



Gaelscoil Thulach na nÓg

Bóthar Rúisc, Dún Búinne, Co na Mí

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SPHE Policy

Social, Personal and Health Education

Introductory Statement and Rationale

(a) Introductory Statement

SPHE is a lifelong process and as such begins before the child comes to school. In this school we provide a foundation that will inform the child's actions and decisions and provide a basis for further development. In this context parents are acknowledged as the primary educators of their children and the school will work in a supportive role. This SPHE plan is an updated and revised version of our previous SPHE Policy. This revised policy was drafted by the Principal and teaching staff of [insert school name] with input from the Board of Management and the Parents' Association.

(b) Rationale

The SPHE Curriculum is taught through various programmes and initiatives such as Stay Safe, Walk Tall, Relationships and Sexuality Education and through our involvement in the Health and Wellbeing Promoting Schools Initiative. It is also taught through integration with other subject areas such as Physical Education, Religion, Geography, etc. However, we wish to formalise our teaching of SPHE and plan for it on a whole school basis.

Aims

(a) Aims:

The children of **Gaelscoil Thulach na nÓg** should be enabled to achieve the aims outlined in the SPHE curriculum, which include:

- 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

Content of Plan

Curriculum:

1 **Strands and Strand Units:**

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

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

Strands	Strand Units and sub categories			
Myself	Self-identity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Self Awareness - Developing Self confidence - Making decisions 	Taking care of my Body <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Knowing About my Body - Food and Nutrition - Health and well-being 	Growing and Changing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - As I grow I change - New Life - Feelings and Emotions 	Safety and Protection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Personal safety - Safety issues
Myself and Others	Myself and My Family	My friends and other people	Relating to others <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Communicating - Resolving Conflict 	
Myself and the Wider World	Media Education	Developing Citizenship <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - My school community - Living in the local community - Environmental Care 		

Gaelscoil Thulach na nÓg 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.

Gaelscoil Thulach na nÓg has, in accordance with the recommendations for full implementation of the SPHE curriculum, divided the strand units over a two year cycle as outlined below.

In order to ensure all strands are implemented it has been agreed that in **Gaelscoil Thulach na nÓg** all class teachers will use the template below to plan for and implement SPHE.

SPHE Two Year School Plan

Strand	Strand Units (Year 1)	Strand Units (Year 2)
Myself	Self-identity (September) Safety and Protection - Personal Safety: (October, November, December) The full implementation of the Stay Safe programme	Taking care of my body <i>+ all classes Revise Stay Safe lessons on Touches and Secrets and Telling lessons</i> (January, February to Mid March)
	a) Making Decisions* (March-April) 3rd to 6th class only. b) Safety and Protection - Other Safety Issues (March-April) Infants to 2nd class only	Growing and Changing (Mid Mar-April)
Myself and others	Myself and My Family (January, February)	Relating to others (September & October)
		a) My friends and other people + b) Safety and Protection: Other Safety Issues 3rd to 6th classes only (May- June)
Myself and the wider world	Developing Citizenship (May-June)	Media Education (Nov-Dec.)

All classes will do the same strands in one year and will implement the strands over the months as outlined above.

At the time of this review

Year 1 = School year 2020/2021

Year 2 = School year 2021/2022

School year 2022/2023

School year 2023/2024

The date for the next review is June 2022

Teacher Planning and recording of content objectives and strand units covered:

All teachers will be required to have an SPHE plan for each month. That plan must clearly show the content objectives (Strand units) to be covered in that month and how this has been timetabled for.

As part of the Cuntas Miosiuil teachers must indicate the content objectives (Strand units) covered in SPHE for that month.

After completion of the Stay Safe programme (YEAR 1 of the School Plan) teachers must sign the 'Completion of the Stay Safe Programme' record sheet in the principal's office.

The Stay Safe Programme:

The Stay Safe programme is a personal safety skills programme for primary schools. The aim of the programme is to reduce vulnerability to child abuse and bullying through the provision of personal safety education for children and training for teachers, school management boards and parents.

In accordance with the DES Child Protection procedures 2017 all primary schools are required to fully implement the programme within the context of the Social, Personal and Health Education curriculum.

The implementation of the Stay Safe programme in **Gaelscoil Thulach na nÓg** will be a collaborative process involving parents, teachers and the wider school community taking a co-ordinated approach to child protection and child abuse prevention through safety skills education.

The Stay Safe programme will be taught in its entirety under the Strand MySelf: Strand Unit: Safety and Protection (Personal Safety) in YEAR 1 of **Gaelscoil Thulach na nÓg** SPHE school plan. All class teachers will ensure that topics are taught consecutively, beginning with Topic 1 and working through to Topic 5.

As part of the Year 2 SPHE plan all classes will revise the following topic from the Stay Safe programme: Touches and Telling&Secrets

On completion of the programme class teachers must sign the 'Completion of the Stay Safe Programme' record sheet in the principal's office.

2. Contexts for SPHE:

SPHE will be taught in **Gaelscoil Thulach na nÓg** through a combination of the following contexts:

a) Positive School Climate and Atmosphere

Gaelscoil Thulach na nÓg 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
- fostering a strong pastoral care role among the staff
- providing for social group sessions in the Learning Support Setting to support pupils with specific needs

b) Discrete time for SPHE

SPHE is allocated ½ hour per week on each teacher's timetable in **Gaelscoil Thulach na nÓg**. However teachers may allocate 1 hour per fortnight to allow for more in-depth exploration of a strand unit.

c) Integration with other subject areas and Linkage within SPHE

Through endeavouring to adopt a thematic approach to SPHE by integrating it with other subject areas such as Language, Geography, History, Religion, Visual Arts, Physical Education, etc. more time can be allocated to exploring SPHE topics.

SPHE Themes/Projects such as Healthy Eating Policy, Food Dudes, Friendship Week, Culture Day, Sports Events, Wellness Initiatives, Lenten Campaign, etc. will also be explored in a thematic way.

3. Approaches and Methodologies:

Gaelscoil Thulach na nÓg believe 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:

- drama activities

- co-operative games
- use of pictures
- photographs and visual images
- written activities
- use of media
- information technologies and looking at children’s work

4. 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.

uses the following recommended informal tools for assessment in SPHE:

- *Teacher observation*
- *Teacher-designed tasks and tests*
- *Portfolios and projects*
- *Self reflection and self assessment*
- *Staff team meetings and consultations*
- *Communication with parents*

5. Children with Different Needs:

Teachers endeavour to adapt and modify activities and methodologies in SPHE to encourage participation by children with special needs. The learning support and resource teachers supplement the work of the class teachers where necessary. **Gaelscoil Thulach na nÓg** school 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.

6. Equality of Participation and Access:

Gaelscoil Thulach na nÓg recognises and values diversity, and believes all children are entitled to access the services, facilities, or amenities that are available in the school environment. Ours is a mixed school and we endeavour to challenge traditional stereotypes and both girls/boys participate in discussion, debate, presentation, the Pupils Council etc. **Gaelscoil Thulach na nÓg** is under An Foras Patrúnachta school management, and we endeavour to provide for *Children of other faiths and no faith, Members of Travelling community, Children with disabilities, Families with literacy difficulties, Children who are learning English as a second language*

Organisation:

7. Policies and Programmes that support SPHE:

Policies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Safeguarding and Risk Assessment Statement • Anti-Bullying • Relationships and Sexuality Education • Substance Use • Code of Behaviour

- Enrolment
- Health and Safety
- Healthy Eating
- Internet Acceptable Useage

Programmes and Resources used

- The Stay Safe programme
- The Walk Tall Programme
- RSE materials and resources
- Webwise resources
- Active School Flag
- Health Promoting Schools
- Food Dudes
- Green Flag

8. Homework:

SPHE homework, if prescribed in SPHE, will reflect the active learning approach and will reinforce information already taught during class. The home/school link worksheets from the Stay Safe programme will be used as recommended to provide parents / carers with information on topics and messages being covered in class.

9. Resources:

PDST 'Making the Links and Beyond' as well as PDST online resources

9.1 Programmes and Other Materials:

Books for Pupil	Books for Teacher	Audio / Visual	Posters	Media & ICT
	RSE Manuals Walk Tall Stay Safe Making the Links	Busy Bodies Food Dudes	Various posters throughout the school	Webwise Resources

9.2 Guest Speakers:

When a guest speaker addresses the children in SPHE, the class teacher will remain in the classroom (as per Circular 42/2018) and make the speaker aware of this school plan and attached policies.

10. Individual Teachers' Planning and Reporting:

This plan in SPHE and the curriculum documents informs and guides teachers in their long and short term planning in SPHE. Each teacher keeps a Cuntas Míósúil and this informs our progress and needs when evaluating and reviewing our progress in SPHE.

11. Staff Development:

Training opportunities will, as necessary, be provided for all school personnel to ensure the effective implementation of the SPHE curriculum:

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

12. Parental Involvement /Opt Out

[insert school name] believe that parental involvement is considered an integral part to effectively implementing the SPHE curriculum. Partnership with parents is an essential component in the promotion and building of key life skills. In addition parental involvement gives children more opportunities to repeat the concepts, skills and messages learned.

Homework sheets and the home school links from the Stay Safe programme (HSL) will be used by the teachers to inform parents / carers on the topics and specific lessons being covered in class and how they can reinforce the messages at home.

Links to this plan, the curriculum documents and the resources used, specifically for sensitive issues, are available for parents. Parents are informed in by way of a text or note in advance of the teaching of the sensitive aspects of the SPHE curriculum e.g. Stay Safe and RSE lessons. Information on other school Initiatives supporting the SPHE curriculum are shared with parents in the school newsletters.

Opt Out:

Parents have the right to opt their child/children out of any of the sensitive aspects of the SPHE programme, including the Stay Safe programme and RSE lessons. [insert school name] informs parents/carers, as part of the enrolment process, that Stay Safe and RSE are being implemented in the school. Parents are invited to contact the class teacher or principal if they have any queries or concerns about their child's participation in these.

In the event that a parent withdraws their child from participation in any of the sensitive aspects of SPHE a written record of their reasons for so doing will be made.

13. Community Links:

[insert school name] believe that the local community has a very important role to play in supporting the programme in SPHE and liaise with the members such as the Dental Hygienist, Health Nurse, Fireman, Vet, New Parent, Local Businesses etc.

14. Success Criteria

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

15. Implementation

(a) Roles and Responsibilities:

Gaelscoil Thulach na nÓg believes that the school community must be involved to successfully implement SPHE. Therefore the teaching staff will implement this plan with the support of the Board of Management, Parents and the Local Community.

(b) Timeframe:

The plan will be implemented from September 2021 with all classes commencing on Year 1 of the SPHE plan as outlined above.

16. Review

It will be necessary to review this plan on a regular basis to ensure optimum implementation of the SPHE curriculum in the school.

This plan will be reviewed in 2022.

■ **Ratification and Communication**

The Board of Management of **Gaelscoil Thulach na nÓg** ratified this plan.

Signed _____

Date _____

This plan is available to view at the school by the parents on request.