

Social, Personal & Health Education Policy



Introductory Statement

The staff of Dalkey School Project NS, formulated this school policy for SPHE, in consultation with our Board of Management and our parents, as we believe that SPHE is a shared responsibility and their contributions and involvement will be essential to the effective implementation of the SPHE programme in the school. It was drafted during an in-school planning day in 2008-2009, reviewed with the assistance of a local *cuiditheoir* from the Primary Professional Development Service in March 2009, and brought to the attention of the Board of Management and parents for approval and ratification.

Rationale

Aspects of SPHE have been taught in our school for many years through various programmes and initiatives such as Stay Safe, Walk Tall, Relationships and Sexuality Education. It has also been taught through integration with other subject areas such as Physical Education, Religion, Geography, etc. However, we wish to formalise our teaching of SPHE and plan for it on a whole school basis to ensure compliance with D.E.S. guidelines

Vision

Dalkey School Project NS is a multi-denominational school which up holds the values of the Educate Together ethos, encapsulated in the motto "Learn Together to Live Together". As primary teachers our aim is to nurture the holistic and harmonious development of our pupils to their fullest potential in accordance with their needs and to encourage them to work collaboratively whilst fostering within them a sense of respect for themselves, others and the environment.

Aims

The children in our school should be enabled to achieve the aims outlined in the SPHE curriculum, which include:

- 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

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- 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 two

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. We 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.

We have created this timetable to reflect this approach:

Strands	Strand Units (Year 1)	Strand Units (Year 2)
Myself	<i>Self-identity (Sept.–Oct.)</i>	
		<i>Taking care of my body (Nov/Dec)</i>
		<i>Growing and Changing (March-April)</i>
	<i>Safety and Protection (March/April)</i>	
	<i>Making Decisions (3rd to 6th class) (January/February)</i>	
Myself and others	<i>Myself and My Family (Nov-Dec.)</i>	
		<i>My friends and other people (September/October)</i>
		<i>Relating to others (January/February.)</i>
Myself and the wider world	<i>Developing Citizenship (May-June)</i>	
		<i>Media Education (May-June.)</i>

Contexts for SPHE

SPHE will be taught in our school through a combination of the following three contexts:-

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1. Positive School Climate and Atmosphere

Dalkey School Project NS has created a positive atmosphere by:

- building effective communication
- catering for individual needs
- creating a health-promoting physical environment
- developing democratic processes
- enhancing self-esteem
- fostering respect for diversity
- fostering inclusive and respectful language
- developing appropriate communication
- developing a school approach to assessment

2. Discrete time for SPHE

SPHE is allocated ½ hour per week on each teacher's timetable in Dalkey School Project NS. Teachers may manipulate this time at their own discretion to cater for the needs of individual classes.

3. Integration

Integration with other subject areas and Linkage within SPHE will be developed throughout this programme. Teachers will endeavour to adopt a thematic approach to SPHE by integrating it with other subject areas such as Language (Media Education), Geography (Citizenship), History (Myself and my Family), Ethical Education (Human Rights), Visual Arts, Physical Education (Water Safety), etc. Themes/Projects such as Healthy Eating Week, Friendship Week, International Day, Lenten Campaign, etc. will also be explored. Some themes will be explored by the whole school community through Assemblies.

Approaches and Methodologies

We believe 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
- circle time
- guided reflective time

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Confidentiality

While confidentiality within discussion groups will be encouraged, children should be informed some information may have to be passed on at the discretion of the teacher to the appropriate person e.g. Principal, parents/guardians

Resources

Refer to Appendix 1.

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. The primary emphasis in this area is on informal assessment.

We use the following recommended informal tools for assessment in SPHE:

- *Teacher observation*
- *Teacher-designed tasks*
- *Portfolios and projects*
- *Regular reviews of class and whole school procedures and goals*
- *Self assessment*

Children with Special Needs

Teachers will endeavour to adapt and modify activities and methodologies in SPHE to encourage participation by children with special needs. The learning support and resource teachers will supplement the work of the class teachers where necessary. We will liaise with trained professionals/appropriate agencies, where appropriate, when dealing with sensitive issues eg. bereavement, to ensure that the children involved are fully supported. Parents could be encouraged to mediate the information on certain topics with their own child.

Equality of Participation and Access

We recognise and value diversity, and believe all children are entitled to access the services, facilities, or amenities that are available in the school environment.

Dalkey School Project NS is under the patronage of the DSP Executive, which is part of the Educate Together body. Our ethos is based on the four principles of Educate Together i.e. co-educational, multi-denominational, democratic and child-centred.

We will endeavour that all children will be given appropriate support to ensure equality of access and participation in the SPHE programme.

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Parental participation is encouraged and valued. Students are included in the democratic process through activities and groups such as the Student Council. Children are also involved in developing rules for the classroom.

- Buddy System
- Split classes – where appropriate
- Social skills modeling skills. Pro-social skills.

We encourage parents to share their interests and expertise through activities such as shared games, cooking, gardening, yoga, IT, crafts, drama, music, trips.

Policies and Programmes that support SPHE

- Code of Behaviour
- Learn Together Programme
- Enrolment Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Stay Safe Programme
- Substance Use Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Healthy Eating Policy
- RSE Policy
- Child Protection Statement
- Guidelines on Administration of Medication
- Information Booklet for New Parents

Homework

Homework in this subject will usually be informal. However if prescribed in SPHE, homework 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. This planning will be in line with the year grid on page 3 of this plan. Each teacher will keep a Cuntas Míosúil and this will inform our progress and needs when evaluating and reviewing our progress in SPHE.

Staff Development

The staff have attended training in the following areas and this training will support an effective implementation of the SPHE programme:

- *two full days in-service seminars in 2002-4 by the Primary Curriculum Support Programme*
- *training in the Child Abuse Prevention Programme/ Stay Safe*
- *training in the Substance Misuse programme /Walk Tall*

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- *training in the Relationships and Sexuality Education programme /R.S.E. One member of staff attended a Walk Tall training programme and passed on the information to other staff members.*
- *Child Protection training for Principal and Deputy Principal Dec 2009*

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 to effectively implementing SPHE as we believe that SPHE is a shared responsibility. This plan and the curriculum documents are available for parents to inform them of the programme for SPHE.

Community Links

We believe that the local community has a very important role to play in supporting the programme in SPHE and endeavour to liaise with the members such as the new parent, Dental Hygienist, Health Nurse, Fireman, Vet, Sports clubs etc.

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. We will know it has achieved its aims if the pupils:

- have increased knowledge, understanding and skills,
- are more aware of their attitudes and values
- are more respectful of themselves and others,
- relate to others in a positive way
- are more actively involved in the school and possibly local community
- feedback from parents and pupils
- happy atmosphere in school

Roles and Responsibilities

We believe that the whole 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.

Each teacher is responsible for the implementation of the SPHE policy with his/her own class. However it is recognized that individual teachers have a right to opt out of teaching some parts of the RSE programme. In this case alternative arrangements will be made to ensure that the programme is taught to all classes.

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Parents have a right to withdraw children from aspects of the RSE programme (cf Role of Parents, RSE Policy).

Role of visitors - Visitors to SPHE classes will deal with discussions in line with the aims of the programme and the Ethos of the school. It is the duty of the teacher who organises the visit to ensure the suitability of the visit to the programme and the school. Teachers will remain with the class for the duration of the visit. Principal must be informed in advance of all visiting speakers and the content of their presentation.

Review

It will be necessary to review this plan on a regular basis to ensure optimum implementation of the SPHE curriculum in the school. The whole staff is responsible for co-ordinating this review.

This plan will be reviewed before May 2011.

Those involved in the review may include:

Teachers, Pupils, Parents, Post holder, BoM, DES Cigiri.

Ratification and Communication

The Board of Management of Dalkey School Project NS ratified this plan on 26th January 2010.

This plan is available for parents to view at the school.

Appendix 1: SPHE RESOURCE MATERIAL

It is not easy (About Dying)	
Steve – A story about Death	
When someone Dies	
What do we think about Death?	
Helping children cope with Death	
Someone to talk too – A handbook on childhood bereavement	
Talking to your child about Cancer	
Living with Death	
When someone close dies – A handbook on adult & children's Death	
Schools In – How teachers welcome children returning to school during Cancer treatment	
Someone Special Dies	
Badgers passing Gifts	

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Goodbye Max	
Comeback Grandma	
In due season (Being young & growing Old)	
Living with Epilepsy	
Living with Cerebral Palsy	
Helping children to understand their Feelings	
Helping children to share their Teacher	
Helping children to share their Feelings	
Writing about my Feelings	
Building self-Image	
Investigating Morals & Values	X 2
Values & Visions	X 2
Whatdayamean	
Love hate and other feelings	
Writing about my Feelings	
Let's talk about feeling sad	
I'll do it – Taking responsibility	
I don't care – Learning about respect	
It wasn't me – Learning about honesty	
Developing self-esteem and citizenship (A-B-C-E-F-G)	
Children's rights (leaflet)	
Enabling listening in the classroom	
The World in the classroom	
Connecting communities	
Values, Cultures & Kids	
A practical guide to using Development education in community settings	
I am human	
My Friends	
People & places	
Our world-Our future	X 2
Conflict Resolutions (Middle)	X 2
Conflict Resolutions (Upper)	X 2
Basic Human Rights & Responsibilities	
Intercultural (Education in Primary Schools)	X 2

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Young & Old – Teachers Guide	
Addressing Racism	
What me a Racist?	X 2
Celebrating Difference	
The Right Start	X 2
Relationships & Sexuality Education	X 2
Relationships & Sexuality Resource Material (JI &SI)	
Relationships & Sexuality Resource Material (1 st & 2 nd)	
Relationships & Sexuality Resource Material (3 rd & 4 th)	
Relationships & Sexuality Resource Material (5 th & 6 th)	
Relationships & Sexuality Resource Material Social & Personal	
Relationships & Sexuality Resource Material Health Education	
What's Bullying?	
Bullying (Lower)	
Bullying (Middle)	
Bullying (Upper)	
Bullying!	
Stop that! (Anti-Bullying)	X 2
Bullying Material	
What do you know about Bullying?	
Mike's Lonely Summer – A child's guide through Divorce	
My two families	
We're taking about Divorce	
Lets talk about Divorce	