Social, Personal & Health Education
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Curriculum
Contents

Introduction
Social, personal and health education 2
The SPHE curriculum 3
Aims 9
Broad objectives 10
Planning content for all classes 11

Infant classes
Overview 15
Content 16

First and second classes
Overview 25
Content 26
Introduction
Social, personal and health education

Social, personal and health education (SPHE) provides particular opportunities to foster the personal development, health and well-being of the individual child, to help him/her to create and maintain supportive relationships and become an active and responsible citizen in society. Through an SPHE programme that is planned and consistent throughout the school, children can develop a framework of values, attitudes, understanding and skills that will inform their decisions and actions both now and in the future. Since SPHE has a moral and a spiritual dimension, its development and implementation are influenced significantly by the ethos or characteristic spirit of the school.

The learning and teaching climate that prevails in the classroom, the methodologies and approaches used and the relationships that the children experience and witness in the school, all contribute to their social, personal and health development. Similarly, many of the themes and topics addressed in the various subjects have a social, personal or health perspective, as will many of the incidental happenings that occur in the everyday life of the school. There are also particular issues that are intrinsic to SPHE that need to be explored and examined in some detail.

An effective and meaningful SPHE programme will cater for all these dimensions by providing learning opportunities in a combination of three ways: in the context of a positive school climate and atmosphere, through discrete time (a specific time on the timetable) and through an integrated approach across a range of subject areas. Implementation in this way will enable the teacher to adopt a coherent approach to the programme, take cognisance of the learning experience in the home and make use of the most appropriate learning and teaching strategies.

As children progress through an SPHE programme, they will encounter a wide range of issues. These will include substance misuse, relationships, sexuality, child abuse prevention, prejudice and discrimination. The SPHE curriculum is structured in such a way that these issues are not explored in isolation; rather the emphasis is on building a foundation of skills, values, attitudes and understanding relevant to all these issues, with specific information provided where necessary.
The SPHE curriculum

SPHE promotes intrapersonal development by helping children to recognise, understand and accept themselves as unique individuals who feel valued and loved. It provides particular opportunities to nurture self-worth and self-confidence, helping the child to set and assess his/her own goals and to be able to manage his/her own behaviour. SPHE enables the child to build a sense of self-efficacy which in turn can increase his/her sense of personal control, promote self-awareness and enable self-directed learning. An SPHE programme particularly contributes to the development of personal attributes and skills, such as learning how to manage feelings, how to resolve conflicts and how to cope with new and demanding situations.

The ways in which children live and behave in the early years of life will have a significant influence on their health and well-being in future years. SPHE ensures that health messages are planned, implemented and reinforced and provides clarification of some of the misinformation that children may receive. It also aims to enable children to develop a sense of personal responsibility for their own health and for the decisions and the choices they make in relation to their behaviour and actions.

As part of their social development children need to learn to appreciate other people in their lives and to know how to create and maintain positive, healthy relationships. An SPHE programme can significantly contribute to interpersonal development by helping children to acquire a range of communication skills and to understand the ways in which they can show respect, care and consideration in their dealings with others. In school, children can learn how to develop and sustain relationships based on mutual respect and responsibility and can begin to understand the importance of trust and honesty in human interactions.

Children also need to learn that personal motives should be balanced with a sense of social responsibility. SPHE plays an important role in developing an understanding of the democratic way of life and individual and group rights and responsibilities. It provides opportunities for children to learn about, and actively participate in, the various communities to which they belong and to develop a sense of a shared commitment. It can also help them to value and take pride in their national, European and global identities and come to an understanding of what it means to be a citizen in the widest sense.
Diversity and difference characterise the society in which children live. However, prejudice and discrimination are all too often a feature of human relationships. A respect for and an appreciation of human and cultural diversity can and should be promoted at every level of the primary school. Through SPHE children can become aware of some of the prejudices and attitudes that fail to respect the dignity of others. They are given opportunities to develop an understanding of their own culture and traditions and equally to acquire a growing appreciation of the positive contributions made by different groups in society. As children learn to understand and practise equality, justice and fairness in school situations they will be enabled to challenge prejudice and discrimination as they experience it in their own lives both now and in the future.

Children live in an age in which they are bombarded daily with information from a variety of sources. They are also under increasing commercial pressure where marketing techniques are employed widely to appeal to even the very youngest child. SPHE encourages children to become more discerning in their use of the media and to learn about and become aware of the techniques and strategies used in advertising and in the media in general.

**Shared responsibility**

SPHE does not begin or end in school. Children’s understanding of the world, their own role and place in society and ways of behaving are significantly influenced by the family and the home environment. While this continues throughout their lives, other factors, such as the media, friends, peers and individual experiences, become increasingly influential.

An SPHE programme is most effective when it is based on a consistency in approach and where the responsibility is shared by parents, teachers, children, board of management, health professionals and relevant members of the community. Close consultation between the partners will be an essential element in the planning process and in regular reviews of the programme. This partnership approach helps to ensure that children are provided with a consistent experience in SPHE and are able to make connections between life at home, in the school and in the community.
The strands of the curriculum

The curriculum is presented in three strands: *Myself*, *Myself and others* and *Myself and the wider world*. These are consistent throughout the primary school and provide a basis for the SPHE and the civic, social and political education (CSPE) curricula at post-primary level.

The strands are presented at four levels, outlining the content that could be covered at each stage of the child’s time in school. Because the child’s development proceeds unevenly, the content and associated exemplars should be used in a *flexible* manner. They are a guideline from which a suitable programme can be developed, one that can have maximum effect because it is made to suit individual schools and sets of circumstances.

The curriculum is drawn up in a spiral manner, that is, where similar content is revisited at each level but the processes, approaches and information adopted reflect the needs of children at a particular time and at their various stages of readiness.

*Myself* is concerned with the personal development of the individual child and his/her health and well-being. An exploration of the elements of this strand can foster self-awareness and understanding and enable children to care for and respect themselves. The content also allows for the development of a variety of personal and self-management skills and the fostering of a sense of personal responsibility for their own actions and behaviour. The strand *Myself* also contributes to children establishing ways of thinking, feeling and acting that can help to promote and maintain health and well-being both now and in the future.

*Myself and others* focuses on developing a sense of care and respect for other people and the facility for relating to and communicating effectively with others. It helps to foster the qualities and dispositions in the children that will help them to live and work with others and to act in socially responsible ways. They are given opportunities to learn and practise a wide range of communication skills, including the ability to resolve conflicts, to empathise, to be assertive, to co-operate and to work collaboratively with others.

*Myself and the wider world* enables children to explore the various communities in which they live. They can learn how to operate competently in society and to understand what it means to belong and to share a sense of purpose. In exploring this strand they are encouraged to develop a sense of social responsibility and an appreciation of the interdependent nature of the world in which they live. The work in this
strand also includes exploring the need to care for the environment and to keep it in trust for future generations. Children are given opportunities to learn about their own culture and traditions and are encouraged to respect the rights and contributions of culturally diverse people and groups.

This strand also promotes media awareness and helps children to examine and explore various forms of media. Using media techniques and becoming familiar with information technologies in a structured way can help children to benefit from the technology, thus fostering critical media usage.

**Approaches and methodologies**

The methodologies and approaches used in the classroom are crucial to the child's social, personal and health development. As active participants in their own learning, children can make sense of what is being learned, make informed judgements and construct new meanings. It is more likely that children will develop a sense of ownership over what they have learned and be able to transfer it to different situations when they have been actively involved in the learning process. While independent learning is fostered, it is equally essential that children are given opportunities to interact with others and with their environment and to learn to co-operate with their peers.

For active learning to take place, the school should provide a supportive and caring environment, in which the child is encouraged to participate in his/her own learning and in which each contribution is valued and appreciated. The role of the teacher will be central to the use of effective active learning and teaching techniques in the classroom. He/she will need to structure activities and guide and direct the work in such a way that a child can participate in a real and meaningful way and can develop a sense of responsibility for his/her own learning.

A wide variety of active learning strategies should be used in implementing SPHE in order to take account of the individual needs and the wide range of objectives in the curriculum. These strategies could include play, discussion and drama activities, co-operative games, multimedia programmes, accessing the internet and e-mail, exploring television, video extracts or photographs, carrying out surveys or interpreting data. As part of any learning and teaching strategy in SPHE children should be encouraged to critically reflect on their work and explore possibilities for transferring what they have learned to situations in their own lives.
Children with special needs

All children should have the opportunity to participate in and benefit from the full range of experiences offered in SPHE. In planning for SPHE account should be taken of the range of difference in the school so that all children will be given the opportunity to obtain maximum benefit from the programme.

SPHE and Language

SPHE provides a context in which children are given opportunities to develop and enhance their language skills and to increase their vocabulary related to the social, personal and health aspects of their lives. In asking appropriate questions, giving opinions, exploring ideas, or making responses, children can become increasingly fluent in their use of language and can improve many of the skills they may have learned in other areas of the curriculum. Such confidence and competence in using language will be particularly significant in enabling children to access critical information relating to their own health and well-being, both now and in later years. This facility can also contribute to building positive relationships by enhancing communication and fostering genuine understanding.

The exploration of language and its usage in relating to others is central to any SPHE programme. Children should become aware of the power and the influence of language. When used positively, language can build up, affirm and show respect to another human being but if used in a negative manner can hurt, diminish or demean. Children need to recognise and become sensitive to the ways in which they themselves use language in their relationships and in their everyday interactions.

Language is also powerful because it both creates and reflects a culture. Through SPHE children can begin to appreciate the connection between language and identity. A planned programme throughout the school also provides children with opportunities to explore the language used in various media and to recognise the values, attitudes and viewpoints being promoted and fostered.
**SPHE and information and communication technologies**

ICTs can support the learning and teaching of SPHE in the classroom. Children can develop self-confidence and motivation through using and becoming familiar with computers. Other aspects of SPHE such as learning to take turns, to share and to co-operate can be developed as children use computers in a planned and appropriate manner. Computers can also be particularly helpful in enhancing children’s decision-making skills and in helping them to become discerning and judicious users of various technologies.

Children can use computers in SPHE to gather information on specific topics or to collate and present data. While there are many CD-ROMs available on health and social issues, the internet also provides a wealth of up-to-date information and can indicate further avenues of investigation. Exploring the internet, and using e-mail or video conferencing can enhance children’s sense of global citizenship and foster a wide range of communication skills.

**Assessment**

Assessment in SPHE guides the teacher in improving the learning experiences for the child and in continually refining and developing the programme to suit individual needs, interests and abilities. It can be particularly helpful in enabling children to see how they are progressing and to recognise and appreciate their own achievements. As many of the benefits or outcomes of SPHE do not emerge or become evident until long after the child has left primary school, the assessment relates to that which can be effectively assessed during his/her time in school. The section on assessment outlines the extent to which the progress of the child in SPHE can be determined, the most appropriate tools for this purpose and the way in which it can be managed in the primary school.
Aims

The aims of social, personal and health education are

• 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.
Broad 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 an 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.
Planning content for all classes

Structure
The content of the SPHE curriculum is presented in three strands, Myself, Myself and others and Myself and the wider world. The divisions within each strand are referred to as strand units, and some of the objectives are illustrated with exemplars. These exemplars are in italic type and should be considered merely as suggestions.

Implementing SPHE in the school
It is recommended that SPHE be provided in a combination of three ways within the school:

- a positive school climate and atmosphere fosters the health and well-being of all the members of the school community. It reflects a safe and secure environment where children experience a sense of belonging and know that the concerns and contributions of parents, children and teachers are taken into account. A positive school climate and atmosphere nurtures self-confidence and self-worth and promotes respectful and caring relationships throughout the school. It therefore provides the context in which work carried out in a range of subjects, including SPHE, is lived out and makes sense

- discrete SPHE time provides for the teaching of some elements of the programme during designated class periods. This time can be used to develop and practise particular skills, deal with sensitive issues or explore issues that are not addressed in other areas of the curriculum. To use this time effectively it may be more appropriate for the teacher to organise it in block periods and use it as required rather than confining the time to a set period in each week

- an integrated approach allows for many aspects of SPHE to be dealt with in the context of relevant subject areas. Through a variety of learning experiences across the curriculum children work together, solve problems, make decisions, engage in dialogue and reflect critically. Some subject areas also provide the most appropriate context for exploring particular aspects of SPHE: for example, developing a sense of care and respect for the environment could be fostered through science and history, while safety in water could be appropriately explored through physical education.
A broad and balanced programme

It is recommended that in planning an SPHE programme the teacher would choose some content from each of the three major strands in any one year. The selection could consist of two or three strand units from the Strand *Myself* and at least one strand unit from the strand *Myself and others* and from *Myself and the wider world*. Alternatively, the selection could consist of a range of topics taken from all three strands. It is envisaged that the content not covered in year one, would be included in the teacher’s planning for the following year.

It is important that planning takes place at both a school and class level to ensure that the programme reflects a spiral approach, where similar aspects are revisited in different ways according to the age, stage of development and readiness of the child. It is also essential that the content chosen for every class includes a balance between learning skills, fostering and exploring attitudes and developing understanding. Planning for SPHE will always be informed by the ethos of the school and developed within the context of the school plan.

In addressing sensitive issues it will be necessary to take into account the different levels of emotional and physical development of the children and to adapt the programme accordingly. It will be particularly important in multi-class situations to seek co-operation from other teachers or make alternative arrangements, so that individual needs are met.
Infant classes
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strands</th>
<th>Strand units</th>
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<tr>
<td>Myself</td>
<td>• Self-identity</td>
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<td>• Self-awareness</td>
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<td>• Developing self-confidence</td>
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<td>• Personal safety</td>
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<td>• Myself and my family</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• My friends and other people</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Relating to others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Myself and the wider world</td>
<td>• Developing citizenship</td>
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<td>• My school community</td>
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<td>• Media education</td>
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The child should be enabled to

**Self-awareness**

- discuss and appreciate all the features that make a person special and unique
  - name, size, hair colour, sex, fingerprints, birthday
- begin to understand, appreciate and respect personal abilities, skills and talents
  - being a friend, being co-operative, playing games
- recognise and record personal preferences
  - things I like and things I don’t like
- become aware of his/her immediate world through the senses

**Developing self-confidence**

- express own views, opinions and preferences
- become more self-reliant and independent
  - taking responsibility for own personal belongings
  - asking relevant questions to seek clarification
  - beginning to reflect on his/her own learning and experiences
  - accepting that making mistakes and trying again are part of the learning process
  - attempting new tasks with courage
  - learning to save money
- begin to learn how to cope with various changes as they occur
  - moving to a new class, losing a friend

**Making decisions**

- identify some everyday choices made by himself/herself and those that are made by others
- begin to develop some awareness of factors that may influence decisions or choices taken.
Strand unit  Taking care of my body

The child should be enabled to

Knowing about my body

• appreciate the need, and understand how to care for his/her own body in order to keep it healthy and well
  regular exercise and activity, adequate sleep and rest, balanced diet, correct posture
• respect his/her own body and that of others
• name parts of the male and female body, using appropriate anatomical terms
• explore and discuss the different things the body can do
  move, feel, think, grow, heal
• recognise and practise basic hygiene skills
  personal hygiene practices
  hygienic eating habits
  developing basic skills in dressing himself/herself and caring for clothes
  taking proper care of teeth
• realise that each individual has some responsibility for taking care of himself/herself

Food and nutrition

• become aware of the importance of food for growth and development
  food provides energy for work and play, food helps to protect against illness, food helps us to grow
• explore food preferences and their role in a balanced diet
  treats, snacks, fruit, vegetables, foods that are unhealthy for some people and not for others
• discuss and explore some qualities and categories of food
  fruit, vegetables, foods that can be eaten at breakfast, foods that are grown, food that comes from animals
• realise the importance of good hygiene when preparing food to eat.
Strand unit  Growing and changing

The child should be enabled to

As I grow I change

• identify some of the factors that promote growth
  food, love, warmth, exercise, rest, sleep, affirmation, natural light
• realise that growth and change are part of the process of life and are unique to each individual
  physical
    increase in shoe size, need to cut hair and nails frequently
  social
    interacting with others, sharing, arguing, talking, playing together
  intellectual
    drawing, writing, reading, questioning, things I can do for myself
  spiritual
    fostering wonder and imagination through the senses, beginning to reflect, availing of quiet time
• recognise that the ability to take responsibility for himself/herself and others increases as he/she grows older

New life

• become aware of new life and birth in the world
  new growth in springtime
  baby animals being born
• develop an awareness of human birth
  that a baby grows and is nurtured in the mother’s womb until ready to be born

• identify what babies need to help them to grow and develop
  love, regular food and water, warmth, nappy changing, careful bathing, medical check-ups

Feelings and emotions

• name a variety of feelings and talk about situations where these may be experienced
  feelings
    happiness, love, joy, excitement, surprise, fear, loss, jealousy, pain, loneliness
  experiences
    when it’s my birthday, when I try something new, the day I started school
• explore the variety of ways in which feelings are expressed and coped with
  hugging or cuddling when expressing affection
  becoming red in the face when embarrassed
  crying when upset or afraid
• begin to be sensitive to the feelings of others and to realise that the actions of one individual can affect the feelings of another
• explore and discuss occasions that can promote positive feelings in himself/herself
  making a new friend, receiving an invitation, being affirmed.
Strand unit: Safety and protection

The child should be enabled to

Personal safety

- explore appropriate safety strategies
  knowing how and when to seek help, knowing who to ask, people I can trust and tell not wandering off on his/her own
  knowing when to say ‘yes’ and ‘no’ to friends or adults in different situations, e.g. taking lifts
  knowing own name, address and telephone number
  identifying local landmarks
- identify situations and places that are safe and those where personal safety might be at risk
  being in a supervised playground, going on an outing with family
  going into unfamiliar places
  feeling unsafe with people, being asked to keep a difficult secret (one that causes worry or makes him/her feel uncomfortable)
- realise how other people can persuade him/her to engage in unsafe behaviour

Safety issues

- identify people who are responsible for safety in the community and learn and practise safety strategies for crossing the road, using the bus or being a pedestrian
  crossing the road with an adult
- realise and understand that rules are necessary in order to protect people and keep them safe
  tidying away own school bag, lining up without running,
  following school code of hygiene
- explore how accidents might be prevented at home, in school, on the farm, or in the water
  items in the home or school environment that are unsafe to play with
- realise that many substances used at home or in school are dangerous and that permission should be sought before exploring the contents
  never touch, taste or smell unknown substances
- identify some of the substances or things that are put onto the body and their associated functions
  plasters, ointment, cream or lotions
- explore occasions when medicines, injections or pills are needed and the safety rules that apply when taking medicine.
Strand: Myself and others

Strand unit  Myself and my family

The child should be enabled to

• identify and name the people who constitute a family and appreciate that all family units are not the same
  sibling, parent, guardian, grandparent, relative

• realise that he/she belongs to a family and that each person has a place and role within a family

• explore the things that families do together
talking, eating, working, travelling, shopping, playing, participating in leisure activities together

• realise how families take care of, support and love each other

• explore and acknowledge many of the things that can be learned in the home.

Strand unit  My friends and other people

The child should be enabled to

• identify, discuss and appreciate his/her own friends

• discuss and examine the different aspects of friendship
talking together, spending time together, helping each other, sharing with each other, trusting each other

• identify and appreciate friends at school and how they can help and care for each other
  recognising and including the lonely child at playtime
  being fair and equitable when working and playing with others

• discuss and appreciate all those considered special, both within and outside the family circle
  parent, grandparent, sister, brother, neighbour, teacher

• recognise and appreciate differences in people and know how to treat others with dignity and respect

• recognise and explore bullying behaviour, who is involved and the effects on different people
  the bully, the child being bullied, the onlookers, the family of the victim

• know that bullying is always wrong and know what should be done if one is being bullied or sees it happening to someone else.
Strand unit  Relating to others

The child should be enabled to

• listen and respond to the opinions and views of others
• use verbal and non-verbal behaviour to perform social functions
  introducing others, expressing thanks, making requests

• practise care and consideration, courtesy and good manners when interacting with others
  giving and taking turns in listening and speaking
• resolve conflicts with others
  learning:
    to listen to others
    to apologise and to accept apologies
    to compromise and to forgive.
The child should be enabled to

My school community

- recognise the name of his/her own school and the people who contribute to the life of the school
- realise that each person is important and has a unique and valuable contribution to make to the class
- recognise the importance of sharing and co-operating and being fair in all activities in the class and school
  
  learning and understanding how to work and play together in a group, taking turns
- realise and understand the necessity for adhering to the class and school rules
- explore and respect the diversity of children in the class and school

Living in the local community

- recognise and appreciate people or groups who serve the local community and how their contribution enhances the quality of life of others

  local credit union, parent and toddler groups, sports clubs

- recognise and become familiar with the rules within a group or wider community, those who safeguard these rules and the importance of obeying the rules in order to keep people safe
- suggest ways of helping other people at home, in school and in the local community
  
  being aware that some people in the community may be in need
- recognise that each person has an important contribution to make to the life of the community
  
  caring for the local environment
- begin to become aware of local identity and to participate in and enjoy celebrating local events

Environmental care

- appreciate the environment and realise that each individual has a community and individual responsibility for protecting and caring for the environment.

The sub-unit Environmental care is developed in detail in SESE geography and science.
Strand unit  Media education

_The child should be enabled to_

- realise that he/she receives information from many different sources
  
  *pictures, posters, other people, books, newspapers, cards, television, internet*

- identify favourite television programmes, videos and video games and indicate reasons for preference

- explore popular stories, books and rhymes and discuss some of the characters and their appealing traits

- begin to use and explore the various kinds of information technology available

- begin to explore and talk about the difference between advertisements and programmes
  
  *what is real and imaginary, the content of advertisements and favourite programmes.*
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strands</strong></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
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  *Feelings and emotions*  
• 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  
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Strand: Myself

Strand unit  Self-identity

*The child should be enabled to*

**Self-awareness**

- develop an appreciation of and talk about personal strengths, abilities and characteristics
- recognise and appreciate the similarities and differences between people
- identify and talk about personal preferences, dreams for the future and hopes
- become aware of his/her immediate world through the senses

**Developing self-confidence**

- become more independent and self-reliant
  - taking responsibility for personal belongings
  - asking for help when needed
  - reflecting on his/her learning and experiences
  - assessing his/her progress
  - appreciating that making mistakes is part of the learning process
  - saving money, looking after school clothes
- explore different ways of coping with change
  - seeking clarification, taking time to adjust
- express personal opinions and preferences and acknowledge those of others and comment on them

**Making decisions**

- recognise and reflect on choices that are made every day
- discuss the factors that may influence personal decisions or choices
- realise that being involved in decision-making demands more personal responsibility
  - beginning to realise that more opportunities to make choices will be given as the trust of others is earned and maintained.
Strand unit  Taking care of my body

The child should be enabled to

Knowing about my body

• appreciate the need and understand how to care for the body in order to keep it strong and healthy

  regular sleep and rest, a balanced diet, regular exercise, quiet time, relaxation, correct posture

• recognise the importance of treating the body with respect and dignity

• explore the various things the body can do

  see, hear, move, breathe, make energy, feel, think

• name parts of the male and female body, using appropriate anatomical terms, and identify some of their functions

• develop and practise basic hygiene skills

  discussing and exploring the effects of poor personal hygiene

  practising and learning about hygienic eating habits

  practising effective dental care

• realise that each individual must take some responsibility for self-care

• become aware of how infection spreads easily and the importance of adhering to a code of hygiene

• recognise and examine some of the substances that are taken into the body and the purpose and function of each one

Food and nutrition

• explore the importance of food for promoting growth, keeping healthy and providing energy

• appreciate that balance, regularity and moderation are necessary in the diet

  the food pyramid, the need for a balanced diet, the importance of having an appropriate intake of liquids, food that is unhealthy for some people and not for others

• identify some of the foods that are derived from plant and animal sources

• recognise and practise good hygiene when dealing with food.
Strand unit

Growing and changing

The child should be enabled to

As I grow I change

• begin to recognise the physical, emotional, social and spiritual factors that promote growth
  
  love, food, warmth, shelter, communication, friendship, sleep

• realise that growth takes place in many different ways and is unique to each individual
  
  physical
  growing out of clothes and shoes

  social
  making new friends, joining clubs, playing or engaging in sports together, an increasing ability to communicate

  intellectual
  improving mental skills and abilities

  spiritual
  becoming more reflective, enjoying quiet time for longer periods, experiencing wonder through the senses

• realise that growing up brings increased responsibility for himself/herself and others
  
  making own lunch, putting away school clothes, helping to feed a younger child

New life

• begin to understand that reproduction, birth, life, growth and death are all part of a life cycle

• appreciate what is necessary in order to provide and care for new-born babies in both the animal and human world
  
  love, regular feeding, nappy changing, careful bathing, medical check-ups

• realise the various roles parents and other family members have in providing for new-born babies
  
  love, time, energy, talking to baby, money, patience
Feelings and emotions

- name and identify a wide range of feelings and talk about and explore feelings in different situations
  - when I changed classes, when my brother/sister was born, when I got glasses for the first time
  - when I attempted something new
  - when I was excluded
- realise and explore the various ways feelings can be expressed and dealt with and choose which are the most appropriate and acceptable
  - affection
    - shaking hands, hugging
  - anger
    - crying, telling someone that I am angry
  - loss
    - crying, remaining quiet, asking for help
  - hurt
    - isolated, angry, seeking an apology
- identify people with whom he/she can discuss feelings and emotions
- become aware of and be able to choose healthy ways of feeling good about himself/herself
- explore the various feelings that change as one grows
  - what made me laugh when I was younger
  - the things I was afraid of when I was younger
  - the things that I find funny or that make me cry now
- recognise that individual actions can affect the feelings of others.
The child should be enabled to

Personal safety

• recognise and explore situations where children feel safe and those where safety might be at risk
  - getting lost, being left alone
  - coming in contact with unsafe or unknown substances
  - being with people who make me feel unsafe
  - inappropriate or unsafe touches, being asked to keep a difficult secret (one that causes worry or makes me feel uncomfortable)

• discuss and practise appropriate strategies for dealing with these situations
  - being assertive, telling a trusted person, making a telephone call, asking for help, knowing when to tell a secret, knowing how to seek help, distinguishing between real and imaginary dangers, adhering to rules made by others, recognising local landmarks, recognising people who are responsible for keeping him/her safe

• explore how other people can persuade him/her to engage in unsafe behaviour and how this may be counteracted

• identify risky behaviour and examine its positive and negative consequences
  - smoking, trying a new activity or game

Safety issues

• develop and practise strategies for keeping safe when travelling
  - being familiar with the rules for travelling in car or bus, on bicycle
  - crossing the road with an adult
  - obeying those responsible for safety in the community

• become familiar with and understand the need to adhere to safety rules that apply in school, at home, on the farm, in water, for his/her own safety and that of others

• recognise places where it is safe to play and understand the importance of adopting responsible and equitable behaviour when playing

• recognise how accidents might be caused and what can be done in order to prevent accidents happening
  - not playing with dangerous equipment or machinery, wearing protective headgear

• recognise and explore occasions when medicines are needed
  - reasons for taking medicine, feelings experienced before and after taking the medicine, who administered the medicine, the safety rules that apply when taking medicine

• distinguish between substances in the home or school that are safe and those that are dangerous and seek permission before exploring them
  - fertilisers, alcohol, detergents.
Strand: Myself and others

Strand unit  Myself and my family

The child should be enabled to

• identify and talk about those who live at home and recognise that homes and families can vary
  personal names, sex, physical description, characteristics

• recognise his/her role and place in the family unit and the contribution made by each member to the family

• appreciate his/her own family and identify ways in which members of families can help, support and care for each other.

• explore many of the things that are learned in families, both practical and otherwise.

Strand unit  My friends and other people

The child should be enabled to

• discuss personal friends and why he/she enjoys being with them

• identify, explore and discuss qualities and skills associated with friendship
  spending time together
talking, playing, travelling together
forgiving each other, trusting each other
being sensitive to the feelings of one’s friends

• explore how friends can influence personal actions and decisions
  adopting a healthy eating option, isolating a classmate, welcoming a newcomer, taking a risk, persuading one to smoke, using inappropriate language

• know how to treat people with dignity and respect
  calling people by their proper name, respecting the personal belongings of others, practising care and consideration, courtesy and good manners when interacting with others

• recognise and explore bullying behaviour, who is involved and the effects on different people
  the bully, the child being bullied, the onlookers

• know that bullying is always wrong and what should be done if one is being bullied or sees it happening to someone else.
The child should be enabled to

- distinguish between verbal and non-verbal behaviour and know how they are used in performing social functions
  - introducing oneself and others
  - expressing concern and appreciation
  - expressing thanks, asking questions, offering help
- listen, hear and respond to what is being said by others
  - accepting compliments and affirmations received
- express and record experiences, opinions, feelings and emotions in a variety of ways through:
  - oral language, drama and improvisation
  - drawing, painting, music
- explore and practise how to handle conflict without being aggressive
  - listening to and thinking about the other person's point of view
  - presenting his/her own point of view clearly
  - seeking to persuade and compromise
  - apologising and/or accepting apology
  - practising using assertive behaviour when dealing with others.
Strand: Myself and the wider world

Strand unit Developing citizenship

The child should be enabled to

My school community

• explore what it means to belong and recognise some of the different groups to which he/she can belong
  family, class, school, village, town, city, club, parish
  activities that promote belonging
  projects, games, concerts, book time

• recognise and write the name and location of his/her own school and identify those who constitute the school community

• discuss and appreciate how the positive contributions of each person can make the class or school a better place for everyone

• be involved in making the classroom rules and recognise the importance of adhering to these rules for the safety of all

• engage in group activities in the class and learn how to share, co-operate, listen to, work and play together
  exploring issues of sexual equality that may arise with friends and others
  practising fairness when playing or working together, taking turns

Living in the local community

• begin to appreciate how people depend on each other in many aspects of life
  some people in the community may be in need or require special attention

• develop a sense of belonging to his/her own local community
  recognising, participating in and enjoying the celebration of local events

• be aware of and appreciate the diversity of cultures and people in the local community, recognise their contributions and be aware of how differences can enrich his/her experiences

• develop an awareness of people in other places
  other communities, other towns, other countries

• identify those who have special responsibilities for looking after people in the community and the importance of the contribution of each individual to community life

Environmental care

• appreciate the environment and realise that there is a community and individual responsibility in caring for and protecting the environment.

The sub-unit Environmental care is developed in detail in SESE geography and science.
The child should be enabled to

- become aware of and learn about the different ways in which information can be communicated
  
  print, radio, television, internet, CD-ROM
- begin to distinguish between fact and fiction in stories or situations in different media forms
  
  television, comic or magazine, story book, video
  creating new or different endings to familiar stories or rhymes
  identifying favourite television programme, favourite video, favourite song
  exploring the content of various programmes, advertisements, videos, CDs
- discuss and explore advertising that is specifically aimed at children
  identifying:
  the difference in content between advertisements and programmes, favourite advertisements, the purpose of the advertisement.
Third and fourth classes
## Overview

**third and fourth classes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strands</th>
<th>Strand units</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Myself</strong></td>
<td>• Self-identity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Self-awareness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Developing self-confidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Taking care of my body</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Health and well-being</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Knowing about my body</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Food and nutrition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Growing and changing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- As I grow I change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- New life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Feelings and emotions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Safety and protection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Personal safety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Safety issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Making decisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Myself and others</strong></td>
<td>• Myself and my family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• My friends and other people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Relating to others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Communicating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Resolving conflict</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Myself and the wider world</strong></td>
<td>• Developing citizenship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- My school community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Local and wider communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Environmental care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- The sub-unit ‘Environmental care’ is developed in detail in SESE science and geography</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Media education</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The child should be enabled to

**Self-awareness**

- recognise, describe and discuss individual personality traits, qualities, strengths, limitations, interests and abilities
- explore the factors that influence his/her self-image
  - how I feel about my own body and my abilities, advertising and media images, comments from other people
- identify realistic personal goals and targets and how these can be achieved in the short or long term
- realise that each person has a unique contribution to make to various groups, situations and friendships
- identify personal preferences, dreams for the future, and hopes

**Developing self-confidence**

- enhance his/her own learning
  - asking for help when needed
  - saying 'I don't understand', asking questions to seek clarification when required, reflecting on his/her own learning and experiences
  - taking an active role in a project or event in the class or school, recognising that making mistakes and learning from them is an important part of growing up
- express personal opinions, feelings, thoughts and ideas with growing confidence
  - taking into consideration the views, opinions and feelings of others
- become more confident in coping with change and with situations that are unfamiliar
  - joining a new club, making new friends, moving house, teams and games
- become increasingly responsible and autonomous
  - saving money, taking care of his/her own sports gear, tidying his/her own room, asserting his/her rights, being able to make a complaint and seek redress.
The child should be enabled to

Health and well-being

• understand and appreciate what it means to be healthy and to have a balanced lifestyle
  
  having energy, being in good form, feeling enthusiastic, having a positive outlook, having a balanced diet, having friends, having good posture

• realise that each individual has some responsibility for his/her health and that this responsibility increases as he/she gets older
  
  not remaining in wet clothes, eating a proper lunch, taking regular and appropriate exercise, balancing work and play, having correct posture

• begin to develop strategies to cope with various worries or difficulties that he or she may encounter
  
  disappointments, peer pressure, bullying, illness

• be aware of the dangers in using tobacco or alcohol and explore the reasons why people may choose to smoke or drink

• know and understand the meaning of the word ‘drug’ and when it is appropriate or inappropriate to take drugs
  
  learning that drugs are substances that change the way the body, and often the mind, works; all medicines are drugs but not all drugs are medicines

• identify and categorise a variety of substances that are taken into or onto the body into those that are helpful or harmful, legal or illegal
  
  nicotine, food, alcohol, liquids, nose drops, sprays

• recognise and discuss some people who are concerned with health and welfare
  
  doctor, nurse, speech therapist, pharmacist, optician, chiropodist, dentist

Knowing about my body

• realise the importance of caring for and treating his/her own body, and that of others, with dignity and respect

• understand the physical changes taking place in both the male and female body
  
  growing height and weight, increasing strength
  
  growing from boy to man, growing from girl to woman

• realise that these changes do not occur at the same time but nonetheless are predictable and natural and that being different is normal
  
  accepting his/her own body image

  being sensitive to the patterns of growth and development in himself/herself and other people

• recognise and practise good personal hygiene, know how it is maintained and understand its importance in social interaction

• understand and explore the relationship between health and hygiene
  
  the transmission of bacteria and viruses, the spread of infection and disease

• recognise the adverse effects of sexual stereotyping and realise that these effects can become more exaggerated as the physical differences between males and females are more apparent
Food and nutrition

• differentiate between a healthy and an unhealthy diet and appreciate the role of balance and moderation
  
  *identifying the nutrients that are necessary in a balanced diet*
  
  *exploring how diet promotes growth, performance and development*

• recognise the wide choice of food available and categorise food into the four main food groups and their place on the food pyramid

  *bread, potatoes, cereals*
  
  *fruit and vegetables*
  
  *milk, cheese, yoghurt*
  
  *meat, fish and alternatives*

• examine the dietary needs of his/her own age group and other groups in society

• explore some factors that influence the consumption of different food products

  *presentation and packaging, shelf life, advertising, imported or home-produced, price, consumer demand*

• discuss and examine the importance of proper food hygiene.
Strand unit  Growing and changing

The child should be enabled to

As I grow I change

• realise that growing and changing are continuous throughout life

• identify the skills and abilities acquired and the interests and pursuits taken up in recent years
devolving sporting skills, playing chess, reading, developing critical thinking abilities, making new friends, joining clubs

• recognise the emotional changes that have taken place since infancy
when I need something—what I did then and now
when I am afraid—what I did then and now

• recognise and discuss how feelings and emotions are affected by the physical changes that take place at puberty*
smiling when hurt or angry, being withdrawn when afraid

• begin to appreciate the need for space and privacy in life
the need for personal boundaries, having opportunities for uncluttered space, having opportunities to work individually

• recognise how independence and responsibilities are continually increasing
choosing own reading materials
doing jobs for self and parents
being trusted

Birth and new life

• discuss the stages and sequence of development of the human baby, from conception to birth*
diet, rest, love, support and role of other family members, medical interventions

• identify the care that needs to be taken while waiting for a baby to be born

• develop an appreciation of the wonder of a new-born baby

*Developed and implemented in the context of the school ethos and school plan
Feelings and emotions

• talk about and reflect on a wide variety of feelings and emotions and the various situations where these may be experienced and how they may be expressed
  ‘highs’ and ‘lows’: sports event, prizegiving, moving away, not winning a prize, not being chosen for a team

• identify strong feelings and learn how to express and cope with these feelings in a socially appropriate manner
  love, embarrassment, shyness, success, happiness, excitement, frustration, jealousy, anger, rage, loss, resentment, ‘being put down’
  seeking help at an appropriate time and in an appropriate manner, naming and discussing the feeling, pausing, taking appropriate action

• identify and recognise the difference between needs and wants and come to realise that some rewards or experiences may be or should be postponed until later
  will I buy something with my money now or will I save for something more expensive later?

• explore how feelings can influence one’s life
  recognising how an individual action can affect the feelings of another
  beginning to recognise how real feelings can sometimes be hidden from others.
The child should be enabled to

Personal safety

- explore the rules and regulations that exist in school, at home and in society and the importance of adhering to these rules for keeping himself/herself and others safe
  
  realising that individual action can keep others safe or can threaten safety

- identify people, places and situations that may threaten personal safety
  
  bullies, large gatherings
  being touched inappropriately, being asked to keep a difficult secret (one that is worrying or makes him/her feel uncomfortable)

- begin to assess the consequences of risky behaviour
  
  smoking a cigarette, tasting alcohol, climbing a wall

- begin to realise that as independence increases, responsibility for personal safety increases, and that a strategy for keeping safe with people has to be developed and adhered to by each individual
  
  being assertive
  realising how and when to get help
  telling people who are trustworthy
  becoming familiar with emergency services and how to contact them
  telling someone where he/she is going at all times
  adhering to rules about unsafe places
  not accepting bribes from anyone or taking lifts from unauthorised people.
Safety issues

• be aware of potential travel hazards and the need for responsible behaviour when travelling

• adopt responsible behaviour at play and know the appropriate safety measures to take while playing

  situations
  in the water, at home, in the school yard, while visiting friends

  safety measures
  wearing protective headgear

• explore and examine how accidents are caused, identifying ways in which some of these can be prevented and the appropriate action to be taken if an accident or emergency occurs

  at home, in school, on the farm, at the seaside

• identify items or substances in the home or school that may be dangerous if not used properly and devise a safety strategy for dealing with them

  never touching, tasting or smelling unknown substances

  never transferring substances into other containers

  always asking a responsible adult before using any substance, learning about correct means of storage

• explore and examine the use of medicines

  where medicines are obtained, the different ways in which medicines are taken, the positive benefits of taking medicine, the dangers of misusing medicine

• identify some potential risks to health and safety in the environment

  traffic, ultraviolet light, polluted water, smoke.
Strand unit  Making decisions

The child should be enabled to

- become aware of and think about choices and decisions that he/she makes every day
- explore and discuss the factors that influence personal decisions and choices and the different levels of thought involved in making a decision
  - personal wishes and desires
  - impulse
  - values and beliefs
  - wishes and directions of parent or teacher
  - social constraints
  - peer and media influences
- discuss why and how adults can make decisions and set boundaries for young people
  - because they care for and love them
  - because they want to keep them safe
  - because they know how to keep them healthy
- recognise that opportunities to exercise choice can increase as responsibilities are accepted and as the trust of others is earned
- recognise and explore the risks and the consequences of making a particular decision
- learn and begin to devise a simple decision-making strategy
  - pausing and thinking
  - identifying the important facts and/or the moral questions about the problem
  - considering the possible solutions and consequences
  - weighing up the advantages and disadvantages
  - implementing the decision
  - reflecting on the choice or decision
- recognise and explore how the views, opinions, expectations and responses of others can influence personal decisions or actions
  - affirming, expressing sympathy, including others, isolating people, bullying, smoking, truancy, drinking alcohol
- make individual and group decisions.
Strand: Myself and others

Strand unit  Myself and my family

*The child should be enabled to*

- explore and discuss different kinds of families, recognising that families vary in structure, in the way they communicate and in the way family members spend their time
  - *single-parent, two-parent, step-parent, adoptive, foster, others*
- recognise that each member has a place and role in the family and contributes to the effective functioning of the family unit
  - *helping to mind younger children, helping to keep the home tidy, sharing and co-operating with each other*
- explore how belonging to a family means that family members love, protect, provide and care for each other
- understand that families often undergo planned or unplanned changes that may be pleasant or difficult
  - *moving house, the arrival of a new baby, the death of one member, unemployment, new job, separation, illness*
- identify the behaviour that is important for harmony in families
  - *forgiveness, understanding, love, empathy, listening, respect, sharing, trust, spending time, adhering to family rules, honesty, accountability*
- compare and contrast life-styles of families in urban and rural areas, in different countries, and in different cultures within and outside Ireland.
Strand unit  My friends and other people

The child should be enabled to

- appreciate the need for and the importance of friendship and interacting with others
- explore the different aspects of friendship
  loyalty, respect, genuine communication, trust, keeping promises, forgiveness, resolving conflict, honesty, what he/she values in each other, why he/she enjoys each other’s company
- examine different types of friendship
  same-sex friendships
  ‘best friend’
  boy-girl friendships
  groups of friends
  befriending someone in a difficult situation for a short time
- begin to cope with disharmony in, or loss of, friendships
- acknowledge that friends often circulate in groups, which can be healthy or unhealthy
  inclusive, friendly, supportive
  teasing, taunting, being pressured
- practise and recognise the importance of care and consideration, courtesy and good manners when interacting with others
- respect and show consideration for the views, beliefs and values of others
  being just and fair when dealing with others
  exploring the role of assumption, rumour, fact and opinion when deciding about other people
- recognise, discuss and understand bullying
  why people bully, the behaviour that constitutes bullying, the consequences of different types of bullying, learning that bullying is always wrong, the role of the onlooker in a bullying situation, being threatened or bribed by a bully
- explore and examine ways of dealing with bullying.
Strand unit \hspace{1cm} Relating to others

The child should be enabled to

Communicating

• recognise and explore various verbal and non-verbal means of communicating
  
  laughing, talking, hugging, fighting, crying, ignoring

• listen carefully and reflectively to others
  
  listening to the experiences and views of others
  reflecting on what has been said in a different way
  commenting on the views expressed and on the views of others

• use language, gestures and other appropriate behaviour to perform social functions
  
  expressing tenderness, gentleness, concern
  presenting one’s own opinion to an individual or a group
  resisting the opinions and requests of others in a polite and firm way, expressing disagreement

• examine the power of persuasion in relating to others and identify times when it can be used positively and negatively

• give and receive compliments and constructive criticism in different situations

• recognise and explore how language can be used to foster inclusiveness

Resolving conflict

• identify reasons for conflict in different situations
  
  children ‘putting each other down’, taunting each other, name-calling

• identify and discuss various responses to conflict situations and decide on and practise those that are the most appropriate or acceptable
  
  pausing and taking action, using assertive behaviour, finding a compromise
  listening to and thinking about the other person’s point of view, apologising and/or accepting apologies.
Strand: Myself and the wider world

Developing citizenship

The child should be enabled to

My school community

• identify the people who constitute the school community and the role of individuals in contributing to the life of the school

• be aware of the importance of mutual respect and sensitivity to the different values and attitudes held by others

• play a role in deciding on classroom rules and discuss and examine the importance of adhering to the school code of behaviour and discipline

• develop and practise leadership roles and learn to work together in different group situations

  assisting others in achieving their goals and enlisting the help of others in achieving own goals, taking part in the school savings scheme

• discuss and explore the concepts of sharing and co-operating and the ways in which they can be put into practice in an effective manner

  practising justice and fair play in everyday interactions

• explore the various ways in which the school promotes a sense of belonging

  celebrating the achievements of individuals, groups and teams within the school

• examine the traditional roles that may be assigned to boys and girls in school because of their sex and become aware of ways of counteracting this stereotyping

• explore and recognise the rights and responsibilities of both adults and children in the school community

  children have the right to feel safe and to take action, they should not infringe on the rights of others
Local and wider communities

- realise what it means to belong to a group
  supporting others, setting goals and targets,
  recognising the strengths of others, adhering
  to democratic rules and regulations,
  respecting the views of everyone, having
  rights and responsibilities

- recognise how each person has both an
  individual and a communal responsibility
  to the community

  being a good neighbour and a good citizen,
  being aware of and taking action to help
  those who may be in need

- appreciate the diversity of people or groups
  within communities and the importance of
  mutual respect, empathy and understanding
  for living together in peace and harmony

- examine how justice, fairness and equality
  may or may not be exemplified in a
  community

  exploring discrimination against particular
  groups, racism, recognising stereotyping of
  any kind and exploring how it can be
  counteracted

- explore some of the issues and concerns in
  the local or national community

  consequences, possible solutions, role of each
  individual

- discuss the role of leaders and
  organisations that serve the community at
  different levels and the influence that they
  have

  mayor, credit union, sports clubs

- become aware of his/her own culture and
  recognise traditions, festivals and
  celebrations that are unique to the locality,
  region or country

  language, music, folklore, literature, national
  flag and anthem
  celebrate local or national achievements and
  accomplishments

- begin to develop an awareness of the lives
  and culture of some people in the
  European Union

Environmental care

- appreciate and respect the environment
  and learn that there is an individual and
  community responsibility in caring for the
  environment and protecting it for future
  generations.

The sub-unit Environmental care is developed in detail in
SESE geography and science.
The child should be enabled to

• explore the different ways in which information can be transmitted and learn to be discerning and selective about this information, with particular regard to language, behaviour, authenticity and attitudes

• discuss and explore television, radio, videos, computer games, the internet (worldwide web and e-mail) and other media

  identifying favourite programmes and the reasons for their popularity
  measuring the amount of time spent watching television, listening to music, playing computer games, exploring the internet, reading comics, books or magazines
  exploring alternative leisure pursuits
  sorting and classifying television programmes, videos, magazines and comics into different categories

• become aware of advertising and its purpose and nature

  advertising intends to persuade, messages can be biased

• begin to explore some of the techniques that are used in marketing and advertising children’s clubs, free toys with certain products, associating a particular pop star or character with a certain product, bonus points with certain food items, creating beauty ideals, appealing to one’s wants rather than one’s needs

• explore and examine some issues that are frequently raised in the media, the way they are portrayed and the accuracy of these presentations

  family life, relationships, school, body images, community life, language, communication
distinguishing between fact and fiction, recognise various inequalities that may be encountered.
Fifth and sixth classes
## Overview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strands</th>
<th>Strand Units</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Myself  | • Self-identity  
  *Self-awareness*  
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  • Growing and changing  
  *As I grow I change*  
  *Birth and new life*  
  *Feelings and emotions*  
  • Safety and protection  
  *Personal safety*  
  *Safety issues*  
  • Making decisions |
| Myself and others | • Myself and my family 
  • My friends and other people 
  • Relating to others  
  *Communicating*  
  *Resolving conflict* |
| Myself and the wider world | • Developing citizenship  
  *Living in the local community*  
  *National, European and wider communities*  
  *Environmental care*  
  The sub-unit ‘Environmental care’ is developed in detail in SESE science and geography  
  • Media education |
Strand: Myself

Strand unit  Self-identity

The child should be enabled to

Self-awareness

• recognise and appreciate that each person is a unique individual and that this individuality is expressed in many different ways
  
  through the clothes we wear, interests and activities pursued, life-style, beliefs, personal attitudes and principles held

• reflect on his/her experiences and the reasons for taking different courses of action

• identify realistic personal goals and targets and the strategies required to reach these

• accept his/her own body image and explore some of the factors that affect his/her self-image and beliefs about himself/herself
  peer pressure, advertising, idols and heroes

Developing self-confidence

• develop further the ability to express personal opinions, thoughts and ideas and listen to, respect, think about and comment critically and constructively on the views of others

• enhance skills to improve learning
  recognising where he/she is successful, realising that making and acknowledging mistakes can provide opportunities for learning
  taking initiative, organising, planning, displaying or executing a project independently or as part of a group, reflecting on ways to improve learning on own achievements

• take increasing personal responsibility for himself/herself
  being part of a savings scheme, caring for own belongings, taking responsibility for his/her homework

• become more independent and autonomous
  making complaints and seeking redress, developing his/her interests and trusting his/her judgements, knowing and asserting his/her rights.
Strand unit  Taking care of my body

The child should be enabled to

Health and well-being

• recognise and examine behaviour that is conducive to health and that which is harmful to health

  healthy behaviour:
  balancing work and relaxation, being usefully occupied, having friends, taking adequate exercise, having a balanced diet, correct posture
  using prescribed substances appropriately

• recognise causes of personal worry and identify appropriate coping strategies

• distinguish between legal and illegal substances, identifying those that are most commonly used, and examine and understand the effects they can have

  alcohol, nicotine, prescribed and non-prescribed substances, cannabis

• explore some of the reasons why people smoke, drink alcohol, misuse any kind of substances or take drugs that have no medical use

  peer pressure, influence of advertising, to feel good, to impress others, to make one feel grown up

• explore the role of personal choice, risk factors and the influence of others when choosing to use non-prescribed substances

  danger of experimentation leading to addiction

• explore and examine attitudes towards the misuse of substances and towards those who misuse substances of any kind

• identify and discuss the roles of various people who are concerned with the health of others

  nurse, doctor, chiropodist, speech therapist, dietician, paediatrician, dentist

• realise that there is a personal and communal responsibility for the health and well-being of himself/herself and others

  identifying practical ways of taking care of himself/herself and of promoting a healthy lifestyle
  examining some of the strategies adopted in the community for promoting health and for protecting people from ill-health.
Knowing about my body

- recognise the importance of treating his/her body and that of others with dignity and respect
- identify and discuss the physical and other changes that occur in boys and girls with the onset of puberty and understand that these take place at different rates for everyone

  **female**
  - hormonal changes, changing body shape
  - development of breasts, appearance of pubic hair, onset of menstruation (periods)

  **male**
  - hormonal changes, physical growth
  - enlargement of testicles and penis
  - appearance of pubic, underarm and facial hair
  - breaking of the voice, beginning of sperm production
  - onset of nocturnal emissions (wet dreams)

- understand the reproductive system of both male and female adults
- realise how increased activity or involvement in physical activities can require increased attention to body care
- recognise some physical disabilities and how they can affect people's lives
- become aware of some communicable diseases and explore how diseases and infections are spread

  **some communicable diseases**
  - chickenpox, rubella, HIV infection, hepatitis
  - infections are spread through
    - air, body fluids, direct contact, poor hygiene and sanitation

- identify and be aware of the different ways in which the body may be protected against disease and infection

  **external organs:** nose, skin
  - **immune system:** formation of antibodies, white blood cells, natural and artificial immunity, immunisation programmes
  - **life-style factors:** diet, hygiene, rest.
Strand unit  Taking care of my body

The child should be enabled to

Food and nutrition

- appreciate the importance of good nutrition for growing and developing and staying healthy
- realise and accept some personal responsibility for making wise food choices and adopting a healthy, balanced diet
- exploring and examining the food pyramid
- recognise some of the important nutrients that are necessary in a balanced diet and the food products in which they are found
  - macro-nutrients: protein, carbohydrate, fat
  - micro-nutrients: vitamins and minerals
- explore the factors that influence food choices
  - cost, advertising, demand, peer pressure, advertising and packaging, value for money, time for shopping and for cooking, ideal body images
- explore and examine some of the illnesses particularly associated with food intake or special health conditions
  - coeliac, diabetic, anorexia, bulimia, the dietary needs of different age groups and individuals
- become aware of the importance of hygiene and care in the preparation and use of food
  - using before sell-by date, reading contents, not chopping cooked foods and uncooked foods on the same board.

Strand unit  Growing and changing

The child should be enabled to

As I grow I change

- identify and discuss the changes that are experienced in growing from child to adult
  - changing interests and leisure activities
  - developing a widening circle of friends
  - increasing personal independence
  - increasing personal and community responsibility
  - coping with transfer from primary to post-primary school
- explore patterns of development and growth, comparing present development with that at earlier stages: physical, social, emotional, intellectual and spiritual
- appreciate the need for individual space and privacy as he/she is growing and developing
  - space and time to engage in favourite pastimes, a place to be quiet or to be alone or undisturbed.
The child should be enabled to

Birth and new life

- understand sexual intercourse, conception and birth within the context of committed, loving relationship
- discuss and explore the responsibilities involved in being a parent and the emotional and physical maturity required to be a parent
  
  *preparing for the birth of the baby*
  *taking care of offspring from birth onwards*
  *emotional, psychological and practical provisions*

Feelings and emotions

- acquire the ability and confidence to identify, discuss and explore a range of feelings, especially those that are difficult to express
  
  *joy, anger, grief, exhilaration, frustration, ‘highs’ and ‘lows’*
- discuss and practise how to express and cope with various feelings in an appropriate manner
  
  *choosing the appropriate time to talk*
  *talking and discussing rather than prolonging a conflict or disagreement by remaining silent*
  *empathising with the feelings of others*
  *knowing when it is appropriate to share feelings with others*

- understand how feelings help in understanding himself/herself
  
  *understanding that moods and emotions are often affected by physical and hormonal changes, realising that true feelings may often be masked, being aware that personal feelings can affect others*
- differentiate between needs and wants and recognise and explore the concept of delayed gratification
  
  *will I watch television now or do my homework first and watch television later?*
- discuss the different types of love that exist and explore how love is portrayed and defined in music, films, books, magazines and other media
- identify and learn about healthy ways to help him/her feel positive about himself/herself.
The child should be enabled to

Personal safety

- explore rules and regulations at home, in school and in society and the importance of adhering to them
  - identifying limits and boundaries that change as children grow and show more responsibility, obeying those responsible for enforcing the rules
- identify situations and places that may threaten personal safety
  - bullying, seeing others being bullied
  - being asked to keep a ‘difficult secret’
  - large public gatherings
  - recognising inappropriate or unsafe touches, being with people who make me feel unsafe
- discuss a variety of risky situations and behaviour and assess and evaluate how these risks may be avoided or minimised and the implications of taking risks
  - sometimes taking a risk can be important for growing and developing, while on other occasions the consequences can be dangerous or even tragic
- realise that as independence increases, responsibility for personal safety increases, and that a strategy for keeping safe has to be developed and adhered to by each individual
  - being assertive
  - telling or confiding in people who are trustworthy
  - realising how and when to get help
  - being aware of policies in school and at home that provide support: for example, the child is aware of the procedure if someone is being bullied or is not collected after school,
  - contacting the emergency services
  - making his/her whereabouts known at all times
- discuss and appreciate the role each individual has in keeping others safe and identify occasions when his/her actions can threaten the safety of others

Safety issues

- recognise places where it is safer to play and how to behave in a responsible manner when playing
- know how to keep safe when travelling and to understand how individuals can keep others safe
- develop an awareness of health and safety in the school, home and work-place
- develop responsible attitudes towards the prevention of accidents and know what to do in the event of an accident
  - using simple first aid procedures, knowing who to contact, knowing how to use the emergency services
- identify the substances in the home and school or on the farm that may be dangerous if not used properly and ensure that he/she has learned a safety strategy for dealing with unknown and dangerous substances
- explore and examine the use of medicines
- identify and explore some potential risks to health and safety in the environment
  - traffic, pollution, chemicals, ultraviolet light.
The child should be enabled to

- acquire a growing sense of the importance of making informed decisions at many levels and identify some of the decisions he/she has to make
  - how will I say no?
  - what will I wear today?
  - which book will I choose from the library?
  - will I tell on my friend?
- explore and learn to examine critically the factors and levels of thought that influence decisions and choices
  - impulse
  - values and beliefs
  - parental opinion
  - social constraints
  - peer and media influences
- recognise that decisions have consequences and that not all people will make the same decisions all the time
- recognise the important and legitimate role that adults have to play in making decisions and setting boundaries for young people
- recognise that opportunities to exercise choice can increase as responsibilities are accepted and as the trust of others is earned
- discuss and practise a simple decision-making strategy
  - pausing and thinking
  - identifying the important facts and moral questions about the problem
  - considering the possible consequences and solutions
  - weighing up the advantages and disadvantages
  - taking the decision
  - reflecting on choice or decision
- distinguish between assumption, inference, fact, rumour and opinion in making a decision
- identify sources of help in solving problems
  - a parent or guardian, a trusted friend, a teacher.
The child should be enabled to

- explore and discuss families and homes and how they can vary in many ways
  - single-parent, two-parent, step-parents, adoptive parents, foster-parents, group homes, hostels
- explore what belonging to a family means
  - being cared about, having a sense of belonging, a place where I can be myself, healthy interdependence, having particular roles and responsibilities, being sensitive to the needs of others in the family, having rules and boundaries, caring and supporting for each other
  - being accountable
- discuss possible changes in family relationships and expectations as he/she grows and matures and how he/she can cope with them
  - increasing independence, conflicting opinions
- discuss and identify behaviour that is important for harmony in family life
  - adhering to family rules, resolving conflict, forgiving, laughter, love, empathy, trust, listening, honesty, accountability, respecting each other
- critically examine the media portrayals of families and family life
- examine some factors that can affect family life
  - the birth of a baby, addiction, material prosperity, poverty, illness, bereavement, violence, a change in life-style, sexual stereotyping
- compare and contrast the life-styles of families in different cultures, both in Ireland and abroad.
The child should be enabled to

• explore the importance of friendship and interacting with others and realise that making and changing friends is part of the natural process of growing

• discuss and appreciate the different aspects of friendship and the difference between close friends and acquaintances
  mutual respect, trust, loyalty, listening, spending time, genuine communication, laughter, honesty, resolving conflicts, forgiveness, being just and fair

• explore the differences between boy-and-girl friendships and same-sex friendships
  talking about different things, having different expectations of each other wishing to impress his/her own sex and opposite sex

• consider problems that can arise in friendships and other relationships and how these could be handled
  jealousy, uncertainty, feeling left out, pressure to belong and conform

• identify the different groups to which friends can belong and recognise what constitutes a healthy group
  healthy group:
  inclusive, friendly, supportive, respectful of the rights and views of others

• explore how the opinions, views or expectations of others can influence how people relate to each other, either positively or negatively
  being inclusive, respectful, sharing, truancy, shoplifting, smoking, making assumptions, stress

• practise and recognise the importance of care and consideration, courtesy and good manners with others

• recognise, discuss and understand bullying and its effects
  what behaviour constitutes bullying, how and why bullying happens, how it feels to be intimidated and to intimidate others, the effect of bullying on self and others, know that bullying is always wrong

• explore and discuss how individuals can deal with being bullied, knowing that others are being bullied and being a bully
  who to confide in, when to tell, how to be assertive.
Strand unit  Relating to others

The child should be enabled to

Communicating

• explore and practise the many verbal and non-verbal ways in which people communicate with each other
  introducing an individual in different situations
  expressing gentleness, concern, tenderness, love
  resisting the opinions or requests of friends, peers
• listen actively to others and respect what each person has to say
  listening carefully to the experiences and views of others, reflecting and repeating what has been said
  giving and receiving compliments and affirmations and giving and receiving constructive criticism
• examine the various ways in which language can be used to isolate and discriminate against people

• begin to appreciate the importance of maintaining a personal stance while also respecting the beliefs, values and opinions of others
  finding positive ways of expressing views that differ from others
• examine the power of persuasion, how it can be used both positively and negatively, and suggest practical ways and develop practical suggestions for dealing with pressures and influences
  pressure to conform or to belong to a group

Resolving conflict

• discuss how conflict can arise with different people and in different situations
• identify and discuss various responses to conflict situations
  submission, negotiation, aggression, telling the truth, avoidance, walking away
• explore and practise how to handle conflict without being aggressive.
The child should be enabled to

Living in the local community

- explore the concept of the class or school as a community
- practise ways of working together and of developing a sense of belonging
  celebrating group and individual achievements, reaching group decisions, making class decisions, taking particular responsibilities in class or in local organisations, exploring the class or club rules and being involved in making the rules, resolving conflicts in appropriate ways
- explore local traditions and folklore and develop a sense of pride in his/her local community
- recognise and understand the role of the individual and various groups in the community
  having a sense of identity, exploring the duties, rights and responsibilities of both adults and children, making individual contributions, respecting each other, being inclusive, taking democratic decisions, adhering to rules, working together for the common good
- recognise and explore the positive contributions made to the local community by various organisations, ethnic, social or community groups and individuals
  sports clubs, credit union, community council, community radio, senior citizens’ groups, boy scouts
- explore how inequality might exist in the local community and suggest ways in which this might be addressed
  poverty, homelessness, material need, lack of facilities for some groups, prejudice and discrimination against particular individuals or groups, stereotyping
- identify some local issues of concern and explore possible action that could be taken to address these issues
  recognising the individual and group responsibility we have as citizens in the community
  consumer rights
National, European and wider communities

• become aware of elements of his/her own cultural heritage and traditions
  
  music, literature, language, folklore, landscape, respecting the national flag and anthem, taking part in festivals and celebrations that are unique to Ireland

• begin to explore the concept of democracy
  
  the role of the President, the Oireachtas and the Constitution, role of elections, equal rights

• recognise and acknowledge the various cultural, religious, ethnic or other groups that exist in a community or society and explore ways in which these differences can be respected
  
  learning about different groups and their culture and heritage, realising what can be learned from them and the positive contributions they make, using inclusive language, exploring ways in which these groups experience discrimination, examining the role of each individual in counteracting prejudice, discussing the need for empathy and mutual understanding

• become aware of some of the cultures, lifestyles and languages of some countries in the European Union and the wider world
  
  learning about the countries in the European Union, identifying some of the effects of the European Parliament on Irish life, exploring the interdependence of countries and peoples, learning about each other through sport and music

• explore how justice and peace can be promoted between people and groups, both nationally and internationally
  
  beginning to learn about Irish involvement in international organisations and the importance of this contribution

• realise and begin to understand the unequal distribution of the world’s resources
  
  basic needs not being met, understanding some of the issues, the ways in which we can help, the role Irish people have to play

Environmental care

• appreciate the environment and develop a sense of individual and community responsibility for caring for the environment and being custodians of the Earth for future generations.

This sub-unit is developed in detail in SESE geography and science.
The child should be enabled to

- explore and understand how information is conveyed and practise relaying messages using a variety of methods
  - information and communication technology, letter, telephone, picture, poster, sign, film, book
- explore the role of newspapers and other forms of print media in transmitting messages, the techniques used and the types of information included
  - identifying information that may be deliberately excluded, the role of bias
- recognise unequal treatment of sexual roles and other issues in literature, advertising, drama, magazines and other media
- identify the audiences at which different aspects of the media are aimed
- become aware of the different forms of advertising, its purpose and the messages it promotes
  - advertising messages—slim always means healthy, beautiful people smoke and drink, certain diets are safe, beauty is physical hidden links between body-image and certain products—you will belong if you use this product
- what I need versus what I want
- become increasingly critical and discerning in his/her own attitude to advertising and the techniques used to promote products, life-styles and ideas
  - techniques:
    - beauty and glamour to promote certain products, the use of music, associating personalities with certain products, giving free gifts on purchase, the use of attractive visual images, the repetition of certain advertisements
- explore various recreation and leisure activities as an alternative to watching television
- explore and use some simple broadcasting, production and communication techniques
  - lighting, voice-over, interview, camera work, using different kinds of music, e-mail.
Assessment
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.

Assessment can enhance the relationships between the parent/s and the teacher and between the child and the teacher. It provides information that can be communicated to the parent/s and ensures that learning experiences are based on the most comprehensive information about the child. Assessment can also contribute to the child’s sense of security because it ensures that each child knows how he/she is performing in school and that individual difficulties are being acknowledged and dealt with as they occur.

Teachers and schools will need to take time to explore the nature and role of assessment in SPHE and to decide on the most effective ways of using it in order to enhance and complement the learning and teaching in the school. There will be a greater possibility of continuity and progression in SPHE in the school where there is a common language and approach to observing, describing, discussing and reporting on children’s progress. Time spent discussing and sharing ideas will enhance communication among staff, with parents and with individual children and will ensure that the assessment is used in the most positive and helpful way.

Assessment in this curricular area cannot be seen in isolation, as it will be directly related to the assessment in other subjects and to any assessment that may take place of the school climate and atmosphere.

**Roles of assessment: why assess in SPHE?**

Assessment provides the teacher with information on how and what children are learning through the planned programme in SPHE. This knowledge will inform decisions regarding future learning experiences and give directions for planning, designing and adapting materials in SPHE and for adopting certain teaching approaches in the classroom. The teacher will be able to discern what the child knows and understands and how he/she transfers learning from one situation to another.

This information will be gleaned from the child’s work during the discrete SPHE time, from the child’s informal learning and everyday interactions and from the learning and teaching in other subjects. When used in this *formative* way assessment is very significant in the child’s overall development. It provides feedback to the child on his/her progress and it also involves the child in reflecting critically on his/her learning.
Assessment also has a diagnostic role, in that it identifies areas of strength or difficulty that may be encountered by the child in his/her learning. The difficulties may relate to the acquisition and use of various skills, to any deficiencies that may exist in the child’s knowledge and understanding or to difficulties that the child may have in engaging in and reflecting on various processes. This type of assessment will provide the teacher with directions for teaching and learning approaches that could help to improve the child’s learning. The strengths can refer to his/her leadership skills or effective social skills or the ability to face a new challenge or situation. This information will help the teacher in planning activities and in working with the children in such a way that their talents and abilities are used and developed effectively. At times, information from formal behavioural tests, carried out in conjunction with psychologists and other professionals, may contribute to this diagnostic assessment.

Summative assessment presents an overall picture of the child’s progress in SPHE. It is a formal recording of information gathered and is particularly useful for informing parents, teachers and other professionals of the progress of the child as he/she moves from class to class.

Assessment may also play a significant role in helping the teacher to evaluate the SPHE programme and its suitability for a particular class and to monitor the effectiveness of the teaching methodologies, approaches and resources in use. Evaluative assessment provides an opportunity to explore the extent to which the objectives of the curriculum have been achieved and the emphasis that is placed on the learning process and on the active engagement of children. It would also identify positive ways of improving the general climate and atmosphere in the school and of building on the good practice that already exists.

Assessment in SPHE: what should be assessed?

There are particular difficulties associated with assessment in this area. In many situations the real impact of the learning in SPHE will take place long after the child has left primary school. Similarly, the achievement of many of the objectives of the curriculum will be dependent on the emotional, intellectual and social maturity of the child, so that rates of progress can vary considerably from child to child. It can also be difficult to assess the effects of personal, social and health messages on an individual child, on his/her thought processes and on the manner in which he/she internalised the learning.
Nonetheless, some very valid and helpful assessment can take place that will enhance the learning and teaching in SPHE. The assessment should reflect the progress of the child in the planned programme in the school. It should take cognisance of the objectives in all three strands and relate to that which can be realistically and appropriately assessed in school. The assessment should also take account of the child’s ability to assess his/her own progress and to set and achieve his/her own goals and targets.

It will be imperative that some assessment should take place of the general approach adopted to the SPHE curriculum in the school, and of the implementation of the programme in the context of the overall school climate and atmosphere. Such assessment will require the teachers to consider a number of key questions for assessing the school environment and identifying the areas that need improvement.

Assessment tools: how to assess
Assessment in SPHE requires the use of particular tools that will help the teacher to acquire information about the child’s progress and the effectiveness and suitability of the programme in place. The primary emphasis in this area is on informal assessment but at times this will be complemented by formal techniques (as they are available), such as behavioural tests, pupil profiles and set criteria reference tests for certain aspects. The informal tools recommended for assessment in SPHE are:

- **Teacher observation**
- **Teacher-designed tasks and tests**
- **Portfolios and projects**

**Teacher observation**

Teacher observation is a particularly suitable and effective technique for assessing this area of the curriculum. It takes place while children are engaged in various activities and/or during the everyday interactions in the class or school. Teachers have always been observing children in school as part of their daily work and in recording some of the observations. Focusing on specific aspects of SPHE can enhance their usefulness in the learning and teaching cycle in the class.
Teacher observation might focus on

- 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
- the quality of presentation of work
- particular interests or aptitudes displayed by the child
- the participation and interest of the child in a variety of activities
- the level of personal or social responsibility exhibited by the child
- the reliability of the child in carrying out established routines
- the perseverance of the child in carrying out a task
- the child’s awareness of the difficulties of others and his/her willingness to help
- the questions the child asks and the responses the child makes to questions and suggestions made by the teacher
- various behaviour, for example shyness, leadership ability, level of self-confidence, the tendency to be anxious, sense of fair play, assertiveness, aggression, readiness to take risks and meet challenges
- physical and emotional maturity
- the ability of the child to engage in assessing his/her progress and reflecting on his/her learning.

Recording the relevant observations or those that the teacher considers the most significant can contribute to the overall picture of the child’s development and can be used as a reference for the teacher when planning for SPHE and in communicating about the child to other teachers, either as the child moves through the school or as he/she moves to another school. Such recorded observations are particularly helpful in discussions with the parent/s. They can also be used in discussions with the individual child and will play an important role in encouraging valuable personal contact both between parent and teacher and between child and teacher.
Where children are involved in particular classroom activities, the teacher can informally observe the way in which they are learning, the level of participation in the activity, the quality of the group or individual work being carried out and any difficulties being displayed by individual children in completing the activity.

Observing the children in various contexts outside the classroom, such as on school outings and in playtime activities in the yard or school hall, will enable the teacher to gauge the effectiveness of activities that are designed to improve the child’s self-esteem or co-operative spirit. The observations of incidental happenings will be as informative for the teacher as those based on planned or structured activities.

Observations by the teacher play a formative and diagnostic role by indicating aspects of the programme that need development and by helping the teacher to plan future learning experiences. For example, where a child or number of children seem ill-equipped to work together effectively, the teacher may have to spend some time developing the group work process so that the children may engage in, and benefit from, a wide variety of activities. Similarly, where a school has noticed a particular need arising from its observations of the children and their behaviour, it can decide to concentrate on a specific aspect of the programme for a particular period. These observations can also be used to communicate regularly with the child about his/her own work and help him/her to gain more from the learning process.

**Teacher-designed tasks and tests**

Tasks set in a learning context can allow for the assessment of the process and product or a combination of both. The teacher can assess the processes in which the children are involved and gauge the extent to which they understand what is being taught and are able to transfer and use what they have learned to a variety of situations. As children reflect on a particular process they can begin to make sense of it and become more aware of themselves as individuals and the ways in which they learn and work.

**Tasks**

A task for example, can be designed that presents children with a situation where they, in a group, will have to reach a decision and defend their opinions. This activity will enable the teacher to assess how the children worked together and whether or not they were able to reach a consensus. The assessment also provides for the children to reflect on and
become aware of their own role in the decision-making process and to learn about the factors that influenced them in reaching a decision.

Specific tasks can also be used effectively to ascertain a child’s ability to apply particular skills in different situations. Tasks can be designed that allow the children to demonstrate abilities in many social, personal and health contexts, for example in displaying assertiveness, persuasiveness, coping ability, critical analysis or safety skills or in solving a problem and reaching a solution. The use of tasks is to be recommended in SPHE, because they mirror the type of activities required by the objectives of the curriculum and so create a link between objectives, methodologies and assessment.

Tests
SPHE includes areas of knowledge and understanding that will need to be assessed at regular intervals. Simple tests designed by the teacher will allow for the teacher to ascertain the knowledge that has been acquired. For example, on completion of the strand unit on food and nutrition it may be helpful to set a test that requires children to display their knowledge of food, food groups, healthy diet, etc.

Portfolios
A portfolio is a personal folder kept by each child that contains a wide variety of evidence of achievement and is appropriate for all age groups in the school. It is a useful way of collecting work that is completed as well as being used as a means of assessing progress.

These portfolios, by becoming a source of pride and giving the child a sense of ownership, can enhance the self-esteem of the child and show concrete evidence that everybody has some success in school. They also provide a means of self-assessment where the child becomes aware of, and reflects on, personal capabilities and limitations.

Portfolios in SPHE can include surveys or questionnaires completed, drawings, written activities, newspaper cuttings or check-lists. They should be sufficiently flexible to record a wide range of achievement in many aspects of the SPHE curriculum. At the end of a term or the end of the school year a representative sample from the portfolio could be chosen for assessment purposes. To complement this assessment by the teacher, the child could be asked to choose his/her own best work and be encouraged to discuss the choices made. This can enhance the teacher-child relationship and reinforce the child’s role in his/her learning.
Portfolios also give the teacher direct evidence of the day-to-day work during the year and are a useful source of information for the child’s next teacher. They are an excellent means of communication between the school and home and enable the teacher to review his/her own approach to SPHE and the effectiveness of various methodologies used.

Projects
Projects allow children to focus on a particular aspect of the curriculum and to study it in some detail. Opportunities arise for project work in all strands of the curriculum, for example in creating a class newspaper, in exploring dietary habits in various parts of the world or in examining safety in school. These types of projects can illustrate how much a child has learned and are particularly significant in assessing the child’s ability to gather information, to collate and present it, and to work with others. It also reveals much about individual and group responsibility and can indicate the level of interest of each child.

Displays and presentations of work
Among the recommended approaches and methodologies in SPHE are displays and presentations of work. These allow children to summarise and collate information they have gathered, to present particular viewpoints or to argue a position. They can also be used to assess what children have learned and indicate their ability to present data to a specific audience.

A balanced approach to assessment
The aim of assessment is to improve the learning experiences of the child in SPHE. It is essential that any of the techniques used and the ways in which recording takes place should not hinder the learning experiences of the child. Once the techniques have become familiar to the teacher they will enhance the work in the classroom and will not detract from teaching time. The school policy should outline ways in which assessment can be undertaken in a practical and balanced way within the school.
Recording and communicating

The importance of discussing assessment in SPHE among the staff in the school cannot be over-estimated. In sharing their expertise and exploring their opinions or concerns, teachers will develop a common understanding of pupils’ progress and the role of assessment in SPHE. Such co-operation can help to ensure continuity and reliability in the use of various assessment tools and provide support for teachers in their everyday use.

Discussions should also take place between parents and teachers regarding the assessment of individual children, because it will ensure a more realistic picture of the child’s overall progress, strengths and weaknesses. Assessment provides essential information for children, teachers, parents and others about the child’s learning and overall development and so facilitates future decisions regarding learning experiences and pupils’ needs.

Pupil profile card

The pupil profile card will contain a profile of the child’s progress in all curricular areas, and the assessment of the child’s development in SPHE will be one aspect of this profile. The teacher’s continuing observation of the child in the completion of various teacher-designed tasks and the compilation of portfolios and projects will form the basis for the information on the pupil profile card. This card will serve as a permanent record of the child’s progress and will be especially useful in communicating information about the child to the parent/s and to other teachers. It is essential that the way in which information is recorded on such a card is both relevant and meaningful.
Appendix
# Membership of the Curriculum Committee for SPHE

This curriculum has been prepared by the Curriculum Committee for Social, Personal and Health Education established by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Chairperson</strong></th>
<th>Sally Sheils</th>
<th>Irish National Teachers’ Organisation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Committee members</strong></td>
<td>Des Broderick</td>
<td>Irish Federation of University Teachers</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Denis Coleman</td>
<td>Irish National Teachers’ Organisation</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Angela Griffin</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Audrey Johnston</td>
<td>Church of Ireland General Synod Board of Education</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sr Regina Lydon</td>
<td>Association of Primary Teaching Sisters/Teaching Brothers’ Association</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Marion Lyon</td>
<td>National Parents Council—Primary</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Colm Ó Ceallacháin</td>
<td>Department of Education and Science</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Micheal Ó Cinneide</td>
<td>National Parents Council—Primary</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Carmel O’Doherty</td>
<td>Irish National Teachers’ Organisation</td>
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<td>Proinsias Ó Dughaill</td>
<td>Department of Education and Science</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Clare O’Leary</td>
<td>Catholic Primary School Managers’ Association</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Eileen O’Sullivan</td>
<td>Management of Colleges of Education</td>
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<th><strong>Education officers to 1996</strong></th>
<th>Carmel O’Doherty</th>
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<td>Eileen O’Sullivan</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

| **Education officer** | Noreen Kavanagh |
Membership of the Primary Co-ordinating Committee

To co-ordinate the work of the Curriculum Committees, the Primary Co-ordinating Committee was established by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment.

**Chairperson**
Tom Gilmore

**Committee members**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>From/To</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sydney Blain</td>
<td>Church of Ireland General Synod Board of Education</td>
<td>1995</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liam Ó hÉigearta</td>
<td>Department of Education and Science</td>
<td>1996</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dympna Glendenning</td>
<td>Irish National Teachers’ Organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fionnuala Kilfeather</td>
<td>National Parents Council—Primary</td>
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<tr>
<td>Êamonn MacAonghusa</td>
<td>Department of Education and Science</td>
<td>1996</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fr. Gerard McNamara</td>
<td>Catholic Primary School Managers’ Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peter Mullan</td>
<td>Irish National Teachers’ Organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sheila Nunan</td>
<td>Irish National Teachers’ Organisation</td>
<td>1995</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eugene Wall</td>
<td>Irish Federation of University Teachers</td>
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</table>

**Co-ordinator**
Caoimhe Máirtín (to 1995)

**Assistant Chief**
Lucy Fallon-Byrne (from 1995)

**Chief Executive**
Albert Ó Ceallaigh

NCCA Chairpersons: Dr Tom Murphy (to 1996), Dr Caroline Hussey (from 1996)