



Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) Policy

Introduction

SPHE is a lifelong process and as such begins before the child comes to school. In this school we will provide a foundation that will inform the child's actions and decisions and provide a basis for further development.

1. Our Vision for S.P.H.E.

In line with our school ethos, Social, Personal and Health Education will provide opportunities for the individual child to develop a framework of values, attitudes, understanding and skills that will inform their decisions and actions now and in the future – enabling them to respect and relate to themselves and others and become active and responsible citizens in society.

2. Vision and Aims

SPHE in Lecarrow CNS should help to develop the whole child. It should foster self-worth, develop self-confidence and enable the children to make responsible choices for life. It will enable them to respect and relate to themselves and others and to become active and responsible citizens in society.

While seeking to meet the pupil's needs we will endorse the aims and objectives of the S.P.H.E curriculum pages 9-10:

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

3. Content of the plan

3 (i) *Strands and Strand Units*

The SPHE curriculum is divided into three strands: **Myself, Myself and Others, Myself and the Wider World**
The strands are subdivided into ten strand units.

- *Self Identity*
- *Safety and Protection*
- *Making Decisions**
- *Relating to Others*
- *Developing Citizenship*
- *Media Education*
- *Taking Care of My Body*
- *Growing and Changing*
- *Myself and My Family*
- *My Friends and Other People*

****The Making Decisions strand unit is taught from third to sixth class.***



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Since SPHE is spiral in nature we will cover the following content at each level throughout the school over a two-year period: Each strand unit will be taught over a time frame of approximately six weeks.

Strands	Strand Units (Year A)	Strand Units (Year B)
Myself	Self-identity (September, October)	
		Taking care of myself (RSE – January)
		Growing and Changing Safety and Protection (revise topic 3 – Touches) (RSE – February, March)
	Safety and Protection (Stay Safe – January, February – 2 lessons per week = 6 hours)	
	Making decisions (March, April)	
Myself and others		Myself and my family (September, October)
		My friends and other people (April, May, June)
	Relating to others (November)	
Myself and the Wider World	Developing Citizenship (May, June)	
		Media (November, December)

Overview of the SPHE Plan is an appendix to this document.

The Digital Citizenship Plan, which outlines monthly lesson topics, objectives, and resources to support responsible digital engagement for pupils from 1st to 6th class, is included as Appendix B.

3 (ii) Context for Teaching SPHE

Positive school climate and atmosphere strategies will be linked appropriately to the strand units

- ❖ building effective communication within the school
 - School website
 - Parents' Association
 - Effective communication policy and procedures
- ❖ catering for individual needs
 - Special Education Needs provision
 - Assistive Technology
 - Outside Agencies
- ❖ creating a health-promoting physical environment
 - Health Promoting School
 - Mindfulness
 - Healthy Eating
 - Active School
 - Green School
 - Outdoor learning spaces
 - Halloween Fancy Dress and Danceathon



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- ❖ democratic processes
 - Student representation on committees e.g. Green Schools, Active Schools
 - Student Council
- ❖ enhancing self-esteem
 - Assemblies on Values
 - School plays
 - Oral language activities
 - Musical performances
 - School sporting events
- ❖ fostering respect for diversity
 - Inclusive Schools
 - Intercultural Day
 - ETB Ethos and ETB Week
 - Diversity projects and initiatives e.g. Different Families, Same Love
- ❖ fostering inclusive and respectful language
 - Oral Language
 - Everyday conduct
 - Modelling respectful conduct
 - Antibullying lessons
- ❖ developing appropriate communication between home and school
 - Positive Communication policy
- ❖ developing a school approach to assessment
 - Assessment Policy

3 (iii) *Discrete time*

The revised Stay Safe programme will be taught in a 5/6 week block in Year A. The RSE programme will be taught in a similar fashion in Year B.

3 (iv) *Integration*

At each class level, teachers should integrate S.P.H.E. with other curricular areas. Many aspects of S.P.H.E. can be dealt with in the context of relevant subject areas. Opportunities for integration are referred to in the Curriculum at the end of each strand unit. In their planning and preparation, teachers will plan and provide for such opportunities. Curricular areas with which integration may be undertaken include:

- **English Language:** using language precisely; acquiring appropriate vocabulary; developing communication skills; learning how to question, to predict, to be critical and to analyse; developing one's imagination and exploring emotions and feelings through the spoken and written word; examining the print media
- **History:** developing empathy; exploring changing influences on our lives; learning about the factors that shape the community; exploring the various contributions of different groups to society; exploring myself and my family
- **Science:** exploring: the way the body works, the constituents of different foods, the process of physical growth and development; learning to care for the environment
- **Geography:** developing a sense of place; exploring local and national issues; developing an appreciation of different national, religious and cultural groups; learning to care for the environment
- **Mathematics:** interpreting and representing data; measuring and estimating; comparing and recording; solving problems
- **Visual arts:** creating and exploring images and pictures; expressing ideas, feelings and experiences in visual form; looking at and enjoying images in the environment



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- **Physical Education:** choosing teams and playing games in a fair manner; understanding physical exercise as necessary for overall health and wellbeing; developing individual skills and talents; developing self-esteem and self-confidence; providing opportunities for cooperation and interaction; appreciating the importance of safety and learning how to act safely
- **Music:** using music to explore moods and feelings; understanding the role of music in our heritage; exploring music as a form of universal communication; developing self expression and a sense of well-being through music; making decisions; taking individual and group responsibility through composing
- **Drama:** using drama: to recognise and manage feelings, to learn to trust and respect others in a group, to experience open and healthy relationships, to foster respect for differences in people, and to help the child understand and moderate his/her temperament.
- **GMGY:** using Philosophy for Children approaches to build communication skills e.g. agreeing and disagreeing respectfully, questioning, critical thinking, and developing dialogues about values, respect, rules and empathy. Story-based sharing of family traditions; creating "All About Me" books; exploring similarities and differences. Exploring kindness, cooperation, and inclusion through class charters and community projects. Exploring respect and curiosity for different beliefs, promoting intercultural understanding.
- **Projects (Involvement) –**
 - Green Schools,
 - Active Flag,
 - Student Council,
 - Food Dudes,
 - Music Generation,
 - Creative Schools,
 - Local Gardaí,
 - Local Fire Brigade,
 - HSE – Mighty Mouth Program,
 - Swimming/Aqua Safety with Local Swimming Pool,
 - RSA – Road Safety Awareness.

3 (v) Approaches and Methodologies

As active learning is a key principle of the revised Primary Curriculum Framework (1999) this is the principal methodology for teaching SPHE. In our school we promote active learning through the following activities depending on the class level:

- Cooperative games
- Drama activities
- Pictures, photographs and visual images
- Pair, small group and whole class discussion
- Written activities
- Media studies
- I.C.T

Further details of these approaches can be found in Teacher Guideline: S.P.H.E pp 54-99.

In order to involve children in their own learning we will provide opportunities for:

- Talk and discussion
- Collaborative learning
- Problem solving activities



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- Engaging with the environment
- Developing skills through content

3 (vi) *Assessment*

Assessment will be carried out in compliance with the school's assessment policy and the SPHE Curriculum pp. 70-77.

Teacher observation might focus on:

- the ability of the child to co-operate and work in groups or to work independently
- the informal interactions between the child and adults and between the child and other children
- the quality of presentation of work
- particular interests or aptitudes displayed by the child
- the participation and interest of the child in a variety of activities
- the level of personal or social responsibility exhibited by the child
- the reliability of the child in carrying out established routines
- the perseverance of the child in carrying out a task
- the child's awareness of the difficulties of others and his/her willingness to help
- the questions the child asks and the responses the child makes to questions and suggestions made by the teacher
- various behaviour, for example shyness, leadership ability, level of self-confidence, the tendency to be anxious, sense of fair play, assertiveness, aggression, readiness to take risks and meet challenges
- physical and emotional maturity
- the ability of the child to engage in assessing his/her progress and reflecting on his/her learning. (SPHE Curriculum p79)

The assessment tools chosen by the teacher will depend on the class level and ability of the children and may include:

- Teacher observation
- Teacher designed tasks and tests
- Portfolios
- Projects
- Self-assessment by pupils

Assessment is a central part of the everyday learning and teaching process in S.P.H.E. It can provide valuable information on the child's progress and on the effectiveness and the suitability of the programme. This information will help the teacher to discern what the child knows and understands and how he/she transfers learning from one situation to another and also inform planning of future lessons.

3 (vii) *Special needs/sensitivities*

All children with special educational needs are included in SPHE lessons. We also ensure that pupils attending Special Education Teacher, Visiting Tutor etc will not be absent for SPHE on an ongoing basis. Activities are modified where needed to enable all children to participate in the class.

If there are specific or sensitive issues which need to be considered in meeting the individual needs of children, (e.g. bereavement, loss, disability, illness) efforts will be made to assist the child in dealing with this issue. Where necessary, external human resources, materials and links with outside agencies will be availed off in assisting the child.



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4. Organisation

4 (i) Policies

The following policies are related to SPHE issues:

- Relationship and Sexuality Education Policy
- Substance Use Policy
- Child Safeguarding Statement
- Bí Cineálta policy
- Safety Statement
- Acceptable Use Policy
- GMGY Policy

4 (ii) Homework

Homework in SPHE may be assigned from time to time and will be in line with the school's Homework Policy.

Home School links pages from RSE and Stay safe are sent home for parents and guardians to review in conjunction with the teaching of the lessons.

4 (iii) Resources

The following resources are available in school and for use in SPHE

- Stay Safe
- Walk Tall
- RSE
- Anti-Bullying
- Webwise
- Childnet International - Smartie Penguin, Ducky Duck and other relevant stories
- Circle Time methodology
- Zippy's Friends
- RSA Resources –
 - Simon and Friends
 - Safe Cross Code
 - Seatbelt Sheriff
 - Hi Glo Silver
 - Bike Safety
 - Road Safety
- Be Safe
- Water Safety www.pawsiws.ie
- The Right Start
- Lift Off
- Me, You and Everyone
- Busy Bodies
- Teacher designed resources
- GoNoodle (mindfulness)

4 (iv) Approaches and Methodologies

We will adopt the following approaches and methodologies:

- Talk and discussion
- Skills through Content



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- Collaborative learning
- Problem-solving
- Use of the Environment
- Active learning which includes drama activities, co-operative games, use of pictures, photographs and visual images, written activities, use of media and information technologies and looking at children's work.

4 (v) Individual teacher's planning and reporting

Each teacher is responsible for ensuring that the curriculum documents and this school plan form the basis of their planning for SPHE. Teachers will plan using the strands and strand units and will ensure that all of these are covered during the year (This will be in accordance with our two-yearly planning timetable). Aspects of the curriculum covered by visiting personnel will be incorporated into the class teacher's plans. The Cuntas Míósúil and Fortnightly notes will show which aspects of the SPHE Curriculum have been taught each fortnight and month.

4 (vi) Staff development

A range of reference books, resource materials, equipment and a list of appropriate websites is available to all teachers within the school. Information about SPHE courses and visiting speakers to the school are communicated to all staff.

4 (vii) Parental involvement

Parents are encouraged to discuss aspects of S.P.H.E. when worksheets/work samples are brought home. Parents are involved in SPHE mainly through the Stay Safe Programme and when outside speakers visit the school. Each year before the Stay Safe Programme is taught parents are informed and information about the programme is provided for their use. Parents are also informed on the teaching of RSE (sensitive lessons).

4 (viii) Community Links

Where necessary the school makes full use of outside community links to enhance the SPHE programme. E.g. Barnardos, Accord, Dental nurse etc.

4 (ix) Guest Speakers

External facilitators/tutors who contribute to the SPHE programme must be approved in advance by the principal. Visitors must work under the guidance and supervision of a teacher, who must remain in the classroom with the pupils at all times. Visitors must never replace the teacher.

4 (x) Provision for Training and Staff Development

In order to successfully implement this plan the teaching staff may attend:

- training in the Child Abuse Prevention Programme(Stay Safe),
- training in the Substance Misuse programme (Walk Tall),
- training in the Relationships and Sexuality programme (R.S.E.),
- Health Promoting Schools
- Circle Time
- Child Protection
- Anti-bullying Training
- Internet Safety
- Zippy's Friends
- Other relevant CPD



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5. Success criteria / Assessment

(a) Self-assessment

- Teacher Reflection
- Staff Discussion

(b) Pupil assessment P.70-77

- Teacher observation
- Teacher designed tasks and tests
- Portfolios

(c) DES/outside assessment

6. Roles and responsibilities

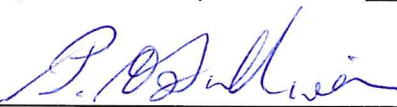
We, the principal and teaching staff, believe that SPHE is a shared responsibility between family, school, health professionals and the community, and see ourselves supporting the home in this lifelong process and will seek at all times to develop positive relations with all these parties.

7. Timeframe and Review

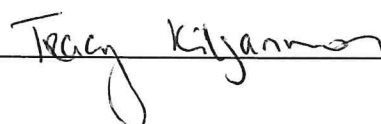
This policy will be reviewed as often as required when changes occur.

8. Ratification and Communication

This policy was ratified by the BOM on 22/10/2025.

Signed: 
Chairperson of BOM

Date: 22/10/2025

Signed: 
Principal

Date: 22/10/2025



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Digital Citizenship Teaching Plan – SPHE Appendix B

Objective:

To equip pupils with the skills, knowledge, and understanding necessary to navigate the digital world responsibly and safely. Digital citizenship education aims to help students become ethical, informed, and respectful participants in an increasingly digital society.

Content:

Digital Citizenship education will cover the following key areas, with content adapted appropriately for each class level:

1. Online Safety and Privacy

- Understanding personal information and its protection online.
- Learning the importance of strong passwords and safe browsing habits.
- Recognising safe websites and avoiding unsafe digital interactions.

2. Responsible Use of Technology

- Developing respectful online behaviour and understanding the impact of digital actions.
- Avoiding plagiarism, respecting intellectual property, and understanding copyright basics.
- Learning the principles of netiquette (online etiquette) and digital footprint awareness.

3. Cyberbullying Awareness and Prevention

- Identifying signs of cyberbullying and understanding its impact.
- Learning strategies to respond to and report cyberbullying.
- Building empathy and promoting inclusivity in online interactions.

4. Digital Literacy and Critical Thinking

- Developing critical thinking skills to evaluate the credibility of online sources.
- Recognising misinformation, disinformation, and how to seek reliable information.
- Using search engines and other online tools effectively and responsibly.

Implementation and Time Allocation:

One digital citizenship lesson/topic will be delivered each month as part of the SPHE program, integrating age-appropriate content from webwise.ie or related suitable resource and adapted for each class level from Junior Infants to 6th class.

Each digital citizenship area will be adapted in complexity based on the class level, with a focus on age-appropriate activities and discussions. [Webwise.ie](http://webwise.ie) and Childnet will provide resources, lesson plans, and activities to support teaching and learning.

Methodologies:

Active learning methodologies, including:

- Stories, discussions, role-playing, and cooperative games on digital scenarios.
- Group projects using digital tools to practice responsible online interaction.
- Use of visual resources, videos, and guided activities from webwise.ie and Childnet to explore online safety topics.

Assessment and Reflection:

Teachers will observe students' engagement and understanding of digital citizenship principles. Assessment may include:

- Teacher observations and self-assessment reflections.
- Projects and written reflections on online safety scenarios and responsible digital practices



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Lecarrow CNS SPHE Overview

SPHE teaching time should be a minimum of 30 minutes per week.

The aims of social, personal and health education are

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

Strands/Strand units	Year A Strand/Strand Units	Year B Strand/Strand Units	
September - October	Myself/ Self Identity <i>Walk Tall Resource</i> <i>Digital Citizenship Lesson</i>	Myself and Others/ Myself and my Family <i>Walk Tall Resource</i> <i>Digital Citizenship Lesson</i>	
October	Myself/ Safety and Protection <i>Road Safety, Cycling Safety, Fire Safety</i> <i>Walk Tall Resource</i>	Myself/ Safety and Protection <i>Road Safety, Cycling Safety, Fire Safety</i> <i>Walk Tall Resource</i>	
November - December	Myself and Others/ Relating to Others <i>Walk Tall Resource</i> <i>Digital Citizenship Lesson</i>	Myself and the wider world/ Media Education <i>Walk Tall Resource</i> <i>Digital Citizenship Lesson</i>	
January - February	Myself/ Safety and Protection <i>Stay Safe Programme</i> <i>Digital Citizenship Lesson</i>	Myself / Growing and Changing <i>RSE Programme</i> <i>Digital Citizenship Lesson</i>	
March - April	Myself/ Making Decisions <i>Walk Tall Resource</i> <i>Digital Citizenship Lesson</i>	Myself / Taking Care of my Body Myself/ Safety and Protection <i>Stay Safe Programme Touches</i> <i>Digital Citizenship Lesson</i>	
May - June	Myself and the wider world / Developing Citizenship <i>Walk Tall Resource</i> <i>Digital Citizenship Lesson</i>	Myself and Others/ My friends and other people <i>Walk Tall Resource</i> <i>Digital Citizenship Lesson</i>	
June	Myself / Safety and Protection Water Safety (1st) http://paws.iws.ie/	6th: SESS Transition Workbook “Transitioning from Primary to Post-- Primary School Programme-” by SESS	
Methodologies	Assessment	Linkage and Integration	Differentiation
Drama and role play, Oral evidence, Documentary evidence, Using ICT Personal and family history, Using artefacts, Pictures and photographs, Using the environment, Using evidence	Teacher observation; Teacher designed tasks, tests; Work samples, portfolios and projects; Curriculum profiles; Diagnostic tests and Standardised tests.	Linkage: History, Geography, Science Integration: English, Gaeilge, History, Geography, Science, Drama, Visual Arts, Religion, Phys Ed., ICT, SPHE, Assembly	Learning objectives, support, pace, resource, grouping, teaching style task, outcome