



Policy for Social, Personal and Health Education

Introduction

Introductory Statement

Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) provides vital opportunities to foster the personal development and the health and well-being of the individual child, to help him/her to create and maintain supportive relationships and become an active and responsible citizen in society. This policy was originally drafted by the SPHE co-ordinator, principal and PDST support services. It was then circulated, discussed and amended by the whole staff, parents and school management. This policy aims to ensure that learning and teaching of this curricular area across the school are consistent, progressive and meets the principles outlined in the Primary School Curriculum.

Summary of this SPHE Policy

General	The aim of this policy is to ensure that SPHE provides each child with opportunities to develop their own framework of values, attitudes, understanding and skills that will inform their actions now and in the future. It will enable the child to be happy and content in him/herself, to form and maintain healthy relationships and become a responsible citizen.
Curriculum Planning	Citywest & Saggart CNS will teach aspects of all three major strand units each year. Strand units have been chosen in such a way that the child will receive a comprehensive programme of SPHE over a two-year period . Both RSE & Stay Safe will be taught by the whole school at the same time of year in the second term (6 th class RSE sensitive lessons will take place in June). RSE will be taught before Stay Safe.
Organisational Planning	The resources and programmes to be taught as part of the SPHE curriculum include Webwise, Stay Safe, RSE, Friends for Life, Weaving Well-Being and Zippy's Friends. Please see page 7 for an outline of when these programmes are to be taught. Please see appendix 1c for a yearly glance sheet of SPHE and RSE topics to be covered by year group.
Roles and Responsibilities	Staff at Citywest and Saggart CNS believe that the whole school community must be involved to successfully implement SPHE. This includes staff, parents, students, community and the Board of Management.
Implementation	This policy will be reviewed and, if necessary, amended in the academic year 2023/2024 or sooner if required.
Whole-School Roadmap	Please see appendix 1 – 1c.

Rationale

Our school aims to provide a happy, secure and friendly learning environment, where children, parents, teachers, special needs assistants, ancillary staff and the board of management work in partnership. Each individual is valued, encouraged and respected for their uniqueness and facilitated to reach their full potential in a positive atmosphere.

In line with our ethos, SPHE at Citywest & Saggart CNS provides each child with opportunities to develop a framework of values, attitudes, understanding and skills that will inform their actions now and in the future. It will enable the child to be happy and content in him/herself, to form and maintain healthy relationships and become a responsible citizen.

Vision Statement

‘The vision of Citywest & Saggart CNS is to create a safe, calm, respectful and inclusive learning environment in which the school community works in close partnership to encourage children to develop skills which will allow them to participate to their full potential in school and society. We strive for the highest quality teaching and learning while fostering the holistic development of the individual child. Our school recognises and celebrates the individual abilities, talents and achievements of the children whilst also instilling a sense of belonging, respect and empathy towards those around them’.

The school operates under the values of DDLETB and the CNS model but places increased emphasis on the values of **Respect, Responsibility, Empathy, Creativity, Care, Belonging and Collaboration**.

Aims and Objectives

The children at Citywest and Saggart CNS 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
- 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

(Curriculum Statement, p.9)

Curriculum Planning

Strands & Strand Units

The curriculum is subdivided into four levels: infant classes, first and second classes, third and fourth classes, fifth and sixth classes. Each level focuses on three strands: Myself, Myself and others, Myself and the wider world.

Each strand is subdivided into several strand units that contain particular objectives.

Citywest & Saggart CNS will teach aspects of all three major strand units each year. Strand units have been chosen in such a way that the child will receive a comprehensive programme of SPHE over two years. All teachers are required to familiarise themselves with the strands, strand units and content objectives for their own class level, as outlined in the S.P.H.E curriculum documents (**Appendix 1**). These objectives have been chosen according to their age-appropriateness, progression and the integration with class themes.

Both RSE & Stay Safe will be taught by the whole school at the same time of year in the second term. RSE will be taught before Stay Safe. RSE sensitive lessons will be taught in June for 6th class. Stay Safe will be fully implemented at all class levels. Published lessons will be taught in JI, 1st, 3rd, 5th Class. Lessons will be revisited in SI, 2nd, 4th & 6th. (Circular 0065/2011)

Contexts for SPHE

SPHE permeates all aspects of school life, and its development and implementation are significantly influenced by our multid denominational, equality-based, child-centred and co-educational ethos. It will be taught through a combination of the following contexts:

Positive School Climate & Atmosphere

Citywest & Saggart CNS 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 & respectful language
- Developing appropriate communication
- Developing a school approach to assessment

See Appendix 2 for approaches used in Citywest & Saggart CNS.

Discrete time for SPHE

SPHE is allocated ½ hour per week on each teacher's timetable. However, teachers may choose to 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

At each class level, teachers should integrate S.P.H.E. with other curricular areas. Many aspects of S.P.H.E can be dealt with within the context of relevant subject areas. Opportunities for integration are referred to in the Curriculum at the end of each strand unit. In their planning, teachers will refer to and plan for such opportunities. Suggested ways in which this can be achieved include:

- **English Language:** using language precisely; acquiring appropriate vocabulary; developing communication skills; learning how to question, to predict, to be critical and to analyse; developing one's imagination and exploring emotions and feelings through the spoken and written word; examining the print media
- **Mathematics:** interpreting and representing data; measuring and estimating; comparing and recording; solving problems
- **History:** developing empathy; exploring changing influences on our lives; learning about the factors that shape the community; exploring the various contributions of different groups to society; exploring myself and my family
- **Geography:** developing a sense of place; exploring local and national issues; developing an appreciation of different national, religious and cultural groups; learning to care for the environment
- **Science:** exploring: the way the body works, the constituents of different foods, the process of physical growth and development; learning to care for the environment
- **Visual arts:** creating and exploring images and pictures; expressing ideas, feelings and experiences in visual form; looking at and enjoying images in the environment
- **Drama:** using drama: to recognise and manage feelings, to learn to trust and respect others in a group, to experience open and healthy relationships, to foster respect for differences in people, and to help the child understand and moderate his/her temperament.
- **Music:** using music to explore moods and feelings; understanding the role of music in our heritage; exploring music as a form of universal communication; developing self-expression and a sense of well-being through music; making decisions; taking individual and group responsibility through composing
- **Physical Education:** choosing teams and playing games in a fair manner; understanding physical exercise as necessary for overall health and wellbeing; developing individual skills and talents; developing self-esteem and self-confidence; providing opportunities for co-operation and interaction; appreciating the importance of safety and learning how to act safely

Approaches & Methodologies

Staff at Citywest and Saggart CNS 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, role-play
- co-operative games
- use of pictures, photographs and visual images
- written activities
- use of media
- information technologies
- looking at children's work
- discussion
- project work
- circle time

School assemblies will provide opportunities to acknowledge a pupil's academic as well as wider achievements. E.g. recognition of awards received outside of school, good manners, friendship skills.

Homework

SPHE homework, if prescribed, will reflect the active learning approach and will reinforce information already taught during class. Its main purpose would be to provide an opportunity for parents/guardians to discuss important topics at home. Please see our homework policy for more details.

Assessment & Record Keeping

Assessment is a central part of the everyday learning and teaching process in SPHE. It provides valuable information on the child's progress and on the effectiveness and suitability of the programme and the teaching methods being used.

Citywest and Saggart CNS uses the following recommended informal tools for assessment in SPHE:

- Teacher observation
- Teacher-designed tasks and tests
- Portfolios and projects
- Presentation of children's work
- Peer Assessment/Self-assessment

Pre and post questionnaires will be sent out to the children before and after interventions such as Friends for Life, Zippy's Friends and Weaving Well-Being.

Teacher observation might focus on:

- the ability of the child to co-operate and work in groups or to work independently
- the informal interactions between the child and adults and between the child and other children
- particular interests or aptitudes displayed by the child
- the participation and interest of the child in a variety of activities
- the level of personal or social responsibility exhibited by the child
- the reliability of the child in carrying out established routines
- the perseverance of the child in carrying out a task
- the child's awareness of the difficulties of others and his/her willingness to help
- the questions the child asks and the responses the child makes to questions and suggestions made by the teacher
- various behaviour, for example, shyness, leadership ability, level of self-confidence, the tendency to be anxious, sense of fair play, assertiveness, aggression, readiness to take risks and meet challenges
- physical and emotional maturity
- the ability of the child to engage in assessing his/her progress and reflecting on his/her learning.

(SPHE Teacher Guidelines, p.79)

Children with Additional Needs

Teachers will endeavour to adapt and modify activities and methodologies in SPHE to encourage participation by children with different needs. The learning support and resource teachers will supplement the work of the class teachers where necessary. Staff at Citywest & Saggart CNS 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, e.g. Barnardos. In order to further support children in this area, a number of staff members have been trained to provide the Rainbows programme.

The Rainbows service is an inclusive service, supporting children and young people experiencing grief and loss resulting from bereavement/parental separation/parental relationship breakdown /divorce.

Teachers may decide that a particular intervention would benefit children who may have behavioural, self-esteem or anxiety difficulties. Interventions such as Friends for Life and Zippy's Friends may be taught at a whole class level or during individual/ group withdrawal time in order to support these children.

Equality of Participation & Access

Staff at Citywest & Saggart CNS recognise and value diversity and equality. We believe that all children are entitled to access the services, and facilities that are available in the school environment. Ours is a co-ed, multi-belief school and we endeavour to challenge traditional stereotypes and ensure that equal opportunities are given to all. The class teacher will try to ensure that the whole class is present during discrete SPHE lessons.

Organisational Planning

Timetable

SPHE must be timetabled on each teacher's timetable for either 30 mins per week or one-hour fortnightly to provide opportunities for in-depth exploration of strand units.

Individual Teacher's Planning & Reporting

This plan for SPHE and the curriculum documents will inform and guide teachers in their long- and short-term planning in SPHE. Objectives covered by discrete lessons will be included, as well as new objectives covered throughout the day via the hidden curriculum or integration with other subjects.

There will be thematic weeks throughout the year which will emphasis certain objectives of the SPHE curriculum. These include Friendship Week, Intercultural Week, Human Rights Week and Grandparents Day.

Teachers will ensure that all sensitive objectives including Stay Safe and RSE objectives are taught by the class teacher themselves. If a teacher is uncomfortable delivering these lessons, they should consult with management to ensure that the content of the lessons is taught to the class by a different teacher. **No student teacher or substitute should engage in these lessons.**

Each teacher will keep a Cuntas Míosúil and this will inform our progress and needs when evaluating and reviewing our progress in SPHE.

Reporting

Teachers will report to parents on their child's self-esteem, social skills, etc. during parent-teacher meetings and on their end of year report. Parents will be informed if specific concerns are arising regarding individual students.

Resources

Programmes & Other Materials:

The Stay Safe Programme will be taught in its entirety.

The following resources may be used to help with the teaching of the objectives from the 1999 curriculum:

- RSE Manuals
- Walk Tall Manuals
- Stay Safe Manuals
- Making the Links
- Busy Bodies
- Webwise in 1st-4th class, including information sheets for parents about up to date apps used by children and A Better Internet booklet
- MySelfie in 5th and 6th class
- Weaving Well-Being in 2nd, 4th, 5th and 6th
- www.digizen.org
- <http://cybersafeireland.org/>: talks for children & parents
- www.thinkuknow.co.uk: parents' videos to watch with children. E.g. jigsaw
- Visits from Community Guard
- Visits from Firemen
- Be Safe Manual JI-6th (road, fire & water safety)
- Seatbelt Sheriff - RSA(1st Class)
- Hi Glo Silver – RSA (2nd Class): theme is about being seen
- High Vis Vests for all new JI

- Going to School safely leaflet for all new JI
- Safe Cross Code Pack – Road Safety Authority (Senior Infants)
- School visit from Road Safety Authority
- Let's Go/Manual – road safety guidelines (3rd Class)
- StreetSmart – Road Safety Authority interactive presentation (3rd Class)
- Wellbeing in Primary Schools (NEPS)
- Stay Safe Parents Guide (available in different languages on website)
- Zippy's Friends: This will be taught in 1st class
- Friend's For Life: This will be taught in 3rd class
- Restorative Practice

JI	SI	1 st	2 nd
Stay Safe	Stay Safe Review Road Safety	Webwise Zippy's Friends Stay Safe	Webwise Stay Safe Review Weaving Well-Being
3 rd	4 th	5 th	6 th
Webwise Stay Safe Weaving Friend's For Life Road Safety	Webwise Stay Safe Review Weaving Well-Being	My Selfie Stay Safe Weaving Well-Being	My Selfie Weaving Well-Being

See **Appendix 3** for suggested resource list from the PDST. Additional resources may be found in the staff library. All resources or books should be signed out when borrowed. The SPHE coordinator is responsible for stocktaking all resources at the end of the year.

Guest Speakers:

When a guest speaker addresses the children in SPHE, the class teacher will remain in the classroom (Circular 0022/2010) and make the speaker aware of this school plan and attached policies. All guest speakers should be decided by the class teacher in conjunction with the principal.

The guest speaker and class teacher will consult beforehand. Topics and teaching approaches will be agreed together. In the context of a pandemic or restrictions on visitors, guest speakers will be connected via video link.

Policies

Policies that support the teaching of SPHE at Citywest & Saggart CNS include:

- Code of Behaviour
- Equality Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Healthy Eating Policy
- Acceptable Use Policy
- RSE Policy
- Substance Use Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Language Policy Statement
- Sexual Orientation Policy

Roles and Responsibilities

Staff Development

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.

A nominated teacher will be released to attend RSE and relevant SPHE training with the PDST. They will feedback information to the rest of staff after completing the training. All staff will attend yearly Child Protection/Stay Safe training during Haddington Road hours. The DLP & DDLP will attend specific child protection training in DWEC when it is held.

Parental Involvement – Home School Links

Parental involvement is considered an integral part to effectively implementing SPHE. Staff at Citywest & Saggart CNS 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. The yearly plan for SPHE is communicated to parents at the yearly class information evenings. Information will be sent home in advance of sensitive topics and parents will be invited to attend a specific RSE information evening in the second term of each year.

Parental consent is not required for any element of the SPHE curriculum, but parents are informed two weeks before sensitive lessons including RSE and Stay Safe are taught in class.

If per the Education Act, 1998, Section 30 (2)(e), a parent wishes to withdraw their child from lessons of any SPHE programme, including Stay Safe and RSE, they will first be informed of the following:

- That the school cannot prevent the child from hearing the language being used or discussed by other children outside of these lessons
- That we would recommend that they attend, so that they learn the factually accurate information, rather than hearing inaccurate information from other sources
- It is their duty now to take full responsibility for this aspect of education themselves

If a parent wishes to withdraw their child for the sensitive lessons, they must first organise a meeting with the SPHE coordinator to discuss their concerns. If the parent is not satisfied with this meeting, they will then bring their concerns to the principal. If they still wish to withdraw their child, they will sign a withdrawal form (**Appendix 5**) and return it to the school principal. Their decision will be honoured on the understanding that the parent is taking full responsibility for this aspect of education themselves. This form will need to be completed each year that the child is withdrawn. The child will be accommodated in another teacher's classroom in the school.

Talks and information sessions will be provided to parents before the implementation of a programme in the SPHE curriculum. This can take the form of virtual presentations or in house talks.

Community Links

Staff at Citywest & Saggart CNS believe that the local community has a very important role to play in supporting the programme in SPHE and endeavour to liaise with members such as the Dental Hygienist, Health Nurse, Fireman, Gardaí, Vet, New Parent, etc.

The health board provides hearing checks, eyesight checks and MMR vaccinations in Junior infants during the school day.

Implementation

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.

Implementation, Review, Ratification & Communication

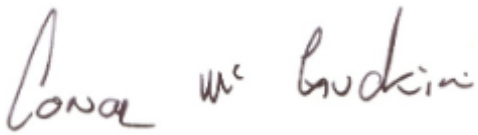

Roles and Responsibilities:

Staff at Citywest & Saggart CNS 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.

- The school principal has overall responsibility for the implementation of the plan.
- The class teacher has the responsibility for implementing this policy within their classroom.
- The SPHE coordinator has the responsibility to:
 - Maintain and supplement the relevant resources agreed at school management level
 - Advise staff on the implementation of this policy
 - Initiate and lead the review of the policy informally at planning meetings and formally on an annual basis, at the end of each academic year.
- Parents/guardians have the responsibility to familiarise themselves with this policy and support the learning of their child.

Timetable for Review

This policy will be reviewed and, if necessary, amended in the academic year 2023/2024 or sooner if required.

This policy was ratified by the school's Board of Management	
 Signed: Chairperson	 Signed: Principal
Date: 21.1.21	

List of Appendices

Appendix 1: RSE objectives overview

Appendix 1a: SPHE objectives overview

Appendix 1b: SPHE objectives per class

Appendix 1c: SPHE and RSE yearly glance sheet

Appendix 2: Promoting a positive school climate

Appendix 2a: Socratic questioning prompts

Appendix 3: [SPHE resource list](#)

Appendix 3a: [Book resource list](#)

Appendix 4: Letter for RSE withdrawal

Appendix 4: RSE leaflet overview (Available on request)

Appendix 4a: RSE parents information leaflet (Available in PDF on request)

Appendix 4b: [Tom's flower power RSE PowerPoint](#)

Appendix 4c: [RSE busy bodies booklet](#)

