

Bunscoil na Toirbhirte Mitchelstown, Co Cork



Whole School Plan for

SPHE

Social, Personal and Health Education

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Introductory Statement and Rationale

Introductory Statement

The staff of Bunscoil na Toirbhirte 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.

SPHE provides particular opportunities to foster the personal development of the child and to help him/her create and maintain supportive relationships and become an active and responsible citizen in society.

Rationale

To enable the child to develop a framework of values, attitudes and understanding and skills that will inform his/her actions and decisions now and in the future.

The SPHE curriculum has been taught in Bunscoil na Toirbhirte for many years through various programmes and initiatives such as Walk Tall, Stay Safe, Relationships and Sexuality Education and through our involvement in our Active Flag. 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.

Vision and Aims

Vision

Bunscoil na Toirbhirte is a Catholic school and the development of the SPHE curriculum will be influenced by this ethos and spirit.

Aims:

We aim to meet the needs of our pupils in a holistic manner and we endorse the aims of the SPHE curriculum. The children of Bunscoil na Toirbhirte 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.

Bunscoil na Toirbhirte 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**. Bunscoil na Toirbhirte have created this timetable to reflect this approach.

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

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 2017, P. 67).

The Stay Safe programme will be taught in Bunscoil na Toirbhirte 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 Bunscoil na Toirbhirte through a combination of the following contexts:

• **Positive School Climate and Atmosphere**

Bunscoil na Toirbhirte 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 ½ hour per week on each teacher's timetable in Bunscoil na Toirbhirte. However teachers may allocate 1 hour per fortnight to allow for more indepth exploration of a strand unit. ***Discrete SPHE time** provides for the teaching of some elements of the programme during designated class periods. This 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. To use this time effectively it may be more appropriate for the teacher to organise it in block periods and use it as required rather than confining the time to a set period in each week.*

• **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, Wellbeing, Project Peru etc. will also be explored.

4. Approaches and Methodologies:

Bunscoil na Toirbhirte 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:

- circle time
- drama activities
- co-operative games
- use of pictures
- 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.

Bunscoil na Toirbhirte uses the following recommended informal tools for assessment in SPHE:

- *Teacher observation*
- *Teacher-designed tasks and tests*
- *Portfolios and projects*

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. Bunscoil na Toirbhirte 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.

7. Equality of Participation and Access:

Bunscoil na Toirbhirte 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-sex* school (up to 1st Class as boys go to the CBS from 1st Class) 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. Bunscoil na Toirbhirte 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 etc.

8. Organisation:

Policies and Programmes that support SPHE:

Policies
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Child Safeguarding Statement including Risk Assessment• Anti-Bullying• Relationships and Sexuality Education• Code of Behaviour• Enrolment• Healthy Eating• Acceptable Usage Policy

Programmes
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Active School Flag• Health Promoting Schools• Friends for Life• Green Schools• Mindfulness/Meditation• Weaving wellbeing

9. Homework:

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

10. Resources:

(PDST have developed a resource list, which is available on the PDST at www.pdst.ie/primary/healthwellbeing)

Programmes and Other Materials:

Books for Pupil	Books for Teacher	Audio / Visual	Posters	Media & ICT
Stay Safe activity booklet	RSE Manuals Walk Tall Stay Safe Making the Links	Busy Bodies Tom's Flower Power	Various posters throughout the school	Webwise

11. Guest Speakers:

When a guest speaker addresses the children in SPHE, the class teacher will remain in the classroom (as per Circular 42/2018) and make the speaker aware of this school plan and attached policies.

12. 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 Míósúil and this will inform our progress and needs when evaluating and reviewing our progress in SPHE. Teachers will record clearly the Strands and Strand Units of SPHE taught.

13. Staff Development:

Training opportunities will include the following areas and this training will support an effective implementation of the SPHE programme:

- *Training in Child Protection*
- *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*

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.

14. Parental Involvement:

Parental involvement is considered an integral part to effectively implementing SPHE as Bunscoil na Toirbhirte 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. They are also welcomed as committee members of the Health Promoting Schools initiative. Parents/carers will be informed that the Stay Safe Programme and RSE are implemented in the school. If parents wish to opt their children out of any of the sensitive aspects of the RSE programme they must provide a written statement to inform the school of their decision. In advance of teaching the Stay Safe parents will be notified and will be able to familiarise themselves with the content of the Stay Safe lessons at www.pdst.ie/staysafe

15. Community Links:

Bunscoil na Toirbhirte 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 Nurse, Fire Brigade, Gardaí, Paramedics, Water Safety, Bike Safety, Local County Council representatives, Heritage Officers, Dental Hygienist, New Parent 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

(a) Roles and Responsibilities:

Bunscoil na Toirbhirte believes that the school community must be involved to successfully implement SPHE. Therefore the teaching staff will implement this plan with the support of the Board of Management, Parents and the Local Community.

(b) Timeframe:

The plan will be implemented by all classes by Easter 2023

Review

(a) 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. Ms Hyland (Assistant principal) is responsible for co-ordinating this review.

Those involved in the review will include:

Teachers

Pupils

Parents

Post holders/plan co-ordinator

BoM/DES/Others

(b) Timeframe:

This plan will be reviewed on a yearly basis unless a need arises that has to be addressed.

Ratification and Communication

The Board of Management of Bunscoil na Toirbhirte ratified this plan on 8th February 2023

Signed _____

Date _____

*This plan is available to view at the school by the parents on request.