

Cabinteely Community School



Social, Personal, and Health Education (SPHE) & Relationships & Sexuality (RSE) Policy

Ratified October 2020

School Ethos and Mission Statement

Cabinteely Community School is a kind, caring and vibrant learning community which supports the wellbeing, academic, spiritual and creative growth of every student. We welcome students of all ethnicities, abilities, genders and faith traditions and none, as equal members of our school community. We identify with our Ursuline founders their values and their love of education.

Our core values guide our policies, our procedures, and how we work with our students, parents and staff. These core values are:

Care - We all need to belong and be cared for in a safe environment in order to learn

Courage - We show courage by making the right choices and committing to learning.

Support - We will be the best we can be by working hard and working together

Policy Aim:

The aim of the policy is to provide a fully comprehensive consistent annual SPHE programme in the school's curriculum to develop students' positive sense of themselves and their physical, social, emotional and spiritual health and wellbeing. It also aims to build the capacity of young people to develop and maintain healthy relationships.

Definition of SPHE

Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) provides students with a unique opportunity to develop the skills and competence to learn about themselves and to care for themselves and others and to make informed decisions about their health, personal lives and social development. Early adolescence is a time of significant change for young people, physically, emotionally and socially. Through the use of experiential methodologies and group work, students have the dedicated space and time in SPHE to develop their understanding and skills to learn about themselves, to care for themselves and others and to make informed decisions about their health and wellbeing in a rapidly changing world.

SPHE Aims

- To enable the students to develop skills for self-fulfilment and living in communities
- To promote self-esteem and self-confidence
- To enable the students to develop a framework for responsible decision-making
- To provide opportunities for reflection and discussion
- To promote physical, mental and emotional health and well-being

With such support, students may be enabled to participate as active and responsible adults in the personal and social dimensions of society and to make responsible decisions that respect their own dignity and the dignity of others. There is a growing recognition the social, personal and health education offered to our students is as important as any other area of the curriculum.

Rationale:

SPHE is taught at CCS by the class teacher. Each class is assigned a class teacher (CT) at CCS. The class teacher builds a close relationship with their own class and in so doing helps students deal with sensitive issues which may arise. The class teacher liaises with the relevant year head and care team. In SPHE, students have opportunities to revisit different themes which focus on developing self-awareness and respect for others, and the skills of self-management, communication, coping, decision-making and relating to others.

CCS Care Structure:

Care Team: The care team comprises of the principal, deputy principal, guidance counsellor, home school liaison teacher, chaplain, special educational needs coordinator, and behaviour for learning teacher. The care team meet weekly and respond to issues for students and their families. The care team liaise with relevant external agencies.

Year Heads: The year head oversees the personal and academic needs for their specific year group. The year head works closely with the relevant class teachers for that year group and they liaise with management and the care team accordingly.

Class Teacher: The class teacher meets with their assigned class regularly and assist students. The class teacher teaches SPHE for their CT class.

SNA's: The special needs assistants work daily in supporting and providing assistance for their assigned students. The SNA's work closely with CT's, Year Heads and the Care Team.

SPHE Short Course: Wellbeing:

By choosing to include this short course in the school's wellbeing programme in junior cycle, students have a dedicated space and time to learn about themselves, caring for themselves and others and making informed decisions for their health and wellbeing.

Course Overview & Learning Outcomes:

The four strands of the Junior Cycle SPHE Short Course are:

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

Learning Outcomes: Learning outcomes are statements that describe what knowledge, understanding, skills and values students should be able to demonstrate having completed this junior cycle short course in SPHE.

Strand 1: Who am I? This strand focuses on developing self-awareness and building self-esteem. *Learning Outcome for strand one:* Students learn about: How I see myself and others; Being an adolescent; Self-management; My rights and the rights of others.

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. *Learning Outcome for strand two:* Students learn about: Being healthy; Substance abuse; Respectful Communication; Anti-bullying.

Strand 3: Team up. This strand focuses on students learning about important relationships in their lives and building relationship skills. *Learning Outcome for strand three:* Student's learn about; Having a friend and being a friend; The relationship spectrum; Sexuality gender identity, and sexual health; Media influence on relationship and sexuality.

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. *Learning Outcome for strand four:* Students learn about; Positive mental health; Mental health and mental ill health; Dealing with tough times; Loss and bereavement.

Personal learning diary:

The nature of much of students' learning in SPHE is concerned with attitudes, values and feelings and is personal to the student. Students should be encouraged to keep a personal learning diary for the duration of the short course, where they can reflect privately on their learning in SPHE. With the agreement of the student, some of the entries may be used to support different learning activities, but essentially the personal learning diary is private and for the student only.

A full breakdown of the SPHE Well-Being short course and curriculum can be found on the NCCA website (www.ncca.ie/junior cycle)

Key skills:

In addition to their specific content and knowledge, the subjects and short courses of junior cycle provide students with opportunities to develop a range of key skills. The junior cycle curriculum focuses on eight key skills.

Key Skills Include:

- Being Creative
- Being Literate
- Being Numerate
- Communicating
- Managing information and thinking
- Managing myself
- Staying well
- Working with others

Context and Teaching Methodologies

Through participation in the SPHE Programme the student will encounter a wide range of issues through a variety of learning experiences. These issues will be addressed in ten modules, each of which appears in each year of the three-year cycle. The emphasis will be on building skills, understanding, attitudes and values important in all these areas.

The ten modules of Junior Certificate SPHE are:

- Belonging and Integrating
- Self-management
- Communication Skills
- Physical Health
- Friendship
- Relationships and Sexuality
- Emotional Health
- Influences and Decisions
- Substance Use
- Personal Safety

SPHE is primarily skills-based and so teaching methods must be of an experiential nature with the emphasis on discussion, reflection and classroom participation. These teaching methods will be student centred and appropriate to the age and stage of development of the student. The class atmosphere must be one of respect for the privacy of the individual teacher and student and hallmarked by sensitivity and care. A respectful 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

The Department of Education and Skills recognises that each school has flexibility to plan the SPHE programme in harmony with the students' needs and the school's resources.

Class Organisation 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 allocation 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.
- Students receive SPHE classes in their dedicated class teacher (CT) groups.
- All Junior Cycle classes, 1st, 2nd and 3rd year, are timetabled one class of SPHE a week.
- SPHE is not a timetabled class for Senior Cycle students, TY, 5th and 6th year, but these students receive at least six classes of RSE a year during Religious Education classes.

Relationship and Sexuality Education (RSE) Junior Cycle

In the school setting, RSE will be taught in the context of SPHE class at Junior cycle and in an RSE module at Senior Cycle.

The Draft Guidelines for RSE (NCCA, June 1995) state that Social Personal and Health Education is “*spiral, developmental in nature and age appropriate in content and methodology*”. The RSE programme is designed to follow this principle and pattern. RSE is addressed within the SPHE programme.

The aims of the SPHE programme are:

- to enable the students to develop skills for self-fulfilment and living in communities;
- to promote self-esteem and self-confidence;
- to enable the students to develop a framework for responsible decision making;
- to provide opportunities for reflection and discussion;
- to promote mental and emotional health and wellbeing.

These aims are achieved with the support of the SPHE Support Service. With such support, students may be enabled to participate as active and responsible adults in the personal and social dimensions of society and to make responsible decisions that respect their own dignity and others. There is a growing recognition that RSE and SPHE (delivered to our junior cycle students) is as important as any other area of the curriculum.

SPHE provides the context which students can learn about the important moral, physical, social, and emotional issues around relationships, intimacy, sex and sexuality and where to get reliable information from trusted sources.

In the RSE module students will:

- become aware of the variety of ways in which individuals grow and change especially during adolescence
- develop respect for differences between individuals
- learn to understand human physiology with particular reference to the reproductive cycle, human fertility and sexually transmitted diseases
- gain an understanding of sexual development and identity while exploring aspects such as stereotyping, gender issues and cultural influences on sexuality

Cabinteely Community School recognises that the primary responsibility for the moral, spiritual, social and personal development of children lies with their parents/guardians. The school has a long tradition of supporting parents in this role and SPHE/RSE is seen as complementary to this.

First Year	Second Year	Third Year
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Friendship ➤ Changes at adolescence ➤ The Menstrual Cycle ➤ The Reproductive System ➤ Images of Male and Female ➤ Respecting myself and others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ From conception to birth ➤ Recognising feelings and emotions ➤ Peer pressure and other influences ➤ Managing relationships ➤ Making responsible decisions ➤ Health and personal safety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Respectful Relationships- what's important ➤ Wants, Needs, Rights and Responsibilities ➤ Responsibilities in Relationships ➤ Contraception and Sexually transmitted Infections (STIs) ➤ Sexual Orientation

Students with Special Educational Needs

- For learning activities to be meaningful, relevant and achievable for all students, it is important that the SPHE teacher finds ways to respond to student's diversity by using differentiated approaches and methodologies. In consultation with the SEN coordinator the following strategies will be used:
- Ensuring that the objectives are realistic for students and ensuring that the learning task is compatible with prior learning

- Providing opportunities for interacting and working with other students in small groups
- Spending more time on tasks and organising the learning task into small stages
- Ensuring that language is pitched at the student's level of understanding and does not hinder understanding of the activity
- Using task analysis, outline the steps to be learned/completed in any given task
- Posing key questions to guide students through the different stages/progression and to assist in self direction and correction
- Using graphic symbols as reminders to assist students in understanding the sequence/steps in any given task/problem
- Modelling task analysis by talking through the steps of a task as it is being done
- Having short and varied tasks
- Creating a learning environment through the use of concrete and where possible everyday materials
- Displaying word lists and laminated charts with pictures

Cross Curricular Links

The following subject areas and other school provisions form cross curricular links with the SPHE Programme:

- Physical Education
- CSPE
- Guidance Related Learning (Tutor Time)
- Science
- Home Economics
- Religious Education
- Health Fun and Fitness first year programme
- BFL (behaviour for learning)
- Chaplaincy/Welfare Support
- Nurture Room
- Pastoral Care Team
- Student Representative Council
- Wellbeing Weeks/Committee

Resources and Accommodation

A limited budget is available for SPHE and is used to purchase resources and/or textbooks and to facilitate workshops, guest speakers and awareness raising initiatives throughout the school year.

Resources include:

- SPHE Junior Certificate Syllabus and Guidelines
- Junior Cycle Wellbeing Guidelines
- 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 and DVDs
- Growing Up LGBT
- Belong To Stand Up Resources
- Mental Health Matters
- Emotional Health Materials
- Working Things Out
- Body Whys
- #Up To Us
- Marie Keating Cancer Awareness Pack
- JC Personal Safety Lessons

This list is not exhaustive.

Assessment and Reporting for SPHE Short Course:

SPHE is not formally assessed in the Junior Certificate Examinations.

Essentially, the purpose of assessment and reporting at this stage of education is to support learning. This short course in SPHE supports a wide variety of approaches to assessment. Some learning outcomes lend themselves to once-off assessment, others to assessment on an ongoing basis as students engage in different learning activities such as discussing, explaining, researching, presenting, planning and taking action.

Classroom-Based Assessment:

Classroom-Based Assessments are the occasions when the teacher assesses the students in the specific assessment(s) that are set out in the subject or short course specification. Junior cycle short courses will have one classroom-based assessment. Where feasible, teachers of short courses will participate in learning and assessment review meetings.

Classroom-Based Assessment: Final project

Students will complete one classroom-based assessment based on learning outcomes in more than one strand of the course. The classroom-based assessment will be designed in consultation with the students

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 preferably gender balanced and to appointing an SPHE co-ordinator. SPHE is enhanced when the appointment of teachers to the subject has been negotiated in advance of timetabling.

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.

- SPHE Co-ordinator
- All SPHE teachers have undertaken Introduction to SPHE and Junior Cycle RSE in-service training.

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 school will respect this choice as their right. It will be necessary for parents of any student opting out of RSE to make suitable arrangements with school management for the welfare of their child at these times. Where students are withdrawn from RSE the school cannot take responsibility for any versions of class content passed on to them by other students. Parents must meet with the Principal in person to discuss their decision to withdraw their child from the RSE module.

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 relevant year head, the guidance counsellor, chaplain or any member of the care team, and/or the Principal.

Referral

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. This should be done within the context of Cabinteely Community School mission and ethos. SPHE teachers where in doubt as to a course of action, are to discuss the issue with the relevant year head, the guidance counsellor, chaplain, or any member of the care team, and/or the principal.

Child Protection/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

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. The designated liaison person (DLP) is Ms Clare Garrihy Principal. The deputy principal will act in place of the DLP if the principal is not available.

SPHE teachers will inform students of the limits of confidentiality at the beginning of the year, remind them at necessary points throughout the year and where possible before making a disclosure.

Visiting Speakers

Circular 0023/2010

National and international research has consistently shown that the qualified classroom teacher is the best placed professional to work sensitively and consistently with students and that he/she can have a powerful impact on influencing students' attitudes, values and behaviour in all aspects of health education.

Research findings indicate that the following teaching approaches have limited effect and are counterproductive to the effective implementation of SPHE:

- Scare tactics and sensationalist interventions
- Testimonials
- Information only interventions
- Short term/once off interventions
- Outside speakers can be a resource when used as part of a school's planned programme for SPHE/RSE

Visiting speakers are seen as complimenting and supporting the SPHE programme and school SPHE policy. Teachers inviting these speakers must:

- Inform the Principal in advance
- Make the speaker aware of the ethos and 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

Parents and Home School Links

The school accepts that it is in the interests of all parents that the child grows up in a healthy and mature fashion. The school will strive to keep parents informed of the contents of the SPHE programme and resources available for parents. An overview of SPHE, RSE information and any relevant updates are given to parents at appropriate Information evenings. The SPHE policy is available on the school website and on request at the school. Notifications regarding reviews are also available on the school website. Parents of incoming first years are informed of the availability of the SPHE Policy along with other relevant policies on the school website.

The involvement of parents at the core of every aspect of SPHE gives it extra impetus, depth and validity and from time to time training and/or input and development opportunities will be offered to parents in certain aspects of SPHE.

Links between home and school play a vital role in supporting the efforts of parents and guardians in the home and the work of the teachers in the classroom. Such links are particularly important in SPHE. Beginning with pre-entry meetings before a student enters the school. CCS has well-structured continuing links with the lives of the students outside the classroom and outside the school in their communities through our home school liaison teacher and other pastoral staff. Such links help inform an SPHE programme; they can help teachers to prioritise modules. These links can also provide parents with strategies for supporting the work of the school in its SPHE programme. Structured and continuing links can contribute to an SPHE programme that is relevant to the needs of students and the expectations of their parents and guardians.

Whole Staff

The SPHE policy will be available for all teaching staff in the teacher's/staff handbook. Copies will be given to each SPHE teacher by the SPHE co-ordinator. Any queries are to be directed to the principal.

SPHE Assessment, Record Keeping, and Reporting

Every student, both Junior Cycle and Senior Cycle, has a SPHE Portfolio folder that is kept by SPHE teachers. The folder contains work sheets, handouts and a journal. At the end of a lesson students record a short reflection in their journal. The folders are given to students at the end of Junior Cycle and the end of Senior Cycle.

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

The SPHE team meet at least once a term, to review, plan and evaluate SPHE in the school. Minutes of all meetings are recorded and contained in the SPHE Subject Folder in accordance with GDPR policy.

Whole School Support for SPHE

While specific teachers are trained and charged with the responsibility of delivering the programme, we see every teacher as a teacher of SPHE in that he/she may from time to time see opportunities to promote healthy lifestyle and encourage responsible and mature decision making with our students. There is generally a whole school approach to key areas of SPHE and the school year has times earmarked when certain topics or issues are covered e.g. Anti-Bullying/Friendship Week, Mental Health Awareness Week, Healthy Lifestyles Week and Suicide Awareness Week.

Related Policies

- Child Safeguarding Statement
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Substance Use Policy
- Acceptable Use IT Policy
- Ethos Policy
- Care Policy
- RSE Policy
- LGBTI Policy
- Critical Incident Policy
- School Tours/Outings Policy

Review and Evaluation

The SPHE course is never static and must be examined and evaluated regularly and adapted to the needs of the students. The SPHE programme and policy will be reviewed and evaluated on an annual basis by the SPHE team.

The opinions of students will be included and SPHE teachers will liaise with the student representative council. The opinions of parents will also be included and SPHE teachers will liaise with the parent's association. The opinions of management will be included and the SPHE co-ordinator will liaise with the principal and the board of management.

RATIFIED BY BOM – September 2020

POLICY EFFECTIVE – September 2020

Appendix A

Summary of what Cabinteely Community School provides both formally and informally to promote the holistic development of students:

Courses

- Junior Certificate
- Transition Year
- Leaving Certificate
- Leaving Certificate Applied

Supports

- Guidance Counsellor
- Chaplain
- BFL Teacher
- Pastoral Care/Student Support Team
- Special Needs Assistants
- Learning Support
- School Completion Programme
- Parents Association
- Student Representative Council
- TY Peer Leaders, Mentors, Prefects
- Nurture Room
- Weekly student of the week awards
- After School Study
- Homework Club
- Library
- Tours
- School Field Trips
- School Activity Trips
- Subject Prize Giving

Sports

- Gaelic Football
- Hurling
- Soccer
- Basketball
- Rugby
- Badminton
- Cross Country
- Athletics
- Boxing
- HFF (health fun & fitness first year programme)

Activities

- School Musical
- Opening School Service
- Christmas Carol Service
- End of year junior and senior prize days
- Graduation Ceremony
- Days of Reflection
- Green Schools Committee
- Debating Team
- Choir/Emmanuel

- Chess Club
- Gaisce