

Clonakilty Community College

Whole School Plan for

SPHE



Social, Personal and Health Education

■ Title

Social, Personal and Health Education Whole School Plan

■ Introductory Statement and Rationale

(a) Introductory Statement

The staff of Clonakilty Community College formulated this school plan 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 in November 2023 by the SPHE Department and brought to the attention of the Board of Management and Parents.

SPHE is a stand-alone Short Course in Junior Cycle, coming under the Wellbeing umbrella. Current 1st Years and 2nd Years (2024-25) are using the new 2023 specification for Junior Cycle. Current 3rd Years (2024-25) are using the 2016 specification for Junior Cycle.

SPHE is delivered through the RE programme and Visiting Speakers in Senior Cycle. SPHE is delivered through the Personal Care and Living in the Community PLUs for our L1LP and L2LP students.

(b) Rationale

The teaching and learning of Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) provides a unique space where students can develop the knowledge, understanding, skills, dispositions and values needed to support their physical, emotional, social and spiritual wellbeing, now and in the future. The SPHE specification is grounded in values of respect, equality, inclusivity, responsibility, dignity, compassion and empathy.

This course places a strong focus on the development of important life skills that young people need growing up in a fast changing and complex world. Specifically, it focuses on developing the core social and emotional skills of self-awareness, self-management, responsible decision-making, social awareness and relationship skills. These have been shown to determine how well people manage changing and challenging environments and can influence many important life outcomes.

In Junior Cycle, six indicators have been identified as central to students' wellbeing. Teaching and learning within the SPHE classroom can provide meaningful learning opportunities to foster all six indicators of wellbeing, helping students become more Active,

Responsible, Connected, Resilient, Respected and Aware. SPHE is thereby a core pillar of a school's Wellbeing programme in Junior Cycle.

The SPHE specifications support teachers in adopting an approach that is inclusive in accordance with principles of equality, human rights and responsibilities. This ensures that all students can see themselves, their families and their communities reflected across the learning and can learn to value diversity as a feature of humankind and as a source of enrichment. SPHE thus contributes to building a cohesive, compassionate and fair society; one that is inclusive of all genders, sexualities, ethnicities, religious beliefs/worldviews, social classes and abilities/disabilities.

■ Vision and Aims

(a) Vision:

The SPHE course aims to build students' self-awareness and positive self-worth; to develop the knowledge, understanding, skills, dispositions and values that will support them to lead fulfilling and healthy lives; empower them to create, nurture and maintain respectful and loving relationships with self and others; and enhance their capacity to contribute positively to society.

Through the use of experiential methodologies including group work, SPHE in CCC aims to develop students' positive sense of themselves and their physical, social, emotional and spiritual health and wellbeing.

It also aims to build the student's capacity to develop and maintain healthy relationships.

Through studying aspects of SPHE, students have time to focus on developing personal and social skills including self-management, communication, coping and problem-solving.

The aims of SPHE are aligned with the mission statement of the school:

"As a college we wish to empower our pupils to become independent and confident young adults enabling them to reach their full potential".

(b) Aims:

This course aims to build students' self-awareness and positive self-worth; to develop the knowledge, understanding, skills, dispositions and values that will support them to lead fulfilling and healthy lives; empower them to create, nurture and maintain respectful and loving relationships with self and others; and enhance their capacity to contribute positively to society

■ Content of Plan

JUNIOR CYCLE:

CURRENT 1st YRS and 2nd YRS 24-25 (2023 Specification)

<p>Strand 1: Understanding myself and others This strand focuses on developing self-awareness and self-esteem and building some of the foundational skills and dispositions needed for healthy relationships and to thrive in life, including communicating and negotiating, listening, showing empathy, respecting difference, and selfmanagement/self-regulation.</p>	<p>Strand 2: Making healthy choices This strand offers opportunities for students to consider how they can make healthy choices to support their wellbeing. It explores what being healthy might look like for a teenager, what helps or gets in the way of making healthy choices and how to access reliable information to support good choices. Students will also practice the skills needed for making healthy decisions and come to understand contextual factors, such as family, peer, media and social pressures, that influence decisions.</p>
<p>Strand 3: Relationships and sexuality This strand explores the cognitive, physical, emotional and social aspects of relationships and sexuality through a positive, inclusive, rights and responsibilities-based approach. The focus is on family relationships, friendships, romantic and potential sexual relationships in the future.</p>	<p>Strand 4: Emotional wellbeing This strand primarily focuses on nurturing emotional wellbeing and promoting positive mental health. It helps students develop problem solving and coping skills for dealing with the emotional ups and downs of life, explores how they can support themselves and others in challenging times and discusses where/how to find support, if needed.</p>

CURRENT 3rd YRS 23-24 (2016 Specification)

<p>Strand 1: Who am I? This strand focuses on developing self-awareness and building self-esteem.</p>	<p>Strand 2: Minding myself and others This strand provides opportunities for students to reflect on how they can best take care of themselves and others.</p>
<p>Strand 3: Team up This strand focuses on students learning about important relationships in their lives and building relationship skills.</p>	<p>Strand 4: My mental health This strand focuses on building positive mental health, examining young people's experience of mental ill health and learning how to support themselves and others in challenging times.</p>

Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE)

Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) is an integral part of, and connects with, aspects of SPHE. It is of particular importance for young people at this stage of their lives as they reflect on questions such as 'what kind of person am I?' and 'what matters for me in relationships?'

As they continue to form their identity, they are making sense of life experiences, information, images and messages about relationships and sexuality from a range of informal sources such as their peers, family, the media, online world. Having the opportunity to think about and discuss

relationships, sexuality and healthy sexual expression within a safe classroom setting and with a skilled teacher is vitally important.

RSE comes under the strand of Relationships and Sexuality (2023 Spec) /Team Up (2016 Spec). It is taught for the required 6 class periods (minimum) in each of the three years of Junior Cycle. This SPHE Policy is supported by a separate RSE Policy.

Contexts for SPHE:

SPHE will be taught in Clonakilty Community College through a combination of the following contexts:

- **Positive School Climate and Atmosphere**

Clonakilty Community College 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 taught at Junior Cycle as a stand-alone Short Course.

Students have two 40-minute periods per week in 1st Year, two 40-minute periods in 2nd Year and one 40-minute period in 3rd Year.

SPHE is one of the Wellbeing umbrella short courses (along with PE, CSPE and a separate Wellbeing class)

The school provides the required 400 hours required in Junior Cycle Wellbeing over the course of three years.

- **Integration with other subject areas and Linkage within SPHE**

- Guidance – see Guidance Policy
- Student Council
- Wellbeing Programme
- Mindfulness in Schools Programme (Dot B)
- Liaising with the Science Dept re: the RSE programme
- European Day of Languages

Approaches and Methodologies:

SPHE is taught using a variety of active methodologies and approaches, adapted to the age and stage of learning of students.

Examples include:

- Opportunities for Awareness, Dialogue, Reflection and Action
- Student Reflection/Voice
- Ice-breakers
- Walking debates
- Relaxation and focusing techniques
- Use of video clips, music, popular media
- Cooperative teaching methodologies
- Sharing research to stimulate discussion or as a means of challenging the 'norm'
- Teaching the language and skills needed for dialogue and listening
- Using creative and arts based active learning methods
- Creating a classroom that facilitates listening
- Using fictional scenarios or case studies

Assessment:

The Junior Cycle places a strong emphasis on Assessment as part of the learning process. This approach requires a more varied approach to assessment in ensuring that the assessment method or methods chosen are fit for purpose, timely and relevant to the students.

Assessment in Junior Cycle SPHE will optimise the opportunity for students to become reflective and active participants in their learning and for teachers to support this. Essentially, the purpose of assessment and reporting at this stage of education is to support learning.

The SPHE course supports a wide variety of approaches to assessment. It is envisaged that most assessment in SPHE will be formative in nature and students will provide evidence of their learning through multiple means of expression, including oral, written, visual, digital and art-based pieces. In these contexts, students, with their teachers and peers, will reflect upon and make judgements about their own and others' learning by looking at the quality of particular pieces of work, and they will agree the next steps in their learning based on feedback they give and receive. In this way, ongoing formative assessment can support the student in their learning journey and in preparing for the Classroom-Based Assessment related to this course.

Current 1st Yrs (24-25): One CBA to be completed in April of 2nd Year from 2023 Specification Assessment Guidelines.

Current 2nd Yrs (24-25): One CBA to be completed in April 2025 from 2023 Specification Assessment Guidelines

Current 3rd Yrs (24-25): CBA completed last year

Assessment in SPHE is not about setting tasks in order to accumulate a record of marks. Nor is it about teachers assessing where the student is situated on the continuum of wellbeing or making a judgment about a student's physical, social or emotional wellbeing. The focus of assessment is on

allowing students to demonstrate the knowledge, skills, dispositions and values they have gained through their engagement in learning in SPHE.

CLASSROOM BASED ASSESSMENT

The CBA for SPHE is completed in April of 2nd Year. The CBA involves a project completed in groups of two with an individual written reflection.

The CBA is prepared and presented/discussed during class time (6 hours).

The descriptor awarded is reported orally to the student following the SLAR and to parents in the 2nd Yr Summer Reports.

The CBA result is also reported on the JCPA. The following generic statement on learning in Wellbeing is also published on the JCPA:

The Framework for Junior Cycle provides for an area of learning over the three years of Junior Cycle called Wellbeing. There are three pillars to all Junior Cycle Wellbeing programmes: Civic, Social and Political Education (CSPE); Physical Education (PE); and Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE). (Student's name) followed a programme of Wellbeing that provided him with opportunities to enhance his physical, mental, emotional and social wellbeing. It supported him in developing important life skills as well as in building a strong sense of connectedness to his school and to his community.

Other Assessment tools that can be used in SPHE:

- Teacher observation
- Oral feedback to students in class and to parents at Parent Teacher Meetings
- End-of-unit reflections in textbooks
- Traffic light system (in textbooks) to assess understanding
- Use of SPHE Reflective Journal (2016 Spec only)
- Walking Debates
- SPHE Audit

Students with Additional Educational Needs:

The diversity of students present in all classrooms means that there is no 'one-size fits-all' approach to teaching SPHE. Junior Cycle SPHE is designed around broad learning outcomes that, with careful planning, can enable all students to engage. All students have a right to participate in meaningful and relevant learning experiences in all aspects of SPHE.

Teachers will endeavour to adapt and modify activities and methodologies in SPHE to encourage participation by students with additional needs. The SET teachers will collaborate with class teachers to support and supplement the work done in the classroom where necessary.

SPHE is delivered in the Level 1 and Level 2 Learning Programmes through the following Priority Learning Units:

- Personal Care
- Living in the Community

However, as per the Junior Cycle Wellbeing Guidelines 2021: *“In the case of a student on a personalised L2LP in a school where students are also studying a Level 3 junior cycle Programme, it is anticipated that much of their learning in PE, SPHE, CSPE and guidance-related learning will be done with their peers”*. This is facilitated where possible.

Examples of ways AEN students are accommodated in SPHE classes:

- Predictability through use of Learning Outcomes
- Use of concrete real-life examples, relevant to students’ lives
- Creation of a safe learning environment where all questions are welcomed
- Pre-teaching terms where relevant (and liaising with SEN/EAL colleagues if needed)
- Use of simple, clear, jargon-free language
- Use of varied, short tasks
- Revisit topics to consolidate learning
- Calming techniques to help students to self-regulate
- Consideration of AEN students in planning for RSE
- Translating RSE letter on website into Ukrainian for EAL students
- Use of subtitles on PowerPoint for EAL learners at level A1.
- Liaising with outside agencies/trained professionals when dealing with sensitive issues such as bereavement or loss to ensure that the children involved are fully supported.
- Reasonable accommodations for CBA
- Use of assistive technology and/or SNAs in the classroom

Equality of Participation and Access:

Clonakilty Community College recognises and values diversity, and believes all students are entitled to access the services, facilities, or amenities that are available in the school environment. Ours is a co-educational 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.

An inclusive SPHE classroom is one where students encounter diversity in a respectful way. It is grounded in a view of individual differences as a resource that can enrich the lives and learning of all.

The Junior Cycle SPHE specifications (2016 and 2023) support teachers in adopting an approach that is inclusive in accordance with principles of equality, human rights and responsibilities. This ensures that all students can see themselves, their families and their communities reflected across the learning and can learn to value diversity as part of human life and as a source of enrichment. SPHE thus contributes to building a cohesive, compassionate and fair society; one that is inclusive of all genders, sexualities, ethnicities, religious beliefs/worldviews, social classes and abilities/disabilities.

Organisation:

Policies and Programmes that support SPHE:

<i>Policies</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Child Safeguarding Statement• Anti-Bullying• Relationships and Sexuality Education• Substance Use• Behaviour for Learning• Enrolment• Health and Safety• Healthy Eating• Internet Acceptable Usage• Guidance Policy

<i>Programmes</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Friends for Life• Amber Flag• Green Schools Programme• Pastoral Care/Chaplaincy/Guidance Councillor

Homework:

Homework, if given in SPHE, will reflect the active learning approach and will reinforce information already taught during class.

Examples of homework given:

- To reflect on fire safety at home in consultation with parents/guardians
- To reflect on food hygiene at home in consultation with parents/guardians
- To use a study plan devised in class
- To use the principles of water safety when next at beach/pool
- To use relaxation techniques at home
- To set up an ICE (in case of emergency) contact on phone

Resources:

The SPHE Department in CCC has a Teams Page dedicated to sharing resources and relaying key messages following CPD. Any lessons/resources created by outside agencies are sent to the Subject Point of Contact and shared with all colleagues on this platform.

Examples of Resources used:

- Webwise Internet Safety Resources e.g My Online World, Coco's Law Lesson
- NCCA/Curriculum Online SPHE Toolkit
- The Respect Effect – Anti-Bullying resources
- The Importance of Sleep – Planet Youth
- HSE Resources for all strands of SPHE
- Padlets from CPD
- Be in Ctrl (An Garda Síochána) - Resources about online sexual coercion and extortion
- Lockers (ISPCC/Childline) - Resources about sharing of explicit images
- B4uDecide online resources for RSE
- Dot B online resources
- Textbooks 24-25
 - Health&Wellbeing SPHE 1 for 2023 Spec (EDCO)
 - Health&Wellbeing SPHE 2 for 2023 Spec (EDCO)
 - My Wellbeing Journey 3 (Gill)

Resources used:

- can support planning for quality teaching and learning in SPHE/RSE linked to the current curriculum
- are relevant to the Irish curriculum and context
- are up-to-date, engaging, creative and relevant to students' interests and needs
- have been developed by a state agency or an agency/organisation with a proven educational track record
- have not originated from a commercial source/seeking commercial benefit
- are freely available online.

Guest Speakers:

SPHE teachers are mindful that *“the qualified classroom teacher is the best placed professional to work sensitively and consistently with students and she/he can have a powerful impact on influencing students' attitudes, values, and behaviour in all aspects of wellbeing education”* (Circular 43/2018).

When a guest speaker/external facilitator is invited into an SPHE class through an identified need, the class teacher will remain in the classroom (as per Circular 42/2018) and make the speaker aware of this school plan and attached policies.

Parents/carers are consulted and made aware in advance of the content of the programme provided by the external facilitator. The programme content is appropriate for the age, gender and cultural background of students.

The Dot B Mindfulness in Schools Programme is delivered over 9 weeks in 1st Year by a trained facilitator. A refresher session takes place in 2nd Year.

Individual Teachers' Planning and Reporting:

SPHE teachers use a shared Yearly Plan. The plan is a working document and is amended according to the needs of the students and issues that arise in school/nationally of relevance to learners. All four strands are taught each year over the three years of Junior Cycle.

Teachers provide feedback to students in class and to parents at PTMs. Reports on students' progress are sent home to parents through Winter and Summer Reports.

Staff Development:

The release of teachers for SPHE CPD is facilitated as much as possible. Teachers share information/resources/skills with colleagues following CPD. Management are informed of relevant information.

All SPHE staff have completed the most recent required Child Protection Training and are aware of their roles as Mandated Persons.

Parental Involvement:

Parental involvement is considered an integral part to effectively implementing SPHE as we believe that SPHE is a shared responsibility.

Parents/Guardians will be informed of the content and timing of RSE through the website and by text message. Parents/Guardians will be informed of their right to opt their child out of this programme.

■ **Ratification**

The Board of Management of Clonakilty Community College ratified this plan on:

Signed _____
Chairperson of the BOM

Date _____