



St. John the Baptist Boys' National School

SPHE Policy

SPHE Policy for St. John the Baptist B.N.S

- ***Introductory Statement and Rationale***

- a. ***Introductory Statement***

John the Baptist B.N.S seeks to help the children grow and develop into healthy, mature adults capable of realising their full potential as human beings. To this end, all the teachers adopt a planned S.P.H.E. programme for the school in line with curriculum guidelines and child protection guidelines. This is to be undertaken in conjunction with parents and guardians of the children. The teachers examined the resources available for SPHE and RSE.

- b. ***Rationale***

The plan is a record of whole school decisions in relation to S.P.H.E. in line with the Primary Curriculum 1999. Its purpose is to guide the teachers in adopting a consistent and coherent approach to the teaching and learning of S.P.H.E. in our school. It is intended to guide teachers in their individual planning for S.P.H.E. to ensure appropriate coverage of all aspects of the curriculum from Infants to Sixth Class.

- ***Vision and Aims***

- a. ***Vision:***

Since S.P.H.E. has a moral and spiritual dimension its development and implementation are influenced significantly by the ethos or characteristic spirit of the school (Primary School Curriculum, p. 2)

John the Baptist B.N.S is a caring Catholic School whose primary objective is to provide education in a safe and friendly atmosphere. We strive to ensure that the staff and pupils have a mutual respect for each other. Every pupil has a right to education. In order that the child receives the best possible, there must be co-operation between parents/pupils and teachers.

We recognise that SPHE is intrinsic to 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 to develop feelings of self-worth and self-confidence while encouraging their ability to relate to others in a positive way.

The individuality of each pupil is accommodated, while acknowledging the right of each pupil to education in a relatively disruption free environment.

b. Aims:

John the Baptist B.N.S will strive to achieve the aims of SPHE which are set out below

- 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

Strands	Strand Units(Year 1)	Strand Units(Year 2)
Myself	Self-Identity/wellbeing	Self-Identity/wellbeing
	Taking care of my body	
	Growing and changing	

		Safety and protection
		Making decisions
Myself and others	Myself and my family	
	wellbeing	My friends and other people
		Relating to others
Myself and the wider world	Developing citizenship	
		Media Education

Year 1 – School year beginning in an even number e.g. 2020-21, 2022-23etc.

Year 2 – School year beginning in an even number e.g. 2021-22, 2023-24 etc.

RSE- to be taught in the second or third term of Year 1

Stay Safe- to be taught in Year 2 (October/November/December)

Stay Safe and RSE will be covered in all classes in the school at the same time of year as per this 2-year plan

2.Contexts for SPHE:

We will teach it in a combination of the following contexts:

(a) *A positive school climate and atmosphere*(T.G Pg22) and adopt strategies such as:

- building effective communication within the school
 - Memos to staff/parents
 - Staff Room Noticeboard/ Aladdin Noticeboard
 - School Noticeboard
 - Children actively encouraged to communicate with all members of staff

- catering for individual needs
 - Friends for Life, Social Groups, etc.

- creating a health-promoting physical environment
- developing democratic processes
- enhancing self-esteem
- fostering respect for diversity
- fostering inclusive and respectful language
- developing appropriate communication between home and school
- developing a school approach to assessment

(b)Discrete Time: Teachers can use their discrete time either ½ hour per week, 1 hour per fortnight or if project work is taking place, a 2 hour block per month.

(c)Integration: At each class level individual teachers will focus on opportunities for integration across other subjects.

3.Approaches and Methodologies: The methodologies for SPHE are

- Talk and Discussion
- Active Learning
- Skills through content
- Collaborative learning
- Problem Solving
- Use of the environment

The following approaches may be used to promote active and collaborative learning within SPHE:

- Drama activities
- Co-operative games
- Pictures, photographs and visual images

- Discussion: in pairs, small groups and whole class
- Written activities: surveys, questionnaires, lists, check-lists, projects, worksheets
- Media Studies
- Information and communication technologies
- Looking at children's work- portfolios, projects etc
- Displays and presentations of work
- Other

4. Assessment:

The informal tools recommended for assessment are

Teacher observation

Teacher designed tasks and tests

Portfolios and projects

Questioning

DES/Outside Assessment

Displays and presentations of work

Teachers may use these in assessing SPHE and RSE throughout the year.

The aim of assessment is to improve the learning experiences of the child in SPHE. pg 72 SPHE curriculum document

Information will be shared via:

Formal written reports to parents via end of year reports

Reports to the DLP where appropriate

Parent teacher meetings

Feedback to students

All information will be treated confidentially

5. Children with different needs:

Children with different needs will be catered for by implementing differentiation strategies across the S.P.H.E. curriculum. Each individual teacher will use differentiation strategies that are relevant to the children in his/her own class/es.

Teacher can cater for individual needs through differentiating by:

- Content
- Teaching Style
- Task
- Pace
- Support
- Resources
- Outcome

SNAs will support allocated children with the guidance of the class teacher.

Any specific needs of the class e.g. bereavement, disability, illness may be addressed by the class teacher according to the needs of the class.

6.Equality of Participation and Access:

Equal opportunities will be given to both boys and girls to access the content provided by the teacher.

Classes may be split for RSE in the case of a multi-grade class according to the RSE guidelines.

Organisation:

7.Policies and Programmes that support SPHE:

7.1Policies/Programmes:

The following policies and programmes will be addressed in the context of SPHE

Code of Behaviour, Anti-Bullying policy, Healthy Eating policy, Child Protection policy, Walk Tall, Stay Safe, RSE, First aid, Health and safety

Include the programme that we will be using here? If the book covers all of the topics outlined in the table above there would be no need- I don't have the book with me to check!

7.3 Relationships and Sexuality Education:

RSE is a lifelong process of acquiring knowledge and understanding and of developing attitudes, beliefs and values about sexual identity, relationships and intimacy. In a school situation RSE, provides structured opportunities for pupils to acquire a knowledge and understanding of human relationships and sexuality through processes which enable them to form values and to establish behaviours within a moral, spiritual and social framework, appropriate to their age. RSE will be taught in accordance with the Department's directives and within the philosophy framework of the school. Teachers will not teach any content outside the Religion programme used by the school or the DES curriculum. The teaching methods used in the school are child centred and reflect the age and stage of development of each child. Sensitive issues will be dealt with appropriately.

Overview of RSE programme:

Aims: In partnership with the home our aims are:

- To promote self-esteem.
- To promote respect for the rights of others, encouraging tolerance and understanding of differences between people.
- To foster responsibility in decision-making.
- To help children develop healthy friendships and relationships.
- To promote an understanding of sexuality leading to a healthy attitude to it and to relationships.
- To help pupils think and act in a moral caring and responsible way
- To learn about their own development and about their friendships and relationships with others.
- To promote knowledge and respect for human love.

The development of relationships is an integral part of all curricular subjects. Aspects of RSE are taught during SPHE, Religion, Science, implementation of the Code of Behaviour, etc. An integrative approach towards RSE ensures that the children encounter RSE in a holistic manner rather than in isolation.

2nd class

- Naming parts of the body including parts of the male and female body using appropriate anatomical terms.

3rd/4th classes

- Sequence of development of the human baby from conception to birth.
- Changes in male and female bodies as they grow.

5th /6th classes

- Changes in male and female bodies as they grow.
- Puberty.
- Reproductive system of male and female.
- Understanding sexual intercourse, conception and birth.

Notes will be sent home to parents prior to addressing sensitive issues with a link to the lessons provided for parents

Consent must be given. Any parents who wish to withdraw children must indicate in writing their wish to withdraw and commit to teaching the RSE programme to their child themselves.

Parents who wish to discuss the RSE programme may arrange a meeting with the class teacher

Questions in class will only be answered in the context of the RSE programme and no teacher will answer personal questions.

Any questions that cannot be answered within the RSE programme will be referred home to be addressed

If any teacher is uncomfortable with teaching an aspect of RSE programme they can discuss this with the principal.

All staff will endeavour to undertake RSE as a whole school in the Spring Term unless special circumstances arise.

Withdrawn children will be supervised by a neighbouring teacher.

RSE to be taught as single class or mixed group.

A sample letter to parents is included in Appendix A

7.4 Stay Safe Programme: Will be incorporated into the SPHE plan of all teachers.

Aim:

To teach children personal safety skills so they can look after themselves in situations which could be upsetting or dangerous.

Content:

The lessons cover the following areas:

- Feeling safe and unsafe
- Friendship and Bullying

- Touches
- Secrets and Telling
- Strangers

Children participating in this programme will learn:

- To distinguish between safe and unsafe feelings
- What to do if lost
- What to do if the phone or doorbell rings when they are alone in the house
- The importance of friends in children's lives
- What to do if bullied
- Stay Safe Rules: Say No/Get Away/Tell
- Why not to bully others
- Appreciating normal, appropriate touches
- That unsafe touches should never be kept secret
- How to respond to inappropriate touches(Stay Safe Rules)
- Good and bad secrets
- That some secrets should not be kept
- Who and how to tell if in trouble
- About strangers and safety strategies

In John the Baptist B.N.S the Stay Safe Programme is taught in Year 2 due to split classes. Children are not segregated for Stay Safe lessons. All topics are addressed on a whole-class basis.

7.5 Child Protection:

The school follows the DES Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures, (Circular 0081/2017) which are based on Children First, National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children. The Principal is the designated liaison person (DLP). Each teacher has a copy of our policy on Child Protection and a copy is available to parents, through the secretary, if they request one.

8. Homework:

Children are encouraged to discuss work done in school at home with their parents. Worksheets begun at school are often finished as homework to enable parents to engage with the topics covered. Homework will reflect the active learning approach as prescribed in the curriculum and in our school policy.

9. Resources:

9.1 Programmes and Other Materials:

Include the book that you bought here...

- SPHE Teacher Guidelines
- Walk Tall
- Be Safe
- Stay Safe Child Abuse Prevention Programme
- Action for life
- Responding to Critical Incidences
- Stop It! (Bullying)
- Stay Safe Pack for children with Learning Difficulties
- RSE
- Bullying (Prim-Ed Publications)
- Anti-bullying support material (primary)
- Busy Bodies (HSE)
- Weaving Wellbeing (Fiona Foreman)
- PDST resources from www.pdst.ie/healthwellbeing

Most materials can be accessed on the PDST website

9.2 Guest Speakers:

- Doctor
- Nurse
- Dental Nurse
- Substance Abuse Speaker
- Vet
- Garda
- Specialist RSE teacher
- Speaker on Internet Safety

10. Well-being in Primary Schools

“Schools play a vital role in the promotion of positive mental health in children. Schools can also provide a safe and supportive environment for building life skills and resilience and a strong sense of connectedness to school. Listening to the voice of the child and fostering healthy relationships

with peers, teachers and school staff are essential to children's positive experiences of school and their cognitive and emotional development. The needs and well-being of school staff are also of paramount importance"

- *From the foreword of Well-Being in Primary Schools*

'Ten actions that schools can undertake to promote well-being of a school community' (WBPS)

Appendix B

Extra-curricular activities are encouraged by the school – those on offer at any given time can be checked in the office.

Guided, non-religious, meditation/mindfulness activities are encouraged and supported by the school for all pupils.

11. Individual Teachers' Planning and Reporting:

Our policy aims to guide teachers in their planning of SPHE/RSE so that it is delivering a whole school approach.

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.

12. Staff Development:

Staff development will be promoted by:

- 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 Special Education Teachers, Special Needs Assistants and ancillary staff with the content and vision enshrined in policies relevant to SPHE.
- All staff will be actively supported in maintaining and developing their wellbeing.

13. Parental Involvement:

SPHE is a shared responsibility between family and school.

- Copies of the school plan for SPHE are available from the office if required.
- Parents will be made aware of the content objectives that deal with the 'sensitive' issues before teachers cover these in class and will be asked to discuss these issues with their child prior to the lessons in school.

14. Community Links:

We value the contribution which members of the local community can make towards furthering the aims and objectives of SPHE in our school. The community Garda, medical persons, 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, as required.

- ***Success Criteria***

Success achieved will depend on thorough preparation of teachers' work and consistently following procedures outlined in the plan. Indications of success will come 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***

a. Roles and Responsibilities:

This plan has been formulated by the staff of our school. It will be supported, developed and implemented by teaching and non-teaching staff members alike.

b. Timeframe:

In order to ensure optimal implementation of the SPHE Programme in our school this plan will be reviewed on a three-year basis. Those involved in the review will include teachers and the Board of Management. The Principal and the staff will be responsible for the co-ordination of this review.

- ***Review***

a. Roles and Responsibilities:

The school principal and SPHE leader Ms. Crowley will co-ordinate its progression.

b. Timeframe:

Date for review: September 2023

- ***Ratification and Communication***

Following ratification by the Board of Management, this plan will be circulated to all staff members. A copy of the plan will be available to parents and guardians on request.

Ratification:

Signed: _____ (Chairperson B.O.M)

Date: _____

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Relationships and Sexuality education is an integral part of the S.P.H.E programme. The sensitive elements of the Relationships and Sexuality education programme are covered under the Strand Units, 'Growing and Changing' and 'Taking Care of my Body'. We will be completing these Strand Units with all class levels in the forthcoming weeks.

<u>Topics covered in 2nd class include:</u>	<u>Topics from 3rd to 6th class include:</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Keeping Safe• Bodily changes from birth (birth-9)• Making age appropriate choices• Appreciating the variety of family types and a variety of family life that exists in our school and community• Recognising and expressing feelings• Self-care, hygiene, diet, exercise and sleep• Expressing opinions and listening to others• Naming the parts of the male/ female body using appropriate anatomical terms (Junior/ Senior Infants)• Naming the parts of the male/ female body using appropriate anatomical terms and identify some of their functions (1st/2nd)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bodily changes• Healthy eating, personal hygiene, exercise• Keeping Safe• Expressing Feelings• Appreciating the variety of family types within our school and community and how these family relationships shape us• Making healthy and responsible decisions• Forming Friendships• Discuss the stages and sequence of development of the human baby in the womb (3rd, 4th class)• Introduction to puberty and changes (3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th class)• Changes that occur in boys and girls with the onset of puberty (5th and 6th Class)• Reproductive system of male/female adults (5th and 6th class)• Understanding sexual intercourse, conception and birth within the context of a committed loving relationship (5th, 6th class)

The class teacher will send home appropriate home school links pages from the Relationships and Sexuality manual which outline the material that will be covered in class and encourage further discussion on the topics at home. If you have any questions, please make an appointment to see the class teacher.

Yours sincerely

Ten actions that schools can undertake to promote well-being of a school community

Within the school context, positive mental health promotion should focus on enhancing protective factors that contribute to the social and emotional growth, and general well-being of young people.

The following key statements are a guide to promoting well-being and mental health in schools:

- 1 Developing and maintaining a safe, caring culture and climate within the school where a sense of belonging and connectedness is fostered.
- 2 Building positive relationships between teachers and children to promote participation, social interaction and pro-social behaviour.
- 3 Adopting a whole-school approach to health promotion, where health is promoted by all and not just by a few members of staff.
- 4 Actively involving children, their parents/guardians and the wider community in developing and implementing school policies to support mental health and health promotion.
- 5 Supporting and implementing a well-planned, consistent and integrated SPHE curriculum to enable children enhance their coping, resilience, communication, conflict resolution, and problem-solving skills.
- 6 Developing whole-school systems and structures to support the early identification of children experiencing social, emotional, behavioural or learning difficulties.
- 7 Actively involving, supporting and encouraging children's participation in extra-curricular activities.
- 8 Fostering a whole-school ethos that accepts and values diversity within the pupil and staff population.
- 9 Providing easy access to information for pupils and staff on supports available to them within the school and wider community.
- 10 Facilitating access to continuing professional development for school staff on the promotion of the mental health and well-being of children.

