

Social Personal and Health Education (SPHE) Policy

Loreto College,

Swords, Co. Dublin

Roll No: 60810B

School Category: Voluntary Secondary School

Introductory Statement:

The purpose of this SPHE policy is to outline the organisation and management of SPHE within our school. The policy has been developed in consultation with our whole school community. We believe that SPHE is a shared responsibility and that the contributions and involvement of staff, students, parents and the Board of Management are essential to the effective implementation of the SPHE programme in the school.

Rationale:

Commitment to education in the area of personal and social development arises out of the holistic aim of education and its underlying vision of the person. Social, personal and health education (SPHE) provides our students with a unique opportunity to develop the skills and competence to learn about themselves, to care for themselves and others, and to make informed decisions about their health, personal lives, and social development.

This SPHE policy is developed in accordance with:

Our mission statement:

The Principal and Board of Management support teachers in their efforts to create a positive teaching and learning environment in the school. The school seeks to promote partnership and communication between home and school through information sessions and meetings with parents and guardians. The school also wants students to participate in activities so that they may feel a sense of belonging to the school, develop socially and build positive relationships with students and teachers alike.

In Loreto College we aim to create a safe and caring environment for staff and students. Students are encouraged to develop a sense of personal responsibility for their own behaviour and to respect the needs and safety of others. Values such as courtesy and thoughtfulness should influence the behaviour of students at our school. In the spirit of justice and in the interest of co-operation and positive relationships, students should exercise self-discipline and respect for others. We fully recognise the role of parents as having the primary responsibility for the development of their children and we support them in this role. The Code of Behaviour is drawn up in consultation with students, staff and parents and ratified by the Board of Management.

Department of Education Circulars and Guidelines

Our SPHE Policy is in keeping with the following guidelines and circulars:

- Circular C23/10 which reminds schools of their obligations to:
 - (a) develop a school policy in regard to Relationships and Sexuality Education and
 - (b) implement a programme in this area as an element of Social Personal and Health Education at junior cycle, and as an RSE programme in senior cycle.
- Circular 0043/2018; Best practice guidance for post primary schools in the use of programmes and/or external facilitators in promoting wellbeing consistent with the

Department of Education and Skills' Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice

- SPHE Junior Certificate Subject Specification for SPHE

Related Policies:

- Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment
- RSE Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Substance Use Policy
- Internet Acceptable Use Policy
- School Code of Behaviour
- Whole School Guidance Policy

Aims of SPHE (SPHE Syllabus, Dept. of Education & Science 2001)

- to enable our students to develop personal and social skills
- to promote self-esteem and self-confidence
- to enable our students to develop a framework for responsible decision making
- to provide our students with opportunities for reflection and discussion
- to promote physical, mental and emotional health and well-being

Programme Provision

- SPHE is compulsory for Junior students (1st, 2nd, 3rd year) in Loreto College Swords. Parents are made aware of this subject (open night, school newsletter, school website, parent teacher meetings, student journal)
- Currently in Loreto College Swords all Junior Cycle students participate in one SPHE class per week.
- In addition to this period of SPHE all 1st year students currently benefit from an additional SPHE period each week, under the heading 'Wellbeing'. This operates on a rotational basis drawing on the expertise of IT, Home Economics and Guidance teachers who address Online Safety, Healthy Eating and Organisational and Study Skills, resilience and positive mental health.

- The Senior RSE Programme in the school is taught as an integral part of the SPHE programme which is a required part of the Junior Certificate programme for all students (Section 4 of the Rules and Programme for Secondary Schools). This is also clearly expressed in DES RSE Policy Circular 0027 / 0028. **See RSE policy**

Content of SPHE in the Junior Certificate

SPHE for Junior Cycle comprises ten modules. SPHE is ‘spiral, developmental in nature and age appropriate in content and methodology’(NCCA) Due to the cyclical nature of the subject each of the key areas listed below are re-visited and developed upon each year as the students mature and their needs and abilities change. The emphasis is on building life skills and developing attitudes and values in relation to the areas explored.

Ten modules of Junior Cycle SPHE:

- Belonging and Integrating
- Self-Management
- Communication Skills
- Physical Health
- Friendship
- Emotional Health (Mental Health Also Included)
- Influences and Decisions
- Substance Use
- Personal Safety
- Relationships and Sexuality (RSE) (**See Appendix i for breakdown for each year group**)

Teaching Methodologies May Include:

Brainstorming. Role Play. Artwork . Narrative expression. Games – Icebreakers
Games – Simulation. Group discussion. Case studies. Debates – Walking debates/class debates. Project work

Junior Cycle RSE within SPHE

At Junior Cycle all students of SPHE participate in a Relationships and Sexuality Module (RSE) as part of the SPHE programme. Within the RSE module friendship, positive relationships, sexuality, gender identity and sexual health will be addressed.

At present the school offers RSE for a minimum of 6 lessons per year for both Junior and Senior Cycle Students. Elements of RSE are also approached in subjects such as Science, Biology, Home Economics, Religious Education, CSPE, Physical Education, Guidance and Counselling.

The Draft Guidelines for RSE (NCCA, June 1995, 1.2) state that SPHE is ‘spiral, developmental in nature and age appropriate in content and methodology’. The RSE programme is designed to follow this principle and pattern.

First Year	Second Year	Third Year
Friendship <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making and being a friend 	Friendship <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes in friendships • Healthy and unhealthy friendships and relationships 	Friendship <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boyfriends, girlfriends and romantic relationships • Respect
	The Relationship Spectrum: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family relationships • Managing relationships • Respecting myself and others • Personal space and boundaries 	The Relationship Spectrum: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relationship difficulties • Ending a relationship • Breaking up respectfully
Sexuality, Gender Identity and Sexual Health: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Puberty • Reproductive system • Gender Stereotyping • Sexual Orientation 	Sexuality, Gender Identity and Sexual Health: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From conception to birth • Stages of pregnancy • Sexuality and sexual orientation 	Sexuality, Gender Identity and Sexual Health: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sexual orientation • Consent and the law • STIs

	<p>Media Influences on Relationships and Sexuality:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The media and your life 	<p>Media Influences on Relationships and Sexuality:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The media and your life
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Involving and Informing Parents

Parents are the primary educators of their children and their role in education concerning relationships and sexuality is seen by the school as being very important. Parents are informed, by letter, in advance of the delivery of the RSE programme (**See Appendix 2**). This ensures that they are aware of what their daughters are covering in class and it provides them with an opportunity to discuss these topics with their daughters. Parents who are concerned about the topics covered during the delivery of the RSE Programme can request to see in advance the material that will be used in class and are encouraged (in the letter, appendix 2) to contact the school if they have any queries or any issues regarding their daughter’s participation in these lessons.

Class Contract, Confidentiality & GDPR

In order for effective learning to take place in SPHE classes, a climate of trust and respect needs to be created. In keeping with the NCCA Guidelines the first step in developing such a climate requires the drawing up of ground rules or class contract. At the beginning of each academic year, each class group writes up their own class contract with the help of their SPHE teacher. (**Appendix 3, Student Contract Template**). Ground rules make explicit the roles, rights and responsibilities of all concerned in the learning relationship. In SPHE they also respect peoples’ privacy and establish appropriate boundaries for what should and should not be raised in classroom discussion. Each student retains a copy of the contract and signs it to show that they agree to abide by the contract. The class teacher also keeps a copy.

A class discussion around the topic of confidentiality is essential for students to be clear on the boundaries that exist around confidentiality.

It is the school’s policy that in circumstances where a student reveals information which suggests that there is a risk (to themselves or others) the teacher must follow the guidelines set down in the Child Protection Procedures for Post-Primary Schools 2017.

Materials and Resources for class

<p>First Year</p> <p>All students will come to class equipped with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Textbook • SPHE folder • Photocopies of worksheets/ reflective tasks/notes, which students will be expected to keep in their folders • Pencil case • Student Journal 	<p>Second Year</p> <p>All students will come to class equipped with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Textbook • SPHE folder • Photocopies of worksheets/ reflective tasks/notes, which students will be expected to keep in their folders • Pencil case • Student journal
<p>Third Year</p> <p>All students will come to class equipped with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Textbook • SPHE folder • Photocopies of worksheets/ reflective tasks/notes, which students will be expected to keep in their folders • Pencil case • Student Journal 	<p>Senior Cycle SPHE</p> <p>TRUST Pack Department of Education SPHE Resource Material Belong To LGBT Resource pack SPHE Folder</p>

Other Core Resources

An SPHE team's folder has been created on Office 365 Team. This contains electronic policy, curriculum content plan and classroom resources.

All other hard copy resources are stored in the SPHE resource press.

Cross Curricular Links

Strong cross-curricular planning takes place between the SPHE department and the following departments:

Religion	Belonging and integrating linked to religion as recognition of world religion and world cultures is encouraged. Promoting tolerance, accepting difference
Home Economics	Physical health, emotional health, substance use linked to aspects of curriculum, for example nutrition, healthy eating, menu planning, rest and exercise.
Science	Physical health addresses aspects of Biology e.g. healthy eating
PE	Linked to Physical health, students are encouraged to take part in both PE classes and sport outside the school hours. Understanding the impact of physical exercise on positive mental health and link between mind, body, food and mood.
CSPE	SPHE particularly linked to the CSPE concepts of rights and responsibilities, human dignity. Other issues such as law may also apply (eg. substance use)
Art	Students encouraged to express themselves artistically in their presentation of projects and at times group posters/leaflets etc
English	Poetry and short stories may be used when discussing sensitive issues such as bullying, substance use, RSE.
Maths	Students may be required to use their numeracy skills when carrying out activities such as questionnaires, study/physical health timetables.
ICT	Students are encouraged to present project work in typed form/short video presentations/PowerPoints/Kahoot. Students may be directed to certain websites when asking for more information on a topic e.g. substance use. Staying safe online, with use of WEBWISE is also used by IT teacher.
Music	Students are encouraged to express themselves creatively.

Wellbeing	Directly linked to SPHE and addresses aspects of Positive Mental Health, Resilience, Study Skills, Managing time, Getting organised, Working with others, Healthy Eating and Online Safety.
Geography	Social geography- Making informed decisions and considering the consequences of actions and decisions on the lives and rights of others.
Guidance and Counselling	Study skills, organisational skills, emotional and mental health and wellbeing, belonging, relationships and integration, self- management and communication, decision making and life choices, coping with loss and personal safety.

SPHE and Positive School Climate and Atmosphere:

There are also strong links to initiatives and events in the school, for example:

- Student bonding activities
- Sports Days
- POPT Week
- Friendship Week
- World Language and Culture Week
- Catholic Schools and Mary Ward Week
- Green schools

Student Support Systems

Loreto College, Swords has a range of pastoral support structures for students who are identified through the SPHE/RSE curriculum as having additional needs. These supports take the form of:

- Tutors
- Year Heads
- Care Team (Pastoral Care)
- Big Sisters

Co-ordinator of SPHE

The co-ordinator will be selected by the SPHE Team every year. The co-ordinator will rotate between members of the SPHE Team if the team so wishes. The co-ordinator will:

- support colleagues in the teaching of SPHE
- distribute information about current developments in the subject, inform the staff of any relevant in-service courses
- ensure that the SPHE Department Plan, including the schemes of works, be reviewed annually and amended as necessary to be in line with the Department of Education and Skills curricula as well as the school's policies
- Update the list of SPHE teachers, training and CPD each year.

Department Meeting Records

Minutes of SPHE meetings will be recorded by a member of the SPHE Department during each meeting, written up, recorded and stored in SPHE Folder/online in 365 SPHE Shared area.

Curriculum Content

- Concise year plans available to each teacher of each year group in the department on Office 365
- Teachers are expected to keep their own personal records of the scheme of work they are following
- It is important to note that flexibility is needed within the SPHE planning programmed in order to suit the individual needs of the students or that of a class group and the school

Assessment Procedures

- SPHE seeks to offer all students an opportunity to experience success.
- Assessment for learning is central to SPHE and teachers are encouraged to apply experiential teaching methodologies
- Assessment should be a continuous part of teaching and learning process, involving students as well as teachers in identifying strengths, weaknesses and the next steps in the learning process

- The most valuable assessment takes place at the site and time of learning and will be in the form of a verbal response and written reflection.
- SPHE is included as a subject within the formal school report system (sent to students home every Christmas and summer following assessment). This is comment based and no grades are awarded.
- All students will engage in reflective practice, using a journal to reflect on material covered. (This will come into place in the school year 2020-21)

Record-Keeping Procedures

Each teacher in the department has their own teacher's diary. In this diary teachers may take notes regarding the following:

- Attendance. Punctuality. Participation. Completed work. Notes.

Teacher In-Career Development

At the beginning of each academic year all teachers of SPHE are encouraged to attend SPHE CPD training for an area they have not yet covered. It is understood that this attendance can only happen with previous permission sought from management who fully support CPD training in this area.

Use of External Programmes/External Facilitators

It is acknowledged that the use of programmes and/or external facilitators can play a role in supplementing but not replacing the SPHE programme. The classroom teacher is the best placed professional to work sensitively and consistently with students. However, there may be occasions when the SPHE teacher/Department feel that it would be beneficial to the students to use external facilitators. In this event of using external facilitators Loreto College Swords is guided by Circular 0043/2018 which outlines best practice for post primary schools in the use of external facilitators.

Monitoring, evaluating and reviewing the SPHE programme

We are committed to monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of our SPHE programme. The SPHE teachers and students will have the opportunity to engage in ongoing review of programmes and policy both formally and informally. This will be done through students' feedback in terms of in-class discussion, reflections and/or evaluations at the end of modules

and consultation with parents and staff. The SPHE policy will be reviewed in line with the school's programme of school development planning and as part of the School Self-Evaluation process.

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management of Loreto College Swords on June 16th 2020

Signed Gerry Sinnott Date 16/6/2020

Appendix I

Table of Contents to suggest the cyclical Nature of the material taught during the 10 Modules, over three years.

First Year	Second Year	Third Year
Who Am I? 1. How I see myself and others 2. Self-management 3. Being an adolescent	Who Am I? 1.Self-Management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making a new Start • Goal Setting& Motivation • Study Skills • Being Safe 2. How I see myself and others 3. Being an adolescent	Who Am I? 1.Self-Management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setting SMART goals • Study skills • Seeking Advice & Becoming Independent 2. How I see myself and others 3. Being an adolescent
Minding Myself and Others 1. Being healthy 2. Substance use 3. Respectful communication 4. Anti-bullying	Minding Myself and Others 1. Being healthy 2. Substance use 3. Respectful communication 4. Anti-bullying	Minding Myself and Others 1. Being healthy 2. Substance use 3. Respectful communication 4. Anti-bullying
My Mental Health 1. Positive mental health 2. Dealing with tough times 3. Change and Loss	My Mental Health 1. Positive mental health 2. Mental health and mental ill-health 3. Loss and bereavement	My Mental Health 1. Positive mental health 2. Mental health and mental ill-health 3. Loss and bereavement

Appendix ii

RSE Letter to Parents of all Junior Cycle Students

Dear Parent/ Guardian,

I wish to inform you that your daughter will be participating in a Relationships and Sexuality Module (RSE) as part of the SPHE programme. All Junior Cycle students must participate in SPHE in compliance with guidelines from the Department of Education. RSE is a compulsory module within this programme. SPHE works on a cyclical basis with the areas of friendship, relationships, sexuality, gender identity, sexual health and media influence being covered each year.

Throughout the delivery of this module the following topics will be addressed and covered each year. Please note which year your daughter is currently in and which topics she will be covering.

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	The Relationship Spectrum: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family relationships • Managing relationships • Respecting myself and others • Personal space and boundaries 	The Relationship Spectrum: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relationship difficulties • Ending a relationship • Breaking up respectfully
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	Media Influences on Relationships and Sexuality: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The media and your life 	Media Influences on Relationships and Sexuality: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The media and your life

Full participation in the RSE programme is expected. If you have any queries regarding your daughter's participation in the programme, please do not hesitate to contact the school in this regard.

Thank you for your continued co-operation and support.

Karen Parker, Meghan Sinnott, Colette McCaughey, Emma Keavney, Felicity Moran

SPHE Department 2019/2020

Appendix iii

Template/Example of Ground rules/class contract (NCCA Guidelines)

WE AGREE THAT THESE ARE THE WAYS IN WHICH WE CAN WORK FOR THE SUCCESS OF THIS GROUP

Confidentiality	Personal details which may be revealed in the class are not discussed outside the group. I can talk about my learning in the class, the material being covered and the activities we are doing.
Responsibility	I will take responsibility for my own sharing and make I STATEMENTS. And I will share responsibility for the progress of the class group.
Freedom	I have the freedom to opt out or pass in discussions.
Participation	I will participate and not dominate.
Listening	I will listen when another person is speaking.
Respect	I will respect others' views even when it is different from mine.
Request	If I want something I will ask for it.
Time-keeping	I will keep to the allotted time for the task.
Materials	I will bring the materials needed for the class and complete any home task so that the group can progress to the next stage of the learning.
Punctuality	I will be punctual.

SIGNED _____

(Student's Name)

This SPHE Policy was ratified by the Board of Management on the 16th of July 2020.

Chairperson of Board of Management