



CBS PRIMARY TRALEE

Where everybody is a somebody

Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) Policy

CBS Primary Tralee

Revised to complement the CBS Primary Tralee Wellbeing Policy (2026)

Contents

1. Introductory statement
2. Rationale
3. Vision
4. Aims and broad objectives
5. SPHE curriculum structure and planning
6. Programmes used in CBS Primary Tralee (Mindful Matters, Stay Safe, RSE, Weaving Wellbeing)
7. Methodologies and approaches
8. Assessment and recording
9. Inclusion and equality of access
10. Organisation, roles and responsibilities
11. Resources
12. Homework
13. Partnership with parents and guardians
14. Community links and guest speakers
15. Review and ratification

1. Introductory statement

This policy outlines the school's approach to the teaching and learning of SPHE from Junior Infants to Sixth Class. It is intended to guide consistent practice, support teacher planning, and ensure appropriate coverage of SPHE. Whole-school wellbeing initiatives, school culture practices and wider wellbeing supports are set out in the CBS Primary Tralee Wellbeing Policy (2026).

2. Rationale

- To guide teachers in adopting a consistent and coherent approach to the teaching of SPHE across the school.
- To assist teachers in individual and whole-school planning for SPHE.
- To ensure appropriate coverage of all aspects of the SPHE curriculum from Junior Infants to Sixth Class.

3. Vision

CBS Primary Tralee values the uniqueness of all individuals within a caring school community. SPHE is integral to learning and teaching in the school and supports children to develop self-worth, confidence, resilience and the skills needed to relate to others positively.

4. Aims and broad objectives

The aims of SPHE are to:

- Promote the personal development and wellbeing of the child.
- Foster care and respect for self and others and appreciation of the dignity of every person.
- Promote the health of the child and provide a foundation for healthy living.
- Enable children to make informed decisions and choices about the social, personal and health dimensions of life.
- Develop a sense of social responsibility, active citizenship and appreciation of democratic participation.
- Enable children to respect human and cultural diversity and appreciate interdependence.

Broad objectives: SPHE should enable the child to:

- Develop a positive sense of self and self-esteem.
- Develop personal responsibility and understand growth and development in an age-appropriate way.
- Enhance communication, cooperation and conflict-resolution skills.

- Create and maintain supportive relationships.
- Develop understanding of healthy living and participate in health-promoting activities.
- Develop a sense of safety and learn strategies to protect self from danger and abuse.
- Make decisions, solve problems and take appropriate action in personal, social and health contexts.
- Become aware of influences on choices and decisions and learn to evaluate values and attitudes.

5. SPHE curriculum structure and planning

The SPHE curriculum is spiral in nature and is delivered developmentally throughout the child's time in primary school. Teachers plan to ensure balanced coverage of the SPHE strands and strand units over a two-year cycle where appropriate.

5.1 Strands and strand units

SPHE is taught across the strands and strand units as set out in the current SPHE curriculum and within the context of the Wellbeing curriculum area. Teachers plan for the relevant content for their class level and ensure continuity and progression across the school. Mindful Matters is the programme used throughout the school.

<i>Class Level</i>	<i>Strand Units Covered</i>
Junior Infants	Self Identity, Taking Care of My Body, Safety and Protection, Myself and My Family, Developing Citizenship, Media Education
1st Class	Self Identity, Taking Care of My Body, Safety and Protection, Myself and My Family, Developing Citizenship, Media Education
3rd Class	Self Identity, Taking Care of My Body, Safety and Protection, Myself and My Family, Developing Citizenship, Media Education, Decision Making
5th Class	Self Identity, Taking Care of My Body, Safety and Protection, Myself and My Family, Developing Citizenship, Media Education, Decision Making
Senior Infants	Growing and Changing, Safety and Protection, Relating to Others, My Friends and Other People, Developing Citizenship
2nd Class	Growing and Changing, Safety and Protection, Relating to Others, My Friends and Other People, Developing Citizenship
4th Class	Growing and Changing, Safety and Protection, Relating to Others, My Friends and Other People, Developing Citizenship, Decision Making
6th Class	Growing and Changing, Safety and Protection, Relating to Others, My Friends and Other People, Developing Citizenship, Decision Making

5.2 Time allocation

SPHE forms part of the Wellbeing curriculum area and is taught in line with the Primary Curriculum Framework 2023. Wellbeing learning, including SPHE and PE, is allocated

approximately three hours per week from first to sixth class and approximately two and a half hours per week in infant classes. SPHE is taught through discrete lessons and integrated learning experiences, with regular coverage across the year. Pupils withdrawn for supplementary teaching are included in SPHE as fully as possible.

6. Programmes used in CBS Primary Tralee

6.1 Mindful Matters

Mindful Matters is used throughout the school to support children's social and emotional learning in an age-appropriate way.

6.2 Stay Safe

Stay Safe is a mandatory programme taught under the strand Safety and Protection. It is taught **annually**. Home-school communication is used to keep parents and guardians informed when Stay Safe content is being taught.

6.3 Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE)

RSE is taught as part of SPHE in line with curriculum requirements and school ethos. Sensitive content is taught in an age-appropriate manner. Parents give consent on enrolment, for RSE to be taught. Parents may submit a written request to the principal to withdraw their child, or to express concerns and request a meeting with the teacher. A copy of this correspondence will be kept on the child's file to facilitate annual follow up where concerns have been expressed. RSE is taught in the week following parent teacher meetings in November, allowing time for discussion if necessary. The sensitive issues grid below may be shown to parents at these meetings.

Where a child is withdrawn, parents accept full responsibility for this aspect of their child's education. Teachers will teach only the prescribed content for each class level and will respond only to age and stage appropriate questions within the programme. Questions outside the curriculum will be referred to the home. Teaching will at all times be guided by the school ethos and pupils' developmental stage.

The school will endeavour to accommodate any teacher who does not wish to teach a particular topic. Teachers will not answer personal questions about themselves nor require pupils to share personal information they do not wish to disclose.

Class	Strand/ Strand Unit	Content Objectives <i>Consult curriculum for complete content objectives in Growing and changing and Taking care of my body</i>	Language	RSE Resource Materials Book	Walk Tall	Supplementary Resources
Junior/ Senior Infants	Myself Growing and changing Taking care of my body	Growing and changing • Become aware of new life and birth in the world • Develop an awareness of human birth Taking care of my body • Name the parts of the male and female body using appropriate anatomical terms	Womb Breastfeeding Penis Vulva	New life p.68 My body p.147 Caring for new life p.137 At the beach or swimming pool p.153	Our amazing bodies p.94 (Senior Infant book)	Anatomically correct dolls Picture books of new baby Visit of baby to class
First/ Second Class	Myself Growing and changing Taking care of my body	Growing and changing • Begin to understand that reproduction, birth, growth and death are all part of new life cycles Taking care of my body • Name the parts of the male and female body using appropriate anatomical terms and identify some of their functions	Womb Breastfeeding Penis Vulva Vagina Urethra	The wonder of new life p.59 & p.151 How my body works p.67 & p.161 Growing means changing p.77 & p.171 A visit to the doctor p.164	Our amazing bodies p.37 (2nd class book)	Picture books of going to the doctor Tom's Power Flower Books / activities on life cycles Birth and new life in nature
Third/ Fourth Class	Myself Growing and changing Taking care of my body	Growing and changing • Understand the physical changes taking place in both the male and female body • Realise that changes do not occur at the same time but nonetheless are predictable and natural and that being different is normal Taking care of my body • Recognise and discuss how feelings and emotions are affected by the physical changes that take place during puberty • Discuss the stages and sequence of development of human body from conception to birth	Revise above Umbilical cord Menstruation Changes in puberty	Preparing for new life p.69 The wonder of new life p.169 As I grow and change p.93 Growing and changing p.195	As I grow I change p.175 (3rd class book) Changing and growing p.140 (4th class book) The wonder of new life p.150	Body system labelling activities Puberty sorting game Picture books on growing and changing
Fifth/ Sixth Class	Myself Growing and changing Taking care of my body	Growing and changing • Understand sexual intercourse, conception and birth within the context of a loving committed relationship Taking care of my body • Identify and discuss the physical changes that occur in boys and girls with the onset of puberty and understand that these take place at different rates for everyone • Understand the reproductive system of both male and female adults	Revise above Wet dreams Semen Sexual intercourse Refer to <i>Busy Bodies</i> language for guidance	My body grows and changes p.81 The wonder of new life p.92 Caring for new life p.103 Different kinds of love p.141	My amazing body p.345 (5th class book) Creation p.121 (6th class book)	Busy Bodies Body system labelling activities Puberty sorting games Question box Puberty quiz

6.4 Walk Tall

Walk Tall is a substance misuse programme for Irish Primary Schools. It focuses on building resilience, decision making and self-esteem to help children avoid substance misuse.

6.5 Weaving Wellbeing

Weaving Wellbeing is used as a supplementary resource to support the development of children's wellbeing-related skills and language in an SPHE context.

7. Methodologies and approaches

Active learning is the principal methodology in SPHE. Teaching approaches are chosen to promote participation, pupil voice, reflection, and the development of social and emotional skills in a supportive and inclusive environment

Approaches include drama and role play, cooperative games and group work, circle time, discussion in pairs, small groups, and whole class settings, brainstorming, journaling, storytelling and scenario-based learning, use of visual stimuli, written activities, media education and ICT where appropriate, social stories, experiential learning, teacher modelling, and portfolio work.

8. Assessment and recording

Children's progress in SPHE is assessed mainly through teacher observation.

- The ability of the child to co-operate and work in groups or to work independently
- The informal interactions between the child and adults and between the child and other children.
- Emotional maturity
- The participation and interest of the child in a variety of activities.

9. Inclusion and equality of access

All children have equal access to SPHE learning experiences. Teaching approaches and materials are differentiated as needed. The needs of children with additional needs are considered when planning lessons and related activities, and support is provided in a respectful, inclusive manner.

The school is mindful of:

- Diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds
- Different family structures and experiences
- The need to support children who may be experiencing dis-advantage or vulnerability
- Creating a respectful learning environment where discriminatory language is challenged

10. Organisation, roles and responsibilities

The implementation of SPHE is a shared responsibility.

- The principal and in-school leadership support whole-school planning and consistent practice.
- The SPHE coordinator supports planning, resource organisation and communication with staff, and reports on progress as required.
- Class teachers plan and teach SPHE and the relevant programmes and communicate with parents and guardians as appropriate.
- SET teachers support inclusion and continuity where pupils require additional support.
- All staff model respectful communication and support the school's agreed approaches to SPHE.

SPHE links with other school policies including Child Protection, Code of Behaviour, Anti-Bullying, RSE, Substance Use, Health and Safety Statement and the Acceptable Use Policy.

11. Resources

Resources to support SPHE include:

- Mindful Matters teacher resources and materials
- Stay Safe manuals and lesson materials www.staysafe.ie
- RSE resources appropriate to class level www.oide.ie
- Walk Tall resources available at <https://oide.ie/primary/home/wellbeing/sphe/resources/>
- Weaving Wellbeing resources (as a supplementary support)
- Visual supports and age-appropriate materials to support discussion and skill development

12. Homework

Where SPHE homework is used, it supports learning through home-school links and reinforces key messages. Homework tasks are appropriate, sensitive and supportive of family discussion, with due regard to the nature of SPHE content.

13. Partnership with parents and guardians

Partnership with parents and guardians supports children's learning in SPHE. Parents and guardians are kept informed of sensitive content, including Stay Safe and RSE, and are invited to communicate with the class teacher where questions or concerns arise.

Parents and guardians may be invited to:

- Support healthy lunches and school wellbeing initiatives (as outlined in relevant policies)
- Participate in school events and celebrations where appropriate
- Engage with home-school link materials related to Stay Safe and RSE

14. Community links and guest speakers

Where appropriate, the school may invite guest speakers to support SPHE learning (for example, internet safety, community safety, or health promotion). The class teacher remains responsible for the class during all visits and ensures that content is appropriate and aligned with school policy.

15. Review and ratification

This SPHE policy will be reviewed regularly, or sooner where required by curriculum updates, school self-evaluation findings or changing school needs. Feedback from staff, pupils and parents and guardians will inform review.

Ratification: This policy is ratified by the Board of Management of CBS Primary Tralee.

Signed: Anne O'Callaghan (Chairperson, Board of Management)

Date: 03/01/2026