

Introductory Statement and Rationale

(a) Introductory Statement:

The staff of Bunscoil McAuley Rice formulated this school plan for SPHE, in consultation with our Board of Management and our parents. We believe that SPHE is a shared responsibility and their contributions and involvement are essential to the effective management and implementation of the SPHE programme in the school.

(b) Rationale:

In developing this plan, the school seeks to foster the personal development, health and well-being of all the children in our care.

To help them to create and maintain positive and supportive relationships.

To help them to become active and responsible members of society.

To help them develop a framework of values, attitudes and skills which will enable pupils to make informed and responsible choices now and in the future.

To benefit the teaching and learning experiences of the S.P.H.E Curriculum.

To conform to the principles of learning outlined in the Primary School Curriculum.

(c) Vision:

Bunscoil McAuley Rice values the uniqueness of all individuals within a caring school community. We recognise that SPHE is intrinsic in the learning and teaching that occurs both formally and informally in the school and in the classroom. Through our SPHE programme we wish to assist children in developing feelings of self-worth and self-confidence while encouraging their ability to relate to others in a positive way. The programme encourages children to be aware of their rights as individuals while at the same time accepting responsibility for their actions as members of the school and the wider community. 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.

Aims:

- We endorse the aims and objectives of Social, Personal and Health Education Curriculum for Primary Schools:
- 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.

Objectives:

- When due account is taken of intrinsic abilities and varying circumstances, the SPHE curriculum should enable the child to:
- Be self-confident and have a positive sense of self-esteem.
- Develop a sense of personal responsibility and come to understand his/her sexuality and the processes of growth, development and reproduction.
- Develop and enhance the social skills of communication, co-operation and conflict resolution.
- Create and maintain supportive relationships both now and in the future.
- Develop an understanding of healthy living, an ability to implement healthy behaviour and a willingness to participate in activities that promote and sustain health.
- Develop a sense of safety and ability to protect himself/herself from danger and abuse.

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- Make decisions, solve problems and take appropriate actions in various personal, social and health contexts.
- Become aware of, and discerning about, the various influences on choices and decisions.
- Begin to identify, review and evaluate the values and attitudes that are held by individuals and society and to recognise that these affect thoughts and actions.
- Respect the environment and develop a sense of responsibility for its long-term care.
- Develop some of the skills and abilities necessary for participating fully in groups and in society.
- Become aware of some of the individual and community rights and responsibilities that come from living in a democracy.
- Begin to understand the concepts of personal, local, national, European and global identity.
- Appreciate and respect the diversity that exists in society and the positive contributions of various cultural, religious and social groups.
- Promote the values of a just and caring society in an age-appropriate manner and understand the importance of seeking truth and peace.

This plan will form the basis for teachers' long and short term planning, and will inform new or temporary teachers of the approaches and methodologies used in our school.

Content of the Plan:

1. Strands and Strand Units:

The three main strands of the SPHE curriculum are:

Myself

Myself & others

Myself & the Wider World

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Each of these strands is further subdivided into a number of strand units or topic areas that contain particular objectives. In Bunscoil McAuley Rice, we will teach aspects of all three strand units each year according to the following table in order to ensure that each child receives a comprehensive programme in SPHE over a two year period.

<u>Strands</u>	<u>Strand Units (Year 1)</u> <u>Sept. of Even Years(2018..)</u>	<u>Strand Units (Year 2)</u> <u>Sept. of Odd Years(2019...)</u>
Myself	Self Identity (Sept/Oct)	Safety & Protection (Jan/Feb)
	Taking care of my body (Jan/Feb)	Making Decisions (March/April)-3 rd to 6 th only
	Growing & Changing (Mar/Apr)	
Myself and others	Myself & My Family (Nov/Dec)	My Friends and Other People (May/June)
		Relating to others (Sept/Oct)
Myself and the wider world	Developing citizenship (May/June)	
		Media Education(Nov-Dec)

2. Contexts for SPHE

A. Positive School Climate

- Each teacher develops a Positive Classroom Climate where children are listened to, feel safe to talk, and which offers many opportunities for the development of the child.
- Every child and staff member is regarded as unique and is valued and treated with respect.
- Our school has an active Parents' Association. Guest speakers are often organised to speak to parents regarding children's health and well-being.
- Good relationships between students, parents, teachers and management founded on respect create a positive school environment where the SPHE curriculum can be fully implemented.

B. Discrete Time

Teachers ensure that all children are present during SPHE. The Stay Safe programme is taught in each class every year. Please refer to our Stay Safe Policy for further details. SPHE may be timetabled for 30 mins per week, one hour per fortnight or blocks of 1-2 hours per month where feasible or appropriate.

In dealing with sensitive issues during RSE, a guest speaker may be invited. In recent years, Ms. O'Sullivan has given lessons to 6th class in this area. This is now part of her post of responsibility.

C. Integration

We recognise that SPHE spans the entire curriculum. Class teachers will endeavour to integrate SPHE themes throughout the curriculum.

3. **Approaches and Methodologies:**

A. Active Learning

Active learning will be the principal learning and teaching approach as recommended for SPHE.

It requires children to actively participate in their learning in a wide variety of ways, thereby increasing the possibility of internalising what they have explored and of being able to use the learning in their everyday lives. Active learning contributes significantly to fostering self-confidence, self-discipline and self-control in the learner.

The key features of active learning

Active learning is a process. As children participate meaningfully in their own learning they engage in a process in which they can begin from what they already know, explore possibilities, question, draw conclusions and reflect on outcomes. It is essential that children are given the opportunity to progress through the various stages of the process in order that they can make sense of the learning for themselves and make new connections.

Active learning can be carried out by individual children or in group situations and by all age groups. Active learning engages children at different levels

Active learning promotes actionActive learning places children at the centre of the learning process. The content of activities for use in the classroom should relate as much as possible to the environment and lives of the children. This ensures that issues explored are relevant and linked to the child's own experience.

Active learning requires the teacher to guide and direct the work.

Active learning requires an atmosphere of trust and support. Active learning will be most effective when it takes place in an atmosphere of trust and flexibility. Children need to feel secure in giving their own point of view, knowing that they are respected as individuals and that their opinions are valued and taken into account.

B. Group Work

In SPHE there is a particular emphasis on children working together. This can include many different types of group interaction, such as collaborative work in small or large groups.

The opinions and views of the children will be central to this process, as will the informal observations of the teacher.

The teacher will choose a particular strategy depending on the objectives of the lesson, the needs and ability levels of the children, and the resources available.

C. Drama Activities

Drama provides active learning situations that explore human relationships, behaviour and events. Through drama children can express their present feelings, understanding and knowledge and are led to new feelings, new understanding and new knowledge. Drama involves the child in a process that is fun, active and intrinsically related to his/her existing experience of play and other forms of interactive and imitative behaviour.

Using drama as a methodology in SPHE can help to heighten self-esteem and self-confidence by providing opportunities for children to take risks and to experiment with their own ideas.

Through drama, children are also helped to make sense of the world around them and to begin to understand themselves and their own behaviour in relation to the behaviour of others. In projecting themselves into a situation, children assume attitudes and behaviour that may not necessarily be their own. Playing a role allows them to become aware of some of the demands of that role in real life and to learn something of the person, the situation and the problem involved.

Dramatic activity can take place in pairs and in small or large groups.

Pair activities include	Group activities include	Whole-class activities include
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• making a complaint• resolving a conflict• conducting an interview• giving an explanation• conducting a phone conversation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• exploring responses to different situations• a family situation, for example eating together• listener-speakerobserver activities• developing questioning skills.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• a court of inquiry• a class meeting• a press conference• a trial.

D. Co-operative games

Games are a valuable means of helping children to work together in a caring and co-operative way. Games can raise the level of co-operative consciousness and help children to realise what they can learn from each other. They are a fun and interesting way of learning to work together and of respecting the contribution of each individual. Games include all children and are particularly helpful for dealing with sensitive issues, such as those of ethnic groups, sex roles and equality.

E. Pictures, photographs and visual images

Pictures, photographs and visual images may be used in a number of different ways in SPHE. Children need to develop skills of discernment and critical analysis to deal with much of the conflicting information and misinformation that they receive from various sources.

Pictures and photographs can be used in many ways within a lesson. They can provoke a discussion or provide the incentive for engaging in another activity. Photographs can also be used as the main activity, where the photograph can be explored and analysed and used to elicit ideas from the children.

Pictures or photographs used in the class can be taken from a magazine or newspaper or from a professionally produced picture pack.

In exploring visual images children will also become familiar with some of the techniques used by the media. They could identify techniques used in advertisements or extracts from television programmes and so become critical media users.

F. Discussion

There are many ways of promoting discussion with children: in pairs, in small groups or with the whole class. It can be used as an introductory activity, where the children identify all the ideas associated with a particular topic. This is a useful way of assessing what the children know and of establishing where gaps exist in their knowledge. The ideas can be recorded and used as the basis for further exploration.

Discussion is an element of almost all activities, but particularly useful strategies for promoting discussion and dialogue with children are

- open-ended statements
- brainstorming
- circle work
- agree or disagree
- creating pictures and posters
- debates, quizzes or soapbox
- interviews
- stories

- poems
- exploring a piece of music.

G. Written activities

There are many opportunities to use written activities for exploring particular issues and aspects of the content. Surveys, check-lists, worksheets and questionnaires are all useful ways of provoking children's thinking, of helping them to gain new insights, and of examining topics in some depth.

Examples of activities that require children to write or record their findings include:

- surveys
- questionnaires
- lists and check-lists
- projects
- worksheets.

H. The media and information and communication technologies

Children live in an information society, and it is essential that they are given opportunities in SPHE to

- access and retrieve information
- explore some techniques used in the media and the various technologies for communication available to them
- learn to make decisions and become more discerning in their use of the technology and the media
- develop self-confidence in using a wide range of technology
- enhance their relationship skills as they discover new ways of communicating

4. Assessment

A number of techniques shall be used in recording information about children's progress in SPHE. Assessment will be used to relate to parent the child's progress and also plan for the future in the classroom.

Teacher Observation

Teacher Designed Checklists

Portfolio and Projects

5. Children with Different Needs

All children will be catered for in our SPHE programme.

6. Equality of Participation and Access

We view the SPHE programme as playing a key role in ensuring equality of opportunities for all children. The programme at each class level will be flexible so that the learning requirements of all children may be addressed. We provide an equal educational experience for both boys and girls as we recognise that stereotyped expectations of gender roles can inhibit children's educational achievements. Children with special needs will be included in all activities. Diversity within our school community will be recognised by valuing and promoting the needs, interests, skills and talents of members of the Travelling Community, children with special needs and international children.

7. Policies and Programmes that support SPHE

<i>Policies</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Child Safeguarding• Anti-Bullying• Relationships and Sexuality Education• Substance Use• Code of Behaviour• Admissions• Health and Safety• Healthy Eating• Internet Acceptable Use

<i>Programmes</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Stay Safe Programme• Active School Flag• Food Dudes• Green Flag• Student Council

We have adopted the National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children and the Department of Education and Science Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures. (D.L.P. = Mr. John Moloney, Principal, Deputy DLP, Mrs. Mildred Grace)

8. Homework

Homework will take the format of handouts and materials from various programmes, such as Stay Safe, Walk Tall etc. The purpose of such homework is to allow for discussion with parents to ensure a balanced approach to topics dealt with.

9. Resources(extensive list attached as appendix)

- Curriculum Documents for SPHE
- Me,You and Everyone
- Walk Tall, Programme for the Prevention of Substance Misuse
- Stay Safe Programme, Health Promotion Unit, Dublin
- RSE Programme
- PSHE and Citizenship
- Food Dudes
- Drug Awareness Programme with John Leahy

Guest Speakers

On occasions it may be appropriate to invite guest speakers to visit the school. Speakers with expertise in a given topic area will be chosen following research and investigation by teachers (including recommendations from other schools).

10. Individual Teacher's Planning and Reporting

This plan in SPHE and the curriculum documents will inform and guide teachers in their long and short term planning in SPHE. Each teacher will keep a Cúntas Míósúil and this will inform our progress and needs when evaluating and reviewing our progress.

11. Staff Development

- An atmosphere of open communication exists between all staff members and skills, expertise and experience in teaching SPHE are shared.

- Teachers are informed of SPHE-related courses available, and are encouraged to attend. Information acquired at these courses is made available to other staff members, e.g. photocopying worksheets, access to SPHE packages in staff room, etc.
- Time is allocated at staff meetings for the discussion of all subjects, including SPHE.

12. Parental Involvement

The parents have the primary role in the SPHE of their children. Opportunities for involvement are provided and include:

- Support of Stay Safe programme
- Schools healthy lunches
- Homework
- Green Schools/Tidy Towns
- Guest speakers for parents regarding SPHE issues
- Christmas Concert / shows
- Parent / teacher meetings
- Parents' Association organising relevant guest speakers

13. Community Links

The wider community are encouraged to participate in school life. Visits have been and will be arranged to promote awareness of what people do in the community.

Success Criteria

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

Implementation

Roles and Responsibilities:

The whole school community must be involved in order to achieve the successful implementation of the SPHE curriculum. The teaching staff will implement this plan with the support of the Board of Management, parents and local community.

Timeframe:

This plan will be implemented each year. It will be reviewed on a regular basis. The postholder responsible for the SPHE plan is Ms. Meade. However, all teaching staff will review this plan as part of our SSE process together with pupils and parents.

Ratification and Communication:

This policy was reviewed during the 2020/2021 school year. It was ratified by the Board of Management on 25th May, 2021. It will be reviewed during the 2022/2023 school year.

Appendix

The RSE and Walk Tall programmes are implemented in every class every year. Stay Safe is implemented across the school every year as per our legal requirement to do so.

Each class level has access to a copy of the Walk Tall programme. Each class level has access to a copy of the RSE programme.

Master copies for The Stay Safe Programme are stored in the central resource room. All relevant materials are available to download from staysafe.ie. The teacher's handbook is available to download from staysafe.ie.

Stay Safe is taught in all classes each year. Parents are informed in advance by the class teacher when the programme is being taught. Parents are invited to contact the school if they have any queries or concerns about their child's participation in the programme. The school will engage with parents in relation to any concerns or queries they may have. It is not necessary to get parental consent in writing before teaching Stay Safe. However in the event that a parent withdraws their child from participation in the programme, the school will keep a written record of their reasons for so doing.

SPHE links with other policies/programmes used in the school- Substance Use, Stay Safe, Child Protection, Enrolment, Attendance, Code of Behaviour, Anti-Bullying, Health and Safety and Healthy Lunches. Teachers are expected to be familiar with these policies and ensure that the school's agreed policy is followed when addressing these issues.