



## **St. David's B.N.S. / Scoil Daibheid Naofa**

*Kilmore Road, Artane, Dublin 5.  
Bothar na Cille Moire, Ard Aidiuin, B.A.C. 5  
Tel: 8487979 Email: stdavidsbns@gmail.com*

### **SPHE POLICY**

#### **Introductory Statement**

This policy was reviewed in 2019. All the teaching staff were present. SPHE is a lifelong process and as such begins before the child comes to school. At St. David's B.N.S. we aim to provide a foundation that will inform the child's actions and decisions and provide a basis for further development.

#### **Rationale**

In developing this plan, the school seeks:

- To benefit teaching and learning in our school
- To conform to principles of teaching and learning outlined in the curriculum
- To review the existing work in SPHE
- To establish a formal structure for teaching SPHE.
- To ensure support for our pupils in their social, emotional and holistic development.

#### **Vision & Aims**

In line with our school ethos and culture, Social, Personal and Health Education will provide opportunities for the individual child to develop a framework of values, attitudes, understanding and skills that will inform his decisions and actions now and in the future – enabling him to respect and relate to himself and others and become an active and responsible citizen in society.

Our school values the uniqueness of all individuals within a caring school community. 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 programme also 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. The parents have the primary role in the social, personal and health education of their children so their role will be encouraged as much as possible.

We endorse the aims and objectives of the Curriculum for SPHE and in addition we emphasise the following:

To promote the personal development and well-being of the child in conjunction with the Amber Flag and Active Flag programmes

To foster in the child a sense of care and respect for himself 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 it's aspects

To develop an understanding of the food pyramid and establish healthy eating habits

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

To appreciate and understand the interdependent nature of the world

To develop a respect for the environment in conjunction with the Green Schools Programme

To develop democratic processes through the Student Council

### **Content of the Plan**

SPHE is planned so that children receive a comprehensive programme over a two-year cycle. Teachers have allocated strand units from each of the strands to each class. This ensures that the strand units not covered in one year are included in the programme of work for the following year. In some cases, it may be necessary to revise specific objectives from the previous year, as with all strand units covered in the 'Stay Safe' Programme. Teachers must teach the 'Stay Safe' Programme in Senior Infants, First, Third and Fifth classes.

The content objectives for some of the more sensitive areas of the RSE elements of SPHE will be addressed in discrete time by an invited and qualified speaker for 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> class age groups.

Since SPHE is spiral in nature we will cover the following content at each level throughout the school over a two-year period:

## Overview of Content for SPHE:

<u>Strands</u>	<b>Strand Units ( Year 1 ) Junior Infants, 1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Strand Units ( Year 2 ) Senior Infants, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup></b>
<b>Myself</b>	Self-Identity (Sept/Oct)	
	Taking Care of My Body (May/June)	
	Growing and Changing (Mar/Apr)	
	Safety and Protection (Jan/Feb)  <i>Stay Safe, 1<sup>st</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> (Jan-Mar)</i>	<i>Stay Safe, Senior Infants (Jan-Mar)</i>
		Making Decisions 3 <sup>rd</sup> -6 <sup>th</sup> (Jan/Feb)
<b>Myself and Others</b>		Myself and my Family (Sept/Oct)
	My Friends and Other People (Nov/Dec)	
		Relating to Others (Mar/Apr)
<b>Myself and the Wider World</b>		Developing Citizenship (May/June)
		Media Education (Nov/Dec)

## Contexts for SPHE

We aim to teach SPHE in a combination of the following contexts:

For a period of 30 minutes each week

Discrete time will be used to develop and practice particular skills and to deal with sensitive issues or to explore issues that are not addressed in other areas of the curriculum.

Teachers will endeavour to adopt a thematic approach to SPHE by integrating it with other subject areas such as Language (Media Education), SESE (Citizenship, Myself and my Family), Religion (Decisions), Visual Arts, Physical Education (Water Safety), etc. Themes/Projects such as Anti-Bullying Week, Healthy Eating Week, Friendship Week, Charity Events, World Autism Day, Green/Amber/Active Flag Activities, Intercultural Day etc. This list is not exhaustive. We have identified the objectives that can be acquired through cross-curricular work. In order to ensure that these are adequately covered, we will make specific provision in our short-term planning and will use the Cúntas Míósúil as a form of self-assessment for these and other objectives.

Within a positive school climate and atmosphere, the following strategies will be adopted:

Creating a safe, bright, warm school environment that encourages all children to explore their strengths and talents and further develop their interests in an atmosphere of understanding, encouragement and respect

Building effective communication within the school and between 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.

Supporting those with additional learning/social/developmental needs through the provision of appropriate interventions, differentiated curriculums, individual behaviour plans, social stories etc .(Through assessment, observation and discussion with parents, we strive to identify and meet individual needs)

Ensuring our school creates a health-promoting environment. This can be done through engaging with the Green/Amber/Active Flag processes, healthy eating, healthy lifestyle, road/water safety and regular fire drills etc.

Organising varied events throughout the year that will encourage family members to attend and celebrate the achievements and successes of our pupils in all the realms of their development. This can include Assemblies, Culture Day, World Autism Day, Coffee Mornings etc.

Promoting democratic processes in certain levels of school life while balancing roles, rights and responsibilities. Children experience and practice the democratic processes by sharing responsibilities, by valuing the opinions of others, by experiencing a sense of belonging to one's own class group and the wider school community and by developing a sense of commitment to common goals

Enhancing the self-esteem of all members of the school community. The staff is aware that their role in helping children 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 as outlined in the curriculum 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 and a sense of competence.

Fostering respect for diversity and prioritising inclusive and respectful language. We will prioritise both racial and gender equality and respect for those with special needs through celebrating all the cultures of our school, as well as the strengths and talents that all our pupils use to enhance our school environment.

Developing a school approach to assessment.

Taking responsibility and pride in the school environment by promotion of behaviour and habits required for maintaining a clean environment.

Involvement of the Parents Association, that works in conjunction with the school to promote our ethos and support us in initiatives introduced in our school.

After School Clubs/Activities

## **Approaches & Methodologies**

We will adopt the following approaches and methodologies (taking into account the school facilities and the children's needs).

Talk and discussion (pairs, small groups, with whole class debates)

Skills through content

Collaborative learning

Problem-solving

Use of the environment

Active learning which includes drama activities, Circle-time, co-operative games, use of pictures, photographs and visual images, written activities, use of media and information technologies and looking at children's work.

## **Assessment**

Assessment is a central part of the everyday learning and teaching process in SPHE.

Children's progress in SPHE is assessed through:

### *Teacher observation:*

The ability of children to cooperate and work in groups or to work independently

The informal interaction between the child and adults and between the child and other children

Physical and emotional maturity

The quality and presentation of work

The participation and interest of the child in a variety of activities

Particular interests or aptitudes displayed by the child

The level of personal or social responsibility exhibited by the child

The reliability of the child in carrying out established routines

The perseverance of the child in carrying out a task

The child's awareness of the difficulties of others and his willingness to help

Various behaviours, e.g. shyness, leadership ability, level of self-confidence, the tendency to be anxious, sense of fair play, assertiveness, aggression, readiness to take risks and meet challenges

The ability of the child to engage in assessing his progress and reflecting on his learning

This list is not conclusive in its design and the teacher will use their knowledge of their class and their discretion to identify other areas of strength or concern a child may have.

### *Teacher-designed task and tests:*

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 behaviour and maturity, and to reflect on their learning.

### *DES/Outside Assessment*

### **Children with different needs**

SPHE is a crucial subject for all pupils, and even more so for pupils who have special needs. It allows them to come to an understanding of their emotional well-being and encourages them to regulate their emotions. It provides them with a greater self-awareness and helps them to develop and maintain friendships. A knowledge of good health and hygiene is also key as young people grow up. The children with special needs are an integral part of our school and endeavouring to meet their needs is a key part of our school culture and ethos. With this in mind, all strands and strand units are adapted to encourage children of all levels and interests to fully engage with all aspects of the SPHE School Plan.

Children who experience bereavement or loss, serious illness or other major personal situations are supported, and consideration is given to meeting their individual needs in the most appropriate manner.

All visitors/workshop coordinators are invited to the school on the premise that all children will be enabled to engage with these workshops e.g. Cyber Awareness Talk for senior classes; Yoga and Mindfulness; Accord Programme for 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> class age groups.

Teachers will support the participation of all pupils with special needs through the use, where appropriate, of:

- Mixed ability groupings

- Differentiation of tasks

- SNA support – where needed

- Lesson topics treated with sensitivity and aimed at the appropriate class level and the needs of the pupils attending

### **Equality of Participation and Access**

All children in our school participate in SPHE and are given equal opportunities in class

The programme at each class level will be flexible so that the learning requirements of all children may be addressed

The physical layout of the classrooms should accommodate children with physical disabilities

All children will have the opportunity to participate in SPHE lessons, regardless of ability, race, religious, ethnic or socio-economic background

Diversity is celebrated in our school and traditional stereotypes are challenged. Under the trusteeship of Archbishop's House, we celebrate the catholic ethos and value the importance of inclusion, understanding, tolerance and acceptance of all members of our school community, recognising the qualities they add to our school

Sensitivity is shown in all areas of this subject, as in today's Ireland, we have many families who are experiencing significant strain, or who may be homeless. Families are also changing and take on many guises. St. David's B.N.S. does not charge for in-school curricular activities where possible. No child will miss out on any school activity, event or opportunity because of a lack of economic resources.

## **Linkage and Integration**

SPHE is a core subject used to promote our school ethos and culture. It is integrated into all aspects of school life, both formally and informally. It is an intrinsic subject in the positive development and growth of the children we serve.

### **Policies and programmes that support SPHE**

- Code of Behaviour
- Enrolment Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Acceptable Use Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Healthy Eating Policy
- Use of children's images

This list is not exhaustive. Individual teachers will timetable this curricular area, in line with the needs of the class. Close communication and cooperation will take place between the class teacher and the SEN team, who will provide additional SPHE education to certain children in light of professional reports as necessary

Guest Speakers may be used to enhance the work being done by the class teacher in SPHE. Class teachers will remain present at all times when outside visitors are facilitating workshops etc. in this area in line with our Child Protection Policy.

We will use the *Walk Tall, Stay Safe* programmes as our main resources and the SPHE curriculum statement and guidelines.

### **Resources**

We will select resources/materials that are:

- Reflective of our school ethos
- In line with the principles of the SPHE Curriculum
- Age appropriate
- Closely matched to specific objectives
- Free of bias, racial or sexual stereotyping
- Produced by a reputable agency.

Specific software, DVDs, online links and textbooks support the SPHE programme. The choice of materials will be reviewed from time to time and may be changed as required. Materials purchased with school funds remain the property of the school.

Other resources include *Relationships and Sexuality, Making the Connection, Accord, Cyber Awareness Workshops, Yoga and Mindfulness* and others as they become available.

## **Health and Safety**

All staff members are familiar with our health and safety policy

Teachers remain with their classes at all times when external instructors are running classes

Classroom management must be well organised and managed in all drama lessons to ensure the health and safety of all children

Best practice is safe practice Teachers should ensure that all children and other adults understand the rules and procedures to be followed throughout the lesson

First Aid kits are available at all times from the school office

## **Child Protection**

The school follows the DES Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures which are based on *Children First*, National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children. Each year at staff meetings, and informally throughout the year, teachers are reminded of the school's Child Protection Policy and the procedures to be followed in dealing with incidents related to child protection. Parents are also informed of these procedures from time to time. Each teacher has a copy of our policy on Child Protection Policy and a copy is available to parents. A copy is also published on the school website.

## **Dealing with questions/confidentiality**

Teachers establish ground rules limiting the discussion to material covered in present or previous lessons and ground rules covering the limits of the discussion, the level of respect required and the concept of confidentiality.

## **Communication with parents re RSE & *Stay Safe* matters/Parents' choices**

Parents have the right to choose whether or not their children receive instruction in the areas covered by the RSE/*Stay Safe* objectives. Parents may choose to withdraw their children from some or all of these objectives. All parents will be made aware of the RSE and *Stay Safe* topics that will be covered each school year and the ethos within which they will be delivered. Any parent who has concerns should discuss them with the class teacher. A parent who asks to have his/her child withdrawn from specific objectives should do so in writing before the end of September.

## **Guest Speakers**

Suitably qualified guest speakers may be invited to complement the work of the class teachers. They will be briefed on school policy as related to their subject matter. A class teacher will be present at all times.

## **Individual Teachers' Planning and Reporting**

Teachers should base their yearly and short-term plans on the approaches set out in this whole school plan for SPHE. Work covered will be outlined in the Cuntas Míósúil, which will be submitted to the principal.



## **Staff Development**

Teachers are made aware of any opportunities for further professional development through participation in courses available in Education Centres or other venues. Skills and expertise within the school are shared and developed through input at staff meetings.

The DLP and/or teaching staff have attended:

Training in the Child Abuse Prevention Programme (*Stay Safe*)

Training in the Substance Misuse programme (*Walk Tall*)

Training in the Relationships and Sexuality programme (R.S.E.)

In-service seminars hosted by the PDST, CAPP, TUSLA, DES, HSE, Patron of the school, CPSMA, Online Children First Training on the websites [www.tusla.ie](http://www.tusla.ie) and [www.pdst.ie](http://www.pdst.ie)

## **Parental Involvement**

SPHE is a shared responsibility between family and school. This plan and the curriculum documents are available to parents to inform them of the programme for SPHE. Other programme information is also available on request. Parents of senior pupils will be made aware of content objectives that deal with sensitive issues and will be asked to discuss these issues with their children prior to lessons in school.

## **Community Links**

St. David's B.N.S. believe that the local community has a very important role to play in supporting the programme in SPHE and endeavour to liaise with the Health Promotion Unit of the local Health Board and other agencies including Dental Hygienist, Health Nurse, Garda, Church, Sports Groups etc. We also link closely with the School Completion Programme.

<b>Success Criteria</b>
-------------------------

The success of this plan will be measured using the following criteria:

Implementation of the SPHE curriculum will be evident in teachers' work

Continuity of content and methodology will be evident in teachers' preparation and monthly reports

On-going assessment will show that pupils are acquiring an understanding of concepts taught and an ability to engage with others in a manner appropriate to their age and personality.

SPHE is a lifelong process and as such some of the result may not be assessed while the children are still in school, however the school will use the following guidelines when reflecting on SPHE:

Happy environment

Respect for each other, how does this show?

Discipline and bullying, what are our observations?

Self care.

## Implementation

### **(a) Roles and Responsibilities:**

The Principal and teaching staff believe that SPHE is a shared responsibility between family, school, health professionals and the community and we see ourselves supporting the home (parents/guardians) in this lifelong process and will seek at all times to develop positive relations with all these parties.

The whole staff will co-ordinate the progress of the plan, encourage and accept feedback on its implementation and report on findings as appropriate.

### **(b) Timeframe**

The staff will endeavour to implement the SPHE curriculum comprehensively in a spiral nature before the pupils graduate from this school.

## Review

The SPHE plan has been reviewed in the second term of 2018/19 and will be presented to the board for ratification. It will be reviewed regularly thereafter. It is available from the office for parents or may be viewed on the school website.

## Ratification

This school plan was approved by the Board of Management of St. David's B.N.S.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Chairperson of the Board of Management

Date: \_\_\_\_\_