



# **SOCIAL PERSONAL & HEALTH EDUCATION**



## **Social Personal & Health Education Plan Jonah Special School**

### **Introduction**

The staff of Jonah Special School, Slieverue, Co.Kilkenny, formulated this school plan for SPHE in consultation with our Board of Management. Jonah Special School is a special school providing educational services for students with Autism and complex needs from 4 –18 years. SPHE is a lifelong process and as such begins before the child comes to school. At Jonah Special School we aim to provide a foundation that will inform the student’s actions and decisions and provide a basis for further development.

### **Rationale**

SPHE is an integral part of the curriculum and is being taught in Jonah Special School on a daily basis through various programmes and initiatives such as Stay Safe (see Appendix 1), ASDAN, The Zones of Regulation, Walk Tall, Relationships and Sexuality Education. It is also being taught through integration with other subject areas such as Physical Education, Geography, and through our focus on the promotion of Functional Living skills for all the students as well as social communication and interactions. The Stay Safe programme is a mandatory part of the curriculum and we wish to formalise our teaching of it and all SPHE areas on a whole school basis.

In developing this plan, the school seeks:

- To benefit teaching and learning in our school.
- To conform to principles of teaching and learning outlined in the curriculum.
- To review the existing work in SPHE.
- To establish a formal structure for teaching SPHE.

### **Aims**

The students of Jonah Special School should be enabled to achieve the aims outlined in the SPHE curriculum, which include –

- To promote the personal development and well-being of the students.
- To foster in the student a sense of care and respect for himself/herself and others and an appreciation of the dignity of every human being.
- To promote the health of the student and provide a foundation for healthy living in all its aspects.
- To enable the student to make informed decisions and choices about the Social, Personal and Health dimensions of life both now and in the future.
- To develop in the student a sense of social responsibility, a commitment to an active and participative citizenship and an appreciation of the democratic way of life.



- To enable the student to respect human and cultural diversity and to appreciate and understand the interdependent nature of the world.
- To empower the student to become independent.
- To empower the student to make decisions.

The teachers of Jonah Special School with the assistance of SNAs will aim to provide the students with these opportunities through –

- Using play as a teaching methodology.
- Using structured teaching as an approach.
- Working with parents at all times to achieve these aims.

### Content of SPHE Plan

SPHE is planned so that students receive a comprehensive programme throughout their educational period in Jonah Special School. The curriculum is delineated dependent on the student’s ability and is divided into three strands: Myself, Myself and others, and Myself and the wider world.

Each of these strands is further subdivided into a number of strand units or topic areas that contain particular objectives. As Jonah Special School is a Special School there will be different levels of cognitive comprehension within each classroom. Teachers will use their knowledge of the individual student in relation to the content that can be attained.

Jonah Special School will teach aspects of all three major strand units each year and strand units will be chosen in such a way that the student will receive a comprehensive programme in SPHE over their time in the school. This is outlined as follows –

Stand	Strand Unit
Myself	Self-identity (self-awareness, developing self-confidence, making decisions). Growing and changing (as I grow I change, new life, feelings and emotions). Taking care of my body (knowing about my body, food and nutrition). Making Decisions. Safety and Protection (Personal safety, safety issues).
Myself and Others	Myself and my family. My friends and other people. Relating to others.
Myself and the Wider World	Developing citizenship (my school community, living in the local community).



**Please Note:** The Strand Unit Safety and Protection will be taught every year and will cover the following topics –

1. Safe and Not Safe.
2. Bullying.
3. Touches.
4. Telling Secrets.
5. Strangers.

Resources for the above topics have been uploaded onto individual teacher's school laptops. These resources will be reviewed and updated in the school year 2023/2024.

A record sheet showing topics covered and level of engagement is kept in child's file.

Consent forms given to parents.

## **Contexts for SPHE**

Our Social Personal Health and Education curriculum is mediated to our students in the following ways –

- Through our Positive School Climate and Atmosphere.
- Through integration with other subjects.
- Through specifically allocated curriculum time.

## **Approaches and Methodologies**

Jonah Special School believe that the approaches and methodologies used in SPHE are crucial to the effectiveness of the programme. Active learning is the principal learning and teaching approach recommended for SPHE, therefore we will endeavour to teach SPHE using a variety of strategies which include –

- Drama and Role Play.
- Talk and discussion.
- Skill through content.
- Collaborative learning.
- Use of pictures.
- Use of the Environment.
- Modelling.
- Problem Solving.
- Learning through play/Aistear.
- Circle time.
- Use of media.
- Looking at students work.
- Lámh, ISL, visual schedules, assistive technology, power point, social stories, PECS, The Zones of Regulation and ASDAN.



## Assessment

Assessment is a central part of the everyday learning and teaching process in SPHE. The purpose of which is –

- To provide the teacher with valuable information on the students development and on the effectiveness of the teaching programme.
- It enables the teacher to make decisions on differentiation and methodology.
- It provides feedback to the student and teacher on his/her achievements.

Children's progress in SPHE is assessed through –

- Teacher Observation.
- Students own feedback.
- Teacher designed tasks.
- Teacher designed tests.
- Completed work.
- School Adaptive Based Checklist.
- DES/Outside Assessment.

## Student with Different Needs

Teachers will endeavour to adapt and modify activities and methodologies in SPHE to encourage participation of all the students. Teachers will as always adapt teaching approaches to suit student's individual needs and learning styles. Teachers will use knowledge of each child's capabilities in relation to level of content that can be attained. Assistive technology, visuals, Lámh, ISL, PECS will all be used where necessary. Jonah Special School will liaise with trained professionals/appropriate agencies when dealing with sensitive issues such as bereavement or loss to ensure that the student involved are fully supported.

## Equality of Participation and Access

Jonah Special School recognises and values diversity, and believes all students are entitled to access the services, facilities, or amenities that are available in the school environment. We will ensure that equal opportunities are given to boys and girls to participate in discussion, debate, presentation, etc. regardless of ethnic background, religion, race or nationality.



## **Policies and Programmes that support SPHE**

We will use the Stay Safe, The Zones of Regulation, ASDAN and Walk Tall programmes as our main resources and the SPHE curriculum statement and guidelines.

The following organisational policies have been developed and have been ratified by our Board of Management. They are continuously been updated and reviewed. Parents are invited to view these documents. The following is a list of Policies and Programmes that support SPHE –

### **Policies**

- ✚ Child Protection
- ✚ Anti – Bullying
- ✚ Relationships and Sexuality Education
- ✚ Substance Use
- ✚ Code of Behaviour
- ✚ Enrolment
- ✚ Health and Safety
- ✚ Internet Acceptable Use
- ✚ Data Protection
- ✚ Behaviour Support
- ✚ Intimate Care
- ✚ Toilet Training
- ✚ Showering

### **Programmes**

- ✚ Stay Safe
- ✚ The Zones of Regulation
- ✚ ASDAN
- ✚ RSE
- ✚ Walk Tall



## **Communication with Parents re RSE and Stay Safe Matters/Parents Choices**

Parents have the right to choose whether or not their children receive instruction in the areas covered by the RSE/Stay Safe objectives. Parents may choose to withdraw their children from some or all of these objectives. All parents will be made aware of the RSE and Stay Safe topics that will be covered each school year and the ethos within which they will be delivered. Any parent who has concerns should discuss them with the class teacher. A parent who asks to have his/her child withdrawn from specific objectives should do so in writing before the end of September.

## **Child Protection**

The school follows the DES Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures which are based on Children First, National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children. Each year at staff meetings, and informally throughout the year, staff are reminded of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement and the procedures to be followed in dealing with incidents related to Child Protection. Parents are also informed of these procedures from time to time. Each teacher has a copy of our policy on Child Safeguarding Statement and a copy is available to parents.

## **Individual Teachers Planning and Reporting**

Teachers should base their yearly and short-term plans on the approaches set out in this whole school plan for SPHE. Work covered will be outlined in the Cuntas Míosúil which is incorporated into monthly plans and this will inform our knowledge when evaluating and reviewing our progress in SPHE. A copy will be submitted to the principal.

## **Resources**

We will select resources/materials that are –

- Reflective of our school ethos.
- In line with the principles of the SPHE Curriculum.
- Age appropriate.
- Closely matched to specific objectives.
- Free of bias, racial or sexual stereotyping.
- Produced by a reputable agency.

Specific software, DVDs, online links and textbooks support the SPHE programme. The choice of materials will be reviewed from time to time and may be changed as required. Materials purchased with school funds remain the property of the school.



## Staff Development

Please note all members of staff must undertake TUSLA Children First Safeguarding E-Learning programme. Staff will avail of any further training in the area of SPHE provided by the Department of Education. Teachers are made aware of any opportunities for further professional development through participation in courses available in Education Centres or other venues. Skills and expertise within the school are shared and developed through input at staff meetings.

The DLP and/or teaching staff have attended –

- Training in the Child Abuse Prevention Programme (Stay Safe).
- Training in the Relationships and Sexuality programme (R.S.E.).
- In-service seminars hosted by the PDST, CAPP, TUSLA, DES, HSE, Patron of the school, CPSMA, Online Children First Training on the websites [www.tusla.ie](http://www.tusla.ie) and [www.pdst.ie](http://www.pdst.ie).

## Parental Involvement

Parental involvement is considered an integral part to effectively implementing SPHE as Jonah Special School believes that SPHE is a shared responsibility. Parents are invited in for IEP meetings and also on informal basis for various shows, open afternoon etc. The teachers and staff of Jonah Special School always aim to work with parents to work on priority needs of the child. These are often social and/or personal health areas that can be addressed through the SPHE programme on an individual level.

## Community Links

Jonah Special School believes that the local community has a very important role to play in supporting the programme in SPHE and endeavour to liaise with the members such as the Dental Hygienist, Health Nurse, Fireman, Vet, Librarian, Shopkeeper, etc. The staff of Jonah Special School ensures that the students are provided with opportunities to access the community in order to develop their Functional Living Skills, Functional sight vocabulary and social communication.

## Success Criteria

The success of this plan will be evaluated through teacher's planning and preparation, and if the procedures outlined in this plan have been consistently followed. We will also judge its success if the students have been enabled to achieve the aims outlined in this plan at their individual level of ability. SPHE is a lifelong process and as such some of the result may not be assessed while the children are still in school, however the school will use the following guidelines when reflecting on SPHE –

- Happy environment.
- Respect for each other, how does this show?
- Discipline and bullying, what are our observations?
- Self-care.





## Implementation & Review

A copy of this SPHE Plan will be available for all teachers and staff. It will be necessary to review this plan on a regular basis to ensure optimum implementation of the SPHE Curriculum in the school.

- Roles and Responsibilities –  
The Principal and teaching staff believe that SPHE is a shared responsibility between family, school, health professionals and the community and we see ourselves supporting the home (parents/guardians) in this lifelong process and will seek at all times to develop positive relations with all these parties. The whole staff will co-ordinate the progress of the plan, encourage and accept feedback on its implementation and report on findings as appropriate.
- Timeframe –  
The staff will endeavour to implement the SPHE curriculum comprehensively in a spiral nature before the students graduate from this school.

## Ratification

### Jonah Special School

Social Political & Health Education Plan

This plan was adopted by the Board of Management of Jonah Special School at its meeting held on:

**Ratified by the Jonah Board of Management on:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date**

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

**Principal**

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

**Chairperson, Board of Management**

**Next Review Period: **Septembr 2027****



## Appendix 2 –

### Stay Safe Programme

**Jonah Special School for Students with Autism and Complex Needs** is a school providing special education to students from age 4 to 18 years. Jonah Special School teaches the Stay Safe Programme, a teaching package designed for use in Irish Primary Schools. It was researched and developed by the Child Abuse Prevention Programme (CAPP). The principal aim of the programme is to reduce vulnerability to child abuse and bullying through the provision of a personal safety education programme, CPD for teachers, training for Boards of Management and information sessions for parents.

The Stay Safe Programme itself is a personal safety skills programme designed for use with primary students. The programme seeks to enhance children's self-protection skills by participation in lessons on safe and unsafe situations, bullying, inappropriate touch, secrets, telling and "stranger danger". The programme aims to give children the skills necessary to enable them to recognise and resist abuse, victimisation and teaches them that they should always tell about any situation which they find unsafe, upsetting, threatening dangerous or abusive.

Under Child Protection Guidelines all schools are obliged to teach the Stay Safe Programme. The Stay Safe Programme has been updated and from the 2017/2018 school year onwards the new Stay Safe Programme will be implemented. Jonah Special School acknowledges that all of our students have a diagnosis of ASD and may be more vulnerable to abuse. We aim to teach this programme with this in mind.

Stay Safe is taught as part of the SPHE (Social Personal and Health Education) curriculum. Given the nature of our school and the needs of the students who attend Jonah Special School, it will be taught in conjunction with other curricula including The Zones of Regulation, ASDAN and RSE.

Students participate in formal lessons on the Stay Safe Programme. The programme is taught throughout the student's education time in the school.

Parents/Guardians are encouraged to become involved and familiarise themselves with the Stay Safe Programme and reinforce elements of the Stay Safe Programme at home where appropriate. Parents can be directed to [www.pdst.ie/staysafe](http://www.pdst.ie/staysafe) for any further information.

In the event that a parent withdraws their child from the Stay Safe Programme a written record of their reasons for doing so will be kept on file.