

St. Michael's NS SPHE Plan



Introductory Statement:

The staff of St. Michael's N.S. formulated this SPHE school plan, 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.

Rationale:

SPHE has been taught in St. Michael's N.S. through various programmes and initiatives such as Stay Safe, Walk Tall, Relationships and Sexuality Education and through our involvement in the overall promoting of a healthy lifestyle, through Active School's and Green School's Programme. It has also been taught through integration with other subject areas such as Physical Education, Religion, Geography, Art, Music, Aistear, Language and Science. The Stay Safe programme of personal safety skills will be taught as a unit of lessons to all class groups every second year. This updated plan will ensure that there is an integrated and co-ordinated whole school approach to the teaching of SPHE across all class levels. It will also guide teachers in planning for the teaching of SPHE and for the assessment of teaching and learning in SPHE.

Vision:

- St. Michael's NS values the uniqueness of all individuals within a caring school community. We recognise that SPHE is intrinsic in the learning and teaching that occurs both formally and informally in the school and in the classroom. Through our SPHE programme we wish to assist children develop feelings of self-worth and self-confidence while encouraging their ability to relate to others in a positive way.
- We aim to support pupils to develop a framework of values, attitudes, understanding and skills to inform their decisions and actions now and in the future.
- The programme encourages children to be aware of their rights as individuals while at the same time accepting responsibility for their actions as members of the school and the wider community. Parents have the primary role in the Social, Personal and Health Education of their children so their involvement will be encouraged as much as possible.

Aims:

The children of St. Michael's NS 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.

Objectives: When due account is taken of intrinsic abilities and varying circumstances, the SPHE curriculum should enable the child to:

- Be self-confident and have a positive sense of self-esteem.
- Develop a sense of personal responsibility and come to understand his/her sexuality and the processes of growth, development and reproduction.
- Develop and enhance the social skills of communication, co-operation and conflict resolution.
- Create and maintain supportive relationships both now and in the future.
- Develop an understanding of healthy living, an ability to implement healthy behaviour and a willingness to participate in activities that promote and sustain health.
- Develop a sense of safety and ability to protect himself/herself from danger and abuse.
- Make decisions, solve problems and take appropriate actions in various personal, social and health contexts.
- Become aware of, and discerning about, the various influences on choices and decisions.
- Begin to identify, review and evaluate the values and attitudes that are held by individuals and society and to recognise that these affect thoughts and actions.
- Respect the environment and develop a sense of responsibility for its long-term care.
- Develop some of the skills and abilities necessary for participating fully in groups and in society.
- Become aware of some of the individual and community rights and responsibilities that come from living in a democracy.
- Begin to understand the concepts of personal, local, national, European and global identity.
- Appreciate and respect the diversity that exists in society and the positive contributions of various cultural, religious and social groups.
- Promote the values of a just and caring society in an age-appropriate manner and understand the importance of seeking truth and peace.

Content of Plan

Curriculum:

Strands and Strand Units:

- The curriculum is delineated at four levels—infant classes, first and second classes, third and fourth classes, and fifth and sixth classes—and is divided into three strands: *Myself*, *Myself and others*, and *Myself and the Wider World*.
- Each of these strands is further subdivided into a number of strand units or topic areas that contain particular objectives
- Below is a two year plan for St. Michael's NS. We follow a two year cycle for SPHE so Year 1= 2020-2021, Year 2= 2021-2022, Year 1= 2022-2023 and Year 2= 2023 -2024

	Year 1		Year 2	
Month	Strand	Strand Unit	Strand	Strand Unit
September/ October	Myself	Safety and Protection Stay Safe	Myself	Self-identity
November/ December	Myself	Safety and Protection Stay Safe	Myself and others	Myself and My Family
January/ February	Myself and others	My friends and other people	Myself	Taking care of my body (RSE)
March/ April		Making Decisions This strand unit is for third to sixth only. Infants to second complete the Safety Issues section of Safety and Protection	Myself	Growing and Changing (RSE)
May/ June	Myself and the wider world	Media Education	Myself and the wider world	Developing Citizenship

In the multigrade setting, the teacher, teaching Junior and Senior Infants, will cover the Junior Infants content the first year and the Senior Infant content in the subsequent year. From 1st to 6th class, we will cover the content aimed at the middle class of the three classes for example, for 1st, 2nd and 3rd classes the 2nd Class content will be covered. In the senior room, the 5th class content will be covered. This is of course subject to change as the composition of classes can change in our school on a given year. Each class teacher will ensure that there is no duplication of content taught by firstly consulting their own teaching plans and by using the above as a guide.

Contexts for SPHE

SPHE will be taught through a combination of contexts:

- Positive School Climate and Atmosphere.
- Discrete Time.
- Integration with other subject areas.

1. **Positive School Climate and Atmosphere-** St. Michael's NS has created a positive atmosphere. Key messages dealing with school climate and atmosphere are also referred to, as appropriate, during the year through newsletters, meetings with parents, at assembly and on a regular basis in classes.

Our key messages are:

- We cater for the individual needs of the children. Individual needs may be social, emotional, spiritual, physical or intellectual. Through assessment, observation and discussion with parents we strive to identify and meet individual needs.

- We provide opportunities to enhance the self-esteem of all members of the school-community.
- The staff is aware that their role in helping children to develop their self-esteem is to create an environment within the school that is as positive as possible for all concerned. The five building blocks of self-esteem, have been adopted as our approach to self-esteem development.

They are:

- A sense of identity.
- A sense of belonging
- A sense of security.
- A sense of purpose.
- A sense of competence.
- We aim to actively value diversity and to prioritise inclusive and respectful language. We will prioritise both racial and gender equality and respect for those with special needs. We believe that children learn to respect themselves and others through experiencing respect in their own lives and through witnessing respect being shown to others.
- We work to develop an effective communication system within the school and between the school and home. Attention will be paid to encouraging everyone to express opinions and concerns and to respond to the opinions and concerns of others as a dimension of classroom work and general school life.
- We support a health promoting physical environment. Through our Health & Safety policy and our PE programme we have set out how we promote health and safety awareness and how we intend to deal with unsatisfactory aspects of our environment. We encourage everyone to lead a healthy lifestyle which has brought about emphasis on healthy lunches, healthy lifestyle and mind. Road, water, farm safety and regular fire drills are some of the areas promoted also. Taking responsibility and pride in the school environment is encouraged through our involvement in the Green Schools programme and through constant review and promotion of behaviour and habits required for maintaining a clean environment. Playground markings for yard time activities, children's work on display throughout school and Active School's Initiative also promote a healthy physical environment.
- We promote democratic processes in all levels of school life while balancing roles, rights and responsibilities. Children experience and practice the democratic process by:
 - Sharing responsibility.
 - Valuing the opinions of others.
 - Experiencing a sense of belonging to their own class group and the wider school community.
 - Develop a sense of commitment to common goals.
 - Children on the Green School's and Active School's Committee
 - We have agreed that we will prioritise care in our own behaviour as adults and in our expectations of children. We will help children to learn to care for each other through actively building relationships within each class. We will seek to build identity, security and belonging, competence and purpose through:
 - (a) -Discussion, promotion of and valuing difference.
 - (b) Agreeing ground rules for responsible behaviour and clarifying values on an ongoing basis.
 - (c) Caring for and promoting inclusion of others and learning that it's OK to be different.

- (d) Promoting inclusive and respectful language.
- (e) Promoting support and co-operation.
- (f) Respecting individual strengths.
- (g) Supporting individual needs through teacher support.
- (h) Supporting individual needs of children in times of family or individual personal crises (children who suffer serious illness and need to be in hospital or out of school for long periods; children who suffer bereavement, especially bereavement in the immediate family; engaging exterior services e.g. NEPS, CAMHS).
- (i) Create meaningful differentiated learning opportunities.
- (j) Celebrating the wide range of children's strengths at assemblies.
- (k) Communicating regularly about learning and general development with the home.

2. Discrete time for SPHE

SPHE is allocated ½ hour per week on each teacher's timetable in St. Michael's NS. However teachers may allocate 1 hour per fortnight to allow for more in-depth exploration of a strand unit. Children who are withdrawn for supplementary teaching must be included for as much of the SPHE programme as possible. Discrete time is used to develop and practise particular skills, deal with sensitive issues or explore issues that are not addressed in other areas of the curriculum.

3. Integration with other subject areas and linkage within SPHE

Teachers will endeavour to adopt a thematic approach to SPHE by integrating it with other subject areas as much as possible. Many aspects of SPHE can be dealt with in the context of Language, Aistear, SESE, Visual Areas, PE, Religion and Drama. Themes/Projects such as Healthy Eating Week, Friendship Week, Agri-Awareness, Healthy Heart Week, Lenten Campaign, etc. will also be explored.

Approaches and Methodologies:

St. Michael's NS believe that the approaches and methodologies used in SPHE are crucial to the effectiveness of the programme. Active learning is the principal learning and teaching approach recommended for SPHE, therefore we will endeavour to teach SPHE using a variety of strategies which include:

- drama activities including Circle Time
- co-operative games
- use of pictures
- photographs and visual images
- written activities: surveys, questionnaires, lists, check-lists, projects, worksheets.
- use of media
- information technologies
- use of external speakers/visitors who are specialists in their own fields e.g. dental nurse, local Garda to talk to pupils about safe use of the internet and social media (parents talks on safety on internet and prevention of cyberbullying), visit from Monaghan Fire Station Officers
- looking at children's work: portfolios, projects
- Other strategies as devised by the class teacher.
- IWB & assessment of children's work

Assessment:

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

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

- Teacher observation
- Teacher-designed tasks and tests
- Portfolios and projects

Each child will keep a SPHE copy and this will be used to assess a child's progress in SPHE.

Teacher observation:

- 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
- Physical and emotional maturity
- The quality of presentation of work
- The participation and interest of the child in a variety of activities.
- Particular interests and attitudes displayed by a child, level of social and personal responsibility displayed by the pupil
- The pupil's awareness of the difficulty of others, his/her willingness to help, ability to verbalise on social and emotional matters.

Teacher-designed tests and tasks:

- SPHE includes areas of knowledge and understanding that will need to be assessed at regular intervals. Specific tasks can be used to ascertain a child's ability to apply particular skills in different situations.

Self-Assessment by Children:

- Children are encouraged to engage in assessing their own progress in SPHE and to reflect on their learning.

Children with Different Needs:

The SPHE programme aims to meet the needs of all children in the school. This will be achieved by teachers varying the pace, content and methodologies to ensure learning for all pupils. Teachers will endeavour to adapt and modify activities and methodologies in SPHE to encourage participation by children with special needs. The SET will positively support the work of the class teachers where necessary e.g. social stories. The SNA supports particular children or groups as directed by the class teacher. St. Michael's NS will liaise with trained professionals/appropriate agencies when dealing with sensitive issues such as bereavement or loss to ensure that the children involved are fully supported.

Equality of Participation and Access:

We view the SPHE programme as playing a key role in ensuring equality of opportunities for all children. The programme at each class level will be flexible so that the learning requirements of all children may be addressed. We provide an equal educational experience for both boys and girls as we recognise that stereotyped expectations of gender roles can inhibit children's educational achievements. Children with special needs will be included in all activities. Diversity within our

school community will be recognised by valuing and promoting the needs, interests, skills and talents of children with special needs and international children.

Organisation:

Policies and Programmes that support SPHE:

Policies: (all available on school's website)

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Statement
- Anti-Bullying Policy and Procedures
- Code of Behaviour
- Enrolment
- Healthy Eating
- Acceptable Use
- Enrolment
- Attendance
- GDPR
- Admissions
- Swimming Policy
- Stay Safe Policy
- Substance Use Policy
- Relationships and Sexuality Education
- Health and Safety

Teachers are expected to be familiar with these policies and ensure that St. Michael's NS agreed policy is followed at all times.

Programmes:

- Active School Flag Awareness
- Food Dudes
- Green Flag Environmental Awareness
- Stay Safe Programme
- Walk Tall

Homework:

SPHE homework, if prescribed in SPHE, will reflect the active learning approach and will reinforce information already taught during class. Children are encouraged to discuss work done in school at home with their parents. Stay Safe worksheets in pupils Stay Safe booklet are sent home when the programme is being taught and parents are asked to read and discuss the lessons with their children.

Resources:

Resources to support the provision of SPHE will include the curriculum statement and teacher guidelines from the Department of Education and Skills, text books, DVDs, ICT, the internet, programmes which target specific issues and guest speakers/facilitators. PDST have developed a resource list, which is available on the SPHE page at www.pdst.ie. New resources are added to this from time to time.

- Walk Tall Programme.
- RSE Programme.
- Be Safe
- Action for Life
- Stay Safe Programme.

St. Michael's NS, Corcaghan

- Mindful Matters (CJ Fallon)
- Circle Time (Jenny Mosley)
- Bi Follain
- Making the Links
- Busy Bodies
- My Selfie and the wider world (Webwise)
- Play and Learn: Being online (Webwise)
- Mindfulness
- Go Noodle
- Relevant websites and Apps etc.
- Dental Pack
- RSA Pack
- Others

Criteria for selecting resources include:

- Conformity with the aims and objectives of the class programme in SPHE and the general principle of the SPHE Curriculum.
- Freedom from bias, racial or sexual stereotyping.
- Compliancy with existing school policies.
- Appealing to the pupils and teacher and be reflective of collaborative, active methods of learning.
- Suitability and trustworthiness of guest speakers, notwithstanding the fact that the class teacher is responsible for his/her class and should remain with the class at all times for the duration of the visit of the guest speaker (as per Circular 22/2010) c/f Child Safeguarding and Protection Policy

Individual Teachers' Planning and Reporting:

The SPHE Curriculum Documents will inform the planning of content, approaches and methodologies employed by individual teachers. Coverage of the strand units each year will be as outlined in this plan. The recording in the Cuntais Mhíosúla of work done will help to monitor progress and assist in future planning.

Staff Development:

Training opportunities will include the following areas and this training will support an effective implementation of the SPHE programme:

- training in the Child Abuse Prevention Programme/ Stay Safe
- training in the Substance Misuse programme /Walk Tall
- training in the Relationships and Sexuality Education programme /R.S.E.
- PDST Advisor support and modelling of lessons
- Child-protection Procedures
- Training for DLP/DDLP and BOM
- Wellbeing
- Mindfulness
- other

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.

- Availing of in-service training, summer courses, conferences and seminars where possible.
- Sharing and exchanging skills, expertise and experience.

- Increasing our stock of resources.
- Allocating time at staff meetings in order to discuss issues relevant to SPHE.
- Familiarising the SET, SNA and ancillary staff with the content and vision enshrined in policies relevant to SPHE.

Parental Involvement:

The ongoing involvement of parents is an integral part to effectively implementing SPHE as a shared responsibility for parents and teachers. This SPHE plan and the SPHE programme of lessons for all class levels are available for parents to inform them of the programme for SPHE and RSE.

Parents are consulted when policy is being developed or revised. The updated policy is placed on the school website when completed and the website carries links to related policies (Child Protection policy) and related sites (Stay Safe programme; Internet Safety website; DES)

As the need arises talks/presentation on other aspects of SPHE relevant to parents may be arranged e.g. Digital Safety etc. Parents also are notified of SPHE initiatives etc. through the school newsletter, the school website and by Aladdin as relevant.

Community Links:

St. Michael's NS believe that the local community has a very important role to play in supporting the programme in SPHE and endeavour to liaise with the members such as the Dental Hygienist, Health Nurse, Fire service, Vet, Church, people of other cultures and backgrounds, members of local community groups and the media have much to offer in supporting the SPHE programme.

We will avail of the services of statutory bodies such as the HSE and An Garda Síochána, Fire Services as required. Personnel from these agencies are welcome to participate in staff-training and awareness programmes along with parents, school coaches and volunteers.

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.

Indications of success will come through having a positive schools and atmosphere, through positive feedback from the main stakeholders in our school community- teachers, parents, pupils and the local community and from the second-level schools attended by our past pupils. However, in many situations, success can only be measured in the medium and long-term by the way in which children mature and live their lives.

Implementation

Roles and Responsibilities:

St. Michael's NS believes that the school community must be involved to successfully implement SPHE. The Principal oversees the teaching and learning of SPHE and supports staff in implementing the programme and in accessing professional development as relevant. Teachers must teach and implement the SPHE curriculum as outlined and must adhere to the current Child Protection Policies and Procedures. Pupils should co-operate and participate in SPHE lessons and assignments as required. Parents should inform themselves of the SPHE school plans and support children's learning in SPHE. The BOM has overall responsibility for the implementation of all aspects of the SPHE curriculum.

Timeframe:

The plan will be implemented by September 2020.

Review

This plan will be updated as necessary to comply with curricular and legislative developments. It will be necessary to review this plan on a regular basis to ensure optimum implementation of the SPHE curriculum in the school. The Principal is responsible for co-ordinating this review.

Those involved in the review will include:

- Teachers
- Pupils
- BoM/DES/Others

Timeframe:

This plan will be reviewed in 2 years' time

Ratification and Communication

The Board of Management of St. Michael's NS ratified this plan in June 2020.

Signed Sinéad Doherty
(Principal)

Ms. Eithne Duffy
(Chairperson BOM)

Date:

This plan is available to view on the school's website.