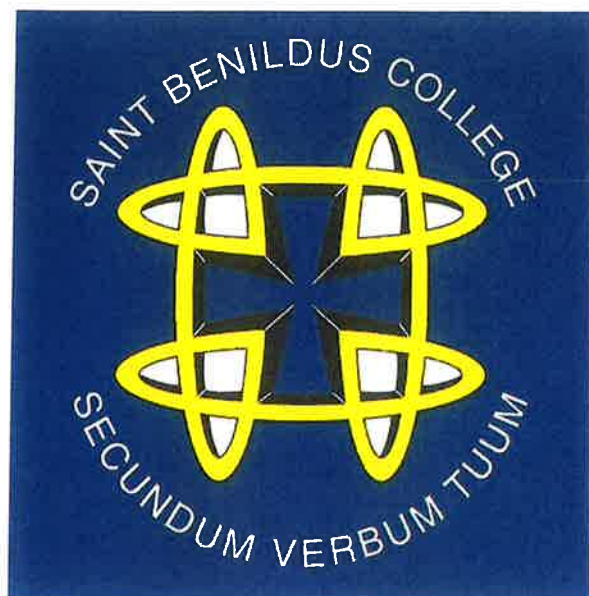




## Subject Department Plan

**SPHE**



### **Table of Contents**

|            |                                                         |
|------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| Section 1: | Aims & Objectives                                       |
| 1.1        | Mission Statement                                       |
| 1.2        | Subject Aims                                            |
| 1.3        | Subject Objectives                                      |
| Section 2: | Practicalities of Implementation                        |
| 2.1        | Teachers                                                |
| 2.2        | Timetabling                                             |
| 2.3        | Grouping of Pupils                                      |
| 2.4        | Access to SPHE                                          |
| 2.5        | Classroom Organisation                                  |
| 2.6        | Homework Procedures                                     |
| Section 3: | Inclusive Practices                                     |
| 3.1        | Planning for Students with Additional Educational Needs |
| 3.2        | Planning for Exceptionally Able Students                |
| 3.3        | Differentiated Teaching Strategies                      |
| 3.4        | Planning for a Culturally Diverse Society               |
| 3.5        | Cross-curricular Planning                               |
| Section 4: | Wellbeing                                               |
| 4.1        | Wellbeing in St. Benildus College                       |
| 4.2        | Curricular Provision                                    |
| 4.3        | SPHE Wellbeing Modules                                  |
| 4.4        | SSE and Wellbeing                                       |
| 4.5        | Our School Context and the Four Aspects of Wellbeing    |
| Section 5: | Resources & ICT                                         |
| 5.1        | Range and Variety of Resources                          |
| 5.2        | Availability and Use of ICT Facilities                  |

Section 6: Student Attainment

- 6.1 Assessment
- 6.2 Record-keeping Procedures
- 6.3 Reporting Procedures
- 6.4 Literacy and Numeracy

Section 7: Curricular Planning

- 7.1 Junior Cycle Planning
- 7.2 First Year Scheme of Work
- 7.3 Second Year Scheme of Work
- 7.4 Third Year Scheme of Work
- 7.5 Transition Year Planning
- 7.6 Senior Cycle Planning

Section 8: School Self Evaluation

- 8.1 LC Grade Analysis
- 8.2 DES Inspection Reports
- 8.3 SSE

Section 9: Professional Development

- 9.1 Table of TPL

Section 10: Health & Safety Procedures

- 10.1 Fire Safety

***Section 1: Aims and Objectives.***

## 1.1 Mission Statement

St. Benildus College provides a Catholic, Lasallian education rooted in a tradition which prepares young people for college and for life. The school seeks to educate students spiritually, academically, physically, and socially through the promotion of Christian values, teaching the broad, prescribed academic programmes as well as a wide range of student activities under the guidance of a caring, dedicated management, staff, and administration.

“This course aims to build students’ self-awareness and positive self-worth; to develop the knowledge, understanding, skills, dispositions and values that will support them to lead fulfilling and healthy lives; empower them to create, nurture and maintain respectful and loving relationships with self and others; and enhance their capacity to contribute positively to society.” (SPHE Curriculum Specification, 2023, p.3)

### School Ethos

As a Lasallian school we are rooted in a tradition that prepares young people for college and for life. Our philosophy fosters the intellectual, physical, social, and moral development of each pupil. The SPHE Department recognises its invaluable role in this process, aligning its practices with current guidelines and policies, including those addressing child safeguarding and well-being

### Department Vision

The SPHE Department of St. Benildus College views its mission as the daily embodiment of our ethos in the classroom. Central to our commitment is the holistic development of each student as a whole person. This vision encompasses physical, mental, emotional, intellectual, and moral aspects, recognising the complex interplay of these dimensions in a teenager’s life. Our primary mission is to support and nurture a positive self-image, a sense of security, and a high degree of self-worth in our students, thus empowering them to thrive in the school environment and beyond.

## 1.2 Subject Aims

Social, Personal, and Health Education (SPHE) provides students with essential skills and competencies for life. It emphasises the development of informed decision-making and active, responsible participation in society. SPHE directly responds to the challenges of modern life, playing a vital role in the progression to adulthood.

“The teaching and learning of Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) provides a unique space where students can develop the knowledge, understanding, skills, dispositions and values needed to support their physical, emotional, social and spiritual wellbeing, now and in the future. The SPHE specification is grounded in values of respect, equality, inclusivity, responsibility, dignity, compassion and empathy.” (SPHE Curriculum Specification, 2023, p.4)

Building on the aims of SPHE at the primary level, post-primary SPHE aims to:

- Promote the personal development and wellbeing of students.
- Foster a sense of care and respect for oneself and others, emphasising the dignity of every human being.

- Enhance students' health and provide a foundation for holistic healthy living.
- Enable informed decision-making regarding the social, personal, and health dimensions of life, both now and in the future.
- Cultivate social responsibility, active citizenship, and an appreciation of democratic principles.
- Respect human and cultural diversity and understand the interdependent nature of our world.

RSE – Aims: Relationships and sexuality education (RSE) has specific aims:

- To help young people understand and develop friendships and relationships.
- To promote an understanding of sexuality.
- To promote a positive attitude to one's own sexuality and in one's relationship with others.
- To promote knowledge of and respect for reproduction.
- To enable young people to develop attitudes and values towards their sexuality in a moral, spiritual and social framework.

These aims contribute to the school's commitment to nurturing Christian values of respect, justice, and integrity in all aspects of school life, fostering the holistic development of our students. Recognising that the home is the primary environment for children's growth, we also embrace our role, as stated in paragraph 9, subsection d) of the Education Act 1998, in supporting parents to foster the social, moral, spiritual, and personal development of their children. Our commitment is evident through numerous activities and support structures at St. Benildus College, with SPHE serving as a vital component of this mission.

### **1.3 Subject Objectives**

When due account is taken of intrinsic abilities and varying circumstances, the SPHE curriculum should enable students to:

- **Foster Self-Confidence and Self-Esteem:** Cultivate a positive self-image and resilience, empowering students to embrace their individuality.
- **Understand Personal Responsibility and Sexuality:** Develop a comprehensive understanding of personal responsibility, relationships, and the biological, emotional, and social aspects of sexuality, growth, and reproduction.
- **Enhance Social Skills:** Strengthen communication, cooperation, empathy, and conflict resolution skills to build meaningful connections with peers.
- **Build Supportive Relationships:** Create and maintain healthy relationships, understanding the dynamics of friendship, family, and community.
- **Promote Healthy Living:** Gain knowledge about physical, mental, and emotional health, and cultivate habits that foster well-being and healthy lifestyle choices.
- **Ensure Safety and Protection:** Develop awareness and skills to recognise, avoid, and respond to danger, abuse, and bullying, promoting a culture of safety.
- **Empower Decision-Making and Problem-Solving:** Foster critical thinking and decision-making skills to navigate personal, social, and health-related challenges.

- **Analyse Influences on Decision-Making:** Encourage discernment regarding the various social, cultural, and media influences on personal choices and behaviours.
- **Reflect on Values and Attitudes:** Promote self-awareness by evaluating personal and societal values, understanding their impact on thoughts and actions.
- **Cultivate Environmental Responsibility:** Develop an understanding of environmental stewardship and engage in practices that support sustainable living.
- **Develop Civic Participation Skills:** Acquire the skills necessary for active participation in community life and democratic processes, understanding rights and responsibilities.
- **Explore Identities:** Begin to understand personal, local, national, European, and global identities and the interconnectedness of these identities.
- **Appreciate Diversity:** Foster respect for diversity, inclusivity, and the contributions of various cultural, religious, and social groups in society.
- **Promote Social Justice:** Encourage the values of empathy, fairness, and compassion, highlighting the importance of truth, peace, and justice in a caring society.

These objectives reflect the specific needs of the boys in St. Benildus College while aligning with current educational standards and policies.

## ***Section 2: Practicalities of Implementation***

### **2.1 Subject Coordinator and Subject Teachers**

The role of SPHE Coordinator is currently filled by Ms. Jennifer Cassidy.

Responsibilities of the SPHE Coordinator:

- **Maintain the Status of SPHE:** Promote the importance of SPHE within the school community.
- **Resource Management:** Ensure ongoing provision and accessibility of resources, while overseeing the Department budget.
- **Program Planning:** Lead in the planning, development, and evaluation of SPHE programs aligned with the new curriculum.
- **Training Access:** Identify and facilitate access to ongoing professional development and training for teachers.
- **Collaboration:** Liaise with various stakeholders involved in SPHE, including management, staff, parents, support services, and relevant external partners.
- **Policy Implementation:** Assist in the implementation of new initiatives and policies related to SPHE.

## **Teachers and Class Allocations 2025/2026**

(Varies annually due to timetabling commitments)

### **2025/2026**

#### **SPHE Junior Cycle Short Course**

**1<sup>st</sup> Year:** Róna Mulvihill, Martin Doyle, Caoimhe McGuinness, Conor Holland and Niamh Minnock

**2<sup>nd</sup> Year:** Róna Mulvihill, Jennifer Cassidy and Niamh Minnock

**3<sup>rd</sup> Year:** Róna Mulvihill, Niamh Minnock and Caoimhe McGuinness

### **Junior Cycle SPHE Wellbeing Modules**

There are several wellbeing modules offered to each of the junior year groups in the school. Wellbeing is modular and is delivered on a rotational basis.

#### **First Year:**

- **Internet Literacy:** Niall Maher
- **Library Studies:** Sandra Downey
- **Online Safety:** Barry Flynn
- **Guidance:** Niamh Minnock
- **Meditation:** Siobhán Fahey

#### **Second Year:**

- **Online Safety:** Seán O'Neill
- **Meditation:** Siobhán Fahey
- **Environmental Studies:** Nicole Mooney
- **Internet Literacy:** Barry Flynn
- **Guidance:** Niamh Minnock

#### **Third Year:**

- **Online Safety:** Rebecca McKinney
- **First Aid:** Eoin Kavanagh
- **Internet Literacy:** Barry Flynn
- **Nutrition:** Cliona Maxwell
- **Meditation:** Caoimhe McGuinness
- **Environmental Studies:** John Kerins

### **SPHE Transition Year Wellbeing Modules**

There are several wellbeing modules offered to each of the transition year classes in the school. Wellbeing is modular and is delivered on a rotational basis.

- **Driver Theory:** Conor Hunt
- **Online Safety:** Róna Mulvihill
- **First Aid:** John Kerins
- **Mindfulness:** Nicole Mooney
- **Nutrition:** Chris Hanley
- **Personal Development:** Caoimhe McGuinness

### **RSE Senior Cycle**

**4<sup>th</sup> Year:** Jennifer Cassidy

**5<sup>th</sup> Year:** Róna Mulvihill, Eadaoin Reid and Nicole Mooney

**6<sup>th</sup> Year:** Jennifer Cassidy and Caoimhe McGuinness

Guidance Counsellors (where possible) will actively participate in Junior SPHE classes, particularly for first-year students. This collaboration is crucial in facilitating a smooth transition from Primary to Post-Primary education. The Guidance Counsellors bring expertise in emotional and social development, helping students navigate the challenges of this significant change in their academic and personal lives. By working alongside SPHE teachers, they can provide tailored support that addresses the unique needs of incoming students, fostering a sense of belonging and confidence. This integrated approach ensures that key themes such as resilience, self-awareness, and effective communication are reinforced, equipping students with the necessary tools to thrive both in and out of the classroom. The presence of Guidance Counsellors in SPHE classes not only enhances the curriculum but also strengthens the overall support network for students during this critical transitional period.

## **2.2 Time Allocation, Options, Structure and Timetabling**

### **Junior Cycle SPHE Short Course**

|                                   |                               |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| First, Second Year and Third Year | 1x 40/45-minute period weekly |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|

### **Junior Cycle SPHE Wellbeing Modules**

|                                   |                               |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| First, Second Year and Third Year | 1x 40/45-minute period weekly |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|

### **Senior Cycle SPHE Wellbeing Modules**

|                        |                                                                |
|------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|
| Transition Year Module | 1 x 40/45-minute periods weekly<br>(Modules run for six weeks) |
|------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|

### **Senior Cycle RSE**

|                                                            |                                                                       |
|------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 4 <sup>th</sup> , 5 <sup>th</sup> and 6 <sup>th</sup> Year | 2 x 40/45-minute periods weekly<br>(Modules run for six to ten weeks) |
|------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|

## **2.3 Grouping of Pupils (Mixed Ability, Streaming, Setting)**

All classes are mixed ability, fostering an inclusive environment where students can learn from one another. Teaching styles and course content are adapted to include all abilities of students present.

In Transition Year, RSE is taught on a modular basis, rotating class group every 6 weeks.

In Fifth and Sixth Year, religion and PE classes are timetabled concurrently. These subjects are taught on a modular basis rotating class group every 8- 10 weeks.

Parents are the primary educators of their children and important partners in the education process within schools and beyond. At St. Benildus College, we recognise that while most parents see the value of learning in SPHE, there may be instances where some express concerns or request that their son be withdrawn from class. Parents have a right to request that their child opt out of any learning that contravenes their conscience, including SPHE. To address these concerns, we will offer to meet with parents to discuss the SPHE curriculum, as issues may arise from a lack of information or misconceptions. Should we not reach a shared understanding of the value of SPHE, parents/guardians have the right to request that

their son opt out of SPHE (or specific components of it), as they are entitled to do with any aspect of the curriculum.

## **2.4 Student Access to SPHE**

- From first year, students have access to SPHE as a non-examination subject.
- Parents/Guardians wishing to absent a student from SPHE class are asked to do so on the understanding that they formally contact the school authorities in writing stating this. The school cannot promise to provide an alternative classroom for the student or alternative tuition at this time.

The SPHE department have identified the need for this opt out policy to be reviewed during the school year 25/26.

We aim to consider:

- Work to be completed in class by a student whose parents wish for them to be exempted from SPHE
- It is suggested that parents would provide some work for students to study from the student's own faith perspective. Other than this, students would complete work from a pool of resources created by SPHE teachers on topics such as philosophy, ethics etc. during this class period.

## **2.5 Class Organisation**

Classes are organised traditionally, but teachers have the flexibility to arrange students into pairs or small groups for collaborative activities, enhancing peer learning and interaction.

- We have a class based rather than teacher-based classroom policy.
- A roll call is taken online at the beginning of every class using VSware.
- Seating arrangements vary according to the structures of the classrooms themselves.
- Paired and group work is strongly encouraged throughout lessons. To facilitate this work, students may turn their chairs or desks accordingly.

## **2.6 Homework Policy**

In line with the school's homework policy, we believe that homework is an integral part of the learning process. We see it as educationally beneficial as it promotes the practice and consolidation of work done in the class. Assignments from the textbook or projects may need to be completed at home. Students are encouraged to manage their time effectively to balance homework with other responsibilities.

At senior level, students will be given reflective activities in the form of key assignments. Students can be assigned homework that allows reinforcement of the work done in that section of the course and considers the mixed nature of the class. All homework that is assigned will be monitored and corrected. This may include some research work, projects, reflection activities etc.

**Section 3: Inclusive Practices****3.1 Planning for Students with Additional Educational Needs**

The SPHE programme is committed to meeting the diverse needs of all students. Teachers will differentiate instruction by varying the pace, content, and teaching methodologies, ensuring inclusive learning environments.

For students with additional needs, specific strategies will be incorporated into lesson planning. Collaboration with the Additional Educational Needs Team and Resource Teachers is essential to support the work of the class teacher. Special Needs Assistants (SNAs) will provide tailored support to individuals or groups as directed by the teacher. Furthermore, students experiencing bereavement, serious illness, or other significant personal challenges will receive appropriate support, with attention given to their individual circumstances.

- A strong link exists between the SPHE Department, the Guidance Department, the Religion and the Additional Educational Needs Department. Teachers work closely together and, in some cases, work in both departments.
- Teachers are informed of pupils with AEN in their class groups through the VShare app, in line with GDPR guidelines. Moreover, they are also given details of specific learning needs requirements such as dyslexia, dyspraxia, autism etc. and briefed on how the student's learning experience might be enhanced.
- Teaching methods, content and resources are varied to meet the needs of all students in the classroom such as the use of paired/ group work, pairing weaker students with stronger students, varied teaching stimuli, etc.
- The subject department discusses and shares good practice and effective teaching methodologies for students with special educational needs. This involves sharing lesson activities which others may have found effective. Teachers are encouraged to share resources through our online Microsoft Team's platform which all SPHE teachers have been added to at the beginning of each school year.

**3.2 Planning for Exceptionally Able students**

All staff must be familiar with the contents of the NCCA document **Exceptionally able students – Draft guidelines for teachers**. Teachers will be *au fait* with models of thinking, teaching, and learning such as Bloom's Taxonomy and Howard Gardener's model of Multiple Intelligences (NCCA guidelines pg66-79) to fully understand and plan for the diverse learning styles that are required within the classroom.

- A variety of pedagogies and resources are used to appeal to, and fully engage, all types of learners.
- Higher order questioning will help to develop student responses and thought process.
- Gifted students are given extension exercises where appropriate.
- One to one attention is given where possible.

- Cooperative learning is encouraged. This can encourage more able students to help those who may require more support.
- Independent learning in the form of research projects and presentations can be effective in allowing Exceptionally Able students work to their own level.
- Teachers can provide secondary sources to encourage students to gain additional knowledge of course content with more complex structure and sophisticated vocabulary.
- Classroom based discussion can provide options for debate and argument.

### **3.3 Differentiated Teaching Strategies**

The SPHE programme aims to meet the needs of all students in the school. This will be achieved by teachers varying the pace, content, and methodologies used to ensure learning for all pupils. The requirements of students with special needs will be taken into consideration when planning class lessons and related activities.

Teaching within the department aims to use a wide range of teaching methodologies to cater for the different learning styles of the students, (e.g., visual, verbal, aural, logical, social, solitary etc.) and to challenge and motivate all students. For learning activities to be meaningful, relevant, and achievable for all students, it is important that the teacher finds ways to respond to student diversity by using differentiated approaches and methodologies. The SPHE Department aims to use interactive teaching methods as much as possible and to encourage students to engage in class discussions, group work, oral presentations, etc.

New ideas and teaching methods that have worked particularly well are shared among members of the department.

The following strategies may be used:

- Outlining the learning outcomes for each class.
- Ensuring that the objectives are realistic for students and ensuring that the learning task is compatible with prior learning.
- Providing opportunities for interacting and working with other students in small groups.
- Organising the learning task into small stages.
- Ensuring that language is pitched at the students' level of understanding and does not hinder understanding of the activity.
- Posing key questions to guide students through the different stages/processes and to assist in self-direction and correction.
- ICT is used when appropriate in learning and teaching in the classroom. These ICT resources facilitate self-directed learning, collaborative learning and teaching, assessment of and for learning and differentiated learning.

### **3.4 Planning for a Culturally Diverse/Sustainable society.**

At St. Benildus College, SPHE plays a crucial role in fostering a culturally diverse and sustainable society. By welcoming students from all faiths and none, the college emphasises the importance of understanding and respecting different beliefs and practices. This commitment to religious diversity not only enriches the educational experience but also promotes mutual respect among students, encouraging them to engage thoughtfully with global issues. In alignment with the Green Schools initiative, students also learn the significance of environmental stewardship and sustainable practices. Through SPHE, they develop empathy and collaboration skills, essential for contributing to a harmonious community where everyone's voice is valued, and a sustainable future is prioritised.

### **3.5 Cross – Curricular Planning**

At each class level, teachers are encouraged to integrate SPHE with other curricular areas. Many aspects of SPHE align with subjects such as English, Career Guidance, Music and Art. Teachers should identify specific objectives that can be addressed through cross-curricular activities. To ensure comprehensive coverage of these objectives, specific provisions should be included in short-term planning, fostering a holistic educational approach that reinforces the values and skills taught in SPHE.

Cross-curricular planning between SPHE and Career Guidance creates a comprehensive framework for student development. SPHE focuses on equipping students with essential life skills, including decision-making, self-awareness, and interpersonal communication. These competencies are crucial as students begin to explore their future career paths and make informed choices about their education and professional aspirations. By integrating Career Guidance into the SPHE curriculum, we can provide students with a holistic understanding of how personal values, interests, and strengths align with potential career opportunities.

One of the key areas of overlap between SPHE and Career Guidance is the emphasis on self-reflection and personal growth. In SPHE classes, students learn to assess their skills, interests, and values, which directly informs their career choices. Career Guidance can build on this foundation by offering tools and resources for exploring various career options, conducting self-assessments, and setting realistic goals. This collaborative approach ensures that students not only gain awareness of their own abilities but also understand how these can translate into fulfilling career paths.

Furthermore, the partnership between SPHE and Career Guidance facilitates important discussions around the challenges students may face in their future endeavours, such as managing stress, balancing responsibilities, and navigating transitions. By addressing these topics in both SPHE and Career Guidance, educators can equip students with strategies to cope with potential obstacles, enhancing their resilience and adaptability. Workshops, guest speakers, and interactive activities can be organised to provide practical insights into different professions, while also reinforcing the social and emotional skills developed in SPHE.

The collaboration between SPHE and Career Guidance enriches the educational experience for students, fostering not only academic success but also personal and professional growth.

By working together, these programs help students navigate their individual journeys with confidence, ensuring they are well-prepared for the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead.

As mentioned cross-curricular planning between SPHE and other subjects in post-primary schools fosters a holistic approach to student development. Another significant collaboration occurs between the SPHE and Religion departments, where both subjects address moral and ethical dimensions of students' lives. Informal discussions about values and ethical decision-making often take place in SPHE, while the Religion curriculum reinforces these concepts through teachings and real-world applications, allowing students to explore their beliefs in the context of personal growth.

Moreover, the synergy between SPHE and the Religion department enhances the overall educational experience. Teachers from both areas frequently communicate to align their approaches, ensuring that students receive consistent messages about important moral and ethical issues. This collaboration creates a cohesive learning environment where students can engage in meaningful discussions about personal values and social responsibility.

Additionally, the overlap between SPHE and other subjects, such as Civic, Social, and Political Education (CSPE), enriches students' understanding of citizenship and social responsibility. Both subjects emphasise key themes such as human rights, community involvement, and justice, encouraging students to engage critically with societal issues. This integrated approach helps students recognise their roles as active participants in their communities, fostering a sense of responsibility and advocacy.

Collaboration also extends to the Arts, where SPHE intersects with Music and Art education. For instance, music teachers may work alongside the SPHE department to prepare for events that emphasise community and well-being, allowing students to engage with themes of personal expression through performance. Similarly, Art classes can incorporate projects linked to themes discussed in SPHE, enabling students to express their understanding of social and emotional concepts visually. This cross-disciplinary approach enriches the educational experience, allowing students to see the relevance of their learning across various contexts.

#### **Section 4: Wellbeing**

##### **4.1 Wellbeing in St. Benildus College**

Wellbeing has been central to St Benildus College for many years. The Mission Statement of the College places the students' holistic development at the core of our aims:

"St Benildus College provides a Catholic, Lasallian education rooted in a tradition which prepares young people for college and for life. The school seeks to educate students spiritually, academically, physically, and socially through the promotion of Christian values, teaching the broad, prescribed academic programmes as well as a wide range of student activities under the guidance of a caring, dedicated management, staff and administration."  
(Mission Statement)

Student wellbeing is present when students realise their abilities, take care of their physical wellbeing, can cope with the normal stresses of life, and have a sense of purpose and belonging to a wider community. There is overwhelming evidence that students learn more effectively, including their academic subjects, if they are happy in their work, believe in themselves, their teachers and feel school is supporting them.

St. Benildus College is committed to promoting the emotional and social wellbeing of all, creating a respectful atmosphere between all individuals: management, teachers, staff members, students, parents and visitors. We recognise the importance of students having positive role models.

#### 4.2 Curricular provision

From September 2017 wellbeing will require a minimum of 300 hours timetabled engagement and up to 400 hours by 2020. All subject planning will include Wellbeing and teachers should embed wellbeing into their curriculum. Wellbeing will be further embedded into the school curriculum through three key subject areas which are; CSPE, SPHE, PE and guidance related learning.

#### 4.3 SPHE Wellbeing Modules

The framework for Junior Cycle (2015) provides for a new area of learning at Junior Cycle called Wellbeing. Wellbeing will cross the three years of Junior Cycle and build on substantial work already taking place in schools in support of students' wellbeing.

SPHE is a core pillar of the Junior Cycle Wellbeing programme. The six indicators of wellbeing – Active, Responsible, Connected, Resilient, Respected and Aware - describe what is important for young people and their wellbeing. The SPHE course supports young people to develop all six indicators of wellbeing. Wellbeing contributes directly to students' physical, mental, emotional, and social wellbeing and resilience.



#### 4.4 SSE and Wellbeing

Over the past few years, our SSE focus on wellbeing has aimed to strengthen student confidence, enrich their educational experiences, and support their overall development. We continue to prioritise motivation and engagement in learning, while fostering the personal, social, and academic growth of every student.

Our SSE/School Improvement Plan is closely aligned with the aims of SPHE, recognising its central role in building students' wellbeing. Through SPHE, students develop key life skills—such as self-awareness, decision-making, communication, and relationship-building—which directly contribute to their confidence and capacity to learn. By embedding these SPHE principles across our school community, we are working to further enhance teaching, learning, and overall student wellbeing.

The school's main strengths in the area of wellbeing include:

### **Wellbeing for All**

- ❖ The school undertakes annual improvements to its building and facilities to maintain a safe, comfortable, and high-quality environment for all.
- ❖ Themed weeks
  - o Student voice week
  - o LGBTI+ week
  - o Healthy mind week
  - o Healthy eating week
  - o Healthy body week
  - o Maths week
  - o College awareness week
  - o Science week
  - o Lasallian week
  - o Seachtain na Gaeilge Etc
- ❖ Sports day
- ❖ Ice-cream truck on sports day
- ❖ Assemblies
- ❖ Regular communication with parents / guardians and students
- ❖ Academic tracking and intervention when needed
- ❖ Run for Life charity event
- ❖ Parent teacher meetings
- ❖ Wide range of extracurricular activities and school clubs
- ❖ Student wellbeing committee
- ❖ Student active committee
- ❖ Student voice committee
- ❖ Year group outings

### **Wellbeing for Some**

- ❖ First Year Induction Programme
- ❖ Wellbeing programmes e.g. FUSE, Pieta House Resilience Programme.
- ❖ Wellbeing talks
- ❖ Study skills workshops to support educational achievement
- ❖ Evening study
- ❖ Class tutors
- ❖ Class outings
- ❖ Subject trips
- ❖ Overnight trips
- ❖ Skiing – TY

- ❖ Second year trip to Europe
- ❖ TY trip to and adventure centre
- ❖ Revision lectures for 6th year students
- ❖ Award ceremony
- ❖ Career guidance modules at senior cycle
- ❖ Academic mentoring for sixth years
- ❖ TY Mental fitness module
- ❖ TY hikes
- ❖ TY musical
- ❖ TY outings – variety over the year
- ❖ Guidance appointments – vocational or educational or personal
- ❖ Graduation – TY and Sixth year
- ❖ Gaisce for TY students

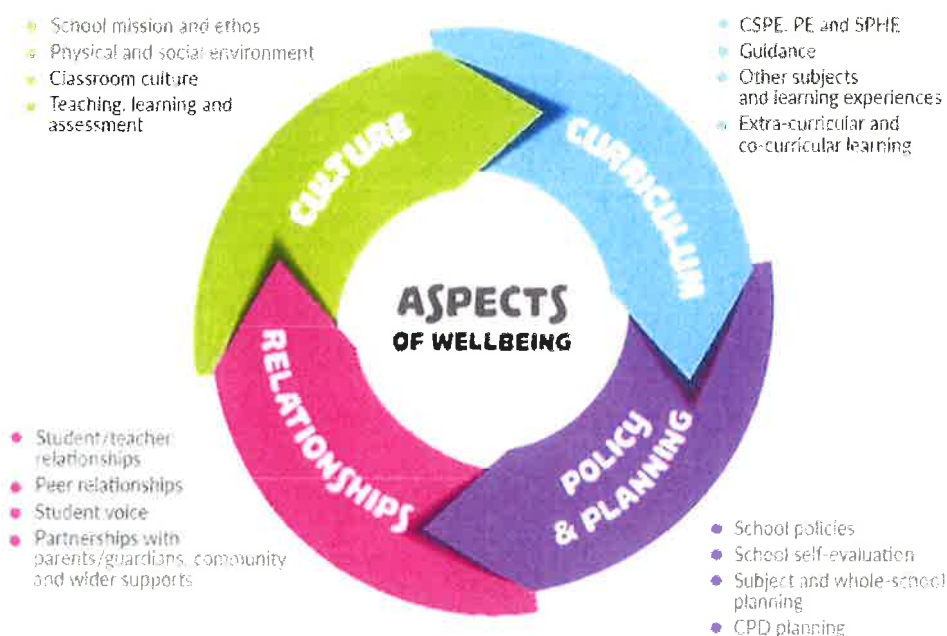
#### **Wellbeing for a Few**

- ❖ Psychotherapist appointments
- ❖ Student support team
- ❖ Weekly year head meetings
- ❖ Mentoring
- ❖ Gaisce
- ❖ Prefect roles
- ❖ AEN support
- ❖ Lunch club
- ❖ One-to-one guidance meetings
- ❖ Referral to outside agencies for further support
- ❖ Commendations on VSware

These activities gave students the opportunity to connect with their peers, readjust to school, relax, have fun, educate themselves about wellbeing and being active.

### **4.5 Our School Context and the Four Aspects of Wellbeing**

Our school has embedded the four key aspects of Junior Cycle Wellbeing—**culture, curriculum, relationships, and policy and planning**—to create a strong foundation for wellbeing across the whole school community. Through a positive and inclusive school culture, we promote shared values, high expectations, and a supportive environment where students feel safe, respected, and encouraged to thrive. Wellbeing is also integrated into the curriculum, ensuring that students develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that support their personal, social, and academic growth. Strong relationships between staff, students, and families are actively nurtured, recognising connection as a central pillar of wellbeing and a key factor in student confidence and engagement. Finally, our policy and planning processes ensure that wellbeing is consistently prioritised, monitored, and developed through whole-school strategies, structures, and initiatives. Together, these four aspects work in harmony to establish a comprehensive and sustainable approach to wellbeing within our school.



### Section 5: Resources and ICT.

#### 5.1 Range and Variety of Resources

Teachers of SPHE possess a variety of resources such as textbooks, useful websites, information packs on various topics, posters, etc.

##### Textbooks

1st Year: My Well-Being Journey 1 (Gill)

2nd Year: My Well-Being Journey 2 (Gill)

3rd Year: My Well-Being Journey 3 (Gill)

To support the provision of SPHE, resources will include the updated curriculum statement and teacher guidelines from the Department of Education and Skills, alongside textbooks, DVDs, ICT tools, internet resources, programs targeting specific issues, and guest speakers.

##### Available Resources within the School:

Shared Teams folder: All SPHE-related documents, including resources, CBA ideas, policies, assessment tools, reporting guidelines, bullying prevention strategies, planning materials, and schemes of work, are shared with SPHE teachers via a dedicated Microsoft Teams Folder.

- RSE Programme for Junior Cycle and Senior Cycle
- SPHE Oide Toolkit for Junior and Senior Cycle
- Be Safe, Be Web Wise

- B4UDecide Resource Kit
- Be in Control Resource Kit
- WebWise: My Selfie Resource Kit
- WebWise: Technology in Education Resource Kit
- Up2Us Anti-Bullying Resource Kit
- Webwise: Lockers Resource Kit
- Cancer Awareness Programme
- On My Own Two Feet: Consequences
- Spunout.ie Survival Guide to Life
- Not on the Label
- Where's Your Head At? (leaflets)
- Focus Ireland
- Stand Up - LGBT

When selecting resources, the following criteria will be considered:

- Alignment with the Aims and Objectives: Resources should conform to the aims and objectives of the SPHE curriculum, reflecting the updated guidelines.
- Freedom from Bias: Resources must be free from racial or sexual stereotyping and promote inclusivity.
- Compliance with School Policies: All materials should adhere to existing school policies and values.
- Engagement and Reflective Practice: Resources should be appealing to both pupils and teachers, fostering collaborative, active methods of learning.
- Relevance to Contemporary Issues: Resources must address current societal issues relevant to students, in line with the new curriculum guidelines.

(Materials purchased with school funds remain the property of the school)

## **5.2 Availability and Use of ICT Facilities**

There is access to a range of ICT facilities throughout the school environment.

- Each teacher has access to a laptop/iPad on the Board of Management ICT Scheme accompanied by a data projector and set of speakers in each classroom. Teachers can access the internet in each classroom.
- It is possible for teachers to book a lesson in the computer room (timetable dependent) so each student has access to a computer. This is particularly effective for any lessons requiring research or project work for students.
- Teachers are encouraged to use an element of ICT throughout their lessons such as in the form of a PowerPoint Presentation, You Tube clip, image, online games, etc. As mentioned before these resources can add something more to lessons whether it be extra information, another perspective on a topic or a modern take on a topic promoting discussion among the students.
- All SPHE teachers have access to an eBook version of the Junior Cycle SPHE text which can be used via data projector in class.
- Fifth Year students have purchased laptops for use for AACs. This will allow for their use in SPHE at Senior Cycle going forward.

**Section 6: Student Attainment.****6.1 Assessment**

Formal assessment does not take place during house exams as in other subjects.

Assessment in SPHE is classroom-based. Students complete one Classroom-Based Assessment, from a choice of two. It is important to note that work completed in year one of Junior Cycle cannot be included for reporting in the CBA. Considering the diversity of learners and contexts, and to support maximum flexibility and choice, there is a choice of Classroom-Based Assessments in Junior Cycle SPHE. The choice of Classroom-Based Assessments in SPHE (outlined in Table 1 below) is designed to support teacher- and student-agency and provide choice of focus, format and mode of presentation.

**Table 1: Choice of Classroom-Based Assessments for SPHE**

| Title                                                                 | Format                                                                                                      | Student preparation                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Portfolio of my learning and my reflection on learning in SPHE</b> | Individual selection of items of work, such as digital, written texts, posters, audio-visual or multi-modal | Students will choose three pieces of work, completed over time and linked to different strands of learning within the course, and present these accompanied by a reflection on why each piece was chosen and how it marked important learning for the student in SPHE. |
| <b>Or</b>                                                             |                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Title                                                                 | Format                                                                                                      | Student preparation                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Taking action for SPHE</b>                                         | Individual or small group project that can be presented in a wide range of formats                          | Students will, over a specified time, with support and guidance from the teacher, research, report and reflect on an action they have taken to raise awareness about or promote an aspect of health/ wellbeing studied in the SPHE short course.                       |

If undertaking Option 1 – Portfolio of my learning and reflection – students will keep examples of work throughout their learning. Within class time they will periodically decide which examples they wish to include and exclude from their portfolio. Also, within class time, they will also be supported to engage in reflection on their chosen pieces of work. Final selection of portfolio pieces and reflections should be completed in 3rd year.

If undertaking Option 2 – Taking action for SPHE – it is envisaged that preparation for and completion of this Classroom-Based Assessment take place over approximately 6 hours of class time, during either 2nd or 3rd year. Aspects of the planning and research might be completed as homework. Work which cannot be authenticated by the teacher cannot be accepted for assessment in the JCPA.

These CBAs are designed to foster reflective practice and encourage students to take ownership of their learning. They also provide opportunities for students to demonstrate their understanding and skills in a supportive environment.

This framework aligns with the NCCA's guidelines, ensuring that assessment in SPHE not only measures knowledge and skills but also supports the holistic development of students in line with the latest educational standards.

## **Classroom Assessment Practices**

### **Teacher Observation**

- **Cooperation and Collaboration:** Evaluating students' ability to work effectively both in groups and independently.
- **Interactions:** Observing informal exchanges between students and teachers, as well as peer interactions, to assess social skills and emotional growth.
- **Physical and Emotional Maturity:** Assessing students' development in these critical areas, vital for personal and social education.
- **Quality of Work:** Evaluating the depth and presentation of students' work.
- **Engagement:** Monitoring participation and interest in a variety of SPHE activities.

### **Student Portfolio**

Teachers will encourage students to maintain personal folders that document their work and reflections throughout the SPHE course. These folders can serve as a valuable resource for both self-assessment and teacher evaluation.

The student portfolio will derive from day to day classroom activities and homework undertaken by the student. As such, it may include a broad range of items, such as personal responses to stimulus materials used in class, a script or role-play created by the student to demonstrate problem solving or other skills, research gathered to inform project work, a poster, leaflet or brochure created to generate awareness, peer-teaching materials, a blog, an interview, etc. The selected items may be presented in different formats—hard copy, digital, multi-modal.

### **Reflection on Learning**

In SPHE, one of the most important skills that students develop is their capacity to reflect on their learning and its meaning for them in their personal and social lives. Like all skills, reflection takes time and practice to develop. With regular reflection, over time students can become aware of both their personal growth and their learning in SPHE. This ongoing practice of reflection will enable students to complete reflections with greater ease as part of their portfolio assessment.

**Impact of assessment on Teaching:** Assessment is vital in order for the teacher to monitor the development of each individual student's ability. It is also a great source of evaluation.

**Impact of assessment on learning:** Assessment encourages motivation and competition among students. Assessment plays a vital role in the development of the student's knowledge and understanding. It also highlights the strengths and weakness of the students learning which is essential for differentiation to take place. The focus of all assessment must be student centred. The focused feedback is aimed to move our students forward in their learning and therefore it is very important to provide feedback as close to the assessment as

possible so that the feedback remains effective and relevant. Students are encouraged to reflect on their own progress by monitoring their own learning as well as making appropriate decision about what to do next.

## 6.2 Record-Keeping Procedures

- Teachers use the VSware system to monitor attendance and student profiles.
- Each teacher is responsible for keeping a record of the work done in class, homework assigned, and any comments given.
- Each teacher and student have access to Microsoft Teams should they wish to engage with the students online. Teams provides a platform to engage with students, assign work and collaborate on project work.
- Students are expected to keep a record of their homework in their student diary.

## 6.3 Reporting Procedures

- Oral feedback is currently provided to students on any written or oral assignments given.
- Each student has a school diary/journal which allows for easy and daily contact with students' parents/ guardians where necessary.
- Teachers can report any issues concerning students' behaviour, effort in class, lack of homework etc. using the school reporting system on VSware.
- Should a more serious incident occur, or a teacher wish to bring the student's behaviour to their Year head's attention, this can be done by escalating the report to the Year Head through the VSware app. This can then be further discussed with the Year head if necessary and dealt with accordingly.

## 6.4 Literacy and Numeracy

The SPHE Department recognises the whole-school responsibility to support and enhance students' literacy and numeracy skills. Each SPHE teacher is aware of their role in promoting these skills and is committed to integrating literacy and numeracy opportunities into lessons wherever possible. This can be achieved through a variety of approaches, including:

- **Creating a word-rich environment** within SPHE classrooms.
- **Displaying key words and terminology** related to current topics on the board, noticeboards, or digital presentations.
- **Designing posters** featuring important vocabulary, concepts, and themes.
- **Using key quotes** on classroom displays or noticeboards to encourage reading and discussion.
- **Developing timelines** of events, traditions, or topics to support sequencing and numeracy skills.
- **Creating calendars of events** throughout the year to promote time awareness, planning, and organisation.

**Section 7: Curricular Planning****7.1 Junior Cycle Planning**

The Junior Cycle course in SPHE is designed to support students in developing a positive sense of self and a capacity to care for themselves and others. It is designed around four interconnected strands and three cross-cutting elements.

**Strand 1: Understanding myself and others**

This strand focuses on developing self-awareness and self-esteem and building some of the foundational skills and dispositions needed for healthy relationships and to thrive in life, including communicating and negotiating, listening, showing empathy, respecting difference, and self-management/self-regulation.

**Strand 2: Making healthy choices**

This strand offers opportunities for students to consider how they can make healthy choices to support their wellbeing. It explores what being healthy might look like for a teenager, what helps or gets in the way of making healthy choices and how to access reliable information to support good choices. Students will also practice the skills needed for making healthy decisions and come to understand contextual factors, such as family, peer, media and social pressures, that influence decisions.

**Strand 3: Relationships and sexuality**

This strand explores the cognitive, physical, emotional and social aspects of relationships and sexuality through a positive, inclusive, rights and responsibilities-based approach. The focus is on family relationships, friendships, romantic and potential sexual relationships in the future.

**Strand 4: Emotional wellbeing**

This strand primarily focuses on nurturing emotional wellbeing and promoting positive mental health. It helps students develop problem solving and coping skills for dealing with the emotional ups and downs of life, explores how they can support themselves and others in challenging times and discusses where/how to find support, if needed. The four strands are underpinned by three cross-cutting elements that are foundational for effective teaching and learning in SPHE. These are:

- Awareness
- Dialogue
- Reflection and action.

**Awareness**

Awareness is the ability to understand one's own thoughts, emotions, values and behaviour. It includes understanding how different factors influence our sense of self and how we live our lives, including the influence of family, peers, the internet, gender, culture and social norms. This element also includes an awareness that to be human is to be in relationships and that we all share a common humanity and dignity, have rights and responsibilities.

**Dialogue**

Through dialogical teaching and learning students are facilitated to engage with a diversity of viewpoints; discuss and reflect on their own perspectives, values, and behaviours and those of others; enlarge their understanding of topics of relevance to their lives; and come to informed, thoughtful decisions based on their personal values, with due regard to their own rights and responsibilities and the rights and responsibilities of others. Respectful dialogue is aided by presuming a diversity of backgrounds, identities, cultures and experiences in every classroom and seeing this as a resource for learning.

### Reflection and action

This cross-cutting element focuses on students reflecting on what they have learned and coming to their own personal insights and conclusions in response to their learning. It enables students to consider how the learning can inform their choices, behaviour and relationships, and discerning what it means for their lives now or for the future. Learning in SPHE is a 'praxis'; an ongoing process of critical reflection and action, nurtured by dialogue with others.

## 7.2 First Year Scheme of Work

### *My Wellbeing Journey 1 1st Year Scheme of Work*

| Year 1            | Class                                                                                                             | Teachers:                                                                                                                                        | Date reviewed:                                                                                             | Date of next review:                                                                                     |                                                                                                                |
|-------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                   | August–October                                                                                                    | November–December                                                                                                                                | January–March                                                                                              | March–April                                                                                              | April–May                                                                                                      |
| Unit title        | Unit 1: Understanding Myself and Others (Lessons 1-7)                                                             | Unit 2: Anti-Bullying (Lessons 8-11)<br>Unit 3: Respectful Communication (Lessons 12-15)                                                         | Unit 4: Relationships and Sexuality (Lessons 16-22)                                                        | Unit 5: Emotional Wellbeing (Lessons 23-26)                                                              | Unit 6: Healthy Choices (Lessons 27-33)                                                                        |
| Learning Outcomes | 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.6, 1.7, 1.8, 1.9, 2.1, 3.1, 4.1, 4.2, 4.4, 4.5                                                   | 1.7, 2.7, 2.8, 2.9, 3.1, 4.4, 4.6, 4.7, 4.8                                                                                                      | 1.1, 1.2, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7, 3.1, 3.2, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 4.7, 4.8                                            | 1.9, 2.6, 2.7, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5                                                                   | 1.5, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6                                                                              |
| Assessment        | Formative exercises in <i>My Wellbeing Journey 1</i> : p.<br><br>Action: Survey on wellbeing of 1st Year students | Formative exercises in <i>My Wellbeing Journey 1</i> : p.<br><br>Portfolio: Anti-bullying resource/ Cartoon or script on effective communication | Formative exercises in <i>My Wellbeing Journey 1</i> : p.<br><br>Portfolio: Report on gendered advertising | Formative exercises in <i>My Wellbeing Journey 1</i> : p.<br><br>Portfolio: Booklet to promote wellbeing | Formative exercises in <i>My Wellbeing Journey 1</i> : p.<br><br>Action: Awareness campaign on healthy choices |
| Reporting         |                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                            |                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                |

## 7.3 Second Year Scheme of Work

*My Wellbeing Journey 2* 2nd Year Scheme of Work

| Year 2            | Class:                                                                                                                                                                     | Teachers:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Date reviewed:                                                                                                                                                                             | Date of next review:                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|-------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                   | August–October                                                                                                                                                             | November–December                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | January–March                                                                                                                                                                              | March–April                                                                                                                                                                                         | April–May                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Unit title        | Unit 1: New Challenges and Territories in 2nd Year (Lessons 1–6)<br>Unit 2: Friendship and Creating Inclusive Community (Lessons 7–8)                                      | Unit 2: Friendship and Creating Inclusive Community (Lessons 9–11)<br>Unit 3: Healthy Choices (Lessons 12–16)                                                                                                                                                               | Unit 4: Relationships and Sexuality (Lessons 17–22)                                                                                                                                        | Unit 5: Media and Me (Lessons 23–27)                                                                                                                                                                | Unit 6: Emotional Wellbeing (Lessons 28–34)                                                                                                                                         |
| Learning Outcomes | 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.6, 1.7, 1.8, 1.9, 2.8, 4.3, 4.4                                                                                                                           | 1.2, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 2.10, 3.1, 3.2, 3.5, 3.11, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.9                                                                                                                                                                                                 | 1.1, 2.7, 2.8, 2.9, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 3.8, 4.2, 4.6, 4.7, 4.8                                                                                                                  | 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 2.1, 2.7, 2.8, 2.10, 3.3, 3.4, 3.6, 3.8, 3.10, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5                                                                                                               | 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 2.6, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.7, 4.8, 4.9                                                                                                                          |
| Assessment        | Formative exercises in <i>My Wellbeing Journey 2</i> : p.<br><b>Action:</b> Survey on diversity and inclusion<br><b>Portfolio:</b> Poster for diversity and inclusion week | Formative exercises in <i>My Wellbeing Journey 2</i> : p.<br><b>Action:</b> Wall of support against hate speech<br><b>Portfolio:</b> Letter to TD on period poverty<br><b>Action:</b> RAK Day<br><b>Action:</b> Awareness campaign on accessing reliable health information | Formative exercises in <i>My Wellbeing Journey 2</i> : p.<br><b>Action:</b> Anti-Bullying campaign specifically on the topic of relational bullying<br><b>Portfolio:</b> Poster on consent | Formative exercises in <i>My Wellbeing Journey 2</i> : p.<br><b>Portfolio:</b> Analysis of piece of media that reinforces stereotypes<br><b>Portfolio:</b> Presentation on sexualised nature of ads | Formative exercises in <i>My Wellbeing Journey 2</i> : p.<br><b>Portfolio:</b> Presentation on supporting a friend<br><b>Portfolio:</b> News report on people's needs not being met |
| Reporting         |                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                     |

*My Wellbeing Journey 2* © GfE Education**7.4 Third Year Scheme of Work**

## My Wellbeing Journey 3\_3rd Year Scheme of Work

| Year 3            | Class:                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Teachers:                                                                                                                                                                            | Date reviewed:                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Date of next review:                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|-------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                   | August–October                                                                                                                                                                                                       | November–December                                                                                                                                                                    | January–March                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | March–April                                                                                                                                                                                                    | April–May                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Unit title        | Unit 1: Understanding Myself and My Emotional Wellbeing in Third Year (Lessons 1–7)                                                                                                                                  | Unit 2: Healthy Choices (Lessons 8–14)                                                                                                                                               | Unit 3: Reproductive Health (Lessons 15–19)                                                                                                                                                                                                | Unit 4: Media and Health Literacy (Lesson 20–26)                                                                                                                                                               | Unit 5: Relationships (Lesson 27–33)                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Learning Outcomes | 1.4, 1.6, 1.7, 1.9, 3.1, 3.2, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5                                                                                                                                                                     | 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7, 2.10, 4.1, 4.2, 4.4, 4.5                                                                                                                | 1.1, 3.5, 3.9, 3.12, 4.9                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 2.7, 2.8, 2.9, 2.10, 3.1, 3.3, 1.4, 3.6, 3.8, 3.9, 3.10                                                                                                                                    | 1.8, 2.3, 2.4, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.6, 3.7, 3.8, 4.2, 4.4, 4.6, 4.7, 4.8                                                                                                                                     |
| Assessment        | Formative exercises in My Wellbeing Journey 3<br><br><b>Action: p. 18</b><br>Research project and presentation on the benefits of mindfulness<br><br><b>Action: p. 18</b><br>Establish a mindfulness group in school | Formative exercises in My Wellbeing Journey 3<br><br><b>Portfolio: p. 143</b><br>Presentation on the risks of online gambling<br><br><b>Action:</b><br>Body Image awareness campaign | Formative exercises in My Wellbeing Journey 3<br><br><b>Action: p. 130/p. 137</b><br>Awareness campaign on testicular checks and breast checks<br><br><b>Portfolio: p. 143</b><br>Poster or slideshow explaining a method of contraception | Formative exercises in My Wellbeing Journey 3<br><br><b>Portfolio: p. 163</b><br>Presentation on stereotyping and sexualisation in the media<br><br><b>Portfolio: p. 169</b><br>Survey on pornography exposure | Formative exercises in My Wellbeing Journey 3<br><br><b>Portfolio: p. 211</b><br>Consent interviews<br><br><b>Action: p. 224</b><br>Advertisement to raise awareness about abusive teenage relationships |
| Reporting         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                      | <b>Action: p. 155</b><br>Research the health, sexual health or reproductive health issue that students want accurate information on.                                                                                                       | <b>Action: p. 189</b><br>Present what you have learned from the central 'What does he/she need?' activity                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                          |

My Wellbeing Journey 2 © 2017 Education

## 7.5 Transition Year Planning

The updated TY Programme Statement is part of a broader Senior Cycle redevelopment. Schools are being asked to audit their current TY programmes and adjust them in line with the new Programme Statement.

The new TY statement emphasises four “Student Dimensions” that schools should build their programmes around:

1. Personal Growth
2. Being a Learner
3. Civic & Community Engagement
4. Career Exploration

In particular, SPHE is explicitly a **curriculum component** in TY: there are micro-modules being developed by NCCA for SPHE, aligned to the *Personal Growth* dimension. Schools have autonomy to design their own SPHE/TY modules, but with parameters. The suggested time

allocation is **one class per week** for SPHE in TY, not exceeding one hour each class. All Transition Year classes currently receive one SPHE Wellbeing class per week, delivered on a rotating modular basis. Each module has been carefully designed to align with the new Transition Year Programme Statement and to support students' overall wellbeing and personal development.

A review will happen at the end of the year to review the modules and adjust where necessary to ensure they align with the TYPS.

| Task                                       | Purpose                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|--------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Audit current TY programmes</b>         | To identify what is already happening re SPHE / wellbeing etc., where gaps exist, and align with the new TYPS document.                                                                                                               |
| <b>Design/wrap TY SPHE modules</b>         | TY should include SPHE micro-modules aligned with <i>Personal Growth</i> student dimension; schools can tailor them, keeping age-appropriate, incremental approach.                                                                   |
| <b>Timetabling &amp; resource planning</b> | One SPHE class/week in TY; ensure teachers, resources, and scheduling are in place. Also, preparing for Senior Cycle SPHE: ensure teacher capacity and time when it comes into mandatory effect.                                      |
| <b>Pedagogical alignment</b>               | Emphasise continuity of approach: skills, wellbeing, relationships; making sure TY SPHE supports the competencies expected in Senior Cycle SPHE.                                                                                      |
| <b>Reporting &amp; recognising growth</b>  | In TY, SPHE contributions feed into the broader dimensions (Personal Growth, Wellbeing etc.), via the recognising & reporting dimension of the TYPS. This helps students, teachers, parents see how SPHE-related growth is happening. |
| <b>Reflection &amp; Renewal</b>            | Schools should plan to evaluate how SPHE is working in TY, getting feedback, adapting and renewing modules to improve alignment and effectiveness.                                                                                    |

(Transition Year Programme Statement, 2024)

Transition Year students also receive 2 classes per week of RSE on a six week module basis.

#### Suggested Course Outline: 4<sup>th</sup> Year RSE

| Week     | Modules       | Topics                                                                                                                                                    |
|----------|---------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Week One | Communication | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effective Communication Skills</li> <li>• Active Listening</li> <li>• A Guide to Better Communication</li> </ul> |

|                     |                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|---------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                     |                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assertive Communication</li> <li>• Healthy Friendships / Relationships</li> <li>• Understanding Boundaries</li> <li>• Consent</li> </ul>                                                                                |
| Week Two            | Dealing with feelings | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Range of Human Emotions</li> <li>• Dealing with your Emotions</li> <li>• Conflict in Relationships</li> <li>• Guidelines for Conflict Resolution</li> <li>• Coping with Loss</li> <li>• The Value of Support</li> </ul> |
| Week Three and Four | Human Reproduction    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Male Reproductive System</li> <li>• Female Reproductive System</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                               |
| Week Five           | Conception            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conception</li> <li>• Fertility</li> <li>• Contraceptive methods</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                             |
| Week Six            | Sexual Health         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sexually Transmitted Infections</li> <li>• Symptoms, causes and treatments for STIs</li> </ul>                                                                                                                          |

### 7.6 Senior Cycle Planning

Senior cycle helps students to become more engaged, enriched and competent, as they further develop their knowledge, skills, values and dispositions in an integrated way.



Figure 2 The components of key competencies and their desired impact

Key competencies can give young adults the power to meaningfully take part in their schools, families, communities, and society. As students mature, these key competencies can work together to help students handle and respond to more complex and varied tasks, as appropriate to their needs and abilities. They come to know what to do and how to do it, to know when to act and when not to act. Students whose key competencies are well-developed are better able to understand and learn; to deal with and respond to social opportunities and problems; to make the transition from school to further, adult and higher

education, apprenticeships, traineeships and/or the world of work; and to embrace adult life.

In addition, all key competencies in senior cycle are embedded within the learning outcomes in this specification. The following table highlights just some examples of how the learning in Senior Cycle SPHE can foster each of the key competencies.

Table 3: Key Competencies and SPHE

| Key competencies              | Opportunities for learning and development                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Thinking and solving problems | Students become more skilful in critical and reflective thinking as they critique social and cultural norms and come to understand the various factors that can influence behaviour and decisions related to health, wellbeing and relationships.                                                                                                                                  |
| Being creative                | Students examine and evaluate options and consequences by engaging with relevant data, experiences and scenarios. This includes being able to accommodate ambiguity and uncertainty as they engage with questions of concern to their lives.                                                                                                                                       |
| Communicating                 | Students develop awareness and skills to effectively communicate opinions, feelings and needs in a respectful and empathic manner.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Working with others           | Through dialogical and participative learning students engage with different perspectives and appreciate how a diversity of backgrounds, identities, cultures and experiences can enrich their learning.                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Participating in society      | Students are encouraged to recognise their own rights and responsibilities in relation to their health, wellbeing and relationships as well as an awareness of their social responsibilities. Students gain awareness of the socio-cultural factors that influence their wellbeing and how this is a matter of social justice, requiring both individual and collective responses. |
| Cultivating wellbeing         | Students explore the factors that influence their physical, social, emotional and mental wellbeing and learn strategies and techniques to help them take care of themselves and others.                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Managing learning and self    | Students grow in awareness of their own thoughts, emotions, attitudes and values and by providing opportunities for reflection, they come to recognise the insights and learning gained.                                                                                                                                                                                           |

### Teaching and Learning

At the heart of all teaching and learning is the relationship. Building supportive, caring and respectful classroom relationships which allow students to safely engage in dialogue and reflection and grow in awareness of themselves and others, is an essential foundation for effective SPHE. This requires the teacher stepping out of the role of expert and assuming the role of facilitator; acknowledging that many of the topics addressed in SPHE may be sensitive and complex and may not have easy answers. It also requires adopting an open,

non-judgmental disposition and at the same time being able to skilfully question and probe assumptions, behaviours and viewpoints, within youth culture or society at large.

Teaching and learning in SPHE is grounded in values of respect, equality, dignity, inclusivity, responsibility, compassion and empathy.

### **Overarching features of effective teaching and learning in SPHE**

When planning SPHE lessons, it is important to provide opportunities for awareness, dialogue, reflection and action.

#### **Awareness**

Awareness is the ability to recognise and understand one's own thoughts, emotions, values and behaviour. It includes understanding how different factors influence our sense of self and how we live our lives, including the influence of family, peers, the internet, gender, culture and social/cultural norms. This also includes an awareness that to be human is to be in relationships and that we all share a common humanity, dignity, rights and responsibilities.

#### **Dialogue**

Through dialogical teaching and learning students are facilitated to engage with a diversity of viewpoints; discuss and reflect on their own perspectives, values, and behaviours and those of others; enlarge their understanding of topics of relevance to their lives; and come to informed, thoughtful decisions based on their personal values, with due regard to their own rights and responsibilities and the rights and responsibilities of others. Respectful dialogue is aided by presuming a diversity of backgrounds, identities, cultures and experiences in every classroom and seeing this as a resource for learning.

#### **Reflection and action**

This is about students reflecting on what they have learned and coming to their own personal insights and conclusions in response to their learning. It enables students to consider how the learning can inform their choices, behaviour and relationships, and discerning what it means for their lives now or for the future. Learning in SPHE is a 'praxis'; an ongoing process of critical reflection and action, nurtured by dialogue with others.

Further characteristics of effective teaching and learning in SPHE Effective SPHE teaching and learning in senior cycle education:

- Involves regular consultation with students to ascertain their needs, questions and concerns and uses this information to plan teaching and learning aligned with the learning outcomes.
- Uses cooperative and experiential learning methodologies.
- Provides accurate and age-appropriate information.
- Is relevant to the real-world experiences of students.
- Builds personal, social and emotional skills and provides opportunities to practice these skills.
- Fosters students' self-efficacy by affirming their capacity to think critically and act with responsibility for their wellbeing and the wellbeing of others.

- Provides opportunities to discuss values, attitudes and beliefs that support healthy behaviours, at a personal and societal level.
- Critiques social pressures and influences and creates awareness of how social, economic, environmental and cultural factors can influence decisions and behaviours related to health, wellbeing and relationships.
- Affirms diversity as an aspect of human life and human sexuality, enabling all students to feel valued and included in the teaching and learning in their classrooms. This involves using inclusive and affirming language.
- Uses a variety of methods to assess what students are learning and uses this information to provide feedback and plan the next steps in learning.

### Relationships and Sexuality Education

Currently, Senior Cycle students are completing the RSE module of SPHE.

Strand outline:

Within this strand students will explore the wide range of relationships that are important for their lives with a particular focus on gaining the awareness, knowledge and skills to support them in creating and nurturing respectful, caring and healthy relationships. This strand also supports students to recognise and be empowered to respond to instances of abuse or violence in relationships.

#### Strand 2 Learning outcomes

| Students should be able to        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Healthy relationships             | <p><b>2.1 demonstrate the awareness and skills needed for nurturing healthy in-person and online relationships, including respecting boundaries, communicating feelings and needs and preventing and managing conflict</b></p> <p><b>2.2 reflect on how their attitudes, beliefs, values and identity can influence the dynamics of friendships, relationships and sexual behaviour</b></p> <p><b>2.3 discuss sexual activity as an aspect of adult relationships characterised by care, respect, consent, intimacy and mutual pleasure</b></p>                                         |
| Gender                            | <b>2.4 examine how harmful attitudes around gender are perpetuated in the media, online and in society and discuss strategies for challenging these attitudes and narratives</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Abusive and violent relationships | <p><b>2.5 identify and consider common signs of abusive relationships, including coercive control</b></p> <p><b>2.6 explain the root causes and consequences of gender-based violence (GBV), with a particular focus on violence against women and girls, and outline the supports available</b></p> <p><b>2.7 investigate the influence of pornography on attitudes, behaviours and relationship expectations</b></p> <p><b>2.8 discuss image-based abuse, sexual harassment, sexual assault and rape and what to do if they or someone they know has experienced any of these</b></p> |
| Sexual health                     | <b>2.9 explore sexual and reproductive health, including fertility, safer sexual practices, possible responses to an unplanned pregnancy, and how to access sexual health services.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |

### Suggested Course Outline: 5<sup>th</sup> Year RSE

| Week       | Title                 | Topics                                                                                             |
|------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Week One   | Relationships         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthy relationships: Boundaries</li> </ul>              |
| Week Two   | Communication         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthy relationships: Communication styles</li> </ul>    |
| Week Three | Gender                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exploring gender norms</li> </ul>                         |
| Week Four  | Gender                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examining harmful expressions of masculinity</li> </ul>   |
| Week Five  | Individuality         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creating more inclusive spaces to be ourselves</li> </ul> |
| Week Six   | Healthy Relationships | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Green flags</li> </ul>                                    |
| Week Seven | Online Relationships  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Managing the world of online dating</li> </ul>            |
| Week Eight | Pornography           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Investigating pornography</li> </ul>                      |

#### Suggested Course Outline: 6<sup>th</sup> Year RSE

| Week       | Title                           | Topics                                                                                              |
|------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Week One   | Relationships                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthy and Unhealthy Relationships</li> </ul>             |
| Week Two   | Sexual Health                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Taking charge: Sexual health literacy</li> </ul>           |
| Week Three | Protecting Yourself Online      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Taking charge: Managing the power of algorithms</li> </ul> |
| Week Four  | Sexually Transmitted Infections | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Taking charge: Reducing the risk of STIs</li> </ul>        |
| Week Five  | STI Treatment                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Taking charge: STI testing and treatment</li> </ul>        |
| Week Six   | Sexual Health                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contraceptive methods</li> </ul>                           |

#### Section 8: School Self Evaluation

### 8.1 Leaving Certificate Grade Analysis.

SPHE remains a non-examination subject at all levels in the school. However, regular discussions on effective reflection activities take place at SPHE department meetings. At present, a reflective activity linked to the relevant learning outcomes is being trialled with first- and second-year groups.

### 8.2 DES Subject Inspection Report

Currently, we have not had an SPHE subject inspection, so we do not have any recommendations. However, the SPHE coordinator has reviewed a number of recent inspection reports and some of the key recommendations include:

1. Schools need to move beyond "activity-based" learning to "reflective" learning.
2. Assessment remains the area most in need of improvement.
3. Create a core team for SPHE.

The SPHE team is actively working towards implementing these recommendations.

### 8.3 SSE School Plan

SPHE is currently undergoing redevelopment and, moving forward, will be reviewed on an annual basis. The SPHE policy remains a working document and will continue to be adjusted as the new Senior Cycle SPHE course is implemented. A further review and update are scheduled for the school year beginning September 2026.

## Section 9: Teacher Professional Development.

### 9.1 Table of TPL 2025 / 2026

| Teacher            | Course Title                                                             |
|--------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Jennifer Cassidy   | JC SPHE – Two Day Workshop                                               |
| Jennifer Cassidy   | SC SPHE – Two Day Workshop                                               |
| Jennifer Cassidy   | SC SPHE – RSE Two Day Workshop 23 <sup>rd</sup> / 24 <sup>th</sup> March |
| Riona Mulvihill    | JC SPHE – Two Day Workshop                                               |
| Riona Mulvihill    | SC SPHE – Two Day Workshop                                               |
| Riona Mulvihill    | DCU SPHE Postgraduate Diploma                                            |
| Caoimhe McGuinness | SC SPHE – Two Day Workshop                                               |
| Caoimhe McGuinness | JC SPHE – Two Day Workshop                                               |
| Éadaoin Reid       | SC SPHE – Two Day Workshop                                               |
| Éadaoin Reid       | Skills to Facilitate RSE across the Junior Cycle<br>SPHE Specification   |
| Nicole Mooney      | SC SPHE – Two Day Workshop                                               |
| Sarah Mulligan     | DCU SPHE Postgraduate Diploma                                            |

**Section 10: Health and Safety**

**10.1 Fire Safety**

Fire evacuation procedures are provided on the back of classroom doors. Care is taken to keep passageways and doorways clear of bags or anything that may obstruct a quick and safe exit.

Reviewed and Updated Date:

**12<sup>th</sup> March 2026**

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Jennifer Cassidy", is written over a horizontal line.

**Jennifer Cassidy  
SEC Coordinator**