

Ballyvary Central National School

Whole School Policy:



(Social, Personal and Health Education)

Introductory Statement & Rationale:

S.P.H.E in our school should foster the personal development, health and well being of each individual child enabling them to feel valued and included in the family, the school, community and wider community. R. S.E will be integrated into the S.P.H.E programme.

We endeavour to implement the curriculum in such a way as to treat the social, personal and health dimensions of child's life in an integrated manner.

The SPHE curriculum has been taught in Ballyvary National School for many years through various programmes and initiatives such as Stay Safe, Walk Tall, Relationships and Sexuality Education and through our involvement in the Green Schools. It has also been taught through integration with other subject areas such as Physical Education, Religion, Geography, Art, Music etc. We wish to outline clearly our formal whole school plan for the teaching of SPHE.

Aims:

- 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 it's 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.

Broad Objectives:

- Be self-confident and have a positive sense of self esteem.
- 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.
- Develop a sense of safety and an ability to protect him/her from danger and abuse.
- Make decisions and solve problems.
- Become aware of and discerning about, the various influences on choices and decisions.
- Respect the environment and develop a sense of responsibility for long term care.
- Develop some of the skills and abilities necessary for participating fully in groups and in society.
- Begin to understand the concepts of personal, local, national, European and global identity.
- Respect the diversity that exist in society.
- Understand the importance of seeking truth, justice and peace.

Content of Policy

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.

Ballyvary National School will teach aspects of all three major strands 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.

Ballyvary National School have created this timetable to reflect this approach.

| Strand | Strand Units (Year 1) | Strand Units (Year 2) |
|-------------------------------------|--|--|
| Myself | <p><i>Self-identity (Sept.-Oct.)</i></p> <p><i>Taking care of my body (Jan-Feb)</i></p> <p><i>Growing and Changing (Mar-April)</i></p> | <p><i>Safety and Protection (Jan - Feb) -Stay Safe</i></p> <p><i>Making Decisions (March - April)</i></p> <p><i>*This strand unit is for third to sixth only. Infants to second complete the Safety Issues section of Safety and Protection</i></p> |
| Myself & Others | <p><i>My Friends and Other People (Nov - Dec)</i></p> | <p><i>Myself & My Family (Sep - Oct)</i></p> <p><i>Relating to others (May - June)</i></p> |
| Myself & the Wider World | <p><i>Developing Citizenship (May - June)</i></p> | <p><i>Media Education (Nov - Dec)</i></p> |

2. Stay Safe Programme:

'All primary schools are required to fully implement the Stay Safe programme. The Stay Safe programme for primary schools plays a valuable role in helping children develop the skills necessary to enable them to recognise and resist abuse and potentially abusive situations'. (Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2023, P. 58).

The Stay Safe programme will be taught in Ballyvary National School in its entirety as part of the two-year cycle of SPHE. All teachers will outline this clearly in their individual planning documents.

3. Contexts for SPHE:

SPHE will be taught in Ballyvary National School through a combination of the following contexts:

• Positive School Climate and Atmosphere

Ballyvary National School 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 $\frac{1}{2}$ hour per week on each teacher's timetable in Ballyvary National School. However, teachers may allocate some discrete time e.g. 1 hour per fortnight to allow for more in-depth exploration of a strand unit. Discrete SPHE time provides for the teaching of some elements of the programme during designated class periods. It also allows for elements to be addressed as they arise. Discrete time can be used to develop and practise particular skills, deal with sensitive issues or explore issues that are not addressed in other areas of the curriculum. This time is used as required rather than confining the time to a set period in each week.

- **Integration with other subject areas and Linkage within SPHE**

SPHE naturally lends itself to integration and linkage with other subject areas. Teachers will endeavour to adopt a 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 The Christmas Shoebox Appeal, Farm-Safety, Healthy Heart Week, Lenten Campaign, etc. will also be explored.

4. Approaches and Methodologies:

Ballyvary National School believe that the approaches and methodologies used in SPHE are crucial to the effectiveness of the programme. Active learning is the principle learning and teaching approach recommended for SPHE, therefore we will endeavour to teach SPHE using a variety of strategies which include:

- Circle Time
- co-operative games and group work
- use of pictures / art work
- photographs and visual images
- written activities
- use of media
- information technologies and looking at children's work

5. 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.

Ballyvary National School uses the following recommended informal tools for assessment in SPHE:

- *Teacher observation*
- *Teacher-designed tasks and tests*
- *Portfolios and projects*
- *Hardback Copy / Stay Safe workbook / Material on Google Classroom*

6. 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 collaborate with class teachers to support and supplement the work done in the classroom where necessary. Ballyvary National School will liaise with trained professionals/appropriate agencies e.g. www.childhoodbereavement.ie when dealing with sensitive issues such as bereavement or loss to ensure that the children involved are fully supported.

7. Equality of Participation and Access:

Ballyvary National School recognises and values diversity, and believes all children are entitled to access the services, facilities, or amenities that are available in the school environment. Ballyvary National School is a *mixed-sex* 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. Ballyvary National School is under *Roman Catholic* school management, and we endeavour to provide for *Members of Travelling*

community, Children with disabilities, Families with literacy difficulties, Children who are learning English as a second language.

8. Organisation:

Policies and Programmes that support SPHE in Ballyvary National School:

Policies

- Child Safeguarding Statement
- Anti-Bullying
- Relationships and Sexuality Education
- Substance Use
- Code of Behaviour
- Admission Policy
- Health and Safety
- Healthy Eating
- Acceptable Usage Policy

Programmes

- Green Flag
- GAA 5 star programme
- Friends for Life
- Stop, Think, Do
- What do you say?
- Brixx Club
- Friendship Formula
- Nurture Programme
- Amber Flag

9. Homework:

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

10. Resources:

Core Resources

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| SPHE Curriculum - SPHE Teacher Guidelines |
| Making the Links |
| Walk Tall |
| Relationships and Sexuality (RSE) Manuals (See Appendix 1 for language) |
| Stay Safe |

Examples of Additional Resources used in Ballyvary National School

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|---|
| Be Safe |
| Friends for Life |
| Webwise |
| Mindfulness in the Classroom - book & cd (Michelle Gallen) |
| Break the Mould - Sinéad Burke |
| HeadBomz - Wreckin' Yer Head - Oisín McGann |
| United We Play - "Duchenne Muscular Dstrophy" book |
| Parent Power - Guidelines for Parents of National School Children |

Appendix 1:

RSE Language Taught at each Class Level:

| | |
|---|---|
| Junior / Senior Infants Womb Breastfeeding Penis Vulva | First / Second Class Penis Vulva Vagina Womb Breastfeeding Urethra |
| Third / Fourth Class Revise the language learned thus far umbilical cord changes in puberty menstruation | Fifth / Sixth Class Revise the language learned thus far Wet dreams Busy Bodies Language* Semen Sexual Intercourse |

*At fifth and sixth class level it is advised that parents / guardians read the Busy Bodies booklet and watch the dvd / videos provided by Busy Bodies.

Appendix 2:

Substance Misuse Prevention - topic and associated organs:

| Class | Topic | Organs |
|----------------------|--|---|
| Jnr & Senior Infants | Healthy Eating - food pyramid. What do babies need? Adult life cycle: baby, toddler, child, adult | |
| First & Second Class | Unhealthy eating to excess (sugary foods, fizzy drinks) Alcohol for parents Medicine, pills, creams Healthy Eating - food pyramid Medicines out of reach | Brain Heart / Heart Conditions / Asthma Lungs Stomach Kidneys Liver Mouth Pancreas Small and large intestine |
| Third & Fourth Class | Alcohol Smoking Solvents | Brain Heart Lungs Stomach Kidneys Liver - Cirrhosis Mouth |

| | | |
|---------------------|---|--|
| | | Pancreas Small and large intestine |
| Fifth & Sixth Class | Alcohol and Other Drugs (Caffeine / Tobacco / Alcohol / Marijuana / Tooth decay / Tablets / Pills) | Brain Heart Lungs Stomach Kidneys Liver Mouth Pancreas Small and large intestine |