

# **St. Fergal's National School**

## **S.P.H.E. Policy**



**St Fergal's School**

**Whole School Plan for Social, Personal and Health  
Education**

## **Introductory Statement and Rationale**

### **Introductory Statement**

A working group of teachers in St Fergal's School revised the school plan for SPHE to reflect current educational thinking, recent initiatives and updated SPHE resources. It replaces the previous plan for SPHE. It will be brought to the attention to the Board of Management for final ratification and will then be available to the school community.

### **Rationale**

Aspects of SPHE have been taught in St Fergal's N.S. for many years through various programmes and initiatives such as Stay Safe, Walk Tall, Relationships and Sexuality Education, Food Dudes, Accord, Alert programme, Drugs Awareness Programme, Transfer Programme, and Multi cultural day. It has also been taught through integration with other subject areas such as Aistear(Infants)Physical Education, Religion, Geography, etc. However, we wish to formalise our teaching of SPHE and plan for it on a whole school basis. This updated plan will ensure that there is an integrated and co-ordinated whole school approach to the teaching of SPHE across all levels from Junior Infants to 6<sup>th</sup> class. It will also guide the teachers in planning for the teaching of SPHE and for the assessment of teaching and learning in SPHE.

### **Vision and Aims**

#### **Vision**

The SPHE curriculum in St Fergal's will support pupils to develop a framework of values, attitudes, understanding and skills to inform their decisions and actions now and in the future. Through the teaching of SPHE pupils will be assisted to develop feelings of self worth and self confidence and will be taught to relate to others positively. Pupils will be taught to be aware of their rights as individuals whilst accepting responsibility for their actions as members of the school and wider community.

#### **Aims:**

The children of St Fergal's NS will 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.
- 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 .

## Overview of the SPHE Curriculum:

### Curriculum:

#### 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.

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

St Fergal's NS 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. St Fergal's have created the following timetable to reflect this approach:

### 2 Year Plan

Year 1 ( J.I,1st,3rd,5 <sup>th</sup> )			Year 2 ( S.I, 2 <sup>nd</sup> , 4 <sup>th</sup> , 6 <sup>th</sup> )		
Date	Strand	Strand Unit	Date	Strand	Strand Unit
September/October	Myself	Self Identity	September/October	Myself and Others	Relating to Others
November/December	Myself and Others	Myself and My Family	November/December	Myself and the Wider World	Media Education  **Drug Awareness

				Myself	6 <sup>th</sup> Class**
January/February	Myself	Taking Care of my Body	January/February	Myself	Safety and Protection <b>(Stay Safe)</b> And Internet Safety
March/April	Myself	Growing and Changing	March/April	Myself	Making Decisions <b>*This Strand is for 3<sup>rd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> only*</b> <b>(Infants to 2<sup>nd</sup> complete the Safety Issues section of Safety and Protection)</b>
May/June	Myself and the Wider World	Developing Citizenship	May/June	Myself and Others	My friends and other people

\*\*The Roots of Empathy Programme is covered throughout the Year in **1<sup>st</sup> Class\*\***

\*\*The Drug Awareness Programme is covered in November/December in **6<sup>th</sup> class\*\***

The Alert Programme is covered in 6<sup>th</sup> class

### **Contexts for SPHE:**

SPHE will be taught in St Fergal's through a combination of the following contexts:

### **Positive School Climate and Atmosphere**

St Fergal's 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

### **Discrete time for SPHE**

SPHE is allocated ½ hour per week on each teacher's timetable in St Fergal's 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. Themes/Projects such as Wellbeing Month, Amber Buddies, Incredible Edibles, Food Dudes, Lenten Campaign, etc. will also be explored.

### **Approaches and Methodologies:**

St Fergal's NS 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
- circle time activities
- discussion in pairs, small groups and whole class
- co-operative games
- use of pictures
- photographs and visual images
- written activities, surveys, questionnaires, lists, projects and worksheets
- use of media
- information technologies
- personal portfolios

### **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.

St Fergal's NS uses the following recommended informal tools for assessment in SPHE:

- *Teacher observation*
- *Teacher/pupil discussion*
- *Group work*
- *Teacher-designed tasks and tests*
- *Portfolios and projects*
- *Displays and presentation of work*

Each child will keep an SPHE Portfolio and this will be used to assess a child's progress in SPHE. Each year the child will be given a teacher-designed task or test related to the strand units taught, and the portfolio will be added to cumulatively during the child's schooling. Finally, an informal "graduation ceremony" will be held in 6<sup>th</sup> class when the child will receive their portfolio as a record of their work in SPHE during their schooling in St Fergal's NS.

**Children with Different 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. St Fergal's NS will liaise 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:**

St Fergal's 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 sex 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 and Programmes that support SPHE:**

<b><i>Policies</i></b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Child Protection</li> <li>● Anti-Bullying</li> </ul>

- Relationships and Sexuality Education
- Substance Use
- Code of Behaviour
- Enrolment
- Health and Safety
- Healthy Eating
- Internet Acceptable Usage

### ***Programmes***

- Active School Flag
- Food Dudes Healthy Eating Programme
- Green Flag Environmental Awareness
- Incredible Edibles
- Be Well Month (January)
- Amber Buddies
- Wellbeing Month
- Roots of Empathy
- Drugs Awareness Programme
- Accord
- Seomra Youth Centre
- Alert Programme

### **Homework:**

SPHE homework, if prescribed in SPHE, will reflect the active learning approach and will reinforce information already taught during class. Stay Safe weekly worksheets are sent home when the programme is being taught and parents are asked to read and discuss the lessons with their children. Parents are required to discuss the worksheet with their child and sign the completed worksheets and send back to school with their child.

### **Resources:**

*(PDST have developed a resource list, which is available on the SPHE page at [www.pdst.ie](http://www.pdst.ie). New resources are added to this from time to time.)*

### **Programmes and Other Materials:**

<b>Pupil Resources</b>	<b>Teacher Resources</b>	<b>Audio / Visual</b>	<b>Posters</b>	<b>Media &amp; ICT</b>
Worksheets from Stay Safe/Be Safe/Walk Tall Food Dudes	RSE Manuals Walk Tall Stay Safe Be Safe Making the Links Webwise Digiduck (younger classes)	Food Dudes videos Stay safe slideshow/ videos	Various posters throughout the school Positive and Growth mindset posters displayed in the school corridors	Relevant websites

### **Guest Speakers:**

Guest speakers may occasionally be invited to the school to speak on topics such as safety, bullying, friendships, etc. Such speakers may include the Lollipop Lady, Garda, Firefighter, Yoga teachers, visiting Theatre groups, Project workers from the Community Centre, Speakers on Internet Safety, Water Safety, First Responders Course, DSPCA speakers etc. Content will be age appropriate and link to the curriculum objectives. All such visits will be arranged as whole school or whole class level events and will be included in the short term planning for SPHE. Speakers or theatre groups will be briefed by the class teacher/s, or the Principal, as appropriate. When a guest speaker addresses the children, the class teacher will remain in the classroom.

### **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 and this will inform our progress and needs when evaluating and reviewing our progress in SPHE.

### **Professional Development for Staff:**

Training opportunities will include the following areas and this training will support an 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 to effectively implementing SPHE as St Fergal's NS 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, and they are welcomed as committee members on the Relationships and Sexuality Education Policy and Substance Use Policy.

### **Community Links:**

St Fergal's NS 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 Dental Hygienist, Health Nurse, Fireman, Vet, New Parent, Local Community Centre etc.

### **Success Criteria:**

The success of this plan will be evaluated through the following:

- 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.
- Availability and relevance of the Teaching Resources to support the teaching of SPHE
- Participation of pupils and involvement of parents in the various SPHE programmes eg. Stay Safe

### **Implementation: Roles and Responsibilities:**

St Fergal's 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:**

The plan will be implemented from 2021/2022 school year onwards

**Review:**

This plan will be updated as needed to comply with curricular and legislative changes.

**Ratification and Communication:**

The Board of Management of St Fergal's NS ratified this plan on .

Signed: Joe Behan  
Chairperson, Board of Management

Date: 08/11/2021

This plan is available to view by parents on request.