbooks are kept in the set classroom, available for use, so as to reduce the weight of the schoolbags

RSE and SPHE Resources – Senior Level

There is no book at Senior Level, so the Coordinator gathers up hard copies of resources and schemes of work for each teacher. There is ample material available in Google Classroom and Teacher – Common, SPHE. This material is regularly updated. Class teachers who complete courses as part of PDST receive relevant material also. Extra hard copies of material are available in C1. Students must record all their work in hardback copies and these must be left in the classroom and be made available for use.

Teacher - Common provides a huge amount of material to include Lesson Plans, Prezi, Power Points, You-Tube Links and information gathered from appropriate Educational Sites such as www.kidshealth.org www.skool.ie www.ispcc.ie etc. Mind- Out (Mental Health – HSE).

Teachers are also emailed information regarding competitions or if something came up following a Care – Team meeting or a point of interest.

Availability/Use of ICT Facilities

Each classroom is equipped with at least one computer for use at the discretion of the teacher. All classrooms have the facility of an interactive whiteboard. The school has two large computer rooms which can be booked for individual project based research or CBAs. The school also has a range of portable Ipads which can be booked through Vsware. This provide students with opportunities for students to implement their ICT skills in the delivery or assessment of various topics.

Literacy and Numeracy

Key words are introduced at the beginning of class, along with Learning Intentions so as to set the direction and assist the learning and additional language around the area of health. Numeracy is also frequently used. For example, when devising a study plan; creating pie-charts for food plans or gathering up percentages for bar-charts, students will regularly use numeracy throughout the year.

Health and Safety Requirements

All students are requested to enter the classroom in an orderly manner. Students may also be required to give out and collect books/copies on a rota basis. Students are usually given the scheme of work for the year and informed of any topics ahead of delivery, at Senior Level. Students are regularly reminded of the Class Contract, Confidentiality and Boundaries. Restorative Practice is recommended in resolving any disputes, however minor, that may occur so that positive relations are maintained and upheld within the classroom. Students sit in assigned seats but this is subject to change to allow for group work or icebreakers. Positive behaviour is recorded in the class journal or on VSware. Competition winners are congratulated on the School Website and on the School Intercom system.

Signed: Pamela Kins Date: 1 Dec 2020
Chairperson

Signed: Derek Ward Date: 1 Dec 2020
Principal

Date of review: Dec 2021