



Rathcoole ETNS

SPHE Policy

Sept. 2022

Social, Personal and Health Education Whole School Plan

Introductory Statement

The staff of Rathcoole ETNS formulated this school plan for SPHE, in consultation with our Board of Management and our Parents, as we believe that SPHE is a shared responsibility and the contributions and involvement of the whole school community will be essential to the effective implementation of the SPHE programme in the school. It was drafted by the school principal and staff and brought to the attention of the Board of Management and Parents.

Rathcoole ETNS is a developing, Educate Together School catering for children from the ages of 4 to 12. We are an inclusive school providing care for children from a variety of cultural and religious backgrounds. Our vision at Rathcoole ETNS, as outlined in our Mission Statement, is to promote the full and harmonious development of our pupils; intellectual, emotional, physical, cultural, and moral. The SPHE programme is just one way of helping us to achieve those aims. Through SPHE, we seek to develop positive self-esteem, social and communication skills, appropriate expression of feelings as well as safety and protection skills in each child in our care. The opportunity to develop these skills will be provided through a structured programme.

Rationale

Through their daily interaction with others in our school, pupils will be enabled to:

- Become more confident
- Respect themselves and others
- Relate to others by learning effective means of handling situations
- Promote healthy lifestyles and positive wellbeing
- Build links to the wider community

The school ethos and the respect and dignity experienced by pupils in their dealings with all school staff and personnel, is of crucial importance in promoting a positive climate.

This plan was created in response to the challenges of the curriculum, and to enable us to be more aware, more consistent and more focused in our approach to SPHE. We want to build on existing good practice, and to have an overall vision to inform long-term and short-term planning.

Vision:

SPHE in Rathcoole ETNS will promote self awareness and understanding, by helping children to name and manage their own feelings, to recognise and appreciate individual abilities, and to cope with change of various kinds. SPHE will help children establish supportive relationships, to enjoy the company of others and to resolve conflicts in appropriate ways.

Aims:

The children in our school will be enabled to achieve the aims outlined in the SPHE curriculum, which include:

- ✚ to promote the personal development and wellbeing 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:

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. We will teach the required aspects of all three major strand units each year and strand units will be approached in such a way that pupils will receive a comprehensive and thorough programme in SPHE over a two year period.

- (a) Relationships and Sexuality Education Programme: This programme aims to promote an understanding of and a healthy attitude towards, sexuality and relationships; to promote knowledge of and respect for reproduction; to promote a sense of wonder and awe at the process of birth and new life; feel comfortable with his/her sexuality and gender and that of others. The aspects of this programme which pertain to the curriculum of Rathcoole ETNS are highlighted in green in Appendix 1.
- (b) The Walk Tall Programme: This programme aims to avert or at least delay experimentation with substances; reduce the demand for legal/illegal drugs; give primary school children the confidence, skills, and knowledge to make healthy choices. The aspects of this programme which pertain to the curriculum of Rathcoole ETNS are highlighted in blue in Appendix 1.
- (c) The Stay Safe Programme aims to prevent child abuse by giving children the skills and strategies necessary to enable them to respond safely to any dangerous, upsetting or abusive situation; teach children how to deal with unsafe or inappropriate touch and never to keep a touch a secret; teach children about the importance of telling; give children safety strategies to deal with strangers. The Stay Safe programme is taught in full and is highlighted in red in Appendix 1. (C/ref Stay Safe Policy attached)

Whole School Plan

Month	Year 1 (Even Years) Strand/Strand Units	Year 2 (Odd Years) Strand/Strand Units
September/October	Myself-Self Identity	Myself and Others – Myself and My Family
November/December	Myself and Others – My friends and Other People	Myself and Others – Relating to Others Myself and Others – Growing and Changing
January/February	Stay Safe	Stay Safe
March/April	Myself – Making Decisions Myself – Safety and Protection	Myself – Taking Care of my Body
May/June	Myself and the Wider World – Media Education	Myself and the Wider World – Developing Citizenship

Contexts for SPHE:

SPHE will be approached in Rathcoole ETNS through a combination of the following three contexts:

1. Creating a Positive School Climate & Atmosphere

(a) Positive School Climate

Rathcoole ETNS has created a positive atmosphere by building effective communication through:

- Regular letters, text messages and newsletters to parents, meetings with parents association representatives, welcoming atmosphere to parents, publishing of a school website, Weekly updates on Seesaw
- Regular staff meetings, in school management meetings, staff memos, correspondance board in staff room, daily updates on Aladdin.
- Respect for children’s views and opinions. Children are encouraged to use respectful language at all times
- A Buddy Bench is available in the yard every breake time for children in need of a friend to gather and seek support/ play buddies
- A Friendship Week is held annually which promotes kindness, sharing and good friendship and cooperation skills.
- After Schools Clubs promoting friendships, time to play as well as team work and cooperation skills.

(b) Enhancing self-esteem

Promotion of positive behaviour and enhancement of children's self esteem is emphasised and highlighted as one of the key areas of focus in our school plan. All staff members nominate a child or children to be included in the Golden Envelopes monthly, and these are then read out and celebrated during Assembly. The principal displays a Proud Wall outside her office where children and their teachers select work and photographs they are proud of.

(c) creating a health-promoting physical environment

The school has a healthy eating policy. There is a strong emphasis on a variety of sporting activities catering for all abilities, including a selection of after schools activities. The children engage in active lessons where emphasis is placed on promoting good physical and mental health. Smart Move Groups are run on a termly basis to support children in need of specific gross motor and movement support.

(d) developing democratic processes

Staff, parents and pupils are welcome to contribute in all areas of school life. Committees such as The Wellbeing Committee/Green Schools etc are run democratically, members are voted on by the children and representatives from the whole school community are included. Within classrooms, children are encouraged to use agency and voice to make decisions and choices that directly impact them.

(e) fostering respect for diversity

Rathcoole ETNS is an inclusive school. We value and respect other cultures and backgrounds. We encourage children to share their experience of lives in different countries. The Learn Together programme is taught fully in all classes, and teachers will celebrate and teach about religious events, cultural traditions or seasonal holidays that pertain directly to the children and cultures present within the school at any one time. A selection of resources are available on cultural diversity and we endeavour to build this over time.

2. Discrete time for SPHE

SPHE is allocated ½ hour per week on each teacher's timetable in Scoil Aonghusa Junior. However teachers may allocate 1 hour per fortnight to allow for more indepth exploration of a strand unit.

Wellbeing is an integral part of Rathcoole ETNS' vision and is taught and supported throughout the entire school day by all staff members.

3. Integration with other subject areas and Linkage within SPHE

Teachers will endeavour to adopt a thematic approach to SPHE by integrating it with other subject areas such as Language, Geography, History, Learn Together, Visual Arts, Physical Education, etc. Themes/Projects. will also be explored.

Approaches and Methodologies:

In Rathcoole ETNS we 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 use of
- + ICT
- + talk & discussion

Assessment:

Assessment is a central part of learning and teaching. 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.

Rathcoole ETNS uses the following recommended informal tools for assessment in SPHE:



- + *Teacher observation*
- + *Teacher-designed tasks and tests*
- + *Portfolios and projects*

Children with Special Educational Needs:

We aim to provide for the individual needs of all the children enrolled in our school in the following ways

- + SET hours are provided for children with learning difficulties as well as those children who are high achievers.
- + Class teachers can seek advice and support from the Support Teacher re implementation of aspects of the SPHE curriculum. Support teacher is also available to offer advice and support regarding the emotional and behavioural needs of vulnerable children.
- + Children enrolled in Autism classes will receive full access to the SPHE curriculum, and teachers will modify and adapt activities and lessons in accordance with the needs of the children within their classes.
- + Teachers will endeavour to adapt and modify activities and methodologies in SPHE to encourage participation by children with special needs. The SET team will preteach/supplement the work of the class teachers where necessary. Rathcoole ETNS 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

Policies and Programmes that support SPHE:

	Code of Behaviour Amber Flag	
	Enrolment Policy Anti-Bullying Policy	
	Stay Safe Policy RSE Policy	
	Child Protection Policy Healthy Eating Policy	
	Healy & Safety Policy Wellbeing Policy	
	Green Flag Friendship Week	

Resources:

Programmes and Other Materials:

Books for Teacher

- RSE Manuals
- Walk Tall
- Stay Safe
- Bi Follain
- Making the Links
- Therapeutic Stories (Margot Sunderland)
- Talkabout for Children 1 and 2 (Alex Kelly)
- Social Skills Training (Jed Baker)
- Cool Kids
- Volcano in my Tummy (Whitehouse & Pudney)
- Comic Strip Conversations (Carol Gray)
- My New Social Stories Book (Carol Gray)
- Relaxation and Concentration Games (Portmann & Schneider)
- Group Games (Birgit Fuchs)
- Self Esteem Games for kids (Barbara Sher)
- Making Waves (parachute games)
- Circle Time (Jenny Mosley)
- How to promote Children's Social and emotional competence

(WebsterStratton)

Media & ICT

- Mind Reading CD ROM
- Board Maker CD ROM

(b)Guest Speakers:

When a guest speaker addresses the children in SPHE, the class teacher will remain in the classroom and make the speaker aware of this school plan and attached policies. Questions to be considered when inviting speakers to the school include:

- Child Protection Procedures are adhered to
- What topics may require an outside intervention
- Will a visitor be invited to speak to the whole school or to individual classes
- Is the visit in accordance with the school plan
- Will parents be made aware of, and invited to, come of the visiting presentations
- How many visits should take place during the year. **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.

Staff Development/CPD:

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. At regular intervals staff training needs will be audited. Staff are encouraged to and are facilitated in sharing expertise in this area.

Parental Involvement:

Parental involvement is considered an integral part to effectively implementing SPHE as we in Rathcoole ETNS believe that SPHE is a shared responsibility. This plan and the curriculum documents are available for parents to inform them of the programme for SPHE. Parents are important partners in any decision regarding S.P.H.E. and Relationships and Sexuality Education.

Community Links:

In Rathcoole ETNS we believe that the local community has a very important role to play in supporting the programme in SPHE and endeavour to liaise with the members such as the Dental Hygienist, Health Nurse, Fireman, grandparents, Traffic Warden (Lollipop lady), Community Garda, Park Warden, G.A.A.Club etc.

Success Criteria

The success of this plan will be evaluated through teacher's planning and preparation, and if the procedures outlined in this plan have been consistently followed. We will assess SPHE in accordance with the guidelines in the Curriculum Statement (p70-77) and it will take the form of

- Teacher Observation
- Teacher designed tasks and tests
- Portfolios and projects

We will also judge its success if the children have been enabled to achieve the aims outlined in this plan. Feedback from parents and children is very welcome and informative.

Implementation

(a) Roles and Responsibilities:

Rathcoole ETNS believes that the whole 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 Sept 2022

Review

(a) 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. Those involved in the review will include: teachers, pupils, parent body and BOM

(b) Timeframe:

This plan will be reviewed regularly in accordance with Child Protection Policy review.

Ratification and Communication

This plan was ratified by the Board of Management at a meeting on: _____

Signed: _____
Chairperson of Board of Management

Signed: _____
Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

Date: _____

Date: _____



Rathcoole ETNS

Stay Safe Programme Policy

Rathcoole ETNS reviewed and amended its approach to the Stay Safe Programme during the school year 2022-2023. The principal aim of the programme is to provide safety education for children in order to reduce vulnerability to bullying and abuse. Under Child Protection Guidelines all schools are obliged to teach the Stay Safe programme in its entirety.

Stay Safe is taught as part of the SPHE (Social Personal and Health Education) curriculum. In Rathcoole ETNS we will teach the full Stay Safe programme in Senior Infants, 2nd Class, 4th Class and 6th Class during Term 2 – this will involve 2x30 minute lessons twice weekly. Topic 3 dealing with the sensitive issue “Touches” lessons will also be revised in 1st Class, 3rd Class and 5th Class every year. Junior Infant classes will touch on topics through playful learning opportunities in accordance with the Aistear Framework and SPHE curriculum.

Parents/Guardians are encouraged to become involved by discussing each lesson with their child and helping their child to complete each worksheet based on the lessons in the programme. Parents are informed in advance of commencement of teaching the Stay Safe Programme. They are directed to www.pdst.ie/staysafe to see the content of the lessons and for any further information they might need.

Parents/Guardians who do not want their child/children to attend these lessons must inform the school in writing. This letter must be kept in the pupil’s School Record File.

Class Teachers will record “Stay Safe completed in Term 2” on the end of year school report. Staff will be facilitated to attend CPD training on the revised Stay Safe programme.

This plan was ratified by the Board of Management at a meeting on: _____

Signed: _____

Signed: _____

Chairperson of Board of Management

Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

Date: _____

Date: _____

