# Social Personal & Health Education (SPHE) and Relationships & Sexuality Education (RSE) POLICY

## SPHE/RSE definitions

*‘Social, Personal, and Health Education (SPHE) contributes to developing the work of the school in promoting health and well-being of children and young people. This happens in the context of their emotional, moral, social, and spiritual growth, as well as their intellectual, physical, political, religious, and creative development. A supportive school climate, where the needs and well-being of all members of the school community are considered, is essential to the best possible provision of SPHE.’*

*“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. This education is delivered consciously and unconsciously by parents, teachers, peers, adults, and the media.*

*Department of Education 1997*

## The purpose of the policy

The centre’s hidden curriculum is to promote students personal safety which is incorporated in all subjects and daily interaction with students. Our young people need the opportunity to acquire skills and learning tools to develop their understanding of what positive mental, physical, and emotional health is and how they can be autonomous in making healthy life decisions. Young people are exposed to misinformation and myths regarding sexuality, sexual activity and drug misuse. Therefore, the policy sets out to provide correct and up to date information regarding topics outlined in the SPHE/RSE curriculum. A whole centre approach to policy development enables staff and management to deliver and access appropriate information to facilitate students’ needs and provide support and guidance.

## Health promotion of the centre

The centre sets out to:

* Provide and maintain an educational and working environment that is both physically and socially safe and health promoting for all its members.
* Encourage, promote and provide healthy lifestyles choices for all its members.
* Ensure aims for health promotion are clear and concise for all those involved in its implementation.
* Provide students with the opportunity to challenge them both physically and mentally through participating in a variety of health promoting activities.
* Celebrate and recognise achievements and participation of students and staff in the promotion of health and wellbeing.
* Utilise outside agencies to gain information, training, support and advice in promotion of health for both staff and students.
* Promote students positive mental health through the provision of Psychological Support Services (PSS).
* Promote staff positive mental health through the provision of monthly supervision and the PSS.

## Relationship of RSE to SPHE

S.P.H.E provides opportunities for students to learn basic personal and social skills which foster integrity, self-confidence, and self-esteem while encouraging sensitivity to the feelings and rights of others. R.S.E is an integral part of S.P.H.E and must be taught in this context. The curriculum provides a safe environment to give students structured opportunities to acquire knowledge, skills, and attitudes in understanding human sexuality and relationships. It is envisaged that by using a range of teaching methodologies, resources and teacher training it will enhance the students learning experience and enable them to form values and establish behaviours within a moral, spiritual and social framework. The curriculum is specific to the meaning of human sexuality, relationships, growth and development, personal and social skills and aspects of parenting.

*The Department of Education and Science recognises that each school/centre of education has flexibility within this framework to plan the SPHE programme that best meets the needs of the students and the school/centre of education.*

## SPHE/RSE timetable, current provision & methodologies

SPHE/RSE is timetabled for all student groups in order to achieve the aims and objectives set out by the centre. The context of SHPE/RSE is taught by staff trained in delivering the programmes and will outline the above modules using cross curricular activities where appropriate in order to enrich the teaching and learning experience for the student:

* SPHE/RSE lessons will occur and be delivered as per timetable.
* Will be taught through other subject areas where appropriate.
* Will incorporate literacy and information technology skills into all modules.
* Delivered in a positive and safe educational climate and atmosphere.
* Delivered in a holistic manner using a range of methodologies that will facilitate the young person’s learning style, needs, and abilities. Methodologies will include group work, field trips, individual/group projects and presentations.
* Lessons taught using resources that are both learning and teaching tools to complement the educational experience for the students.
* Each staff member will adhere to the SPHE/RSE policy.

## Sensitive and confidential issues

Any disclosures made by any young person to a member of staff shall be reported directly to the centre coordinator or resource persons. Staff must not promise privacy or complete confidentiality as all serious concerns must be reported. The whole staff team are trained in Child Protection and how to refer issues and concerns to management. The process of reporting and recording are outlined in the centre Child Protection policy which all staff have read and signed. This policy is reviewed annually and Child Protection is on the agenda for every monthly staff meeting.

## Visitors to the centre

Visitors to the centre may be invited from time to time to deliver information to the young people regarding specific subject areas. Visitors are accompanied at all times by teachers/management and must brief staff on content they intend to deliver to ensure it is appropriate, educational, and realistic for the student group. This Youthreach centre does not depend on outside agencies to deliver any aspect of SPHE/RSE as staff are equipped with training and resources to deliver all aspects of the programmes. However, the centre will avail of information from local agencies such as the Drugs Task Force, Headstrong, and counselling services on mental health and drug misuse issues. These agencies provide staff training on a regular basis and are used for referral of young people for further supports outside of the centre.

## Parents

All parents/guardians must attend the interview process with their son/daughter if they are under the age of 18 years. Parents are informed where they can read all centre policies and must sign where appropriate to give parental consent for their son/daughter to participate in all centre activities and educational programmes. Parents are also contacted via letter or phone to be informed of changes.

## Staff Involvement

Staff are informed both formally and informally regarding the SPHE/RSE delivery, development, assessment, and evaluation of the programme. The whole staff are provided with on-going training where appropriate and SPHE/RSE are on the agenda for every monthly staff meeting. Communication will also occur via in-house emailing system. Staff can avail of all SPHE/RSE resources and use in their lessons where appropriate after consultation with the SPHE/RSE coordinator. Staff are also given the schedule of training in the area.

## Assessment and record keeping

A whole centre approach is used to evaluate the overall effectiveness of the programme in the centre as part of the Internal Centre Evaluation & Improvement Planning (CEIP) this evaluation also includes students. A continuous assessment process is favoured where appropriate work produced by the young people is transferred to their QQI portfolios in a variety of subjects for the assessment periods throughout the year. Evidence gathered from the evaluation process will dictate amendments necessary and a review of such will be undertaken.