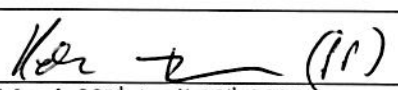


Deansrath Community College

SPHE Policy

2021



Ratified by the Board of Management on	April 20 th 2021
Signature (Chair of Board of Management)	 (11)
Consultation with Parents/Guardians	March 22 nd -April 12 th 2021
Consultation with Students' Council	Week of April 12 th 2021
Consultation with Staff	March 19 th 2021

Definition of Social, Personal and Health Education

SPHE provides students with an opportunity to develop their understanding of themselves, society and to make informed decisions about their health, personal lives, and social development.

SPHE provides learning opportunities and experiences which help students' social, moral, cultural and personal development. It helps students grow and develop as individual people, and in their relationship to others as a family member, friend or citizen.

Aims of SPHE

This programme aims to provide opportunities for students to learn about relationships and sexuality in ways that help them think and act in a moral, caring and responsible way.

It aims to:

- help students to develop healthy friendships and relationships in an ethical and honorable framework.
- develop a framework for responsible decision making.
- encourage self-esteem and self confidence.
- promote an understanding of sexuality and respect for sexual orientation.
- promote knowledge of and respect for reproduction.
- promote physical, mental and emotional health and wellbeing.

Relation to School Ethos/Mission/Vision/Aims

Deansrath Community College is a co-educational, multi-demoninational post primary school under the patronage of Dublin DunLaoighre Education and Training Board.

Our mission in Deansrath Community College is to create a safe learning environment within the community which acknowledges diversity, fosters mutual respect, celebrates achievement, recognises the needs of the individual, challenging all to meet their full potential.

The SPHE Programme in Deansrath Community College reflects the vision for holistic education of the individual, creating a space for the development of valuable life skills which are compatible with the ethos of the school.

Rationale for Policy

Deansrath Community College is fully cognizant of the importance of the home as the primary place where students grow, develop and mature into adults.

However, the promotion of the social, personal and health education of students is also a major concern for each school. As educators we have a duty “to promote the moral, spiritual, social personal development of students and provide health education for them, in consultation with their parents having regard to the characteristic spirit of the school.”¹

Junior Cycle Wellbeing

SPHE is now part of Junior Cycle Wellbeing. SPHE provides opportunities for teaching and learning directly related to health and wellbeing. Through active learning methodologies SPHE aims to develop students’ positive sense of themselves and their physical, social, emotional and spiritual health and wellbeing.

Class organization and timetabling.

Circular M11/03

All second level schools must timetable Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) as part of the Junior Cycle core curriculum from September 2003. The time recommended is the equivalent of one class period per week.

Circular 0037/2010

All second level schools must implement Relationship and Sexuality Education (RSE) as an element of Social Personal and Health Education at Junior Cycle, and as an RSE programme in Senior Cycle, even in the absence of a timetabled SPHE class.

Circular 0015/2017

The new area of learning entitled Wellbeing will be introduced for First Years from September 2017. A key component of this area of learning is Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE), including Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE).

¹ Paragraph 9 (d) subsection of the Education Act 1998

Circular 0055/2019

The area of learning, wellbeing will be reported on for the first time in 2020.

Circular 0076/2020

Amendments to the implementation of the Junior Cycle due to the Pandemic.

Timetabling

All Junior Cycle classes, 1st, 2nd and 3rd year have timetabled classes of SPHE once a week.

All second level students will have Pastoral Care each morning from 8.32 am to 8.40 am.

Transition Year Students have timetabled wellbeing classes each week.

Roles & Responsibilities in developing, implementing, monitoring, evaluating this policy.

1. Board of Management

The Board of Management will ensure that the ethos and values of the DDLETB are reflected in the implementation of this policy.

2. Principal and Deputy Principal

The Principal and Deputy Principal are committed to supporting all those involved in delivering the SPHE Programme and encourage teachers to participate in CPD in this area.

3. SPHE Co-ordinator

The Co-ordinator will work with the SPHE teachers to ensure a consistent and coherent programme is delivered during each academic year. A record of meetings and discussions will be maintained in the Subject Department Folder and uploaded to SharePoint. The Co-ordinator will liaise with outside agencies, which will provide services to support the SPHE Programme as appropriate.

4. Teachers of SPHE

SPHE Teachers will ensure that classes are conducted in an atmosphere of mutual respect thus facilitating opportunities for reflection and discussion. Teachers will avail of opportunities to attend CPD relating to the SPHE Programme.

5. Parents/Guardians

The SPHE Policy is available on the school website. Notifications regarding reviews will also be published on the school Website and parents /guardians will be invited to

contribute. Parents /Guardians will be able to meet SPHE teachers at Parent Teacher Meetings. Parents/Guardians will be informed by text message when RSE is scheduled.

6. School Staff

While specific teachers are trained and charged with the responsibility of delivering the programme, we see every Staff Member as a teacher of SPHE in that he/she may from time to time have opportunities to promote a healthy lifestyle and encourage responsible mature decision making. The school year has times earmarked when certain topics or issues are highlighted e.g. Friendship Fortnight and other awareness and fundraising events.

Students with Additional Education Needs

Students with Additional Educational Needs may need more help than others in coping with the physical and emotional aspects of growing up. They may also need more help in learning what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. They may also need more help in staying safe and recognising forms of abuse. AEN students may find change challenging such as transition from Primary to Second Level education. The Belonging Plus Programme will help with this transition as will the SPHE and Wellbeing Programme.

For learning activities to be made meaningful, relevant and achievable for all students, the teacher will respond to students' diversity by using differentiated approaches and methodologies. Teachers will link with the AEN Co-ordinator and use suggested strategies.

The four strands of the Junior Cycle Specification are:

- Who am I?
- Minding myself and others
- Team Up
- My mental Health

SPHE is primarily skills-based and so teaching methods are of an experiential nature with emphasis on discussion, reflection and classroom participation. These teaching methods will be student centred and age and developmentally appropriate. A respectful class atmosphere and code of conduct is expected from all participants. Every class establishes ground rules which are referred to throughout the lessons.

Teaching Methodologies may include:

- Group work
- Role play
- Brainstorming
- Icebreakers
- Simulation
- Narrative expression
- Debating
- Project work
- Art work
- Multi-media materials
- Case studies
- Visiting Speakers
- Assessment for Learning Strategies such as Traffic Lights.
- Wellbeing section in Student's journal
- Reflective practices
- Journaling

Cross Curricular Links

The following subject areas form cross curricular links with the SPHE Programme:

- Physical Education (Wellbeing hours)
- CSPE Short Course (Wellbeing hours)
- Guidance Related Learning (Wellbeing hours)
- Science
- Home Economics
- Friendship Fortnight
- Geography (Climate Change)

SPHE Resources include:

- SPHE Junior Cycle Specification
- Junior Cycle Wellbeing Guidelines
- Wellbeing Policy
- Healthy Lifestyles, 1,2, and 3
- Healthy Living, Healthy Times and Healthy Choices
- On My Own Two Feet
- RSE Junior Cycle Materials
- RSE Senior Cycle Materials
- Before You Decide
- Trust
- HSE Leaflets
- Growing up LGBT
- Belong to
- Mental Health Matters
- Working Things Out
- Body Whys
- Dove Self –Esteem Project
- Student’s Journal
- HSE Resources on SharePoint
- Reporting Guidelines

The list is not exhaustive. As resources become available they are uploaded on SharePoint.

Staff Development and Subject Development

The value placed on SPHE by the school will be evident by the commitment on the part of management to developing a core of trained SPHE teachers.

In-career development is an integral part of this programme. Management is responsible for responding to the relevant expressed and perceived training needs of SPHE teachers and whole staff.

Confidentiality and Referrals.

Participation

SPHE at Junior Cycle and RSE at Senior Cycle is a core curricular subject. Each parent has the right to withdraw their child from some or all RSE classes but parents are encouraged to provide alternative RSE at home. The RSE+ programme incorporates mandatory Child Protection lessons. Parents are not permitted to withdraw students from the Child Protection lessons. If parents wish to withdraw their child from RSE lessons, they will be invited by the school to discuss the matter with the Wellbeing/SPHE Coordinator and other relevant staff. Where a student has been withdrawn from RSE alternative arrangements for the supervision of the student will be agreed with the parents. Where students are withdrawn from RSE the school cannot take responsibility for any versions of class content passed on to them by other students.

Sensitive Issues

Class discussion will be of a general nature, and will not be personally directed, in accordance with the previously agreed class ground rules. Inappropriate questions will not be answered in class by a teacher, or from student to student. Only questions directly pertinent to the lesson content will be addressed in class. The SPHE teacher may also exercise his or her own professional judgement in deciding whether to answer the question privately after the class has finished. If a teacher becomes concerned about a matter that has been raised he/she should seek advice from the Guidance Counsellor, Pastoral Care Team, and/or the Principal. The Children First Act 2015 places a legal obligation on teachers as mandated persons to report child protection concerns.

Teachers discuss classroom rules, such as confidentiality, listening and respect for others. This forms the basis for a Ground Rules Class Contract which is signed by the teacher and students.

Referrals

While it is acknowledged that teachers have a professional responsibility to impart the SPHE course content, the needs of students will be addressed in a caring and supportive manner. Where it is appropriate, the teacher may refer students to other supportive links within the school. As far as possible this should be done in negotiation with the student.

The teacher may inform the class of external services relevant to the class material. If a teacher of SPHE is unsure of a course of action, he/she should discuss the issue with a member of the Care Team or Principal.

Confidentiality

While an atmosphere of trust is a pre-requisite of SPHE class, the following limits of confidentiality must be observed. These limits are:

- Child abuse – physical, emotional, sexual, neglect
- Intention to harm self or others
- Substance misuse
- Underage sexual intercourse. The age of consent is 17
- Sharing of explicit images
- Pregnancy.

Any disclosure will be reported to the Designated Liaison Person in compliance with the Child Safeguarding Statement and the revised Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017.

Teachers of SPHE will inform students of the limits of confidentiality at the beginning and throughout the school year and where possible before students make a disclosure.

Visitors

Circular 0023/2010

Visiting speakers are seen as complimenting and supporting the SPHE programme.

Teachers inviting these speakers must:

- inform the Principal in advance
- ascertain that visitors are Garda vetted.
- make the speaker aware of the SPHE Policy of the school
- agree the content of the presentation
- do preparatory and follow up work where possible
- remain with the class group during the visit

- ensure that health and safety guidelines and the covid plan are followed.

Assessment Record Keeping and Reporting

Every student has an SPHE Portfolio. As of 2020 all first year students have wellbeing folder which they will use for the duration of junior cycle. This folder contains worksheets and reflective evidence of learning. At the end of a lesson students record a short reflection. This reflection will be part evidence of students' learning which teachers will use for assessment purposes. The language of descriptors will be used for progress reports to parents/guardians.

As part of Junior Cycle Wellbeing students will be formally assessed in SPHE and results will be recorded on the Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement.

SPHE teachers report progress in SPHE for Junior Cycle students on the Christmas and Summer reports. SPHE teachers also meet parents at Parent Teacher Meetings.

Minutes of all SPHE meetings are recorded in the SPHE Subject Folder.

Related Policies

- RSE Policy
- Child Safeguarding Statement
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Substance Use Policy
- Acceptable Use Policy
- Pastoral Care Policy
- Wellbeing Policy
- AEN Policy
- Covid Plan
- Critical Incident Policy
- Health and Safety Policy

Review and Evaluation

The SPHE course is never static and must be examined and evaluated regularly and adapted to meet needs of the students. The SPHE Programme and Policy will be reviewed and evaluated by the SPHE team. The input of parents, students, and staff will be sought and included in such reviews.