

SOCIAL PERSONAL HEALTH EDUCATION POLICY

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1. Scope

This policy applies to the following:

Second level students 1st – 3rd year.

Second level students 4th – 6th year via RSE Policy

Teachers and parents of students

Where a school policy exists that relates to an SPHE module, this policy must be considered in conjunction with that policy e.g. Substance Use, anti-Bullying, Relationships and Sexuality.

2. Relationship to School's Mission Statement

The core values of our mission statement are aligned with the aims of the SPHE programme in that both support the spiritual and emotional growth of the student. Further the mission statement states that Grange Community College fosters *...an atmosphere which promotes self esteem, honesty, justice and respect for others* a key part of the SPHE programme.

3. Rationale

SPHE is not a required policy for schools however it is recognised that existence of a policy supports the planning and implementation of SPHE within schools.

The Education Act 1998, Section 9, Subsection (d) states that:

A recognised school shall provide education to students which is appropriate to their abilities and needs and, without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing, it shall use its available resources to

- (d) promote the moral, spiritual, social and personal development of students and provide health education for them, in consultation with their parents, having regard to the characteristic spirit of the school"

The White Paper on Education (1995), "Charting our Education Future" states that "The promotion of the social, personal and health education of students is a major concern for each school." And again, "The promotion of the social, personal and health education of students throughout their time in school is an integrated part of the school's educational policy" (p.161).

As well as these national papers and Acts, this policy has also drawn on observations of good practice/positive feedback and recommendations and made in Subject Inspection of Social, Personal and Health Education Grange Community College, Department of Education and Science 4 September 2008.

4. Goals/Objectives

Grange Community College supports the outline goals of the Programme as stated in the School Handbook for SPHE.

- To enable the students to develop personal and social skills
- To promote self-esteem and self confidence
- To enable the 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

5. Content

Grange Community College recognises that the primary responsibility for the moral, spiritual, social and personal development of children lies with their parents. The content of the programme is detailed in the School Handbook, Guideline for Teachers and Curriculum. Some of the principal points from these documents are:

5.1 Curriculum

The curriculum for SPHE is presented in ten modules, each of which appears in each year of the three year cycle. The emphasis will be on developing skills, understanding, attitudes and values important to all these areas. The ten modules are:

- Belonging and Integrating
- Self-Management – a sense of purpose
- Communication Skills
- Physical Health
- Friendships
- Relationships and Sexuality
- Influences and Decisions.
- Emotional Health
- Substance Use
- Personal Safety

5.2 Teachers

Teachers are assigned a class following consultation. This was commended in the 2008 report on SPHE. "... and is a contributing factor to the success of the programme"

It is an aspiration that as far as possible teachers retain classes for the duration of the three year-cycle. This is mentioned both in the report on SPHE in Grange Community College and in SPHE handbook.

A further aspiration proven to be good practice is to have the class tutor as SPHE teacher. This allows teachers who have no contact with their tutor group other than for registration to have a class contact period with their students.

5.3 Co-ordination (SPHE Support Service Handbook pp 2.2)

Time is given at least once a term for monitoring/reviewing the curriculum. An overall evaluation is carried out at the end of the school year and this feeds into planning for SPHE at the beginning of the next year.

Co-ordination is managed by the SPHE team, there is no specific SPHE co-ordinator.

5.4 Organisational Issues

Consideration is given to the size of class. Smaller class groups are more effective; this is especially true for the more challenging groups, or classes with particularly low self-esteem.

(SPHE Support Service Handbook pp 2.2)

5.5 Place on Timetable

For 1st, 2nd and 3rd year students one timetabled class period will take place per week.

5.6 Classroom Methods and Assessment

The SPHE programme is primarily of an experiential nature with an emphasis on discussion, reflection and classroom participation. In Grange Community College these methods are supplemented with the use of a suitable school textbook.

Students maintain a folder and/or copybook as evidence of written work, as there is no formal assessment in this subject.

5.7 Sensitive Issues/Participation

Within Grange Community College we do not promote any 'one particular lifestyle' as the only acceptable way for the community as a whole, be it moral, sexual or spiritual. Therefore it is inevitable that topics will be discussed during the SPHE programme that will affect this. Exploring these issues can provide opportunities to correct false ideas, and assumptions and address prejudice. Discussion will be age appropriate to pupils and will be discussed in an open manner, looking at all sides of the issues in a non-directive way.

Teachers seeking further clarification on specific issues such as RSE, Substance Use and Bullying, should consult the relevant policy.

5.8 In-service Training

Teachers of SPHE wherever possible will be facilitated to attend in service training.

5.9 Cross Curricular Delivery and Whole School Support

Many aspects of SPHE are dealt with through other subjects and therefore can be termed a whole school activity.

Self management, study skills and organisational skills are key to many subjects and are a focus for all subject areas, particularly in relation to first year students.

Physical Education and Science are the two compulsory junior cycle subjects where specific links exist.

- **Physical Education** touches on many aspects within the area of physical healthy lifestyles.
- **Science**
Relationships and Sexuality
With regard to Science the biological aspects of relationships and sexuality are dealt with, within a context of responsibility, personal choice and relationships education.
Substance Use
Chemical nature of various drugs and their effects.

5.10 Role of Visitors

Visiting speakers are seen as complementing and supporting the SPHE programme in the school. Teachers inviting these speakers must:

- i. Inform Principal in advance.
- ii. Inform Parents if necessary.
- iii. Inform speaker of the ethos and the SPHE policy of the school.
- iv. Agree the content of the presentation in advance.
- v. Do preparatory and follow-up work where possible.

6. Information and Involvement – Parents

Information will be provided to parents/guardians at parent teacher meetings. Where external speakers are visiting the school to speak to groups about sensitive issues parents/guardians will be informed. Parents have a right to withdraw students from talks or workshops concerning RSE.

A comment for SPHE appears on Christmas and Summer Reports.

7. Resources

- Class sets of SPHE books for each year.
1st Year – Minding Me 1
2nd year – Minding Me 2
3rd year – Healthy Lifestyles 3

- Single copies of other SPHE text books, for supplementary material including :
Its your life
Grow Up
- On my own two feet. Resource Pack
- Packs and information provided by the HSE, for schools on the subject of RSE
- SPHE support programme
- Trinity Youth Services
- Child Protection Guidelines. (Department of Education and Science 2004).

8. Links to Other Policies

- Relationships and Sexuality Policy
- Substance Use Policy
- Anti Bullying Policy
- Guidance Policy

Any other relevant policy

9. Monitoring Review and Evaluation

The responsibility for policy review rests with the Principal and the Board of Management of Grange Community College and will be carried out within the framework of Whole School Planning.

The policy will be updated in the context of changing legislation, developments in education programmes and feedback from staff, students, and parents/guardians, or in two years as indicated below.

10. Ratification and Communication

After Ratification, this policy will be made available to all staff. It will be published on the schools website and parents will be informed that they can find the policy on the webpage.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Review Date: _____

