

Social, Personal and Health Education (S.P.H.E.)

Mission Statement of the School

Corran College by excelling in teaching and learning creates opportunities for excellence for all its students through an all embracing well balanced education. We aim to achieve the highest standards of learning and behaviour in a caring atmosphere where all students feel valued.

Our commitment to S.P. H. E. is a fundamental part of our commitment to provide for the faith and personal development of each student’.

Definition of S.P.H.E.

Social, Personal, Health Education, including its module on Relationships and Sexuality Education (R.S.E.) is a programme that provides students with the unique opportunity to develop the skills and competence to learn about themselves and others, and to make informed decision about their health, personal lives and social development.

The Aims of S. P. H. E.

- To enable the students to develop skills for self-fulfilment and living in communities.
- 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.

A) Whole School Approach

We believe the ways in which every member of staff relates to one another and to the students, and the quality of relationships between the students themselves, form the foundation for personal and social development in a school. Consequently, every

teacher, every class and extracurricular activity offers opportunities for enhancing the personal and social development of the students. Corran College aims to create an environment which fully supports SPHE. The introduction of SPHE gives the school an opportunity to develop positively and strive to achieve an environment in which

- People feel valued
- Self-esteem is fostered
- Respect, tolerance and fairness are evident
- High expectations and standards are promoted
- There is support for those with difficulties
- Open communication is the norm
- Effort is recognised and rewarded
- Uniqueness and difference is valued
- Conflict is handled constructively
- Initiative and creativity are encouraged
- Social, moral and civic values are promoted.

B) The Aims of R. S. E.

SPHE/RSE aim to provide opportunities for our young people to develop a positive sense of self-awareness, and the skills for building and maintaining self esteem and to learn about relationships and sexuality in ways that help them think and act in a moral, spiritual, caring and responsible way.

How S.P. H.E. links with the School Ethos

S.P.H.E will provide young people with skills to evaluate critically the wide range of information, opinions, attitudes and values offered today, in order that they will make positive, responsible choices about themselves and about the way they live their lives.

While the school acknowledges that the home is the natural environment for the social , personal and health development of children, the Education Act of 1998 (Section 0,

subsection d) requires all recognised schools to promote the moral, spiritual, social and personal development of students and provide health education for them. This will happen in consultation with their parents and in the context of the Christian Ethos of the school.

A summary of what the school currently provides for the general well being of students, both formally and informally, to support S.P.H.E. is included in Appendix 1. S.P.H.E. is seen to build on this existing commitment to the care and development of students within the school.

Outline of the Programme Content for S.P. H. E.

The programme for S.P.H.E. is presented in ten modules, each of which appears in each year of the three-year junior cycle programme. 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
- Emotional Health
- Influences and Decisions
- Substance Use
- Personal Safety

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

Topics for Senior Cycle students will build on elements covered in Junior Cycle will treat issues in ways suitable for the young adult. Topics will include:

Treating women and men with equal respect

Making responsible choices regarding sexual activity
Sexual harassment
Awareness of what constitutes a loving relationship
A deeper understanding of pregnancy and the developing foetus
The long-term commitment involved in marriage
Parenting and family life
Fertility and family planning
Sexual abuse, rape, legal rights: voluntary and statutory agencies

The contents of the RSE programme are described in three themes. These are:

- Human Growth and Development
- Human Sexuality
- Human Relationships

1. Each theme is developed in an age appropriate manner during Junior and Senior cycle in accordance with the guidelines issued by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment and the Mission Statement and aim of our school.
2. Teachers have opportunities for In-service in SPHE and RSE and are provided with relevant resources.
3. Prior to beginning any R.S.E. module parents will be notified of its content.
4. The School recognises the rights of parents to withdraw their child/children from all or parts of the RSE programme.

Teaching Methods:

Because the programme is primarily skills-based, teaching methods must be of an experiential nature with an emphasis on discussion, reflection and classroom participation. These teaching methods will be child-centred and appropriate to the age and stage of development of the student.

We are very aware that each child has individual needs and abilities. We believe that we must sometimes change and adapt the S.P.H.E. programme to suit the huge variety of needs displayed by children in our care, some of whom may have particular special needs. These students may be in our Special Class or in our mainstream class groups. As S.P.H.E.

teachers, we are conscious of the need to include each student in the lesson by using various different teaching methods.

S.P.H.E. is a subject that requires participation, involvement and interaction from each student so it is very important that each teacher will use a wide variety of teaching methods to make it possible for all students to be actively involved. Through the use of appropriate methodologies, students with special needs can fully participate in the S.P.H.E. class.

S.P.H.E addresses areas that are particularly crucial in the development of a person with learning difficulties and special needs and so it is our policy that a child will not be withdrawn from S.P.H.E. class in order to receive learning support or resource help.

Cross Curricular Links:

The SPHE team is conscious of the potential for cross-curricular links in particular with CSPE, RE, Science and Home Economics. The team will endeavour to develop and formalise these links as part of the development of the SPHE programme in the school.

Student Programme Assessment

S.P.H.E. will not be formally examined at Certificate Examinations. Self-assessment by students, using self-assessment tools such as questionnaires and/or worksheets, will be seen as an integral part of the teaching, learning and assessment process. Self-assessment tools must be based on clearly stated criteria. Some outcomes of self-assessment must be private.

Peer assessment might also be used to evaluate how well a group might work as a team.

How S.P.H.E. will be Timetabled and Taught

S.P.H.E. will be timetabled for one class period a week for first, second and third years. It will be taught in the context of the Mission Statement of the school. The single SPHE class is assigned to the class tutor. At senior cycle S.P.H.E./R.S.E. will be taught as part of the Religion Programme.

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Staff Development, Training and Resource Issues

The value placed on S.P.H.E. by the school will be evident by the commitment on the part of management to develop a core of trained S.P.H.E. teachers. In-career development is an integral part of this programme. Management are responsible for the relevant training needs of S.P.H.E. teachers. The school management is committed to the appointment of an S.P.H.E. Co-ordinator.

Sensitive Issues in S.P.H.E. and R.S.E.

While it is acknowledged that teachers have a professional responsibility to impart the S.P.H.E. course content, the needs of the students will be addressed in a caring and supportive manner. Where it is appropriate the school will refer students to other supportive links or services, internal or external to the school community e.g. Pastoral Care Team etc. Class discussion will be of a general nature in accordance with the previously agreed ground rules and will not be personally directed. Inappropriate questions will not be answered by a teacher or by another student. Only questions directly related to the lesson content will be addressed.

Subject Planning for a Culturally Diverse Society

Students come in from a wide variety of cultural backgrounds. Therefore, S.P. H.E. Teachers must always be mindful that every classroom includes students from a variety of cultures, even if all present were born and reared in Ireland.

Every module taught in S.P.H.E. must be taught in a culturally sensitive manner, always aware of how different cultural practices must impact on content and methodologies used.

It is important that students learn about similarities and differences and that in doing so they are helped to understand and to respect these differences.

Confidentiality is S.P.H.E. and R.S.E.

The normal limits of confidentiality will apply to any information coming to the attention of the teacher. However every effort should be made to ensure that this information is dealt with in a sensitive and discreet manner.

The Role of Visitors

The S.P.H.E. teacher will consult with the principal in relation to the suitability of guest speakers prior to their invitation to the school. All guest speakers will be made aware of, and requested to comply with the school S.P.H.E. policy. The presentations of guest speakers will be negotiated with the relevant S.P.H.E. teacher before delivery to students. It is normal practice for teachers to remain in the classroom while visitors are there. Preparatory and follow up work where possible should be undertaken by class.

How Teachers will be Informed about S.P.H.E. Policy in the School

Teachers will be provided with a full copy of the school S.P.H.E. policy upon request or access a copy directly from the school website. Teachers will be made aware of any substantial changes made by the Department of Education and Science through the appropriate and usual channels. Interested teachers or those delivering the programme will be afforded the opportunity for a deeper discussion of the S.P.H.E. policy.

How Parents will be Informed

The policy will be available for inspection by all parents on the school website. Feedback provided to parents at Parent Teacher meetings, term exams and school journal. Formal reviews of the policy will only take place in collaboration with teachers, students and parents.

How the Board of Management will be informed about S.P.H.E. policy in the school.

The final S.P.H.E. policy will be discussed at a meeting of the Board of Management.

Review, Assessment and Evaluation

The S.P.H.E. policy will be reviewed and evaluated on a regular basis by school management and the S.P.H.E. team. This is the responsibility of the S.P.H.E. co-ordinator.

Appendix I

Below is a summary of what our school currently provides for the general well-being of students, both formally and informally to support S.P.H.E.

Policies including the following: Admission, Discipline, Anti-Bullying, Substance Use, health and Safety, Attendance, I. T. etc.

Pastoral Care Team

Class teachers, Year Heads

Parents and Students Councils

Class Representatives

After School Study

Sports and Games

Career Guidance

Outside Speakers

Study skills

Open Nights for Parents

Enterprises

Mentor System

Subject Fieldtrips

Green Schools

Christmas Concert/Musical

School Masses, including Christmas and Easter Ceremonies etc.

Student Retreats

Supporting Charities including ‘Concern Fast, St. Vincent de Paul, Bothar etc.

Cross-Curricular links including Religion, Health Education, Science, C.S.P.E. etc.

Parent Teacher Meetings

School Tours

This list is not exhaustive.

