



# Coláiste Pobail Acla

## SPHE Policy

**Coláiste Pobail Acla,  
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## 1. Subject Title: Social, Personal & Health Education (SPHE)

### Duration:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Years 2 periods per week
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Years 1 period per week
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Years 1 period per week

**Aims:** Social, Personal & Health Education (SPHE) aims to develop students' positive sense of themselves and their physical, social, emotional and spiritual health and wellbeing.

This builds on student learning in SPHE in Primary school. Learning in SPHE is essentially supported by a positive, empowering whole school environment and relevant school policies/guidelines including RSE, Anti- Bullying and Substance Misuse policies and Child Protection Guidelines. This broader context for learning in SPHE helps to ensure that students learn to make informed decisions about their Health and Wellbeing. (NCCA Rationale and Aim)

## 2. Course Content

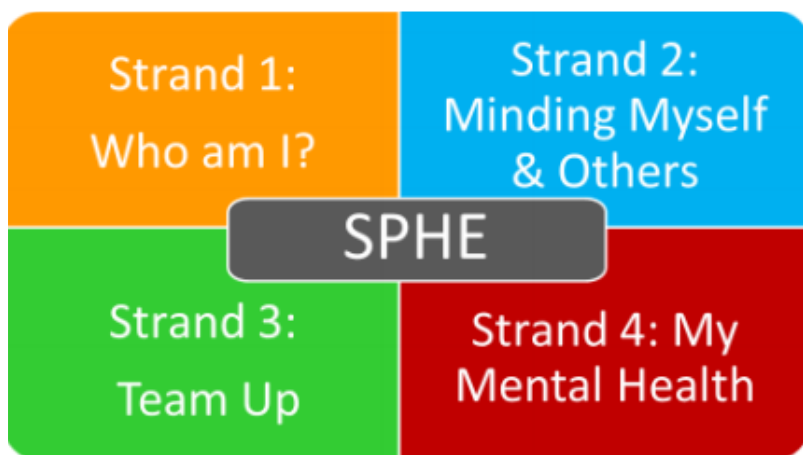
SPHE is designed to enable students to develop a positive sense of themselves and a commitment to caring for themselves and others.

**Strand 1: Who am I?** This strand focuses on developing self-awareness and building self-esteem.

**Strand 2: Minding myself and others.** This strand provides opportunities for students to reflect on how they can best take care of themselves and others.

**Strand 3: Team up.** This strand focuses on students learning about important relationships in their lives and building relationship skills.

**Strand 4: My mental health.** This strand focuses on building positive mental health, examining young people's experience of mental ill health and learning how to support themselves and others in challenging times.



### **3. Rationale**

It is accepted that the home and the parents are the primary educators of their children in the area of Social, Personal and Health Education and Relationships and Sexuality Education. Programmes in these areas carried out in the school are extensions of the education already begun in the home.

SPHE aims to help students develop skills which will enable them to make informed decisions about their health, social development and personal lives thus enabling them to make responsible decisions that respect their own dignity and the dignity of others.

Early adolescence is a time of significant change for young people, physically, emotionally and socially. Through the use of experiential methodologies and group work, students have the dedicated space and time in SPHE classes to develop their understanding and skills to learn about themselves, to care for themselves and others and to make informed decisions about their health and wellbeing in a rapidly changing world.

In this policy document the term ‘parent’ is taken to include guardian.

### **4. Subject Background**

In SPHE, students have opportunities to revisit different themes which focus on developing self-awareness and respect for others, and the skills of self-management, communication, coping, decision-making and relating to others. This spiral approach of revisiting key ideas and topics is familiar from existing approaches to SPHE. This new Wellbeing programme builds on this approach but also emphasises the importance of student agency and engagement in the learning process as key to learning in the affective domain. The skills involved are vital for self-fulfilment, for living in communities and for full engagement in learning beyond SPHE. Personal reflection, resilience and empathy are also promoted through SPHE.

SPHE provides the context within which young people can learn about important physical, social, emotional and moral issues around relationships, sexual health, sexuality and gender identity. Learning in SPHE is supported by a positive, empowering whole school environment and relevant school policies including our anti-bullying and child protection policies. It is school policy that in circumstances where a pupil is considered at some risk of any type of abuse or in breach of the law, the teacher must immediately refer this under the Child Protection Guidelines to the designated liaison person, the Principal. The Principal will then take further action in keeping with the policy. Teachers must not promise absolute confidentiality as teachers may have to report to the Principal under the Child Protection Guidelines.

The context for learning in SPHE helps to ensure that students learn to make informed decisions about their health and wellbeing. These decisions are further supported and encouraged by school, community and national policies and guidelines. Ground rules/class contracts are drawn up by the class teacher in consultation with the class at the start of each school year. Ground rules should be clear and simple and adhered to by all. In Junior Cycle, six indicators (Active, Responsible, Connected, Resilient, Respected and Aware) have been identified as central to students’ wellbeing.

Learning in SPHE provides learning opportunities designed to enhance each of these indicators thereby contributing significantly to the school’s Wellbeing programme in junior cycle.

## 5. Statements of Learning Links to SPHE

The following tables show how SPHE may be linked to the central features of learning and teaching in junior cycle.

Statement of learning	Example of related learning in SPHE
The student has an awareness of personal values and an understanding of the process of moral decision making (SoL 5)	Students participate in a range of activities that promote responsible behaviours and help them to develop skills for making personal and group decisions that respect their own dignity and the dignity of others.
The student appreciates and respects how diverse values, beliefs and traditions have contributed to the communities and culture in which she lives. (SoL 6)	In SPHE, students have opportunities to discuss opinions, examine problems and decide how these might be approached with their peers, thereby helping them to appreciate the value of different perspectives. By examining case studies and undertaking role-play, students can learn to be more empathetic towards others and to respect different values, beliefs and traditions.
The student takes action to safeguard and promote her/his wellbeing and that of others (SoL 11)	Students examine how their values, attitudes and behaviour impact on their own and others' health and wellbeing. They develop different resources designed to support young people in making informed decisions for their own wellbeing and that of others.

## 6. Key Skills Developed Through SPHE



Key Skill	Element	Student learning activity
Being Creative	Exploring options and alternatives	Students explore and evaluate options and alternatives in the context of decisions they make. They record and communicate their learning in creative ways.
Being Literate	Expressing ideas clearly and accurately	Students learn to articulate their thoughts and feelings clearly and respectfully through group work, roleplay and reflections, and by exploring and discussing scenarios and case studies.
Being Numerate	Gathering, interpreting and representing data	Students gather information through questionnaires, surveys and personal records and present their findings in graphic form to different audiences.
Communicating	Listening and expressing myself	Students learn to express themselves clearly and respectfully, to ask for help, to listen to other peoples' viewpoints and discuss ideas and opinions.
Managing Information and Thinking	Gathering, recording, organising and evaluating information	Students become familiar with how and where they can access information and support to maintain their physical and mental health in a holistic way.
Managing Myself	Knowing myself	Students learn more about themselves as they engage in decision-making activities and goal

		setting. They learn to be flexible, to organise themselves, to plan to achieve their goals and to develop a sense of balance in their lives.
<b>Staying Well</b>	Being healthy and physically active	Students learn about taking responsibility for their wellbeing and relationships. They also learn how to include a balanced diet, physical activity and relaxation as part of a healthy lifestyle.
<b>Working with others</b>	Respecting difference	Students learn about group processes and how group membership can affect an individual's thinking and behaviour. They develop greater empathy as they learn about other peoples' perspectives and develop skills for relating effectively to others.

## 7. Wellbeing Indicators & SPHE Learning Outcomes









































The six wellbeing indicators make explicit what is important learning in Wellbeing. The learning outcomes in each of the four strands of SPHE are aligned to the indicators for Wellbeing in junior cycle





## 8. Learning Outcomes

Learning outcomes are statements that describe what knowledge, understanding, skills and values students should be able to demonstrate having completed the four strands of the junior cycle SPHE course. Each SPHE learning outcome is aligned to the indicators of wellbeing.

SPHE Strand 1: Who am I?		ACTIVE	RESPONSIBLE	CONNECTED	RESILIENT	RESPECTED	AWARE
Students learn about	Students should be able to						
How I see myself and others	1.1 appreciate the importance of building their own self-esteem and that of others						
	1.2 welcome individual difference based on an appreciation of their own uniqueness						
Being an adolescent	1.3 participate in informed discussions about the impact of physical, emotional, psychological and social development in adolescence						
	1.4 recognise how sexuality and gender identity is part of what it means to be human and has biological, psychological, cultural, social and spiritual dimensions.						
Self-management	1.5 identify short, medium and long-term personal goals and ways in which they might be achieved						
	1.6 apply decision-making skills in a variety of situations						
	1.7 source appropriate and reliable information about health and wellbeing						
My rights and the rights of others	1.8 explain how stereotyping can contribute to a person's understanding and experience of rights and wellbeing						
	1.9 appreciate the importance of respectful and inclusive behaviour in promoting a safe environment free from bias and discrimination						

## 9. Monitoring and Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed on a three year basis through:

- Teacher feedback
- Department feedback
- Junior Cycle Guidelines

## 10. Links with Other Policies and Documents

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- RSE Policy
- JSCP Policy
- Code of Behaviour
- Child Protection Guidelines
- Pastoral Care Policy
- Substance Misuse Policy
- Whole School Guidance Policy
- Child Safeguarding Statement

## 11. Declaration

This Coláiste Pobail Acla Policy was formed following consultation with all staff, members of the Board of Management, Parents/Guardians and the Student Council. It is recommended that this policy be reviewed every three years or whenever it is deemed necessary by School Management. It was adopted by the Board of Management of Coláiste Pobail Acla on:

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Mrs. Bina Munnelly

Chairperson of the Board of Management

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Mr. Paul Fahy

Board Secretary & School Principal (Acting)