



Springdale Social Personal and Health Education Policy

Introductory Statement

The staff of Springdale N.S. reviewed this policy in October 2022. It was reviewed during a staff meeting and brought to the attention of the Board of Management and parents.

Rationale

Aspects of SPHE have been taught in Springdale N.S. for many years through various programmes and initiatives such as Stay Safe, Walk Tall, Relationships and Sexuality Education, the Weaving Wellbeing Programme and through our involvement in various initiatives which promote health and well-being. It has also been taught through integration with other subject areas such as Physical Education, Religion, Geography, etc. However, we wish to review our current practice and update our whole school plan accordingly.

Vision

Springdale N.S. values the uniqueness of all individuals within a caring school community. We provide a safe, caring school environment where every child is cherished and helped to achieve their maximum potential intellectually, spiritually, physically and emotionally. We recognise that SPHE is intrinsic to the holistic 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 to develop 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

The aims of the SPHE curriculum are:

- 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

In addition we emphasise the following:

- to enable the children to develop an awareness of their responsibilities to others in a caring community
- to enable the children to take greater control of their personal lives as individuals
- to encourage the children to be active in determining their own learning

Content of Plan:*Curriculum: Strands and Strand Units*

The curriculum is delineated at four levels—infant classes, first and second class, third and fourth class, and fifth and sixth class. It 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.

Since SPHE is spiral in nature, we will cover the following content at each level throughout the school over a two-year period:

Overview of Content for SPHE

Strands	Strand Units (Year 1) Sept '22 '24	Strand Units (Year 2) Sept '23 '25
Myself	<i>Self-identity (Sept.–Oct.)</i>	
	<i>Taking care of my body (Jan-Feb)</i>	
	<i>Growing and Changing (Mar-April) Sensitive topics will be taught in 4th and 6th Class each year</i>	<i>Growing and Changing- (Mar-April) Sensitive topics will be taught in 4th and 6th Class each year</i>
		<i>Safety and Protection (Jan-Feb)-Stay Safe</i>
		<i>Making Decisions (March-April) *This strand unit is for third to sixth only. Infants to second complete the Safety Issues section of Safety and Protection</i>
Myself and others	<i>Myself and My Family (Nov.-Dec.)</i>	
		<i>My friends and other people (May-June)</i>
		<i>Relating to others (Sept-Oct.)</i>
Myself and the wider world		<i>Media Education (Nov-Dec.)</i>
	<i>Developing Citizenship (May-June)</i>	

Springdale NS will teach aspects of all three major strand units each year. Teachers will use 'Making the Links and Beyond, Revised Edition, Dublin, 2018', to choose strand units in such a way that the child will receive a comprehensive programme in SPHE over a two year period

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

Contexts for SPHE:

SPHE will be taught in Springdale NS through a combination of the following contexts:

Positive School Climate and Atmosphere

Springdale NS has created a positive atmosphere by:

- Building effective communication within the school and between school and home. Attention will be paid to encouraging everyone to express opinions and concerns and to respond to the opinions and concerns of others as a dimension of classroom work and general school life
- Catering for individual needs (individual needs may be social, emotional, spiritual, physical or intellectual. Through assessment, observation and discussion with parents, we strive to identify and meet individual needs)
- Creating a health-promoting physical environment (healthy lunches, healthy lifestyle, road, water, farm safety and regular fire drills are some of the areas promoted.)
- Promoting democratic processes in certain levels of school life while balancing roles, rights and responsibilities. Children experience and practise the democratic processes by sharing responsibilities, by valuing the opinions of others, by experiencing a sense of belonging to one's own class group and the wider school community and by developing a sense of commitment to common goals
- Enhancing the self-esteem of all members of the school community. The staff is aware that their role in helping children develop their self-esteem is to create an environment within the school that is as positive as possible for all concerned. The five building blocks of self-esteem as outlined in the curriculum have been adopted as our approach to self-esteem development. They are a sense of identity, a sense of belonging, a sense of security, a sense of purpose and a sense of competence
- Fostering respect for diversity and prioritising inclusive and respectful language. We will prioritise both racial and gender equality and respect for those with special needs. We believe that children learn to respect themselves and others through experiencing respect in their own lives and through witnessing respect being shown to others
- Developing a school approach to assessment (e.g., whole class and individualised arrangements made during standardised assessments and individual assessments)
- Taking responsibility and pride in the school environment by promotion of behaviour and habits required for maintaining a clean environment

Discrete time for SPHE

SPHE is allocated ½ hour per week on each teacher's timetable in Springdale NS. However teachers may allocate 1 hour per fortnight to allow for more in-depth exploration of a strand unit.

Integration with other subject areas and Linkage within SPHE

Teachers will endeavour to adopt a thematic approach to SPHE by integrating it with other subject areas such as Language, Geography, History, Religion, Visual Arts, Physical Education, etc. Initiatives such as Friendship Week and Show Racism the Red Card will also be incorporated into planning for SPHE.

Teachers will identify the objectives that can be acquired through cross-curricular work and will include these in their short-term planning and will use the *cuntas míosúil* as a form of self-assessment for these and other objectives.

Approaches and Methodologies:

Springdale NS believes that the approaches and methodologies used in SPHE are crucial to the effectiveness of the programme. Active learning is the principal learning and teaching approach recommended for SPHE. Therefore we will endeavour to teach SPHE using a variety of strategies which include:

- drama activities
- co-operative games
- use of pictures
- photographs and visual images
- written activities
- use of media
- information technologies and looking at children's work

Assessment:

Assessment is a central part of the everyday learning and teaching process in SPHE. It can provide valuable information on the child's progress and on the effectiveness and suitability of the programme and the teaching methods being used.

Springdale NS uses the following recommended informal tools for assessment in SPHE:

- *Teacher observation*
 - The ability of children to cooperate and work in groups or to work independently
 - The informal interaction between the child and adults and between the child and other children
 - Physical and emotional maturity
 - The quality and presentation of work
 - The participation and interest of the child in a variety of activities
- *Teacher-designed tasks and tests*
 - SPHE includes areas of knowledge and understanding that will need to be assessed at regular intervals.
 - Specific tasks can be used to ascertain a child's ability to apply particular skills in different situations
- *Self-assessment by children:*
Children are encouraged to engage in assessing their behaviour and maturity, and to reflect on their learning
- *Projects and work samples filed in assessment folders*

Children with Different Needs:

Teachers will endeavour to adapt and modify activities and methodologies in SPHE to encourage participation by children with special needs. Information is available on the NCSE website under SPHE. The special education teachers will supplement the work of the class teachers where necessary. Individual children's identified needs will be noted in their Continuum of Support documents. Springdale NS will refer to its Critical Incident Policy and consult with trained professionals/appropriate agencies when dealing with sensitive issues such as bereavement or loss to ensure that the children involved are fully supported.

Equality of Participation and Access:

Springdale NS recognises and values diversity, and believes all children are entitled to access the services, facilities, or amenities that are available in the school environment. Ours is a mixed school and we endeavour to challenge traditional stereotypes and ensure that equal opportunities are given to boys and girls to participate in discussion, debate, presentation, etc.

Organisation:

Policies that support SPHE:

- Child Protection
- Critical Incident
- Anti-Bullying
- Relationships and Sexuality Education

- Code of Behaviour
- Enrolment
- Health and Safety
- Healthy Eating
- ICT Acceptable Use Policy

Programmes/Initiatives used in Springdale NS:

- The SPHE Curriculum
- Walk Tall Programme
- RSE Programme
- Busy Bodies
- Webwise
- Cocoon Teaching Resources (Internet Safety)
- Be Safe (Road, water & fire safety)
- RSA Safety Programme
- Halloween safety talks (City Council)
- Active School Flag
- PMCA Programme
- Food Dudes
- Green Flag
- Weaving Wellbeing
- Circle Time
- Mindfulness
- The Alert Programme (Self Regulation Programme)
- A variety of texts to support the teaching of SPHE for children with additional needs (available in Ms. Hogan's room)
- Recommendations for teaching SPHE to children with additional needs as per the NCSE/SESS website

Stay Safe Programme

As per Circular 65/2011, we in Springdale NS recognise that the Stay Safe Programme is mandatory for all children and will fully implement it for each class level in its entirety over a two year period.

Resources:

We will select resources/materials that are:

- Reflective of our school ethos
- In line with the principles of the SPHE Curriculum
- Age appropriate
- Closely matched to specific objectives
- Free of bias, racial or sexual stereotyping
- Produced by a reputable agency.

Specific software, DVDs, online links and textbooks support the SPHE programme. The choice of materials will be reviewed from time to time and may be changed as required. Materials purchased with school funds remain the property of the school.

Guest Speakers:

Springdale NS will adhere to the guidelines outlined in Circular 42/2018. When a guest speaker addresses the children in SPHE, the class teacher will remain in the classroom and make the speaker aware of this school plan and attached policies.

Homework:

SPHE homework, if prescribed, will reflect the active learning approach and will reinforce information already taught during class.

Individual Teachers' 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 Cuntas Míosúil (monthly record) and this will inform our progress and needs when evaluating and reviewing our progress in SPHE.

Staff Development:

Training opportunities will include the following areas and this training will support effective implementation of the SPHE programme:

- *training in the Child Abuse Prevention Programme/ Stay Safe*
- *training in the Substance Misuse programme /Walk Tall*
- *training in the Relationships and Sexuality Education programme /R.S.E.*
- *PDST Advisor support and modelling of lessons*

Teachers are encouraged to attend SPHE related courses and will share information/skills acquired at these courses with other members of staff during staff meetings.

Parental Involvement:

Parental involvement is considered an integral part of the effective implementation of SPHE. We recognise that parents play a the primary role in the Social, Personal and Health Education of their children so their involvement will be encouraged as much as possible.

This plan and the curriculum documents are available for parents to inform them of the programme for SPHE.

Community Links:

Springdale NS believe that the local community has a very important role to play in supporting the programme in SPHE and endeavour to liaise with members of the community such as the local library, the local community Garda, local hospitals, speakers on web safety, etc.

Success Criteria

The success of this plan will be measured using the following criteria:

- Implementation of the SPHE curriculum will be evident in teachers' work
- Continuity of content and methodology will be evident in teachers' preparation and monthly reports
- On-going assessment will show that pupils are acquiring an understanding of concepts taught
- Ability to engage with others in a manner appropriate to their age and personality.

Implementation**Roles and Responsibilities:**

Springdale NS believes that the school community must be involved to successfully implement SPHE. Therefore the teaching staff will implement this plan with the support of the Board of Management, Parents and the Local Community.

Timeframe:

This plan will be reviewed in October 2024

Ratification and Communication

The Board of Management of Springdale NS approved this updated plan on _____

Signed: *Lesley Cahill* (Principal) & *[Signature]* (Chairperson)

Date: 11/10/2022