

# **Social Personal Health Education** **School Policy Document**

## **Committee Members:**

Ms. Eva Burke (Staff)  
Ms. Nora Bourke (Board of Management)  
Mr. Pdraig Doyle (Staff)  
Mr. Michael Duffy (Parents' Association)  
Mr. Jonathan Hazlett (Students Council)  
Mr. Phil Jones (Board of Management)  
Ms. Pauline Keys (Parents' Association)  
Mr. Stuart Neylon (Students Council)

## ***October – December 2002***

Students Council, Parents' Council, Staff, Principal, Board of Management.

## ***January – February 2003***

### **Introduction:**

Ardcoil Rís, North Circular Road, Limerick is a boy's secondary school, under the trusteeship of the Christian Brothers. As a Christian Brothers School, we aim to create a Christian community, composed of students, staff, parents, and management. We strive to create a school atmosphere where pupils are imbued with the Christian values of respect, justice, and integrity. Our rules are based on respect for fellow pupils and staff. We aim to uphold and develop the spiritual, social, academic values of students in accordance with the philosophy and ethos of Christian Brothers School.

Valuing all pupils, irrespective of background, has always been a feature of the Christian Brothers Schools and Ardcoil Rís supports this principle. The school strives to provide pupils with excellent teaching and learning opportunities and we expect each pupil to work diligently and achieve his full potential in accordance with his ability.

The aim of our school is to co-operate with parents in fostering the holistic development of our students, so that each one may realise and bring to fulfilment his own special talents and unique personality.

## **Definition of Social, Personal and Health Education, its aim and how it links with school ethos.**

SPHE is a programme that provides students with the unique opportunity to develop the skills and competencies to learn about themselves and others and to make informed decisions about their health, personal lives, and social development.

### **The Aims of SPHE:**

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

- ♣ To enable the 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.

We see these aims as contributing towards the school's commitment to nurturing the Christian values of respect, justice and integrity in all aspects of school life and to fostering the holistic development of the students in our care.

The school recognises that the home is the natural environment where children grow, develop and mature into adults. However, it also accepts as stated in paragraph 9 sub section of the Education Act 1998, its own role in supporting parents in this work and in fostering the social, moral, spiritual and personal development of the students. Our commitment to the development of the student community is evident in the many examples of activities and support structures (Appendix 1) is acknowledged by Ardscoil Rís School. S.P.H.E. is seen to build on this commitment.

### **Outline of the Programme and Teaching Methods:**

The curriculum for S.P.H.E. is presented in ten modules. The Department of Education and Science recognises that each school has flexibility within this framework to plan the SPHE Programme most suitable for the students and the school. (Appendix 2 & 3).

### **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.

As the SPHE programme is primarily skills based, teaching methods should be of an experiential nature with an emphasis on discussion reflection and classroom participation. These teaching methods are child centred and must be appropriate to the age and stage of development of the student. The class atmosphere needs to be one of respect for the privacy of each individual student and hallmarked by sensitivity and care.

How SPHE will be thought and timetabled for one period a week for 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> years, commencing in 2003. Provision for SPHE in Transition year is subject to the TYO Programme.

**Staff development, training, and resource issues:**

The Board of Management will endeavour to provide the necessary human and material resources to support the programme on an ongoing basis. The role of the SPHE co-ordinator is seen as vital to a meaningful SPHE Programme. School management will encourage and facilitate teachers to attend relevant in-service training for the continued development of the SPHE Programme.

**How Parents Will Be Informed:**

The SPHE Policy will be sent to all parents of students currently taking SPHE and thereafter parents of incoming students taking SPHE will receive the document. A full and complete syllabus, core resource material and the policy document will be available in the school for viewing. Parents who require further information may contact the SPHE co-ordinator in the school. While SPHE is part of the core curriculum for Junior Certificate students, parents may withdraw their child from the RSE module. In this event, suitable supervision must be agreed with the school management.

**How Teachers will be informed:**

All teaching staff will be provided with a copy of the school policy and an explanatory leaflet of the SPHE programme. The Department of Education and Science will make them aware of any substantial changes, to the programme, through the usual channels. Teachers delivering the SPHE programme will be afforded the opportunity for a deeper exploration of all the issues in meetings with the SPHE Co-ordinator.

**How Students will be informed:**

Students will be informed of the policy through The Students Council and their parents.

**The Role of Visitors:**

Visitors to SPHE classes will deal with discussions in line with the aims of the programme and the Ethos of the school. It is the duty of the teacher who organises the visit to ensure the suitability of the visit to the programme and the school. Teachers will remain with the class for the duration of the visit. Principal must be informed in advance of all visiting speakers and the content of their presentation.

**Sensitive Issues:**

Class discussion will be a general nature and not be personally directed. If individual issues emerge, they will be referred on by the teacher to the appropriate person(s). The SPHE teacher will act as a facilitator and not a counsellor.

**Evaluation & Review:**

The SPHE policy will be reviewed after two years by a group composed of the SPHE Co-ordinator and representatives from the Board of Management, Students Council, Parents Association and SPHE teachers. The evaluation of the SPHE programme will take place annually and will include teachers, students and the principal.

**Board of Management Approval:**

**04 March 2003**

## *Appendix 1*

Examples of activities and support structures in the school:

- ♣ Year Heads
- ♣ Class Tutor system
- ♣ Students Council
- ♣ Parents Council
- ♣ Transition Year Programme
- ♣ Games/Sport
- ♣ Music
- ♣ Religious Education
- ♣ L.C.V.P. Programme
- ♣ School Trips
- ♣ Retreats
- ♣ Immersion Programme (India)
- ♣ Career Guidance
- ♣ Rights of Passage (Transition and Leaving Cert Year)
- ♣ Horizon Programme
- ♣ Gaisce and Edmund Rice Awards
- ♣ Quizzes
- ♣ Student Counselling
- ♣ Enterprise Education
- ♣ Supervised Study
- ♣ Learning Support

*This is not a definitive list.*

### *Policies:*

Substance Abuse Prevention  
Discipline  
Graffiti Policy

## *Social, Personal and Health Education Junior Cycle Programme*

| <b>Module</b>                      | <b>Year One</b>  | <b>Year Two</b>  | <b>Year Three</b>  |
|------------------------------------|--|--|--|
| <b>Belonging and Integrating</b>   | Coping with Change<br>Joining a new group<br>Appreciating Difference<br>Bullying is everyone's business<br>Coping with Loss                                | Looking Back, Looking Forward<br>Group work<br>Family ties   | Goal Setting for Third Year<br>Work Contract   |
| <b>Self Management</b>             | Organising Myself<br>Organising my work at home and at school.<br>Balance in my life   | What motivates me<br>Study Skills  | Organising my time<br>Planning for effective study<br>Coping with examinations   |
| <b>Communication Skills</b>        | Express yourself<br>Learning to listen<br>Passive, Assertive and aggressive communication  | Assertive communication  | Learning to communicate<br>Communication in situations of conflict   |
| <b>Physical Health</b>             | Body Care<br>Healthy Eating<br>Exercise  | Body Care and Body Image   | Physical exercise<br>Relaxation<br>Diet  |
| <b>Friendship</b>                  | Making New Friends<br>A Good Friend  | The changing nature of friendship  | Boyfriends and Girlfriends   |
| <b>Relationships and Sexuality</b> | Me as Unique and Different<br>Friendship<br>Changes at Adolescence<br>The Reproductive System<br>Images of Male and Female<br>Respecting myself and others | From conception to birth<br>Recognition and expressing feelings and emotions<br>Peer pressure and other influences<br>Managing relationships<br>Making responsible decisions<br>Health and Personal safety | Body Image<br>Where am I now?<br>Relationships – what's important<br>The three R's: respect, rights and responsibilities<br>Conflict |
| <b>Emotional Health</b>            | Recognising Feelings<br>Respecting my Feelings and the Feelings of others  | Self Confidence<br>Body image  | Stress<br>Feelings and Moods   |
| <b>Influences and Decisions</b>    | My Heroes  | Positive and negative influences<br>Making decisions   | Making a good decision   |
| <b>Substance Use</b>               | Why use drugs<br>Alcohol: the facts<br>Smoking and its effects<br>Smoking: why, why not?   | The effects of drugs<br>Alcohol and its effects<br>Alcohol: why, why not?<br>Cannabis and its effects<br>Cannabis: why, why not?   | Ecstasy; the realities<br>Heroin: the realities  |
| <b>Personal Safety</b>             | Looking after myself   | Accidents at home<br>Feeling threatened  | Recognising unsafe situations<br>Violence<br>Help agencies   |

The Department of Education and Science recognises that each school has flexibility within this framework to plan for SPHE programme most suitable for the students and the school.

## Appendix 3

### ***Transition Year Course Outline (A)***

SPHE Module

#### **Unit 1 - Health, Physical and Mental**

Learning outcomes – learners should:

- (i) Understand that physical and mental health are closely interrelated.
- (ii) Understand the concept of mental health.
- (iii) Know what being mentally healthy means in the context of his/her own life.
- (iv) Know how best to achieve and maintain his/her mental health.

#### **Unit 2 - Mental Health**

Learning outcomes – learners should:

- (i) Understand that it is as important to care for one's mental health as it is to care for one's physical health.
- (ii) Know that those who neglect their mental well-being are more susceptible to mental illness as a result.
- (iii) Have a letter knowledge of some of the coping skills necessary to counter mental health problems.

#### **Unit 3 - Mental Illness**

- (i) Understand the concept of mental illness in general as well as the symptoms of particular mental illnesses and the related courses.
- (ii) Sensitively appreciate the position of a mentally ill person.
- (iii) Know that being mentally ill is not a hopeless position in which to find oneself.

#### **Unit 4 - Treatment and Care**

Learning outcomes – learners should:

- (i) Understand that just as there are many mental health problems, there are an equally wide variety of treatments and care techniques.
- (ii) Understand that there is a positive outlook for the vast majority of these problems.

- (iii) Understand that just as with physical illness, some of these problems do not fully respond to treatment.
- (iv) Appreciate that even in these cases treatment and care can greatly relieve both the sufferer's and their family's distress.
- (v) Appreciate that no treatment occurs in a vacuum. The whole person, mental, physical and spiritual must be considered.

## **Unit 5 - Society and Mental Health Attitudes**

Learning Outcomes – learners should:

- (i) Understand the importance of the media in shaping public opinion in relation to mental health.
- (ii) Explore their own personal attitude to those who suffer from mental health problems.
- (iii) Understand their own local communities attitude when confronted with issues dealing with mental health.
- (iv) Comprehend society's attitude when dealing with mental health issues in the past and at present.

## **Unit 6 - Mental Health and You**

Learning outcomes – learners should:

- (i) Be in a position to apply his/her acquired knowledge into making choices for amore mentally healthy lifestyle

## **Transition Year Course Outline (B)**

### **Unit 1 - Text and Resources:**

'On my Own Feet', Department of Education and Science and Mater Del Counselling Centre.

#### Course Content

- (i) Identity and self-esteem
- (ii) Understanding influences
- (iii) Assertive Communication
- (iv) Feelings
- (v) Decision making

### **Unit 2 - Text and Resources:**

Social and Health Education for Senior Cycle Pupils, Frank Dorr and Eileen Lynch.

#### Course Content

- (i) Respect
- (ii) Stress
- (iii) Living Well
- (iv) R.S.E.

