

# **St Joseph's Primary School for Children with Visual Impairment**



**Whole School Plan for**

**SPHE**

**and**

**Wellbeing**

## ■ Title

# Social, Personal and Health Education Whole School Plan

## ■ Introductory Statement and Rationale

### (a) Introductory Statement

At St. Joseph's Primary School for Children with Visual Impairment, we believe that Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) is a shared responsibility and that the involvement of the whole school community is essential to the effective implementation of the SPHE programme in the school. This revised SPHE plan was drafted following in-school support from PDST (Professional Development Support for Teachers) and a whole-staff Wellbeing planning day facilitated by a member of the Junior Cycle Team. It also takes account of Wellbeing input from NEPS (National Educational Psychological Service). The final draft of this revised plan was brought to the attention of the Board of Management and Parents in February 2021 and will be implemented throughout the school.

### (b) Rationale

Aspects of SPHE have been taught in St. Joseph's Primary School for Children with Visual Impairment for many years through various programmes and initiatives such as Stay Safe, Walk Tall, Relationships and Sexuality Education, and Friends for Life. Learning in SPHE has also taken place through our involvement in health promoting school initiatives and through the numerous incidental learning opportunities that present during the school day. SPHE has been taught, too, through integration with other subject areas such as Physical Education, Religion, Geography and in Aistear themes. Social, personal and health-related targets are also included in IEPs. This SPHE and Wellbeing Plan gives overview and form to our teaching of SPHE on a whole school basis and also includes the Wellbeing content of our Junior Cycle programmes.

## ■ Vision and Aims

### (a) Vision:

The SPHE and Junior Cycle Personal Care and Wellbeing (PCW) curricula offer a framework around which a school can build an SPHE/ PCW programme, fostering the personal development, health and wellbeing of the child/ young person, helping him/her to create and maintain supportive relationships and to become, in whatever ways possible, an active and responsible citizen in society. At St. Joseph's Primary School for Children with Visual Impairment, we aim to ensure that every pupil has access to a broad, balanced and appropriate SPHE/ PCW curriculum. We recognise that each child is unique and should be given the opportunity to learn in an inclusive environment where ability, not disability, is central. We seek to nurture children holistically, in line with the core belief of Antonio Rosmini, and in partnership with parents and the wider school community, developing values and skills that will enable pupils to reach their full potential as individuals and as members of society. As our motto says, in the words of Helen Keller, 'Together we can do so much'.

We recognise that SPHE/ PCW is intrinsic to the learning and teaching that occurs both formally and informally in the school and in the classroom. Through our SPHE/ PCW programmes, 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 individual while at the same time accepting responsibility for their actions as members of

the school and the wider community. Parents have the primary role in the social, personal and health education of their children so their involvement will be encouraged as much as possible.

**(b) Aims:**

The children at St. Joseph’s Primary School for Children with Visual Impairment should be enabled to achieve the aims outlined in the SPHE/ Wellbeing curriculum, in an age and ability-appropriate way. These aims include:

- promoting the personal development and well-being of the child
- fostering in the child a sense of care and respect for himself/herself and others and an appreciation of the dignity of every human being
- promoting the health of the child and provide a foundation for healthy living in all aspects
- enabling the child to make informed decisions and choices about the social, personal and health dimensions of life both now and in the future
- developing in the child a sense of social responsibility, a commitment to active and participative citizenship and an appreciation of the democratic way of life
- enabling the child to respect human and cultural diversity and to appreciate and understand the interdependent nature of the world

**■ Content of Plan**

**Curriculum:**

**A. Primary School SPHE - *Strands and Strand Units:***

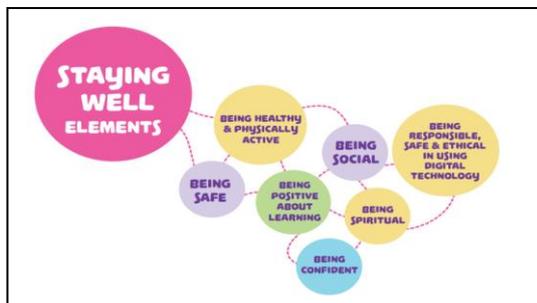
The curriculum is delineated at four levels—infant classes, first and second classes, third and fourth classes, and fifth and sixth classes—and is divided into three strands: *Myself*, *Myself and others*, and *Myself and the wider world*. Each of these strands is further subdivided into a number of strand units or topic areas that contain particular objectives. St. Joseph’s Primary School for Children with Visual Impairment will teach aspects of all three major strand units 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. The following timetable reflects this approach:

<b>Month</b>	<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Year 2</b>
<b>September/October</b>	<i>Self-identify (Myself)</i>	<i>Myself and my family (Myself and others)</i>
<b>November/December</b>	<i>My friends and other people (Myself and others)</i>	<i>Relating to others (Myself and others)</i>
<b>January/February</b>	<i>Safety and protection (Myself)</i>	<i>Growing and changing (Myself)</i>
<b>March/April</b>	<i>Making decisions*(Myself)</i>	<i>Taking care of my body (Myself)</i>
<b>May/June</b>	<i>Media education (Myself and the wider world)</i>	<i>Developing citizenship (Myself and the wider world)</i>

*\*Making decisions is only a strand unit from 3rd – 6th, Juniors – 2nd may complete the Safety Issues section of Safety and Protection at this time. Due to the increased amount of lessons in the Stay Safe Programme from 3rd to 6th class, placing the strand unit Making decisions after the*

*Safety and Protection in a standard two year plan will enable the teacher to achieve some of the content objectives of Making decisions through the Stay Safe Programme.*

## **B. Junior Cycle – Personal Care and Wellbeing Priority Learning Unit:**



One of the key skills in Junior Cycle education is Staying Well. The Personal Care and Wellbeing PLU (Priority Learning Unit) build awareness and skills in the following areas: self awareness; personal care and hygiene; food nutrition; emotional wellbeing; physical wellbeing and personal safety. The scheduling of content taught will be at the discretion of the teacher over the 3 years of the L1LP/ L2LP Programme.

## **Contexts for SPHE and Personal Care & Wellbeing PLU:**

SPHE and Junior Cycle Personal Care and Wellbeing will be taught in St. Joseph's Primary School for Children with Visual Impairment through a combination of the following contexts:

### **1. Positive School Climate and Atmosphere**

St. Joseph's Primary School for children with Visual Impairment seeks to create a positive atmosphere by:

- building effective communication
- catering for individual needs (Large print, Braille and tactile resources)
- 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

### **2. Discrete time for SPHE/ Junior Cycle Personal Care and Wellbeing**

SPHE is allocated ½ hour per week on each teacher's timetable in St. Joseph's Primary School for children with Visual Impairment. However teachers may allocate 1 hour per fortnight to allow for more indepth exploration of a strand unit. Some teachers may chose to teach extra SPHE depending on the individual needs of the students.

### **3. 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, Green Schools Initiative, Agri-Awareness, GOAL Jersey Day, World Sight Day, World Mental Health Day etc. will also be explored.

## **Approaches and Methodologies:**

St. Joseph's Primary School for Children with Visual Impairment believe that the approaches and methodologies used in SPHE/ PCW 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/ PCW using a variety of strategies and taking account of the nature of the child/ young person's visual impairment. Strategies will include:

- drama activities
- co-operative games
- use of photos, pictures and images (enlarged or using magnification as required)
- tactile and real objects
- story
- written activities
- use of media including ICT
- use of assistive technology
- looking at children's work
- talk and discussion: in pairs, small groups, with whole class

## **Assessment:**

### **A. Primary Curriculum**

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.

St. Joseph's Primary School for Children with Visual Impairment uses the following recommended informal tools for assessment in SPHE/ PCW:

- *Teacher observation*
- *Teacher-designed tasks and tests*
- *Portfolios and Projects*
- *Self Assessment and Peer Assessment*

An SPHE/ PCW Folder and/ or Online Portfolio (e.g. Seesaw) may be kept and this will be used to assess a child's learning and progress in this area. Worksheets, photos or other evidence of learning will be added to the folder/ portfolio during the child's schooling.

Children's progress in SPHE is assessed mainly through teacher observation:

- The ability of the child to engage, co-operate and work in groups or to work independently
- The informal interactions between the child and adults and between the child and other children
- emotional and/or behavioural maturity
- The quality of presentation of work
- The participation and interest of the child in a variety of activities.

### **B. Junior Cycle Personal Care and Wellbeing**

The PCW Teacher Checkpoint booklet allows the teacher to gather evidence and record achievements for this Priority Learning Unit, in hard copy and in digital format.

## Children with Different Needs:

All of our pupils have a visual impairment and many have additional needs so class and subject teachers will endeavour to adapt and modify activities and methodologies accordingly to encourage participation and learning for all our pupils, in as much as they are able. This will apply in the discrete teaching of SPHE and also in all school activities that further a child's learning in the area of personal safety, e.g. Computer and Orientation and Mobility lessons, and wellbeing. Large print, Braille, tactile and audio resources, and assistive technology will be used where required or helpful. St. Joseph's 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.

## Equality of Participation and Access:

St. Joseph's Primary School for children with Visual Impairment 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 for children with visual impairment 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. St. Joseph's Primary School for Children with Visual Impairment is under Roman Catholic school management, and we endeavour to provide for each child/ young person, regardless of degree of impairment or disability, family status, community, race, religion, gender or sexual orientation.

## Organisation:

### 1 *School Policies that support SPHE:*

<i>Policies</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Child Protection</li><li>• Anti-Bullying</li><li>• Relationships and Sexuality Education</li><li>• Intimate Care</li><li>• Substance Use</li><li>• Positive Behaviour Policy and Code</li><li>• Admissions Policy</li><li>• Safety Statement</li><li>• Pupil Illness, Medications and Medical Procedures Policy</li><li>• Healthy Eating</li><li>• Internet Acceptable Usage Policy</li></ul>

### 2 *Programmes that support SPHE:*

The Stay Safe, Walk Tall and RSE programmes mentioned below are available as downloads at [www.pdst.ie](http://www.pdst.ie) – and parents are welcome to view these. See Section 2 below and also Appendix 1.

<i>Programmes</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Walk Tall</li></ul>

- Stay Safe
- RSE
- Weaving Wellbeing
- Friends for Life
- Bí Folláin
- Food Dudes
- Green Flag
- Stop, Ask, Listen, Talk (SALT)

Stay Safe lessons are taught as a block every two years. Content is covered as shown below.

Stay Safe Topic	Number of Lessons			
	J. Infants S. Infants	1 <sup>st</sup> and 2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup> and 4 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup> and 6 <sup>th</sup>
Feeling Safe and Unsafe	3	3	3	3
Friendship and Bullying	3	5	6	6
Touches	2	2	2	2
Secrets and Telling	1	1	1	1
Strangers	1	1	1	1

### 3 Resources:

Teachers are made aware of the PDST (Professional Development Service for Teachers) resource list which is available on the SPHE page. New resources are added to this from time to time. See Appendix 1 for current resource list - January 2021.

Books for Pupil	Books for Teacher	Video/Audio	Posters	Media & ICT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weaving Wellbeing</li> <li>• Friends for Life</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stay Safe</li> <li>• RSE</li> <li>• Walk Tall</li> <li>• Making the Links</li> <li>• Be Safe</li> <li>• Bí Folláin</li> <li>• Friends for Life</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Busy Bodies</li> </ul>	Various posters throughout the school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Webwise (wide range of resources)</li> <li>• Food Dudes</li> <li>• Bí Folláin</li> </ul>

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. Schools will be informed if, in the future, the Department approves an alternative or replacement to the Stay Safe Programme (Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools, 2017).

**4 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.

**5 Staff Development:**

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

- *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 / JCT Advisor support and modelling of lessons*
- *training in the Friends for Life programme*
- *other*

Teachers are encouraged to attend SPHE related courses and training and will share information/skills acquired at these courses with other members of staff during staff meetings.

**6 Parent Involvement/ Homework:**

At St Joseph's Primary VI, we consider parental involvement to be an integral part of effectively implementing social, personal and health education and in nurturing wellbeing. We welcome and see the benefits of collaboration and shared responsibility between school and home. This SPHE plan and related school policies, including our Relationships and Sexuality Education Policy and Substance Use Policy, are available to parents on request.

Teachers will make parents aware when they are about to commence the Stay Safe programme or sensitive topics in RSE lessons. It is mandatory for teachers to cover the Stay Safe programme every two years but parent/ guardian consent will be sought when the class is about to cover more sensitive RSE topics in the SPHE curriculum. Parents are encouraged to view the information on the PDST website about these programmes so they are aware of content to be covered and resources available for home, as well as school. There is a dedicated PDST webpage for parents about Stay Safe:

**<https://www.pdst.ie/StaySafeParents>**

RSE Tips for parents of primary age children can be found at :

**<https://www.pdst.ie/sites/default/files/RSE%20in%20Primary%20School%20Parent%20Tips.pdf>**

There are also useful resources for parents at: **[www.webwise.ie](http://www.webwise.ie)** on supporting internet safety at home.

It is clearly recognised that parental involvement adds greatly to the success of a child's learning in SPHE. This will usually take the form of following up with a child on key SPHE messages or skills that are taught at school and might include:

- practising a personal safety or a self-care skill
- talking with the child about a current topic in the Stay Safe programme or from a Walk Tall or RSE lesson.

Such parental interactions will not only help the reinforcement of important messages and skills but will nurture good parent-child communication on the more sensitive topics relating to personal safety, relationships and sexuality. Any SPHE/ PCW homework will reflect the active learning approach and will reinforce information already taught during class.

**7 School Website:**

On our school website, some wellbeing resources are available to parents. These resources were gathered and posted during school closure in 2020 and include links to NEPS wellbeing information for parents of primary-age children and a range of wellbeing resources created by our own teachers.

**8 Guest Speakers:**

When a guest speaker addresses the children in SPHE, the class teacher will remain in the classroom (as per Circular 22/2010) and make the speaker aware of this school plan and attached policies.

**9 Community Links:**

St. Joseph's Primary School for Children with Visual Impairment believe that the local community has a very important role to play in supporting the programme in SPHE and endeavour to liaise with community members such as the Dental Hygienist, Health Nurse, Fireman, Garda, Vet 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:**

St. Joseph's Primary School for Children with Visual Impairment 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 March 2021.

**■ 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. Olivia Duggan and Geraldine McMahon, in consultation with the Principal, Gwenda Johnson, were responsible for co-ordinating this review.

Those involved in the review:

*Teachers*

*Leadership and Management Team*

*Parents*

*BOM*

**(b) Timeframe:**

This plan will be reviewed in February 2023

■ **Ratification and Communication**

The Board of Management of St. Joseph's Primary School for Children with Visual Impairment ratified this plan on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2021.

Signed: Chairperson



Principal



This plan is available to parents on the school website and on request from the school office.