

Social Personal and Health Education Whole School Plan

Introductory Statement and Rationale

The Social, Personal and Health Education Plan (SPHE Plan) for Scoil Mhuire was formulated following consultation with the Principal and teaching staff, the parents and it was subsequently ratified by the Board of Management. SPHE is a shared responsibility and the involvement of parents and guardians is vital for the effective implementation of the SPHE programme in the school.

Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) provides particular opportunities to:

- foster the personal development
- health and well-being of the child
- help her to create and maintain supportive relationships
- become an active and responsible citizen in society.

Within the Catholic ethos of the school and through the SPHE programme children can develop a framework of values, attitudes, understanding and skills that will inform their actions and decisions in these areas of their lives both now and in the future.

Rationale

Aspects of SPHE have been taught in Scoil Mhuire for many years through various programmes and initiatives such as the previous Stay Safe, Walk Tall, Friends for Life, Relationships and Sexuality Education and the many creative programmes adopted by the teachers in Scoil Mhuire. It is also an element of integrated work in teaching and learning and is not restricted to the 30 minutes per week allotted to SPHE. Such areas include:

- ✓ Religion
- ✓ Physical Education
- ✓ SESE

As outlined in our Vision Statement, SPHE aims to foster

- self-worth, self-confidence and wellbeing.
- places a particular emphasis on developing a sense of personal responsibility for one's own behaviour and actions
- the ability to relate to others in a healthy way, develop good relationships and empathy

SPHE promotes:

- self-awareness and understanding by helping children to name and manage their own feelings
- to recognise and appreciate individual abilities
- to cope with change of various kinds
- to cope with success and talents
- to cope with challenges and limitations
- learn how to manage their own behaviour
- to set and review personal goals within a safe and supportive environment.

Such intrapersonal development will increase the child's sense of self-efficacy and help her to be more in control of her life.

The purpose of this plan is to provide practical guidance for teachers, parents and other relevant persons.

Vision and Aims

Scoil Mhuire, in line with our Vision Statement and our Catholic ethos, places the child at the centre of our collective endeavours and values the uniqueness of all individuals within a caring, Christian school environment.

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/ guardians have the primary role in the Social, Personal and Health Education of their children so their involvement will be encouraged as much as possible. The Board of Management will work closely with the staff and the PA Committee in agreeing and providing speakers and workshops for parents on this important area.

SPHE is an integral element of the learning and teaching that occurs both formally and informally here in Scoil Mhuire. Through SPHE programme we seek to develop in children a sense of self-worth, self-confidence and empathy for others with the aim of learning to live in harmony and in community in an effective and satisfying way.

Aims:

The aims of the SPHE Plan of Scoil Mhuire are:

- To promote the personal development and well-being of the child
- To foster in the child a sense of care and respect for herself and others and an appreciation of the dignity of every human being, thus enabling each child to develop an awareness of their responsibilities to others in a caring community.
- To promote the health of the child and provide a foundation for healthy living in all its aspects – developing in the child the ability to make informed decisions and choices about the social, personal, and health dimensions of life both now and in the future
- To inspire children to be active participants in their own learning

Content of SPHE Curriculum in Scoil Mhuire GNS:

1 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.

Strand Strand Units (Year 1) Strand Units (Year 2)

Each of these strands is further subdivided into a number of strand units or topic areas that contain particular objectives.

Teachers are familiar with the strands, strand units and content objectives for their class levels.

Curriculum objectives are at the core of each SPHE lesson, and teachers consider this in their own planning.

This programme will be taught in a variety of ways through:

- a positive school climate
- discrete time for SPHE lessons
- integration with other subjects such as Religion, Language, Drama, SESE, P.E and Sport
- Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE)
- Stay Safe programme which is mandatory in all Primary schools
- Other school policies feed into the teaching and learning of SPHE, such as

- o Child Protection and Safeguarding
- o Code of Behaviour
- o Healthy Eating – Healthy Living
- o Anti bullying Policy
- o Dignity at Work
- o Attendance
- o Healthy Eating and Active Life style
- o Health and Safety Statement
- o Substance Use Policy: The National Drugs Strategy, 'Building on Experience', requires schools to have a drugs policy in place (Action 43, Ireland's National Drugs Strategy 2001-2008) The Substance Use Policy of Scoil Mhuire adheres to recommendations in the school's Health and Safety Statement. As part of our SPHE Programme children learn about the dangers associated with drugs and substance abuse.

Strands and Strand units

Myself - Self-identity (Sept.-Oct.) *This strand unit is for third to sixth only.
Infants to second complete the Safety Issues section of Safety and Protection
Growing and Changing (Mar-April)

Safety and Protection (Jan-Feb)

Stay Safe

Taking care of my body (Jan-Feb)

Making Decisions (March-April)

Myself and others - Myself and 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.)

(See SPHE Curriculum p. 11, Teacher Guidelines: SPHE p. 5, pp.31 – 32, 36 – 41)

Circular 43/2018 Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice

Approaches and Methodologies:

The Key Characteristics of SPHE in Scoil Mhuire:

- SPHE is a lifelong process
- Is a shared responsibility between
 - o Family
 - o School
 - o Health professionals
 - o The wider community
- It requires a generic approach
- It is based on the needs of the pupils
- It is spiral in nature
- It is developed in a combination of contexts
- It engages pupils in activity-based learning
- It involves a holistic approach to wellbeing as part of life and self care

SPHE is a shared responsibility

Parents, teachers, health professionals and members of the community all have a responsibility for the social, personal and health development of the child. Scoil Mhuire, like any school, does not operate in a vacuum removed from society at large but must operate as part of the community and a hub for the community. The contributions and involvement of all will be important if the implementation of the SPHE programme in Scoil Mhuire is to be effective and supportive of the girls in our care.

SPHE requires a generic approach.

Rather than treating topics in isolation, SPHE aims to develop in the child a generic set of skills, attitudes, values and understanding relevant to a range of social, personal and health issues.

SPHE is based on the needs of the child.

When planning an SPHE programme Scoil Mhuire has looked at the needs of the children and the environment in which they are growing and developing.

Appropriate adaptations should be made within the curriculum to suit individual requirements and individual school situations. Differentiation of the SPHE Curriculum is required as in any area for children with special educational, emotional and behavioural needs.

In Scoil Mhuire where it is deemed appropriate for a class, two teachers may be involved in order to deliver the SPHE programme at that time in a smaller group and allow for greater participation for some children. One half of the class might stay with the class teacher while the other half is taught by one of our Special Education Team, (SET) teachers.

This approach may also be used where we have a Split Class, eg, First and Second Class with one teacher.

SPHE is spiral in nature.

Similar content is revisited at different stages throughout the child's time in school. This provides opportunities to consolidate and build on previous learning and allows for issues and topics to be explored and treated in a manner appropriate to the children's needs, abilities and levels of maturity.

SPHE is developed in a combination of contexts.

Teaching occurs both formally and informally in the school. To be effective it should be implemented in a combination of ways as stated above , through:

- the context of a positive school climate and atmosphere – praise and affirmation to build self esteem.
- discrete time
- integrated learning SPHE requires children to be engaged in activity-based learning.

SPHE engages children in activity-based learning

Children need to be actively engaged in the learning process in order to use what they have learned in a variety of situations. Through active learning children can make sense of what they have learned and take increasing ownership and responsibility for their own learning. The following active learning strategies are promoted for SPHE:

- Drama activities e.g. role play
- Wellbeing breaks and activities (we have always given the girls breaks from sitting and thinking but it now comes under the umbrella heading of Wellbeing)
- Wellbeing mantras, eg I can't do it --- no – you can't do it YET!
- Co-operative games
- Pictures, photographs and visual images
- Discussion: in pairs, small groups, with whole class
- Written activities: surveys, questionnaires, lists, check-lists, worksheets
- Media studies
- Information and communication technologies
- children's work: portfolios, projects
- Many other strategies as devised by the class teacher.

Organisation of SPHE in Scoil Mhuire GNS

All pupils will have the opportunity to participate in and benefit from the full range of experiences offered in SPHE. Our approach to the Teaching and Learning of SPHE will allow for differentiation according to:

- Pupils' gifts, abilities and maturity
- Sensitivity to different individual, family, cultural and religious backgrounds

While SPHE is taught as one of the subject of the curriculum and has its own allocated time for each class, it is also taught through the day to day activities and interchanges in Scoil Mhuire.

The children will learn about their own rights, duties and responsibilities and all staff in Scoil Mhuire will present as role models in how they carry out their day to day duties with the children. This is a two-way process and the Dignity of the child is learned by watching the significant adults in their lives demonstrating dignity, respect, care for others and self-care.

School Planning

SPHE is delivered in Scoil Mhuire on a two year plan.

Junior and Senior Infants

First and Second Class

Third and Fourth Class

Fifth and Sixth Class

The Stay Safe Programme (which is mandatory in all Primary Schools) is delivered in Scoil Mhuire in

Senior Infants, 2nd Class, 4th Class and 6th Class.

The Scoil Mhuire devised programme is delivered in

Junior Infants, 1st Class, 3rd Class and 5th Class. This designed by the teachers and uses as its main resource the Prim Ed SPHE curriculum.

Supplementary resources include:

Weaving Wellbeing

SPHE worksheets from the Department of Education's PDST unit

Grow in Love programme in religion and others.

UNESCO programme on Human rights for children

Assessment

Assessment of the children's progress in SPHE is mainly through teacher observation:

- The child's demeanour in school and her sense of calm and wellbeing during class and recreational activities
- The ability to accept her own talents and challenges and to take constructive criticism as part of her own learning and development
- The child's ability to show empathy for others
- The ability of the child to co-operate and work in groups or to work independently
- The informal interactions between the child and adults and between the child and other children

- Physical and emotional maturity
- The quality of work and presentation
- The participation and interest of the child in a variety of activities.

The main Assessment Tools used in the teaching and learning of SPHE are:

- Teacher observation
- Teacher-designed tasks
- Feedback from parents and children
- Displays, projects and portfolios of SPHE work.

Equality of Access to SPHE in Scoil Mhuire GNS

Children with Different Needs:

In Scoil Mhuire all children will have equal access to SPHE education. The requirements of children with special needs will be taken into consideration when planning class lessons and related activities. For the sensitive issues in the RSE programme, girls in 5th & 6th class are supervised by a Female teacher when ACCORD facilitators are in class.

Equal opportunities will be given to all children regardless of gender, ethnic background, socio-economic status across all strands and activities.

Scoil Mhuire will endeavour to identify provision required, where necessary for the following:

- Members of the Traveller community
- Children experiencing any form of disadvantage
- Children with disabilities
- Families with literacy problems
- Families for whom English is not the first language

Child Protection and Safeguarding:

The school follows the DES Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures, which are based on Children First & National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children.

- The Principal Ms. Mary Elizabeth Price is the Designated Liaison Person (DLP)
- the Deputy Principal Ms. Breda Nugent is the Deputy Designated Liaison Person (DDLDP).
- The Board of Management of Scoil Mhuire is responsible for the Safeguarding of all children in Scoil Mhuire and as such complies with all its legal requirements in this regard.
- A Statement is reported by the Principal at every BOM meeting showing any actual cases or allegations of any Safeguarding issues since the last meeting. The statement is attached to the minutes but must also be cited in the minutes.

Every member of staff has a copy of the Child Protection and Safeguarding Statement and a copy is available to parents on the website or through the secretary if they request one.

Support of members of the local community

There are a number of people in the local community who can support the SPHE curriculum in very significant ways. A local garda, firefighter, crossing warden, nurse or doctor can visit the classroom, work with the teacher, and reinforce what has been taught. Visitors should be approved by the BOM and the teacher should remain with his/her class for the duration of the visit. It is essential that any special focus programmes used in school, comply with the principles of the SPHE curriculum and the catholic ethos of the school.

Use of special-focus programmes

Many programmes are available, both national and regional, that may be relevant and useful for SPHE. They deal with issues such as the prevention of substance misuse, celebrating difference, the prevention of child abuse, cyber safety, consumer education, and relationships and sexuality education.

It is essential that any special focus programmes used in school, comply with the principles of the SPHE curriculum and the catholic ethos of the school.

Roles and Responsibilities

All partners in the wider school community have a role in SPHE :

The Board of Management will support and facilitate the school approach to SPHE and is ultimately responsible for the Child Protection and Safeguarding of children in Scoil Mhuire.

Parents will be invited to contribute to the development of the SPHE programme in Scoil Mhuire, in policy development and in supporting the work of the teachers in this area.

The Principal is the liaison person between the BOM and the staff and will ensure that the SPHE curriculum is taught and implemented effectively throughout the school according to the ethos of the school, the Plean Scoile and the legal requirements in this regard.

Individual teachers will design an SPHE plan specifically for their own class while at the same time ensuring that their class plans coordinate with and feed into the overall school plan, set out in the policy.

Strands covered in SPHE each month are recorded on the Cúntas Míosúil. When delivering the Stay Safe programme the lessons covered each month will be recorded in the Cuntas Miosuil. Planning must state the lesson(s) in the Stay Safe Programme. The Cúntaisi Míosúla will be very relevant in recording what has been covered and in reviewing and developing the school plan for the following years.

Staff Development:

The school will develop its own Staff development when teachers share with colleagues their experience and resources gained from their own continued professional development (CPD) .

Visiting teachers/guest speakers, eg facilitators from the PDST may be used to supplement and support the work of the class teacher or to provide specific training during Croke Park hours. Teachers will be notified of courses relating to SPHE available in the area. Time will be allocated at Teachers' Meetings to discuss opportunities for development.

Parental Involvement:

Parents have a responsibility to encourage their children to participate in all strands of the SPHE curriculum. Parents may view the SPHE policy on the website and in the school. Parents are encouraged to attend the talks and workshops provided by the BOM and more often by the Parents Association Committee, as these will be chosen with the particular needs of Scoil Mhuire in mind.

Success Criteria

The criteria for evaluating the success of this policy will be :

- The level of enjoyment exhibited by the children
- The level of positivity in the school as a whole
- The ability of children to work and play in a harmonious and supportive manner
- Parents feedback that things are working or not working re SPHE

- The maximum participation by all children
- The development of skills and understanding
- The level of teacher satisfaction in teaching a broad, balanced curriculum.

Implementation and Review

(a) Roles and Responsibilities:

Each teacher and the staff as a group will evaluate the progress in SPHE by referring back to our set of stated objectives as stated in this plan.

Sessions at the Teachers' Meetings will be allocated to this work.

b) Timeframe:

This policy will be reviewed at the end of the school year 2020/2021.

Ratification and Communication

This SPHE policy was drawn up in 2017/18 and ratified by the Board of Management .

Parents can inspect the policy in the school office. The policy will continue to be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure optimum implementation of the SPHE curriculum and to comply with incoming updates or legal requirements.

All school plans are ratified and communicated to the Board of Management. This plan will be available for inspection by all interested parties.

Signed: _____ Chairperson

Ms. J. Henry

Date: _____

Appendix 1 Stay Safe Programme:

Under the Child Protection Guidelines 2011, The Stay Safe Programme is an essential and mandatory element of the SPHE Programme of Scoil Mhuire.

Aim:

To teach children personal safety skills so they can look after themselves in situations which could be upsetting or dangerous.

Content:

The lessons cover the following areas:

- Feeling Safe and Unsafe
- Friendship and Bullying
- Touches
- Secrets and Telling
- Strangers

Children participating in this programme will learn:

- To distinguish between safe and unsafe feelings
- What to do if lost
- What to do if the phone or doorbell rings when they are alone in the house
- The importance of friends in children's lives
- What to do if bullied
- Stay Safe Rules:

Say No/Get Away/Tell

- Why not to bully others
- Appreciating normal, appropriate touches
- That unsafe touches should never be kept secret
- How to respond to inappropriate touches (Stay Safe Rules)

- Good and bad secrets
- That some secrets should not be kept
- Who and how to tell if in trouble
- About strangers and safety strategies

The new Stay Safe programme for 5th and 6th Classes deals with sexuality in greater detail than before and it includes treatment of homosexuality and trans gender issues.