Darley National School
SPHE Policy

Introductory Statement:
This policy was formulated in consultation with all staff members during the first term of the school year 2017/2018. It is formulated in conjunction with the Children First Guidelines 2017/2018 and the Stay Safe Programme 2017.

Rationale:

- To foster the personal development, health and well-being of all the children in our care.
- To help them to create and maintain positive and supportive relationships.
- To help them to become active and responsible members of society.
- To help them develop a framework of values, attitudes and skills which will enable pupils to make informed and responsible choices now and in the future.
- To benefit the teaching and learning experiences of the S.P.H.E Curriculum.
- To conform to the principles of learning outlined in the Primary School Curriculum.
- To compliment the teaching of the Health Promoting Schools initiative and action plan. The themes addressed as part of the HPSI are Healthy eating, oral hygiene and mental and physical health.

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Vision:
The Darley NS values the uniqueness of all individuals within a caring school community. We recognize that SPHE is intrinsic in the learning and teaching that occurs both formally and informally in the school and in the classroom. Through our SPHE programme we wish to assist children in developing feelings of self-worth and self-confidence while encouraging their ability to relate to others in a positive way. The programme encourages children to be aware of their rights as individuals while at the same time accepting responsibility for their actions as members of the school and the wider community. Parents have the primary role in the Social, Personal and Health Education of their children, so their involvement will be encouraged as much as possible. We see SPHE as central to the health promoting schools initiative.

Aims:
We endorse the aims of **Social, Personal and Health Education Curriculum for Primary Schools:**

- To promote the personal development and well-being of the child.
- To foster, in the child, 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 child and provide a foundation for healthy living in all its aspects.
- To enable the child 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 child a sense of social responsibility, a commitment to active and participative citizenship and an appreciation of the democratic way of life.
- To enable the child to respect human and cultural diversity and to appreciate and understand the interdependent nature of the world.

Objectives:

When due account is taken of intrinsic abilities and varying circumstances, the SPHE curriculum should enable the child to:

- Be self-confident and have a positive sense of self-esteem.
- Develop a sense of personal responsibility and come to understand his/her sexuality and the processes of growth, development and reproduction.
- Develop and enhance the social skills of communication, co-operation and conflict resolution.
- Create and maintain supportive relationships both now and in the future.
- Develop an understanding of healthy living, an ability to implement healthy behaviour and a willingness to participate in activities that promote and sustain health.
- Develop a sense of safety and ability to protect himself/herself from danger and abuse.
- Make decisions, solve problems and take appropriate actions in various personal, social and health contexts.
- Become aware of, and discerning about, the various influences on choices and decisions.
- Begin to identify, review and evaluate the values and attitudes that are held by individuals and society and to recognise that these affect thoughts and actions.
- Respect the environment and develop a sense of responsibility for its long-term care.
- Develop some of the skills and abilities necessary for participating fully in groups and in society.
- Become aware of some of the individual and community rights and responsibilities that come from living in a democracy.
- Begin to understand the concepts of personal, local, national, European and global identity.
- Appreciate and respect the diversity that exists in society and the positive contributions of various cultural, religious and social groups.
- Promote the values of a just and caring society in an age-appropriate manner and understand the importance of seeking truth and peace.

Curriculum Planning

1. Strands and Strand Units:

SPHE is planned so that children receive a comprehensive programme on an annual basis. In some cases it may be necessary to revise specific objectives from the previous year. The content objectives for the sensitive areas of the RSE will be addressed in discrete time in relevant classes. Parents are informed about the teaching of the sensitive issues by letter 2 weeks prior to commencement of the lessons.

2. Contexts for SPHE

SPHE will be taught through a combination of contexts:

- Positive School Climate and Atmosphere.
- Discrete Time.
- Integration with other subject areas.

Positive School Climate and Atmosphere:

At the first staff meeting of the year all members of the school community are reminded of the importance of promoting a positive school climate. These key messages dealing with school climate and atmosphere are also referred to, as appropriate, during the year through newsletters, meetings with parents and on a regular basis in classes.

Our key messages are:

- We cater for the individual needs of the children. Individual needs may be social, emotional, spiritual, physical or intellectual. Through assessment, observation and discussion with parents we strive to identify and meet individual needs.
- We provide opportunities to enhance the self-esteem of all members of the school-community.
- The staff is aware that their role in helping children to develop their self-esteem is to create an environment within the school that is as positive as possible for all concerned. The five building blocks of self-esteem, as outlined in the curriculum, have been adopted as our approach to self-esteem development. They are:
  - ✓ A sense of identity.
  - ✓ A sense of belonging
  - ✓ A sense of security.
  - ✓ A sense of purpose.
  - ✓ A sense of competence.

- We aim to actively value diversity and to prioritise inclusive and respectful language. We will prioritise both racial and gender equality and respect for those with special needs. All pupils regardless of the ability are treated in an inclusive and equitable way. Pupils from our hearing impaired unit are integrated into mainstream classes on a regular basis. We believe that children learn to respect themselves and others through

experiencing respect in their own lives and through witnessing respect being shown to others.

- We work to develop an effective communication system within the school and between the school and home through our monthly newsletter and regular parent information evenings. Attention will be paid to encouraging everyone to express opinions and concerns and to respond to the opinions and concerns of others as a dimension of classroom work and general school life.

- We support a health promoting physical environment. Through our Health and Safety Policy and the Health Education section of our PE programme we have set out how we promote health and safety awareness and how we intend to deal with unsatisfactory aspects of our environment. Emphasis on healthy lunches, healthy lifestyle, road, water, farm safety and regular fire drills are some of the areas promoted. Taking responsibility and pride in the school environment is encouraged through constant review and promotion of behaviour and habits required for maintaining a clean environment. Playground markings for yard time activities and children's work on display throughout school also promote a healthy physical environment.

- We promote democratic processes in all levels of school life while balancing roles, rights and responsibilities. Children experience and practice the democratic process by:
  - ✓ Negotiating the class rules at the start of the year.
  - ✓ Sharing responsibility.
  - ✓ Valuing the opinions of others.
  - ✓ Experiencing a sense of belonging to their own class group and the wider school community.
  - ✓ Develop a sense of commitment to common goals.
  - ✓ Valuing and respecting diversity.

- We have agreed that we will prioritise care in our own behaviour as adults and in our expectations of children. We will help children to learn to care for each other through actively building relationships within each class. We will seek to build identity, security and belonging, competence and purpose through:

  - ✓ Discussion, promotion of and valuing difference.
  - ✓ Agreeing ground rules for responsible behaviour and clarifying values on an ongoing basis.
  - ✓ Caring for and promoting inclusion of others and learning that it's OK to be different.

- ✓ Promoting inclusive and respectful language.
- ✓ Promoting support and co-operation.
- ✓ Respecting individual strengths.
- ✓ Supporting individual needs through teacher support.
- ✓ Supporting individual needs of children in times of family or individual personal crises (children who suffer serious illness and need to be in hospital or out of school for long periods; children who suffer bereavement, especially bereavement in the immediate family; engaging exterior services e.g. NEPs, CAMHS, Barnardos, Rainbows to assist in this difficult area).
- ✓ Create meaningful differentiated learning opportunities.
- ✓ Celebrating the wide range of children's strengths through the monthly newsletter.

Discrete Time:
SPHE is timetabled for 30 mins per week in each class. Children who are withdrawn for supplementary teaching must be included for as much of the SPHE programme as possible. This discrete time is used to develop and practise particular skills, deal with sensitive issues or explore issues that are not addressed in other areas of the curriculum. It has been agreed that content objectives dealing with RSE and Child Protection are addressed through discrete time.

Integration:
At each class level, teachers should seek to integrate SPHE with other curricular areas. Many aspects of SPHE can be dealt with in the context of English, Gaeilge, SESE, Visual Areas and Drama. Teachers have identified the objectives that can be acquired through cross-curricular work. In order to ensure that these are being adequately covered, teachers will make specific provision in their short-term planning and will use the cuntas miosuil as a form of self-assessment for these and other objectives.

Approaches and Methodologies:
Teachers are in agreement that active learning is the principal learning and teaching approach used in the SPHE programme. The following active learning strategies are promoted for SPHE:

- Drama activities.
- Co-operative games.
- Pictures, photographs and visual images.
- Discussion: in pairs, small groups, with whole class.
- Written activities: surveys, questionnaires, lists, check-lists, projects, worksheets.
- Media Studies.
- Use of external speakers/visitors who are specialists in their own fields:

- ✓ e.g. nutritionist (helping children understand food-labels)
- ✓ Dental nurse visits to classroom to discuss healthy eating, healthy drinking, cleaning teeth and regular visits to the dentist.
- ✓ Local Garda to talk to pupils about safe use of the internet and social media
- ✓ Engaging experts for both pupils and parents talks on safety on internet and prevention of cyberbullying

- Information and communication technologies.
- Looking at children's work: portfolios, projects …
- Other strategies as devised by the class teacher.

Assessment

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
- Physical and emotional maturity
- The quality of presentation of work
- The participation and interest of the child in a variety of activities.

Teacher-designed tests and tasks:

SPHE includes areas of knowledge and understanding that will need to be assessed at regular intervals. Specific tasks can be used to ascertain a child's ability to apply particular skills in different situations.

Portfolios and Projects:

Teachers may decide that children will keep personal folders of their work.

Self-Assessment by Children:

Children are encouraged to engage in assessing their own progress in SPHE and to reflect on their learning.

Children with different needs:

The SPHE programme aims to meet the needs of all children in the school including pupils with SEN. This will be achieved by teachers varying the pace, content and methodologies to ensure learning for all pupils. Evidence of this differentiated approach will be recorded in teacher's planning documentation. The requirements of children with special needs will be taken into consideration when planning class lessons and related activities. Members of the Learning

Support Team and Teacher of the hearing impaired will positively support the work of the class teacher. The SNA supports particular children or groups as directed by the class teacher. Children who experience bereavement or loss, serious illness or other major personal situations are supported and consideration is given to meeting their individual needs in the most appropriate manner.

Equality of Participation and Access:
We view the SPHE programme as playing a key role in ensuring equality of opportunities for all children. The programme at each class level will be flexible so that the learning requirements of all children may be addressed. We provide an equal educational experience for both boys and girls as we recognise that stereotyped expectations of gender roles can inhibit children's educational achievements. Children with special needs will be included in all activities.

Policies and Programmes that support SPHE:

Policies/ Programmes
SPHE links with other policies/programmes used in the school- Substance Use, Stay Safe, Child Protection, Enrolment, Attendance, Code of Behaviour, Anti-Bullying, Health and Safety and Healthy Eating. Teachers are expected to be familiar with these policies and ensure that the school's agreed policy is followed when addressing these issues.

Resources
Programmes, ICT, DVDs, Textbooks, Supplementary Materials
Resources to support the provision of SPHE will include the curriculum statement and teacher guidelines from the Department of Education and Skills, text books, DVDs, ICT, the internet, programmes which target specific issues and guest speakers.
Resources available within the school include:

- Walk Tall Programme.
- RSE Programme.
- Stay Safe Programme
- NEHB guidelines
- Health promoting Schools programme.

Criteria for selecting resources include:

- Conformity with the aims and objectives of the class programme in SPHE and the general principle of the SPHE Curriculum.
- Freedom from bias, racial or sexual stereotyping.
- Compliancy with existing school policies.

- Appealing to the pupils and teacher and be reflective of collaborative, active methods of learning.
- Suitability and trustworthiness of guest speakers, notwithstanding the fact that the class teacher is responsible for his/her class and should remain with the class at all times for the duration of the visit of the guest speaker.

Materials purchased with school funds remain the property of the school

Implementation:
This plan has been formulated by the staff of our school. It will be supported, developed and implemented by teaching and non-teaching staff members alike. The school principal will co-ordinate its progression.

Review:
Those involved in the review will include teachers and the Board of Management. The Principal and the staff will be responsible for the co-ordination of this review.

Ratification and Communication:
Following ratification by the Board of Management, this plan will be circulated to all staff members. A copy of the plan will be available to parents and guardians on the school website.

Signed by: _____
(Chairperson B.O.M)

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Derek Middleton
Principal

Date : _____