

# **SPHE/RSE Policy**

January 2019

**SPHE/RSE Policy**

**Coláiste Mhuire Co- Ed, Thurles**



## **Social Personal and Health Education Policy**

### **Mission Statement:**

*At Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed we aspire to develop a caring and inclusive learning community that optimises the potential of each person.*

*“Rath as Saothar”*

#### **(a) School Background**

*Name and address of school: Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed  
Thurles*

*Description of School: Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed is a co-educational vocational school under the management of Tipperary ETB*

*Mission Statement of School:*

*At Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed we aspire to develop a caring and inclusive learning community that optimises the potential of each person.*

#### **(b) Definition of S.P.H.E.**

*S.P.H.E. is a programme which provides students with the unique opportunity to develop the skills and competence to learn about themselves and others and to make informed decisions about their health, personal lives and social development.*

##### *Aims of S.P.H.E.*

- *To enable students to develop skills for self-fulfilment and living in communities*
- *To promote self esteem and self-confidence*
- *To enable students to develop a framework for responsible decision making*
- *To provide opportunities for reflection and discussion*
- *To promote physical, mental and emotional health and well-being*

*These aims are consistent with the mission statement of Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed in that they foster the personal development of the individual by preparing the student for a meaningful and fulfilled life within the community.*

#### **(c) Outline of Programme, content and teaching methods.**

*The curriculum for S.P.H.E. is presented in ten modules, each of which appears in each year of the three year junior cycle as outlined in Appendix A and A1. The emphasis will be on developing skills, understanding, attitudes and values important to these areas. The ten modules are*

- *Belonging and Integrating*
- *Self-management-a sense of purpose*
- *Communication Skills*
- *Physical health*
- *Friendship*
- *Relationships and Sexuality*
- *Emotional Health*

- *Influences and decisions*
- *Substance Use*
- *Personal Safety*

*RSE is delivered in the TY programme*

*The Department of Education and Science recognises that each school has flexibility within this framework to plan the S.P.H.E. programme in harmony with the students' needs and the school's resources. In Coláiste Mhuire RSE is delivered on a band for half the year to ensure that all students are provided with the required curriculum.*

*SPHE teaching methodology*

*Because the programme is primarily skills-based, teaching methods must be of an experiential nature with an emphasis on discussion, reflection and classroom participation. These teaching methods will be student centred and appropriate to the age and stage of development of the student. A team approach is implemented in the planning and delivery of the programme. Folders are compiled of resources for all year groups which are shared. Additional resources are available in the SPHE press in Room 5.*

The class atmosphere must be one of respect for the privacy of the individual, student and teacher, and hallmarked by sensitivity and care. S.P.H.E. is allocated one class period per week for 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> years, RSE is part of transition year and is part of the RE programme in senior cycle and is taught to LCA students. It is taught in the context of the mission statement of the school.

**(d) *Whole school commitment to the holistic development of students.***

*Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed recognises that the primary responsibility for the moral, spiritual, social and personal development of children lies with their parents. However this school has a long tradition of supporting parents in this role.*

A summary of what the school provides both formally and informally to promote the holistic development of our students is included in Appendix C. S.P.H.E. is seen as building on this.

**(e) *Staff development, training and resource issues.***

*As Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed is involved in S.P.H.E. for a number of years a core group of teachers are in place and management is committed to the continuous professional development of these staff. In-career development is an integral part of this programme. Management are responsible for responding to the relevant needs of S.P.H.E. teachers for training. Teachers are encouraged to attend SPHE training. As is the practice S.P.H.E. will have a budgetary allocation in line with it's stage of development, it's teaching methodologies and time-tabled allocation. The school management recognises the value of an S.P.H.E. co-ordinator.*

**(f) *Participation, sensitive issues, confidentiality and referral.***

S.P.H.E. is a core curricular subject on the junior cycle curriculum. It is also included in the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> year in the Religion programme. Relationships and Sexuality(R.S.E.) is one module of the programme. RSE is mandatory from the point of view of the DES. However, each parent has the right to withdraw their child from some or all R.S.E. classes but are required to provide alternative R.S.E. at home. It will be necessary for parents of any student opting out of R.S.E. to contact the school principal prior to the beginning of the school year.

Where students are withdrawn from R.S.E. the school cannot take responsibility for any versions of class content passed onto them by other students.

Class discussion will not be personally directed and will be of a general nature, in accordance with the previously agreed ground rules.

If a student feels unable to ask a question in a classroom situation they will be allowed to hand in a written question. The teacher will use his/her professional judgement to determine whether the question will be dealt with in a classroom situation or privately with a student afterwards.

While an atmosphere of trust is a pre-requisite of S.P.H.E. class, the following limits of confidentiality must always be observed. The limits are outlined in the Child Safeguarding Protection Procedures available to staff on the school team drive.

- Child Abuse- physical, emotional, sexual and neglect
- Intention to harm self or others
- Substance Use
- Underage sexual intercourse

Where possible students should be informed of these limits before making a disclosure. The SPHE teacher should outline the limits to the class at the beginning of the school year.

While it is acknowledged that teachers have a professional responsibility to impart the S.P.H.E. course content, the needs of our students will be addressed in a caring and supportive manner. Where it is appropriate, the teacher may refer students to other supportive links within the school. As far as possible this should be done in negotiation with the student. The teacher may inform the class of external support services relevant to the subject matter. This should be done within the context of the school's characteristic spirit. SPHE teachers, where in doubt as to a certain course of action, are encouraged to discuss the issue with a relevant member of staff. However, if the issue pertains to Child Protection the staff members should only discuss this with the DLP, in line with school policy. Information revealed about a student should be on a need to know basis.

#### (g) External Programmes and Facilitators

In line with circular letter 43/2018 Coláiste Mhuire adopts the following procedures when using external programmes and facilitators.

## Use of External Programmes/External Facilitators

Use of programmes and/or external facilitators can play a role in supplementing SPHE and RSE. Programmes and/or external facilitators are most likely to be effective when they:

- are part of a whole school approach and address an identified need
- are delivered to class groups with the involvement of school staff and the appropriate involvement of parents/carers
- enhance protective factors which predispose students to positive outcomes in the face of adversity such as: facilitating supportive adult pupil relationships, strengthening life skills, helping students believe in their capacity to overcome hardship and building a sense of mastery over life circumstances
- adopt a planned implementation process, for example, incorporate needs analysis, use evidence informed programmes and track and evaluate outcomes for students
- are implemented and used in a school in a sustained way over a number of years in order to bring about lasting effects and benefits

### Guidance for Engaging External Facilitators

When engaging external facilitators schools are advised to consider the following best practice criteria:

- External facilitators supplement, complement or support an identified component of the school's Wellbeing Promotion Process.
- External facilitators are approved by the sphe coordinator/principal in consultation with the relevant teaching staff.
- All materials proposed for use by the external facilitator must also be agreed in advance by the sphe coordinator/principal and teacher involved
- All external facilitators are compliant with the school's child protection policy and other relevant school policies and procedures.
- External facilitators are aware of the schools SPHE policy
- The SPHE coordinator/principal is happy that any vetting obligations that arise under the Vetting Act and in line with Circular 0031/2016, for such external facilitators.
- Programmes used are delivered by facilitators who are qualified to work within the specific area of content and with the students for whom the programmes are designed.
- Relevant school staff liaise with facilitators in advance of the delivery.
- Preparatory work is done with the class in advance of the visit by the class teacher
- External facilitators always work under the guidance and supervision of the relevant classroom teacher who remains in the classroom with the students at all times and retains a central role in the delivery of the subject matter. Absence of the teacher may undermine the integrity of the curriculum, and the credibility and professionalism of the teacher. It may also compromise the safety of the students.
- Relevant school staff are informed of the details of the programme being provided by external facilitators.
- Parents/carers are consulted and made aware in advance of the content of the programmes provided by external facilitators.

- External facilitators and programmes are evaluated by students and teachers with regard to the subject matter, messages communicated, methodology and proposed learning outcome.

#### Appraisal of Appropriate Use of External Facilitators

When appraising appropriate use of external facilitators, teachers/spe coordinator should consider the following best practice criteria:

- Facilitators supply comprehensive information to the school about their organisation, programme content and programme methodology.
- Facilitators demonstrate an understanding of the Department's Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice and appropriate educational training and qualifications.
- Facilitators demonstrate skills in facilitating and managing groups and students. Facilitators demonstrate an understanding of the general organisation and structure of schools.
- Facilitators show an understanding of the role of school management, school support structures, roles of support staff and other relevant support services in the event of a challenging situation arising.
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#### Appraisal of Appropriate Use of Programmes

When appraising the appropriate use of programmes, schools should consider the following best practice criteria:

- The programme or input supports/complements the whole school Wellbeing Promotion Process which includes the social personal and health education, physical education and civic, social and political education curricula.
- Consideration is given to the programme's sustainability and whether the programme will bring about lasting effects or if its benefits will end on the completion of the programme.
- The programme is appropriate for the educational stage of the students, and includes evidence informed content and methodology with clear educational outcomes.
- The programme content is appropriate for the age, gender and cultural background of students.
- The programme does not focus on a single topic or use shock tactics, and does not directly or indirectly raise an unhealthy awareness of, for example, topics such as suicide, self-harm or eating disorders.
- The programme and its outcomes have been independently evaluated and/or informed by research and evidence.
- The programme does not place an unreasonable onus on students to take an unduly high level of responsibility for the wellbeing of their peers.

#### (h) *How parents and students will be informed.*

Present students will be informed of this policy through their S.P.H.E and Religion class. Parents will be informed by sms that the policy is on the school website. It will be given to incoming first year parents in their information pack. Parents will be asked to read and sign the attached form in appendix C and return it to the school.

#### (i) *How staff will be informed*

This policy will be available for all staff in the school by its inclusion with the Policy Documents. An SPHE team drive is available and all staff have access to that drive.

(j) ***How the S.P.H.E. programme and policy will be reviewed and evaluated.***

The S.P.H.E. programme and policy will be reviewed and evaluated on an annual basis by the S.P.H.E. team. The opinion of the students will be included as part of the review. The S.P.H.E. policy will be reviewed in line with the schools' programme of School Development Planning.

Ratified by the Board of Management on      Effective from

## Appendix A

<b>Module</b>	<b>Year One</b>	<b>Year Two</b>	<b>Year Three</b>
Belonging and Integrating	Coping with Change. Joining a new group. Appreciating Difference. Bullying is everyone's business. Coping with Loss	Looking back, Looking Forward Group work. Family ties.	Goal Setting for Third Year. Contract.
Self Management	Organising Myself. Organising my work at home and at school. Balance in my life.	What motivates me? Study Skills.	Organising my time. Planning for effective study. Coping with examinations.
Communication Skills	Express yourself Learn to listen. Passive, Assertive and aggressive communications.	Assertive Communications.	Learning to communicate. Communication in situations of conflict.
Physical Health	Body Care. Healthy Eating. Exercise.	Body Care. Feeling Unwell.	Physical Exercise. Relaxation. Diet..
Friendship	Making New Friends. A Good Friend.	The Changing Nature of Friendship.	Boyfriends and Girlfriends.
Emotional Health	Recognising Feelings. Respecting my Feelings and the Feelings of Others.	Self Confidence. Body Image.	Stress. Feelings and Moods.
RSE	Me as unique and different Friendship Changes at adolescence (puberty) The Reproductive System Images of male and female Respecting myself and others LGBT rights	Conception to Birth Peer pressure Other influences Personal Safety Responsible Decisions LGBT rights	Relationships Respect Rights / Responsibilities Consequences Teenage Pregnancy Teenage parenting HIV & AIDS LGBT rights
Influences and Decisions	My Heroes.	Positive and Negative Influences. Making Decisions.	Making a good Decision.
Substance Use	Why use drugs? Alcohol: the facts. Smoking and its effects. Smoking: Why? Why not?	The effects of drugs. Alcohol and its effects. Alcohol? Why?, Why not? Cannabis and its	Ecstasy: the realities. Heroin: the realities.



		effects. Cannabis: Why?, Why not?	
Personal Safety	Looking after myself.  Internet Safety	Accidents at home, school and farm/water. Feeling threatened. Internet Safety	Recognising unsafe situations. Violence. Help Agencies. Internet Safety

The Department of Education & Science recognises that each school has the flexibility within this framework to plan the S.P.H.E. Programme most suitable for the students needs and the school's resources.

## **R.S.E. CURRICULUM CONTENT**

### **Development of themes at Junior Cycle.**

#### **Human Growth and Development**

- Awareness of changes in the human cycle.
- An understanding of the physical and emotional changes that take place in males and females at puberty and appreciation of variation
- Knowledge of sexual organs and their function
- An appreciation of hygiene associated with puberty
- An awareness of the sometimes conflicting feelings, moods and emotions characteristic of adolescence
- Development of a language for the expression of emotions
- An understanding of fertility, conception, pregnancy and birth
- Awareness of implications of sexual activity
- Understanding of sexually transmitted diseases, with particular reference to HIV/AIDS

#### **Human Sexuality**

- An awareness of what it is to be female and male.
- An awareness of stereotyping and its influence on attitudes and behaviour
- An appreciation of equality and difference
- Information on and sensitivity to sexual orientation
- Awareness of discrimination
- Respect for sexuality
- Developing skills for personal safety
- Awareness of sexual abuse and rape including identification of help agencies within and outside the school.

#### **Human Relationships**

- Developing skills for self awareness
- Developing skills for building and maintaining self esteem
- Awareness of the qualities valued in friendships and how friendship patterns change
- Developing skills for establishing and maintaining relationships
- Awareness of roles and responsibilities in relationships and families
- Identifying groups students belong to, behaviour in these groups and response to peer pressure.

### **Development of themes at Senior Cycle.**

#### **Human Growth and Development**

- Understanding the structure and function of sex organs
- Awareness of fertility
- Awareness of the importance and methods of family planning
- Understanding of pregnancy and the development of the foetus
- Appreciation of the importance of health care during pregnancy
- Recognizing the range of human emotions and ways to deal with these
- An understanding of the relationships between safe sexual practice and sexually transmitted diseases with particular reference to HIV/AIDS

## **Human Sexuality**

- Understanding of what it means to be male or female
- Exploration of some of the issues pertaining to equality
- Understanding the concept of sexual harassment and its different forms
- Awareness of sexual abuse and rape, including legal issues and the identification of help agencies in these areas
- Skills for making choices about sexual activity
- Laws in relation to sexual activity
- Exploration of the range of attitudes, values and beliefs regarding sexual behaviour in modern society
- Understanding the nature of peer pressure
- Developing skills for resolving conflict
- Development of an awareness of the complex nature of love and loving relationships
- Understanding what it means to be LGBTQIA
- Understanding marriage as a loving commitment
- Understanding of marriage in various cultures
- Deeper awareness of the importance of family life

## Appendix C

Provision for holistic development of students in Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed (formal and informal).

- Teachers
- Chaplain
- Students Council
- Le Cheile
- SCP
- JCSP
- R.S.E. Programme
- S.P.H.E. Programme
- Bullying Workshops
- Class Tutors
- Year Heads
- Journal
- Career Guidance Counselor
- Awards Ceremony
- Co-curricular activities
- School Show
- Sport programmes
- Peer Education
- Employers – Work Experience
- Friendship Week
- Canteen
  - Student Council
- Community Education Prog.
- Programmes to suit all levels
- Parent Teacher Meetings
- Induction Programme
- Assessments
- Enrolment
- Open Night
- Intercom
- Visits to Primary Schools
- Check and Connect
- Homework Club
- Parenting Programme
- Behavioural Support
- Debates
- Principal & Deputy Principal
- Mental Health Promoters
- Friends
- Extra Curricular Activities
- Parent’s Association
- Supervised Study
- Resource/Learning Support Teachers
- School Policies
- Talks – outside speakers
- School Tours
- Young Scientist involvement
- Religious Services
- Religion Classes
- School web site
- Attendance Awards
- Book Scheme
- Progression opportunities (Fetac)
- Positive Comments in Journal
- Special Needs Assistants
- Mentoring
- Team Teaching
- Cultural Activities
- Mixed Ability Teaching
- Study Skills Course
- Information Nights for Parents
- Leaving Certificate Applied
- LCVP
- School Newsletters
- Local Paper Notes
- Parents Information Evenings
- Music
- Progress reports to Leaving Cert. students and parents
- TV Display at main entrance
- Professional Counselling Support
- HSCL support

Date: Jan 2019

Dear Parents/Guardians

**Junior Cert Cycle S.P.H.E. - R.S.E.**

The S.P.H.E. Social/Personal/Health Education programme is a compulsory subject in the Junior Cert curriculum as specified by the Department of Education & Science. It is delivered to the students each week for one class period. Please find enclosed our SPHE policy which includes a summary of the programme which covers the course content over the three years. One part of the programme is the module known as RSE-Relationships & Sexuality Education.

Parents are required to consent to their son/daughter participating in this module.

If you do not wish your child to avail of this module you must make an appointment with the school principal to discuss the care of your child at this time. **Please sign below if you wish your child to avail of this programme.**

I \_\_\_\_\_ parent of \_\_\_\_\_

wish for my son/daughter to participate in the RSE module of SPHE.

Yours sincerely,

Denis Quinn

Principal

Shelley Martin

*SPHE/RSE Coordinator.*

