



## Social, Personal & Health Education Policy

### **Introductory Statement:**

This policy was updated by the staff of Navan ETNS in May 2024. It was drafted by the school staff and brought to the attention of the Board of management and parents for consideration, approval and ratification. Therefore, the involvement of all these bodies will contribute to an effective implementation of the SPHE programme in the school.

### **Rationale:**

SPHE has been taught in Navan ETNS on a whole-school basis through various programmes and initiatives such as Stay Safe, Walk Tall and Relationships and Sexuality Education. It has also been taught through integration with other subject areas such as Physical Education, Learn Together, Geography, etc. The implementation of the policy is the responsibility of all the teaching staff. Our goal is to optimise the effectiveness of SPHE teaching in the school and put a clear structure on the SPHE plan for the whole school to ensure compliance with D.E.S. guidelines.

### **Vision:**

Navan Educate Together NS is an equality based school which up holds the values of the Educate Together Ethos, encapsulated in the motto "Learn Together to Live Together".

As primary teachers our aim is to nurture the holistic and harmonious development of our pupils to their fullest potential in accordance with their needs and to encourage them to work collaboratively. We strive to promote a sense of belonging, which is nurtured in an atmosphere of mutual respect and tolerance and supported by a positive democratic environment of discussion, listening and review. SPHE in Navan ETNS should promote self-awareness and understanding by helping children to name and manage their own feelings, to recognise and appreciate individual abilities and to cope with change of various kinds. SPHE should help children establish supportive relationships, to enjoy the company of others and to resolve conflicts in appropriate ways.

### **Aims:**

The children in our 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 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.

**Context:**

The curriculum is split in to four levels-infant classes, first and second classes, third and fourth classes and fifth and sixth classes-and is divided into three strands:

- Myself
- Myself and Others
- 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. We will teach aspects of all three major strand units each year and strand units will be chosen in such a way that the child will receive a comprehensive programme in SPHE. Navan ETNS have created a whole school plan to reflect this approach

**Discrete time for SPHE:**

Based on timing in the framework. We will have a 3 hour assigned to SPHE and P.E. 1-hour minimum will be allocated to P.E and 1-hour minimum allocated to S.P.H.E. the remaining time will be allocated using teacher discretion and based on the current needs of the children in the class.

**Integration:**

Integration with other subject areas and linkage within SPHE will be developed throughout this programme. Teachers will endeavour to adopt a thematic approach to SPHE by integrating it with other subject areas such as language, Geography(Citizenship), History (Myself and My Family), Learn Together (Human Rights), Visual Arts, Physical Education (Water Safety). Themes/projects will also be explored. Some themes will be explored by the whole school community through assemblies and school initiatives.

**Linkage with the Learn Together Curriculum:**

Of note, there are many ways in which the SPHE objectives can be linked with the Learn Together Curriculum. Two very important ways are using the Moral and Spiritual Development objectives to support the Myself and Others Stand as well as using the Equality and Justice objectives to support the Myself and the Wider World Strand. Therefore, much of the activities and lessons delivered in the Learn Together Curriculum actively contribute to meeting SPHE objectives.

**Approaches and Methodologies:**

Navan ETNS believes that the approaches and methodologies used in SPHE are crucial to the effectiveness of the SPHE programme. Active learning and language development are the principle learning and teaching approaches recommended for SPHE, therefore we will endeavour to teach SPHE using a variety of strategies which include:

- Drama activities
- Cooperative games
- Use of pictures
- Photographs and visual images
- Games
- Use of Media
- Use of interactive whiteboard & digital devices
- Looking at children's work
- Circle Time

- Guided Reflective time

A broad range of approaches and methodologies are suggested in the curriculum guidelines to realise the aim of involving children in their own learning.

- Talk and discussion (Language Development/ Oral Language)
- Skills through content
- Collaborative learning
- Problem solving
- Use of the environment

**Confidentiality:**

While confidentiality within the discussion groups will be encouraged, children should be informed some information may have to be passed on at the discretion of the teacher to the appropriate persons, e.g. DLP or DDLP, Garda, Tusla.

**Assessment and record keeping:**

Assessment is a central part of the everyday learning and teaching process in SPHE. It can provide valuable information on the child's progress and on the effectiveness and suitability of the programme and the teaching methods being used. The primary emphasis in this area is on informal assessment. We use the following informal assessment tools:

- Teacher observation
- Teacher designed tasks
- Portfolios and projects
- Regular reviews of class and whole school procedures and goals
- Self-assessment

**Children with different needs:**

Teachers are familiar with the NCCA guidelines for teachers of students with different needs. We do our best at all times to endeavour to adapt and modify activities and methodologies in SPHE to ensure that every child has equal opportunities in learning. We use the following techniques to cater for individual difference:

- To use a mixture of whole-class teaching and focused group work
- To set tasks of various complexities
- To plan topics so that opportunities are provided for alternative investigation work
- To use a range of questions
- To use a wide range of communication skills
- To give individuals and groups the direction, stimulus and encouragement they need as the children are engaged in activities
- Use focused vocabulary and phrases to assist EAL learners
- Visuals
- Social stories
- The Special Education Team will supplement the work of the class teachers where necessary.

Navan ETNS will liaise with trained professionals/appropriate agencies, where appropriate, when dealing with sensitive issues such as bereavement or loss to ensure that children involved are fully supported. Parents could be encouraged to mediate the information on certain topics with their own child.

**Equality of Participation and Access:**

Navan ETNS recognises and values diversity, and believes that all children are entitled to access the services, facilities or amenities that are available in the school environment. NETNS is under the patronage of Educate Together body. Our school is co- educational and we endeavour to ensure that equal opportunities are given to all children to participate in all areas of the SPHE programme. We are equality based - we celebrate diversity and we ensure that every child is made to feel valued, that their voice matters and where every child belongs. Our school promotes democracy and encourages input from everybody. This will be encouraged through our SPHE programme. We take a child centred approach where we celebrate the uniqueness of the child.

**Policies and programmes that support SPHE:****Policies**

- Code of Behaviour Policy
- RSE Policy
- Admissions Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Substance Use Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Acceptable Usage Policy
- Digital Device Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Healthy Eating Policy
- Dignity in the Workplace Policy
- Enrolment Policy

**Programmes**

- Active School Flag
- Green Flag
- Amber Flag
- Friendship Week/Anti-Bullying Week
- Fun Friends Programme
- Learn Together Programme
- Stay Safe Programme
- Walk Tall Programme
- Incredible Years
- Fun Friends
- Friends for Life
- Get Up Stand Up
- Stop Think Do
- Web wise

**Homework:**

Homework in this subject will usually be informal. However, if prescribed in SPHE, homework will reflect the active learning approach and will reinforce information already taught during class. When Stay Safe homework is assigned, worksheets are to be signed by parents/guardians and returned to school.

**Resources:**

| <b>Books for pupils</b>   | <b>Books for Teachers</b>  | <b>Posters</b>                                      | <b>Media &amp; ICT</b>  |
|---|--|---|---|
| Worksheets from<br>Walk Tall/ Stay Safe<br>Education Packs<br>Toms Flower<br>Be kind online | Walk Tall<br>Stay Safe<br>RSE manuals<br>Healthy Bodies for<br>girls<br>Healthy bodies for<br>boys<br>My selfie and the<br>wider world<br>Digitown | Various Posters to be<br>displayed in the<br>school | Busy Bodies<br>workbook<br>Learn Together<br>Resource Bank<br>Oide<br>Webwise<br>School Drive |

**Programmes & Resources may include:**

|                            |                                    |                                  |  |
|----------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| Walk Tall                  | Be Internet Awesome<br>(3rd & 4th) | All Together Now                 | My Selfie & the Wider<br>World (5th & 6th) |
| Healthy Bodies             | Stay Safe (mandatory)              | Different Families,<br>Same Love | Zeeko Internet Safety<br>Guide             |
| Gender Equality<br>Matters | Be Safe RSE Manuals                | RESPECT Guidelines               | Webwise                                    |
| HTML Heros (1st &<br>2nd)  | Busy Bodies                        | We All Belong                    | Oide                                       |

**\*The above lists are not exhaustive lists and will be added to as and when the need arises. A hard copy of all manuals will be available in the classroom in each class level. All manuals are available on the school drive. Anatomical dolls are in the resource room.**

**Individual Teacher's Planning and Reporting:**

This plan in SPHE and the curriculum documents will inform and guide teachers in their long and short term planning in SHPE. This planning will be in line with the year grid. Each teacher will keep a Cuntas Míósúil and this will inform our progress and needs when evaluating and reviewing our progress in SPHE. Teachers can avail of class resource packs.

**Parental Involvement:**

Parental involvement is encouraged and valued. We welcome parents to share their interests and expertise through activities such as shared games, cooking, gardening, yoga, IT, crafts, drama, music. Parental involvement is considered an integral part to effectively implementing SPHE as we believe that SPHE is a shared responsibility. This plan and the curriculum documents are available for parents to inform them of the programme for SPHE.

**Community Links:**

Navan ETNS believes that the local community has a very important role to play in supporting the programme in SPHE and we endeavour to liaise with members such as the Dental Hygienist, Health Nurse, Fireman, Vet, Gardaí, local Sports Clubs, Tusla.

**Success Criteria:**

The success of this policy will be evaluated through the successful implementation of the school plan, in conjunction with the children's learning outcomes. We will know if it has achieved its aims if the pupils:

- Have increased knowledge, understanding and skills

- Are more aware of their attitudes and values
- Are more respectful of themselves and others
- Relate to others in a positive way
- Are more actively involved in the school and possibly local community
- Feedback from parent/guardians and pupils
- Happy atmosphere in school

### **Implementation:**

#### **Roles and Responsibilities**

Navan ETNS believes that the whole school community must be involved to successfully implement SPHE. In line with circular (0042/2018) where it states "Teachers are best placed to teach more sensitive topics as they have a relationship with the class. The teaching staff will implement this plan with the support of the Board of Management, Parents/Guardians and the local community. Each teacher is responsible for the implementation of the SPHE policy with his/her own class. However, it is recognised the individual teachers have the right to opt out of teaching some parts of the RSE programme. In this case alternative arrangements will be made to ensure that the programme is taught to all classes.

Parents/Guardians have the right to withdraw their child/children from aspects of the RSE programme (c.f. Role of Parents/Guardians, RSE Policy). A meeting can be arranged between parent/guardian and class teacher if an opt out option arises to fully discuss the content that will be taught. The final decision lies with the parent/guardian if they want their child/ children to opt out of any areas of the SPHE/ RSE curriculum. The parent/ guardian must put this request in writing at the beginning of each school year.

#### **Roles of visitors**

Visitors to SPHE classes will deal with discussions in line with the aims of the programme and the ethos of the school. It is the duty of the teacher who organises the visit to ensure the suitability to the programme and the school. Teachers will remain with the class for the duration of the visit and the Principal must be informed in advance of all visiting speakers and the content of their presentation.

### **Review:**

#### **Roles and Responsibilities**

It will be necessary to review this Policy on a regular basis to ensure optimum implementation of the SPHE Curriculum in the school. We will review the policy in 2027. The whole staff is responsible for coordinating this review.


Those involved in the review may include- teachers, pupils, parents, post holders, Board of Management and others.


### **Timeframe:**

This Policy will be reviewed in May 2027.

### **Ratification & Communication:**

The Board of Management ratified this plan on the 16/10/24

Signed:   
Chairperson of Board of Management  
Date: 16/10/24

Signed:   
Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management  
Date: 16/10/24

This policy is available for parents to view at the school or on the school website.