



Loreto College St. Stephen's Green

SPHE / RSE Policy

Introduction

The Board of Management of Loreto College St. Stephen's Green is committed to providing the very best educational opportunities for each student in its care. We are committed to the holistic development of the person, and recognise the richness of the relationship between the individual and her local, national and global community. We hope to encourage the development of the spiritual, intellectual, physical, moral and emotional aspects of each individual student. The school is constantly challenged to be aware of the cultural reality in which the students live and we must aim to equip students with the necessary skills to make good decisions and healthy choices in a world that is constantly changing, often confusing and invariably challenging. Our SPHE programme deals with contemporary issues and topics at an age appropriate level. Outside speakers and workshops are used to great effect in conjunction with the class teachers and the school's SPHE programme.

SPHE / RSE Working Party

This group is responsible for supporting the development and implementation of a whole-school approach to SPHE/RSE encompassing professional development for teachers, short-term interventions for students and a school- wide enrichment policy.

The SPHE / RSE Working Party comprises:-

- Jane Kelly SPHE Co-ordinator
- Maura McCaul RSE Teacher
- Ailís Travers RSE Teacher
- Jackie Dempsey Principal
- Des FitzGerald Deputy Principal
- Emer O'Keeffe Guidance Counsellor
- Caitriona Fitzpatrick Chaplain
- Aoife Donohoe Chaplain

Rationale:**Aims:**

The aim of SPHE is to foster, encourage and promote physical and mental well being among students. We also aim to provide students with good social, organisational and study skills. This is achieved through a cyclical programme in accordance with the D.E.S. guidelines, the unique spirit of the school and in our Anti-Bullying Policy.

Objectives:

- To enable 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.

Timetabling and Class Organisation:

SPHE is allocated an equivalent of one 40 minute class period per week for all Junior Cycle students. The SPHE programme will be delivered as a cross curricular programme by the full teaching staff, monitored by the Co-ordinator with the assistance of designated tutors, Year Heads and the SPHE/RSE working party. Topics are assigned to subject departments to be delivered by relevant teachers across three timeframes, term 1, term 2 or term 3. The programme will, in the main, be delivered to base classes of mixed ability. Each class tutor in consultation with their class group draws up a class contract which is displayed in the classroom. This ensures that an atmosphere of respect exists from the outset.

Confidentiality:

At the beginning of each academic year and at regular intervals throughout the year students are informed that complete confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. At the discretion of teachers information may have to be passed on to the D.L.P. (Designated Liaison Person) or to the Student Support Team.

Resources for SPHE:

A wide range of resources are available in the SPHE Resource Press which is located in the quiet area of the Staff Room and is easily accessible to all teachers. A resources website has also been made available to all teaching staff with links to various resources and lesson plans. An appropriate annual budget funded by the BOM covers the cost of the department's requirements. This is negotiated on an annual basis according to the needs of the department.

Cross- Curricular Links:

There are links between SPHE and the following departments: Religion, Home Economics, Science, Art, P.E. CSPE, and Physical Education. The programme is fully

supported by the Religion Department in the context of the Catholic ethos of Loreto College and its characteristic spirit and mission. All subject departments have familiarised themselves with the programme to facilitate the cross curricular delivery of the programme.

Staff & Subject Development:

RSE teachers and relevant teachers have engaged and will continue to engage in professional development. Regular updates will be provided by the SPHE Co-ordinator for inhouse training. A regular skills/training audit will be conducted by the SPHE Co-ordinator to ensure that sufficient numbers of staff are fully trained in SPHE and RSE. The SPHE Co-ordinator will liaise with the PDST to arrange training courses as required.

Visiting Speakers:

The school is informed in this regard by Circular 0023/2010, Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) and Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE), Best Practice Guidelines for Post-Primary Schools.

Parents:

The school acknowledges the role of parents/guardians as the primary educators of their children. The SPHE programme aims to help and support parents in this task. In the case of the 3rd Year RSE talk, parents are invited into the school to hear the talk for themselves prior to the students receiving the presentation and parents/guardians must then give consent for their daughter to attend. Parents also give their consent for the 6th year RSE talk.

Assessment:

Portfolios, e-portfolios and participation in class are used to assess student performance in the SPHE programme.

Regular meetings take place among the working party regarding the delivery of the programme and on-going evaluation.

Whole School Activities and SPHE:

The promotion of health and well being in mind, body and soul is of paramount importance in Loreto College St. Stephen's Green. There is whole school support for the implementation of the SPHE programme. The following is a list of some of the ways in which support is shown throughout the school:

- A "Buddy" system exists between the 6th and 1st years to promote friendship, encouragement and understanding.
- Numerous sports and activities are organised at lunchtime to allow everybody to get involved, get active and make new friends.
- A number of relevant themed weeks are run during the academic year, including for example *Spirit Week*, *Stand Up Awareness Week* and *Health & Wellbeing week*, these are intended to promote a good atmosphere and good relationships between all.

RELATIONSHIPS AND SEXUALITY EDUCATION RSE

School Philosophy and Mission Statement

In an atmosphere of mutual respect and justice, Loreto is a community that aims to provide a rich and diverse curriculum catering for the needs of each individual student. We provide a holistic education wherein spiritual values are central to our educational philosophy. Each student is challenged to realise her full potential and to recognise the dignity of each human being.

RSE aims to build on the primary programme and provide young people with information and 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 the way they live their lives. Spiritual, moral and ethical issues that arise in the delivery of the RSE programme shall be dealt with within the school's overall mission statement.

Scope

The Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) Policy applies to all students at Junior Cycle level as part of SPHE which is delivered as a cross curricular programme. An RSE programme is run in fourth year during which students receive one 40 minute class period for half the year. Development of the RSE programme for 5th and 6th year students is underway and is due to be implemented in the academic year 2016 – 2017.

Definition of relationships and sexuality education

RSE is a developmental process through experiential learning in which pupils participate to help cultivate a healthy attitude towards themselves and others, particularly in the area of sexuality and relationships.

RATIONALE

Relationships and sexuality education within social personal health education

The aims of an RSE programme i.e. the provision of opportunities for young people to learn about relationships and sexuality in ways that help them think and act in a moral, caring and responsible way, are best done through a full Social, Personal and Health Education programme. By providing RSE through an SPHE programme we teach young people personal skills to increase their personal effectiveness, so that in the context of their own lives they are able to implement informed decisions in relation to their own sexuality and relationship to others. SPHE deals with many issues such as self-esteem, assertiveness, communication and decision-making skills all of which can contribute to the effectiveness of the RSE programme.

The aims of relationships and sexuality education programme.

Relationships and sexuality education which is located in the overall framework of Social, Personal and Health Education, has as its specific aims:

- To help pupils understand and develop friendships and relationships.
- To promote an understanding of sexuality.

- To promote a positive attitude to one's own sexuality and in one's relationship with others.
- To promote knowledge of and respect for reproduction.
- To enable young people to develop attitudes and values towards their sexuality in a moral, spiritual and social framework.

What the school currently provides

Elements of RSE are being approached in subjects such as Science, Biology, Home Economics, Religious Education, CSPE, Physical Education, Guidance and Counselling. The programme is fully supported by the Religion Department in the context of Catholic teaching. The RSE curriculum framework is divided into ten modules each of which is revisited in each of the three years at junior cycle. An RSE programme is run in fourth year during which students receive one 40 minute class period for half the year. An RSE programme for 5th and 6th year students is due to be implemented in the academic year 2016 – 2017. This will provide six class periods in 5th year and 6 class periods in 6th year.

GUIDELINES FOR THE MANAGEMENT AND ORGANISATION OF RELATIONSHIPS AND SEXUALITY EDUCATION IN OUR SCHOOL

Arrangements regarding the teaching of the programme and the deployment of staff will be made by the Principal.

Involving and informing parents.

Parents are the primary educators of their children and their role in education concerning relationships and sexuality is seen by the school as very important. We recognise the right of any parent who so wishes to request that his/her daughter should not participate in the programme. The school must be informed of such a decision.

Timetabling

The RSE programme will follow the outlines for each year group drawn up by the NCCA and the Department of Education and Skills following the report of the advisory group commissioned by the Minister of Education. The content will be delivered annually as follows;

Topics for Junior Cycle RSE are divided across 10 modules. (See Appendix 1)

Topics for senior cycle students will build on the elements covered in Junior Cycle and will treat issues in ways suitable for the young adult. (See Appendix 2)

Delivery of the senior programme shall be informed by the contents outlined in the *TRUST* programme and the *Growing Up LGBT* programme supported by the Department of Education and Skills.

Delivery of Relationships and Sexuality (RSE)

- There is the equivalent of 5 – 6 class periods of RSE taught in 1st, 2nd and 3rd year as stipulated by the Department of Education.
- A nurse visits the school to give both the parents of 3rd year and the 3rd year students a talk on STIs.
- In 4th year every student receives one period of RSE for half the year from *The Trust Programme* delivered by Ms Maura McCaul and Ms Ailís Travers. 4th year students also receive a talk from Accord in the course of the year as part of RSE.
- A nurse visits the school to give the 6th year students an information session on contraception and recaps on the 3rd year talk.
- Beginning in the academic year 2016-2017 there will be 6 class periods of RSE taught in 5th and 6th year as stipulated by the Department of Education.

Offering Advice and Classroom strategy regarding questions that may arise in Classroom

Issues that may arise in the RSE class will be addressed in a manner that reflects the ethos of the school in a professional manner by staff.

On-going Support and Development

All teachers delivering RSE take part in the PDST training programme. They commit themselves to do so in the context of the Catholic ethos of Loreto College and its characteristic spirit and mission.

Teachers involved in delivering the programme will do so in the context of these guidelines. They will be encouraged to avail of suitable in-career development opportunities, which may arise.

Monitoring and Implementation of the Policy.

This policy was informed by best practice guidelines for the implementation of SPHE/RSE in the junior cycle and RSE in Senior cycle by Circular 0023/2010 and The Education Act 1998, Circulars M4/95 and M20/96.

Appendix 1.

Junior Cycle SPHE

Modules:

- . Belonging & Integrating
- . Self-Management: A sense of purpose.
- . Communication Skills
- . Physical Health
- . Friendship
- . Relationships and Sexuality (RSE)
- . Emotional Health
- . Influences & Decisions
- . Substance Use
- . Personal Safety
- . Workshops (Sticks & Stones Workshop Company)
- . Speakers:
 - Study Skills Seminar – various year groups
 - Internet Safety – Various year groups
 - Substance abuse – Various year groups
 - 3rd Year RSE Talk
 - 4th Year Accord Talk
 - 6th Year RSE Talk

Appendix 2.

Senior Cycle RSE modules

The Three strands of The Trust programme will be covered:

- Relationships
- Taking time to think
- Sexual Health

These modules will be covered over the three years with the following topics being focused on:

TY Topics

- Self-esteem,
- Communicating Boundaries
- Influences and Values
- Decision-making
- Reproduction
- Unplanned pregnancy
- STI recap from 3rd year talk

5th Year Topics

- Healthy and Unhealthy Relationships
- Intimacy
- Sexuality
- Sexual Orientation
- Responsible Relationships

6th Year Topics

- Growing up LGBT
- Fertility
- Contraception
- Consent
- The Influence of the Media