

Presentation Secondary School Listowel

Co. Kerry



SPHE POLICY

Date of policy adoption

This Policy was ratified by the Board of Management of Presentation Secondary School, Listowel

Signed Shane & Dorothea
Chairperson, Board of Management

Date 9-5-2023

**Social, Personal, and Health Education
(SPHE)
Policy**



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Contents

Introduction	1
SPHE Policy Context	2
SPHE Definition & Aims	3
School Ethos and SPHE	4
Class Organisation and Timetabling	4
Content of SPHE programme	5
Delivery and Teaching	6
Staff Development and Subject Development	6
Cross Curricular Links	7
Participation	7
Sensitive Issues	7
Referral	8
Confidentiality	8
Guidelines for the Use of External Agencies	8
Assessment, Record Keeping and Reporting	9
Whole School Support for SPHE	9
Review and Evaluation	9
Ratification	Error! Bookmark not defined.

Introduction

Presentation Secondary School, Listowel is a Catholic all girls voluntary secondary school with a Catholic ethos under the trusteeship of CEIST (Catholic Education An Irish Schools' Trust). The School draws on the richness of the religious and cultural heritage of the past, interpreted and lived out for students living in today's world. The School ethos is based on Nano Nagle's vision of bringing God's love to all people and is dedicated to an all-round Christian education based on gospel values.

This SPHE policy is developed within the context of the Mission Statement set out by the School:

OUR MISSION

WHAT WE STAND FOR

Context

Ours is a Presentation secondary school, inspired by the vision of Nano Nagle, and in response to her we welcome and cherish all our students irrespective of ability or background.

We aim to develop a vibrant community based on Gospel values such as justice, truth and honesty, in accordance with the ethos of the school and our agreed Code of Behaviour.

Mission

We aim to assist in the development of the full potential of each person in a vibrant, inclusive, and safe environment, where the dignity of each member of our school community is recognised, affirmed and valued.

Inspired by these values we dedicate ourselves to the continued development of our Presentation School.

Guided by our Catholic ethos, our School provides a positive, respectful, inclusive, and welcoming learning environment for all, with a commitment to academic excellence. Our students are afforded many opportunities to reach their full potential in all aspects of education. We are dedicated and inspiring leaders of innovative and modern teaching practices, supported by a highly equipped technological learning environment.

In this policy document, all references to gender are taken to be inclusive and the term "parent" is taken to include "guardian".

SPHE Policy Context

Education Act 1998

The School recognises that the home is the natural environment where children grow, develop and mature into adults. Notwithstanding this, the School is cognisant of its obligations under Section 9 of the Education Act (1998), which provides:

'A recognised school shall promote the moral, spiritual, social and personal development of students and provide health education for them, in consultation with their parents, having regard to the characteristic spirit of the school'

School management and teachers have a duty to provide the best quality and most appropriate social, personal and health education for their pupils. They also have a duty to protect pupils in their care at all times from any potentially harmful, inappropriate or misguided resources, interventions or programmes.

Circulars and Guidance

This Policy has been developed and implemented taking into account the requirements and guidance set out in relevant DES Circulars, including M11/03 *Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) in all schools*, 0037/2010 *Relationships and Sexuality Education*, and 0023/2010 *Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) and Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE): Best Practice Guidelines for Post-Primary Schools*.

Links to other school policies and documents

The school adopts and adheres to the DES Child Protection Procedures, Children First Legislation (2017) and has a Child Protection Policy / Child Safeguarding Statement, with the Principal as the Designated Liaison Person (DLP) and the Deputy Principal as the Deputy DLP. This Policy is cognisant of all aspects of our current Child Protection Policy and Child Safeguarding Statement.

This Policy is also informed by:

- The Mission Statement of Presentation Secondary School and the CEIST charter
- RSE Policy
- Wellbeing policy
- Code of Behaviour
- Acceptable Use Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Substance Misuse Policy

- Dignity at Work Policy
- SEN policy

Wellbeing

Student wellbeing is present when students realise their abilities, take care of their physical wellbeing, can cope with the normal stresses of life, and have a sense of purpose and belonging to a wider community¹. The goal of wellbeing in education is human flourishing for all. When children and young people are 'flourishing' they are not only curious and eager to learn, they are creative and imaginative, connected and empathetic, good team players, confident about who they are, resilient and persistent, positive about themselves and see themselves growing into better people². The subject area of SPHE plays an integral role in the promotion of student wellbeing.

In addition, our School acknowledges wellbeing is a multi-faceted concept and efforts to promote student wellbeing require a whole-school approach. Our School recognises that everyone within our school community, regardless of the level and frequency of contact they have with young people, shares the responsibility for creating a positive ethos and climate of respect and care - one in which everyone can make a positive contribution to the wellbeing of each individual within the school and to the wider community. The importance of small, everyday acts of kindness, interest, consideration and positivity cannot be underestimated. These dimensions of relationships and interactions communicate to students that they are recognised, cared for, valued and listened to and thereby, contribute significantly to students' feeling of wellbeing.

SPHE Definition & Aims

SPHE is a programme that provides students with the unique opportunity to develop the skills and competencies to learn about themselves and others and to make informed decisions about their health and wellbeing, personal lives, and spiritual and social development. SPHE also provides the context within which students can learn about the important moral, physical, social and emotional issues around relationships. Students are 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.

The aims of the SPHE programme are:

- To enable students to develop skills for self-fulfilment and living in community
- To promote self-esteem and self-confidence
- To enable students to develop a framework for responsible decision-making
- To provide opportunities for reflection and discussion

¹ NCCA Wellbeing Guidelines 2017, pg. 17

² NCCA Wellbeing Guidelines 2017, Growing Great Kids pg. 11

- To promote physical, mental and emotional health and wellbeing.

School Ethos and SPHE

As a CEIST school, Presentation Listowel values teaching as one of the most important of all human activities. Our School seeks to build a quality learning community that welcomes, and bears witness to the Gospel values of Jesus Christ, expressed through the lens of the CEIST Charter. These are encapsulated in the core values which are intended to support and nourish the lives of the people who are at the heart of our schools:

- Promoting Spiritual and Human Development
- Achieving Quality in Teaching and Learning
- Showing Respect for Every Person
- Creating Community
- Being Just and Responsible

Presentation Listowel provides a rich, holistic education in the Catholic tradition where engagement with and development of the whole person (the intellectual moral, religious, physical, spiritual and psychological) are at the core of our practice. The aims of the SPHE programme support our commitment to nurture the Christian values of respect, justice and integrity in all aspects of school life and to fostering the holistic development of students in our care.

Class Organisation and Timetabling

In accordance with **Circular M11/03**, all second level schools must timetable SPHE as part of the Junior Cycle core curriculum. The time allocation recommended is the equivalent of one class period per week.

In accordance with **Circular 0037/2010**, all second level schools must implement Relationship and Sexuality Education (RSE) as an element of SPHE at Junior Cycle and as an RSE programme in Senior Cycle, even in the absence of a timetabled SPHE class.

In Presentation Listowel, SPHE is timetabled for one class period a week for second and third year students and two class periods per week for first year students (Junior Cycle). Every effort is made to ensure that teachers retain their class group from first year through to third year.

Content of SPHE programme

Junior cycle short course in SPHE - First Year SPHE

This junior cycle short course in SPHE is designed to enable students to develop a positive sense of themselves and a commitment to caring for themselves and others.

Strand 1: Who am I? This strand focuses on developing self-awareness and building self-esteem.

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.

Strand 3: Team up. This strand focuses on students learning about important relationships in their lives and building relationship skills.

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.

Junior Cycle SPHE Programme - Second and Third Years

The curriculum for SPHE is presented in 10 modules, each of which appears in Second and Third Year SPHE. The emphasis is on developing skills, understanding, attitudes and values important in all of these areas.

The ten modules are:

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

Further detail on SPHE content is included in Appendix A.

Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE)

Relationships and Sexuality Education forms an important part of the SPHE programme. While all elements of this policy apply to RSE, a separate policy statement is available with specific reference to the School's delivery of RSE.

Delivery and Teaching

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

As the SPHE programme is primarily skills-based, teaching methods are experiential in nature with the emphasis on discussion, reflection and classroom participation. These teaching methods are student centred and are appropriate to the age and development of the student. The 'ASK Model' (Attitude, Skills and Knowledge) is widely used in the delivery of classes. The class atmosphere is one of respect for the privacy of each individual student and is hallmarked by sensitivity and care. A respectful code of conduct is expected from all participants.

Teaching methodologies include:

- Groupwork
- Role play
- Brainstorming
- Icebreakers
- Narrative expression
- Debating
- Project work
- Artwork
- Multi-media materials
- Case studies
- Visiting speakers
- Online collaboration and contribution
- Reflection

Staff Development and Subject Development

The value placed on SPHE by the School is evident by the commitment on the part of management to developing a core of trained SPHE teachers and to having a rotating SPHE coordinator. The Board of Management provides the necessary human and material resources to support the programme on an ongoing basis. In-career development is an integral part of this programme.

School management encourages and facilitates teachers to attend relevant in-service training for the continued development of SPHE.

Cross Curricular Links

Presentation Listowel recognises the importance of linking with other subject departments in planning and delivering the SPHE programme. The following subject areas form cross curricular links with the SPHE Programme, with specific examples of linked content:

Subject	Example of linked content
Home Economics	Healthy eating, first aid, good hygiene
P.E.	Physical fitness and activity
Science	Biological anatomy
Religious Education	Spiritual and moral development
Civic, Social and Political Education	Preparation for participatory citizenship
Wellbeing	Cultivating emotional, physical and social wellbeing
Guidance	Study skills, motivation, goal setting

Extra-curricular activities are regularly organised by the School that contribute to the positive health and overall social and personal development of students.

Participation

The Education Act (1998) provides that a student is not required to attend instruction in any subject which is contrary to the conscience of the parent or, in the case of a student who has reached the age of eighteen years, the student. Parents have a right therefore to withdraw a student from all or any aspect of SPHE, including RSE. Parents must notify the Principal in advance of their wish to have their child withdrawn from all or part of the programme. The School requires that this request be put in writing. It will be necessary for parents to make suitable arrangements for the welfare of their child during these timetabled times. Where students are withdrawn from SPHE, the School cannot take responsibility for any versions of class content passed on to them by other students.

School management will notify parents on Compass prior to the delivery of the RSE module during the school term. A draft of the notification is included in Appendix B.

Sensitive Issues

SPHE teachers strive to address the needs of students in a caring and supportive manner. Class discussion in SPHE is of a general nature, and is not personally directed, in accordance with the agreed class ground rules. Inappropriate questions will not be answered by the class 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 checking whether to answer the question privately after the class has finished. Should a teacher be concerned about a matter that has been raised, he/she will seek advice from the Guidance Counsellor or the Principal [without identifying the student].

Referral

Where appropriate, the teacher may refer students to other supportive links and personnel, either within or external to the School community. Where a teacher is in doubt as to a course of action, the teacher will discuss the issue with the Principal.

All staff in the School will follow the recommendations for reporting concerns or disclosures as outlined in *Children First, National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children* and the Department of Education and Skills document, *Child Protection: Guidelines and Procedures*.

Confidentiality

Teachers strive to create a safe learning environment for all students. While students are not encouraged to disclose personal or private information in SPHE classes, there may be times when they talk about their own lives. Confidentiality is respected and upheld by the teacher unless the teacher feels that the child is at risk or where there are reasonable grounds to believe that a law may be broken. In such a case, the appropriate action will be taken in accordance with the procedures set down in the Child Protection Procedures for Post-Primary Schools, the School's Child Protection Policy / Child Safeguarding Statement and the Children First legislation (2017) or the School's Substance Abuse Policy, i.e. the teacher must inform the Designated Liaison Person and ensure that that all reporting procedures are complied with.

Guidelines for the Use of External Agencies

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 wellbeing and health education.

If an external facilitator is invited to the School to supplement and complement the delivery of the SPHE programme, the School follows the guidance of Circular **0043/2018**.

This includes:

- The Principal and Board of Management are informed
- The SPHE teacher discusses and agrees the content of the presentation with the facilitator
- The SPHE teacher completes preparatory and follow up work where required

- The degree of explicitness of the content of the class is discussed and agreed before the visit
- The facilitator is accompanied by a teacher throughout the visit.
- The facilitator is advised to report to the School office upon arrival

All external facilitators to the School will deal with discussions in line with the aims of the SPHE programme and the ethos of the School.

Assessment, Record Keeping and Reporting

The School accepts that it is in the interests of all parents that children grow up in a healthy and mature fashion. The School will strive to keep parents informed of the contents of the SPHE programme and available resources.

SPHE teachers report progress and achievements in SPHE for every student on the November, February and Summer reports. In addition, feedback on student progress is given to parents at Parent Teacher meetings.

Whole School Support for SPHE

This policy will be available for all School staff personnel.

While specific teachers are trained and charged with the responsibility of delivering the programme, every teacher is a teacher of SPHE in that he/she may from time to time see opportunities to promote positive health and wellbeing among students, and encourage responsible and mature decision making. There is a strong focus on pastoral care in the School with regular pastoral care meetings taking place among management. The Year Heads play an active role in providing direct pastoral care and support to students.

Review and Evaluation

The policy will be reviewed and evaluated regularly under the direction of the Board of Management. The SPHE course is never static. Ongoing review and evaluation will take cognisance of changing information, guidelines, legislation and feedback from parents, students, teachers and others. The policy will be revised as necessary in the light of such review and evaluation and within the framework of School self-evaluation and policy planning.

Appendix A: Overview of Junior Cycle Modular Course

Appendix A: Overview of Junior Cycle SPHE

First Year	Second Year	Third Year
Getting to know each other and our new school	Making a New Start	Setting Goals and Targets
Setting goals	Class Contract	Class contract
Managing myself, digital literacy, organisation skills, timetables, communication	Setting Goals and Targets and Motivation	Making the most of your study time
Rules and class contract	Learn How to Study and Learning styles	Jigsaw One Good School
Self-management; effective study	Stand Up Awareness Week	Managing exam stress online
A balanced life; different types of health	Jigsaw One Good School	Lets Talk, Sure Why Not online
Personal Safety; Fire and internet safety	Let's Talk Sure Why Not online	How I see myself and others
Jigsaw One Good School	Peer Education : Let's Talk Change Workshop	Narrative 4
Let's Talk Sure Why Not online	How I see myself and Others	Lesson 1: Empathy and perspective taking
Peer Education: Let's Talk Change Workshop	Narrative 4	Lesson 3: Crafting your story
Stand Up Awareness	Lesson 1: Empathy and Perspective Taking	My Friends Youth
Becoming an adolescent	Lesson 2: Active Listening	Session 3: Friendship skills
Being Healthy; hygiene, sleep, physical activity and a balanced diet	Lesson 3: Crafting a Story	Session 5: Different ways of thinking
Narrative 4	Lesson 4: Story Exchange	Substance use
Lessons 1-4	Friends Youth	Humourfit : Message from a Bottle - drink awareness
Qualities of friendships	Sessions 3: Friendship, Session 5- Different Ways of Thinking	Anti-bullying
		Dealing with tough times - "Stress"
		RSE
		Sexuality and gender identity (Stand up Week)
		Being an adolescent

<p>Puberty</p> <p>Friends Youth Sessions 1-4</p> <p>Substance Use</p> <p>Antibullying Humourfit : Mighty Bully Brady; Anti - Bullying</p> <p>RSE Sexuality and Gender Identity (Stand Up Awareness Week) Being an Adolescent Having a friend and being a friend What's Happening Inside Your Body</p> <p>RSE Workshop - Southwest Counselling</p>	<p>Substance Use Humourfit : Message from a Bottle – drink awareness</p> <p>Anti- Bullying</p> <p>RSE Sexuality, Gender Identity and Sexual Health (Stand Up Awareness Week)</p> <p>Having a Friend and Being a Friend</p> <p>Relationship Spectrum</p> <p>Media influences on Relationships and Sexuality</p> <p>RSE Workshop - Southwest Counselling</p>	<p>Having a friend & being a friend</p> <p>The Relationship spectrum</p> <p>Lockers Programme - Lesson 1, 2 and 3. (Lockers is an educational resource developed to support schools as they address the issue of non- consensual sharing of intimate images in the context of the SPHE class) Sexuality, sexual health and age of consent</p> <p>Media influences on relationships and sexuality</p> <p>RSE Workshop - Southwest Counselling</p>
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Appendix B

Sample wording for notification to parents on RSE

10th March, 2023

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s),

This term as part of our Junior Cycle Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) Programme your daughter will have the opportunity to participate in Relationship and Sexuality Education (RSE). RSE will be delivered mainly in class by the teachers of Junior Cycle SPHE and may at times be supported by external guest speakers and agencies.

Outline of First Year RSE Programme:
Friendship; tips for making friends Stand Up Awareness Week Gender Stereotyping Sexual and Gender Identity Sexual Orientation LGBTQ+ terminology Being an Adolescent Definition of Adolescence and puberty Changes during adolescence for males and female Reproductive Systems males and females What's happening inside your body Pregnancy; sexual intercourse, ovulation, conception, fertilisation, menstruation Age of Consent

We also want to acknowledge that parents/guardians are the primary educators of their children and the school respects the values of each family. The RSE component of your daughter's SPHE Programme will be conducted in accordance with the ethos of the school. The RSE Programme will be taught in the coming weeks. While we assume that all students will want to participate in the RSE classes, if you do not wish your daughter to attend these classes, please advise the principal.

The school's RSE policy is available for inspection.

If you have any questions or queries, please do not hesitate to contact the school and we will be happy to help.

Yours sincerely,

K. Broderick

Principal