

CEIST

Catholic Education
An Irish Schools Trust



SPHE/RSE Policy of PSS, Wexford

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1.0: Introduction

Presentation School Wexford is a Catholic Secondary School, guided by the ideals of Nano Nagle, foundress of the Presentation Congregation. The school is committed to the pursuit of excellence in a caring environment.

The school recognises that the world in which we live presents young people with many opportunities and challenges that affect their health and well-being. A student who has a high self-esteem and a sense of security will be better able to meet these challenges and opportunities. Social Personal and Health Education (SPHE) supports the personal development, health, and well-being of young people. It provides them with opportunities to develop skills and competence to learn about themselves and to care for themselves and others and to make informed decisions about their health, personal lives, and development. Presentation School Wexford recognises that the home is the natural environment in which children grow, develop and mature into adults. In line with the Education Act (1998) Presentation Wexford supports parents and guardians in this work by promoting the social and personal development of students and by providing health education for them. The school's approach to health education is in line with its Mission Statement and supported by all teachers across the curriculum.

2.0: Aims and objectives

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

- ✓ To promote self-esteem and confidence.
- ✓ To enable 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.

3.0: Outline of Programme

The programme is presented as four strands over three years. The curriculum is an enabling one, its purpose is to offer a flexible framework around which the school can build an SPHE programme. Teachers of SPHE follow the DES (Department of Education and Skills) guidelines for each year. The order in which the modules are covered may vary depending on the needs of individual classes, as indicated by regular review and the circumstances and issues which may prevail at the time.

4.0: Implementation

In line with Circular 0028/23 each class is allocated one class period per week in line with 400 hours well-being.

Staff allocation varies from year to year. Teachers who are not contracted to deliver S.P.H.E do so by choice and become involved by a process of consultation.

The school's view is that S.P.H.E should have a co-ordinator and will endeavour to have same as far as resources allow

The methodology is experiential where each student is actively engaged in her own learning.

5.0: CPD

Each year details of SPHE CPD will be circulated to the staff who will be facilitated to choose the CPD of interest to them. Recent CPD included consent now which is taught at junior and senior cycle as well as Pieta resilience Academy

6.0: Parents/Guardians

Each parent/guardian of incoming first year students is informed of the contents of the SPHE curriculum and teachers will inform senior students of upcoming modules. If a parent/guardian has a concern about any aspect of the curriculum they are invited to contact the principal to discuss the concern. Each parent has a right to withdraw her/his daughter from the Relations and Sexuality Education (R.S.E.) module. Students absenting themselves from the module will be supervised in the study hall. It is important to be aware that in these circumstances the school cannot be responsible for information subsequently passed on by participating students.

7.0: Guidelines for the Use of External Agencies

The teacher is the primary educator in SPHE. An outside speaker is a resource and does not replace the teacher. When engaging the services of an outside agency suitably qualified and experienced personnel will be sourced. The needs of the target group will be identified.

The SPHE teacher will normally be present, and boundaries of confidentiality will be agreed beforehand. Any concerns/issues arising will be followed up in SPHE classes, with referrals to appropriate authorities where necessary.

8.0: Sensitive Issues

While it is acknowledged that teachers have a professional responsibility to impart the S.P.H.E course content, they will respond flexibly to the needs of the students as they arise. Where it is appropriate the school will refer students to other supportive links, internal and external to the school community in line with Child Protection Guidelines for secondary schools. Class discussion will be of a general nature in accordance with previously agreed ground rules and will not be personally directed. Questions not related to the lesson content will be addressed appropriately by the S.P.H.E teacher.

9.0: Relationships and Sexuality Education

R.S.E is covered as a module in S.P.H.E. See the school policy on R.S.E.

The school has R.S.E guidelines for teachers.

10.0: Confidentiality

The normal limits of confidentiality will apply to any information coming to the attention of the teacher. Any concerns about a student's welfare will be dealt with discreetly and sensitively within the Child Protection Guidelines for post-primary schools issued by the Dept. of Education and Science with the designated liaison person being notified.

11.0: Relationships and Sexuality Education Policy

Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) seeks to enable students to develop attitudes and values towards their sexuality in a moral, spiritual, and social framework in keeping with the mission statement of this school.

RSE (Relationships and Sexuality Education) in this school has the following aims:

- ✓ To help students to understand and develop friendships and relationships.
- ✓ To promote an understanding of sexuality.
- ✓ To promote a positive attitude to one's own sexuality and that of others.
- ✓ To promote a knowledge of and a respect for reproduction.
- ✓ To provide opportunities for the students to learn about relationships and sexuality in ways that helps them to think and act in a moral, caring, and responsible way.

As a Catholic school Presentation Wexford holds that full sexual intimacy belongs in an adult relationship, in which there is trust, respect, acceptance and understanding for both partners such as in marriage.

Throughout the year, 5th year students will undergo a 16-week module while Transition year students will complete a 9-week module.

12.0: Ratification

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 5th October 2023 following consultation with all stakeholders.

Chairperson: Mary Culleton

Date 5th October 2023

Principal: Billy Ryan

Date: 5th October 2023