

Scoil Mhuire na nGael



Social Personal Health Education (SPHE) Whole School Plan

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT and RATIONALE

Introductory Statement

The staff of Scoil Mhuire na nGael formulated this school plan for SPHE, in consultation with our Board of Management and our Parents, as we believe that SPHE is a shared responsibility and their contributions and involvement will be essential to the effective implementation of the SPHE programme in the school. This plan has been brought to the attention of the Board of Management and Parents.

Rationale

Aspects of SPHE have been taught in Scoil Mhuire na nGael for many years through various programmes and initiatives such as Stay Safe, Walk Tall, Relationships and Sexuality Education and through our involvement in the Health Promoting Schools Initiative. It has also been taught through integration with other subject areas such as Physical Education, Religion, Geography, etc. However, we wish to formalise our teaching of SPHE and plan for it on a whole school basis.

VISION and AIMS

Vision:

Scoil Mhuire na nGael is a co-educational inclusive, Catholic primary school where children of other religions are equally welcome. We strive to provide a well ordered, happy and secure atmosphere where the self-esteem of each child will be enhanced and the educational, spiritual, moral and cultural needs of each child is identified and developed with compassion, enthusiasm and due regard for the child's individuality. We work in partnership with parents and the community to empower pupils to live in and contribute to a rapidly changing society, and to act as responsible, independent and later, self-sufficient adults who care about others and the environment.

Through our SPHE programme all of the above aspects of education will be explored and developed with the aim of our children developing feelings of self-worth, self-confidence and learning to relate to others in a positive way.

Aims:

The children of Scoil Mhuire na nGael 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

CONTENT of PLAN

Curriculum:

1 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.

Scoil Mhuire na nGael will teach aspects of all three major strand units each year and strand units will be chosen in such a way that the child will receive a comprehensive programme in SPHE over a two-year period. The post-holder for SPHE will coordinate and oversee an SPHE noticeboard in the corridor which will reflect the strand / strand unit being taught throughout the year, as well as suggesting relevant photographs / samples of children's work to be shared on the school website. Teaching staff have collaboratively created this timetable to reflect this approach:

Social, Personal and Health Education - Two Year Grid		
Strand	Strand Units (Year 1)	Strand Unity (Year 2)
Myself	Self Identity (Sept. – Oct.)	Safety and Protection (Jan. – Feb.)
	Taking Care of My Body (Jan. – Feb.)	Making Decisions (March-April)
	Growing and Changing (March - April)	<i>*This strand unit is for third to sixth only. Infants to second complete the Safety Issues section of Safety and Protection</i>
Myself and Other	Myself and My Family (Nov. – Dec.)	My Friends and Other People (May – June)
		Relating to Others (Sept. – Oct.)
Myself and the Wider World	Developing Citizen (May – June)	Media Education (Nov. – Dec.)

2 Contexts for SPHE:

SPHE will be taught in Scoil Mhuire na nGael through a combination of the following contexts:

Positive School Climate and Atmosphere

Scoil Mhuire na nGael has created a positive atmosphere by:

- building effective communication
- catering for individual needs
- creating a health-promoting physical environment
- developing democratic processes
- enhancing self-esteem
- fostering respect for diversity
- fostering inclusive and respectful language
- developing appropriate communication
- developing a school approach to assessment

Discrete time for SPHE

SPHE is allocated 30minutes per week (cl. 56/2011) on each teacher's timetable in Scoil Mhuire na nGael. However teachers may 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

Teachers will endeavour to adopt an thematic approach to SPHE by integrating it with other subject areas such as Language, Geography, History, Religion, Visual Arts, Physical

Education, etc. Themes/Projects such as Healthy Eating Week, Friendship Week, Active Schools, Catholic Schools Week etc. will also be explored.

3 Approaches and Methodologies:

Scoil Mhuire na nGael 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
- co-operative games
- use of pictures
- photographs and visual images
- written activities
- use of media
- information technologies
- looking at children's work

4 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.

The school assess the child's progress in SPHE by teacher observation, classroom atmosphere, teacher designed tasks, projects and self-assessment by pupils. The school utilises the continuum of assessment guidelines and the strategies recommended within the assessment guidelines for schools, to assess the learning outcomes for SPHE.

As SPHE is an integral part of the revised curriculum, information regarding the child's abilities, strengths and overall progress in SPHE is shared with the pupil and parents e.g. parent/teacher meetings, homework journal, and school reports.

Each child will keep an SPHE record and this will be used to assess a child's progress in the subject. Each year the child will be given a teacher-designed task related to the strand units taught, and the record will be added to cumulatively during the child's schooling.

5. Children with Different Needs:

Teachers will endeavour to adapt and modify activities and methodologies in SPHE to encourage participation by children with special needs. The learning support and resource teachers will supplement the work of the class teachers where necessary. The role and responsibility of the special needs assistant (SNA) in relation to SPHE is to support and assist the special needs child to reach their full potential. Scoil Mhuire na nGael 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.

6. Equality of Participation and Access:

Scoil Mhuire na nGael recognises and values diversity, and believes all children are entitled to access the services, facilities, or amenities that are available in the school environment. Ours is a mixed school and we endeavour to challenge traditional stereotypes and ensure that equal opportunities are given to boys and girls to participate in discussion, debate, presentation, etc. Scoil Mhuire na nGael is an inclusive, Roman Catholic school and we endeavour to provide for pupils from a wide cohort of social, economic, intellectual, cultural, spiritual and religious communities.

Organisation:

7. Policies and Programmes that support SPHE:

Policies

- Child Safeguarding Statement
- Anti-Bullying
- Relationships and Sexuality Education
- Substance Use
- Code of Behaviour
- Admissions Policy
- Health and Safety
- Healthy Eating
- Internet Acceptable Usage
- Remote Teaching and Learning

Programmes

- Active School Flag
- Amber Flag
- KIVA Programme
- Stay Safe
- RSE
- Walk Tall

Stay Safe Programme

The Stay Safe programme will be explicitly taught to the pupils. In accordance with our two-year SPHE plan the teaching of the 'Safety and Protection' strand unit will be facilitated using strictly the the Stay Safe programme. Outside of this specific strand, the Stay Safe Programme will be used, as a resource to address the content objectives of the other SPHE strand units. Please refer to our Stay Safe Statement (Appendix A) attached to this policy .

8. Homework:

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

9. Resources:

The school has already created a bank of resources suitable for the teaching of SPHE. Additional resources will be sourced and purchased in accordance with recommendations from the PDST. The post holder responsible for SPHE will carry out an annual inventory of resources and will replenish those which need to be replaced and/or purchase new resources as required.

9.1 Programmes and Other Materials:

Books for Pupil	Books for Teacher	Audio / Visual	Posters	Media & ICT
Staysafe workbook	RSE Manuals Walk Tall Stay Safe Making the Links	Busy Bodies Food Dudes PDST resources	Various posters throughout the school	Seesaw Google Classroom PDST resources

9.2 Guest Speakers:

When a guest speaker addresses the children in SPHE, the class teacher will remain in the classroom (as per Circular 22/2010) and make the speaker aware of this school plan and attached policies. To ensure clarity, class teachers will be presented with content covered by the facilitator to ensure the non duplication of topics and the identification of areas which may not be taught by said such person. Once identified that class teacher will teach the remaining content.

10. Individual Teachers' Planning and Reporting:

This plan in SPHE and the curriculum documents will inform and guide teachers in their long and short term planning in SPHE. Each teacher will keep a Cuntas Míosúil and this will inform our progress and needs when evaluating and reviewing our progress in SPHE.

11. 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*
- *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.

12. Parental Involvement:

Parental involvement is considered an integral part to effectively implementing SPHE as Scoil Mhuire na nGael 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, and they are welcomed as committee members on the Relationships and Sexuality Education Policy and Substance Use Policy. They are also welcomed as committee members of the Health Promoting Schools initiative.

13. Community Links:

Scoil Mhuire na nGael 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, Fireman, Vet, New Parent, Local Gardaí, Genesis, Louth Leader Partnership etc.

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

Roles and Responsibilities:

Scoil Mhuire na nGael believes that the school community must be involved in the support of the Board of Management, Parents and the Local Community.

Timeframe:

The plan will be implemented by from September 2021. It was reviewed in September 2024.

REVIEW

Roles and Responsibilities:

It will be necessary to review this plan on a regular basis to ensure optimum implementation of the SPHE curriculum in the school. The designated postholder is responsible for coordinating this review.

Those involved in the review will include:

- Teachers
- Pupils
- Parents
- Post holders/plan coordinator
- In School Management Team
- BoM/DES/Others

Timeframe:

This plan will be reviewed biennially, normally in the month of June. It may be reviewed sooner in the event/rise of unforeseen circumstances.

RATIFICATION and COMMUNICATION

The Board of Management of Scoil Mhuire na nGael reviewed and ratified this plan on the 15th of October 2024.

Signed:

Proinsias Ó Cuanaigh

Date: 15th October 2024

This plan is available to view at the school by the parents on request and can be accessed on our school website.

STAY SAFE PROGRAMME STATEMENT



Scoil Mhuire na nGael teaches the Stay Safe Programme, a teaching package designed for use in Irish primary schools. It was researched and developed by the Child Abuse Prevention Programme. The principal aim of the programme is to prevent both physical and sexual abuse of children.

Under Child Protection Guidelines all schools are obliged to teach the Stay Safe programme. The Stay Safe Programme has been updated and from the 2021-2022 school year onwards, the revised Stay Safe Programme will be implemented in its totality in each class in the school.

Stay Safe lessons are taught as part of the SPHE (Social Personal and Health Education) curriculum and as per best practice recommendations it will be taught in the second term of a Year 2 in our SPHE two-year cycle. The sensitive topics of the RSE (Relationships and Sexuality Education) programme will be taught in Year 1 of the cycle, during the second term also.

Children from Junior Infants to Sixth Class participate in formal lessons on the Stay Safe Programme.

Parents/Guardians are encouraged to become involved by discussing each lesson with their child and helping their child to complete each worksheet based on the lessons in the programme.

Parents are informed in advance of commencement of teaching the Stay Safe Programme. They are directed to www.pdst.ie/staysafe to see the content of the lessons and for any further information they might need.

In the event that a parent informs the school that they wish to withdraw their child from the Stay Safe Programme, a written record of their reasons for doing is required from the parent. This is retained on the child's school file. If a child has been withdrawn from the Stay Safe lessons, the school takes no responsibility for what the child may hear following on from the teaching of the lessons. E.g. what they may hear on yard

Staff will be facilitated to attend CPD training on the revised Stay Safe programme. This Stay Safe Programme Statement was re-adopted by the Board of Management on the 15th of October 2024.

Signed: Proinsias Ó Cuanaigh
Chairperson of the Board of Management

Date: : 15/10/24

Signed: Lisa Jones
Principal

Date: 15/10/24