



1. Introduction

Rathcormac National School is a co-educational primary school committed to providing a caring, inclusive and respectful learning environment. In keeping with the school's ethos, SPHE supports the holistic development of each child – nurturing their spiritual, moral, social, emotional and physical wellbeing. SPHE aims to help pupils develop a strong sense of self-worth, respect for others and an awareness of their responsibilities within the school community and the wider world.

Mission Statement

Rathcormac N.S. (Co. Sligo) aims to provide a caring, happy, and secure Catholic environment where children reach their full potential, fostering self-esteem, respect, responsibility, and cultural awareness, while also promoting inclusion for all, including those of other faiths, and encouraging strong community and parent involvement.

2. Vision and Aims

Through the SPHE programme, Rathcormac NS aims to enable pupils to:

- Develop self-confidence and a positive sense of identity
- Build respectful, caring relationships
- Make informed, responsible decisions
- Show respect for diversity and inclusion
- Contribute positively to school and community life

3. Curriculum

SPHE is taught in accordance with the Primary School Curriculum (1999) and PDST guidance, under the three strands:

- Myself
- Myself and Others
- Myself and the Wider World

Stay Safe, Mindful Matters and Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) are taught as integral components of SPHE.

4. Strand and Strand Units

The curriculum is delineated at four levels—infant classes, first and second classes, third and fourth classes, and fifth and sixth classes—and is divided into three strands: Myself, Myself and others, and Myself and the wider world.

Each of these strands is further subdivided into a number of strand units or topic areas that contain particular objectives.

Rathcormac NS will teach aspects of all three major strand units each year and strand units will be chosen in such a way that the child will receive a comprehensive programme in SPHE over a two-year period. Rathcormac NS has created the following timetable to reflect this approach:

Strand	Strand Units Year 1	Strand Units Year 2
Myself	Self Identity (Sep –Oct)	Making decisions (Mar –Apr) *
	Safety and Protection (Jan – Feb)	Taking Care of my Body (Jan – Feb)
		Growing and Changing (May – June)
Myself and other	Myself and my Family (Nov – Dec)	Relating to Others (Sep – Oct)
	My Friends and Other People (Mar – Apr)	
Myself and the wider world	Developing Citizenship (May – June)	Media Education (Nov – Dec)

5. Context for SPHE

5.1 Positive School Climate and Atmosphere

Rathcormac NS has created a positive atmosphere by:

- building effective communication
- catering for individual needs
- creating a health-promoting physical environment
- developing democratic processes
- enhancing self-esteem
- fostering respect for diversity
- fostering inclusive and respectful language
- developing appropriate communication

5.2 Time for SPHE

In accordance with Department of Education guidelines, SPHE is allocated ½ hour per week on each teacher's timetable in Rathcormac NS. However teachers may allocate 1 hour per fortnight to allow for more indepth exploration of a strand unit when the need arises (e.g. Stay Safe/ RSE programmes).

5.3 Integration with other subject areas and Linkage within SPHE

Teachers will endeavour to adopt an thematic approach to SPHE by integrating it with other subject areas such as Language, Geography, History, Religion, Visual Arts, Physical Education, etc.

Themes/Projects such as Active School Week, Active School initiatives, Green School Initiatives, a whole school approach to promoting good manners etc. will also be explored.

SPHE plays a central role in promoting wellbeing and positive behaviour in Rathcormac NS. The programme supports the school's Wellbeing Policy and the Bí Cineálta procedures by fostering kindness, inclusion, empathy and respectful communication. SPHE lessons reinforce positive behaviour expectations and contribute to a safe and supportive school climate.

6. Approaches and Methodologies:

Rathcormac NS believes that the approaches and methodologies used in SPHE are crucial to the effectiveness of the programme. Active learning is the principal learning and teaching approach recommended for SPHE, therefore we will endeavour to teach SPHE using a variety of strategies which include:

- a. Talk and discussion
- b. Problem solving
- c. Collaborative learning
- d. Direct teaching
- e. drama activities
- f. co-operative games
- g. use of pictures, photographs and visual images
- h. written activities
- i. use of media and ICT

7. Assessment:

Assessment is a central part of the everyday learning and teaching process in SPHE. It can provide valuable information on the child's progress and on the effectiveness and suitability of the programme and the teaching methods being used.

Rathcormac NS uses the following recommended informal tools for assessment in SPHE:

- a. Teacher observation
- b. Teacher-designed tasks

8. Children with Different Needs:

Teachers will endeavour to adapt and modify activities and methodologies in SPHE to encourage participation by children with special needs. The learning support and resource teachers will supplement the work of the class teachers where necessary. Rathcormac NS will liaise with trained professionals/appropriate agencies when dealing with sensitive issues such as bereavement or loss to ensure that the children involved are fully supported.

9. Policies and Programmes that support SPHE

Policies
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Child P Safeguarding Statement• Anti-Bullying• Relationships and Sexuality Education• Substance Use• Code of Behaviour• Admissions• Health and Safety• Healthy Eating• Acceptable Use Policy• WellBeing and Bí Céinealta

Programmes
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Active School Flag• Health Promoting Schools• Green Flag Programme• Weaving Well Being• Mindful Matters

10. Homework:

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

11. Resources:

(PDST have developed a resource list, which is available on the SPHE page at www.pdst.ie. New resources are added to this from time to time.)

Books for Teacher	Audio / Visual	Posters	Media & ICT
Walk Tall Stay Safe Mindful Matters SPHE (1999)		Various posters throughout the school Active School noticeboard Green School noticeboard	PDST Website Weaving Well Being website

12. Individual Teachers' Planning and Reporting:

This plan in SPHE and the curriculum documents will inform and guide teachers in their long- and short-term planning in SPHE. Each teacher will keep a Cuntas Míósúil and this will inform our progress and needs when evaluating and reviewing our progress in SPHE.

13. Staff Development:

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

- training in the Child Abuse Prevention Programme/ Stay Safe
- training in the Substance Misuse programme /Walk Tall
- training in the Relationships and Sexuality Education programme /R.S.E.
- PDST Advisor support and modelling of lessons
- Other

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

14. Parent/Community Links?

15. Success Criteria

The success of this plan will be evaluated through teachers' planning and preparation, and if the procedures outlined in this plan have been consistently followed. We will also judge its success if the children have been enabled to achieve the aims outlined in this plan.

16. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every three years, or earlier if required.

17. Implementation

17.1. Roles and Responsibilities:

Rathcormac NS believes that the school community must be involved in successfully implementing SPHE. Therefore, the teaching staff will implement this plan with the support of the Board of Management, Parents and the Local Community.

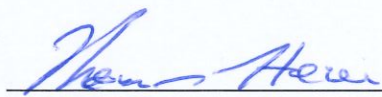
17.2. Timeframe:

The plan will be implemented following ratification by the Board of Management.

18. Review – Roles and Responsibilities

It will be necessary to review this plan on a regular basis to ensure optimum implementation of the SPHE curriculum in the school. The SPHE co-ordinator is responsible for managing this review.

Signed:



Date:

10/2/20

Chairperson BOM