

Mallow CNS Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) Policy

(a) Introductory Statement

This plan is drawn up in accordance with the SPHE curriculum as laid down by the Department of Education and Skills. This plan will form the basis for teachers' long and short-term planning. It will also inform new or temporary teachers of the approaches and methodologies used in our school. Staff, Board of Management and parents were consulted in the drawing up of this document.

(b) Rationale

- To formalise the delivery of SPHE throughout the school
- To coordinate the delivery of the programme using the strand approach of the SPHE Curriculum
- To maximise the use of existing resources appropriate to the various strand units.

(a) Vision

Mallow Community National School's characteristic spirit is underpinned by five core values:

- o Equality
- o Respect
- o Community
- o Care
- o Excellence in Education

In line with our school's ethos, the teaching of SPHE in our school ensures that each child is helped to:

- Understand and appreciate the diversity of the world we live in
- Develop self-worth
- Appreciate each child's unique strengths, needs and characteristics
- Foster self-respect and respect of others
- Live and interact with others with confidence and knowledge
- Make informed decisions

(b) Aims

We endorse the aims of the Primary SPHE School Curriculum (pp. 9-10)

- 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

Time Allocation:

Time will be allocated in accordance with the proposed timetable in SPHE Curriculum – half-hour per week. Also discretionary time will be used by class teachers for work in SPHE as appropriate

SPHE integrates with subjects such as GMGY and SESE, History and Music.

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.

Content

In accordance with the revised curriculum, the content of SPHE curriculum in Mallow CNS will incorporate the following three strands and strand units.

Strand	Strand Unit	Sub-units (where relevant)
Myself	Self-identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-awareness • Developing self-confidence • Making decisions
	Taking care of my body	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health and well-being • Knowing about my body • Food and nutrition
	Growing and changing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As I grow I change • Birth and new life • Feelings and emotions
	Safety and protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal safety • Safety issues
	Making decisions	
Myself and others	Myself and my family	
	My friends and other people	
	Relating to others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicating • Resolving conflict
Myself and the wider world	Developing citizenship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My school community • Living in the local community • Local and wider communities • National, European and wider communities • Environmental care
	Media education	

Mallow CNS Two Year Plan

- **RSE and Stay Safe is taught in Term 2** of alternate years as outlined below. Teaching these essential programmes in Term 2 allows teachers to build relationships with the children in their class in Term 1 and allows time in Term 3 for children to ask any follow up questions they might have.
 - Stay Safe is taught in the first year of each band (JI, 1st, 3rd and 5th)
 - RSE is taught in the second year of each band (SI, 2nd, 4th and 6th).
- Teachers are free to teach the other strands and strand units relevant to their year group, as outlined below, at any other time during the year.

Social, Personal and Health Education – Two Year Grid		
Strand	Strand Units (JI, 1st, 3rd & 5th Class)	Strand Units (SI, 2nd, 4th & 6th Class)
Myself	Self-identity	Taking care of my body <i>Term 2 - RSE</i>
	Safety and Protection <i>Term 2 - Stay Safe</i>	Growing and Changing <i>Term 2 - RSE</i>
	Making Decisions <i>Term 2 - Stay Safe</i>	
Myself and others	My friends and other people	Myself and My Family
		Relating to others
Myself and the wider world	Media Education	Developing Citizenship

Methodology

We in Mallow CNS will approach SPHE by:

- Creating a school climate and atmosphere which fosters the health and wellbeing of all members of the school community
- Providing a safe and secure environment where children experience a sense of belonging.
- Using discreet SPHE time to reinforce the principles of SPHE
- Using an integrated approach to SPHE will allow for aspects of SPHE to be covered in related subject areas – GMGY, SESE, PE, History
- Encouraging children to be active in their learning

- Encouraging children to take increasing responsibility for their own learning

These are some strategies we will use in Mallow CNS to adopt a positive school climate and atmosphere

1. Building effective communication within the school

In-school:

- Notice Boards
- Children are involved in in-class and whole school decisions.
- Children report bullying to class teacher/yard duty teacher
- Wellbeing Committee
- Student Council
- Active Committee
- Creative Committee
- Green School Committee
- STEM Committee

Parents:

- Notes i.e. homework journal
- Parent/Teacher Meetings – By appointment meetings also.
- Coffee/Tea sessions after school events such as the GMGY Welcome Ceremony, Belief Ceremony etc.
- Parent's Association
- Parents consulted on curricular matters such as SSE is

2. Catering for individual needs

- Supporting student learning in-class and in small groups
- Use of a variety of teaching styles & activities – Activity based learning
- General positive school climate with regard to reinforcing positive behaviour
- Student Support Files & Personal Pupil Plans are drawn up where appropriate
- Playground Buddies
- Health Promotion Committee
- Green School's Committee
- Active school activities
- STEM committee and activities
- Playground Buddies
- Programmes such as Zippy's Friends, Friends for Life, Mindfulness training

3. Creating a health-promoting physical environment

- The Nine Grounds of Discrimination are displayed in the main school foyer
- Belief Space is displayed in the main school foyer
- Beautifully decorated & well maintained school
- Displays celebrate equality and the holistic development of child
- Sensory room
- Litter management by senior pupils.
- Recycling in classrooms.

4. Developing democratic processes

- Pupils involved in drawing up class rules.
- Code of Behaviour is widely publicised
- Job allocations in classrooms.
- Children's voice is heard in committees such as Student Council, Green Schools, Wellbeing, Creative Schools, Active Schools and STEM committees

4. Enhancing the self-esteem and well-being of members of the school community.

- Regular appraisal of staff efforts
- Close links with parent body
- Principal welcomes parents/students as they arrive at the school each morning
- Open-door policy

5. Fostering respect for diversity

- The Nine Grounds of Discrimination is studied at each class level
- Anti-bullying policy exists and is practised by all staff members.
- Promoting and communicating our core values at assembly.
- Communicating school policies and practices to all parents and children.
- Children are included in all aspects of school life with due regard given to the nine grounds of discrimination
- Books celebrating diversity are available in school library

6. Fostering inclusive and respectful language

- Praise, encourage and affirm.
- Zero tolerance of discrimination based on any of nine grounds
- Being conscious of different family structures and units, respect them and refer to them in whole class situations.



7. Developing appropriate communication between home and school

- Regular newsletters, notice boards, posters etc.
- Regular email correspondence
- PT meetings
- IEP meetings
- Notes in homework journals
- Parents Association
- Collaboration regarding Student Support Files etc

9. Developing a school approach to assessment

- Teacher and SNA observations (ongoing)
- Discussion with children formally/informally
- Open forum in Circle time and Social Skills group
- Teacher designated Tasks and Tests
- Portfolios
- Communication with parents

10. Involvement of parents and members of the wider community:

It is our practice to make parents feel that they are an integral part of the school.

Guest speakers on Environmental issues, Health & Safety issues, Local Government, Gardaí, Fire Brigade and local people who contribute to making our area special are invited in on a regular basis.

Outside Speakers

- As per Circular 42/2018, the school recognises that
"The qualified classroom teacher is the best placed professional to work sensitively and consistently with students and she/he can have a powerful impact on influencing students' attitudes, values, and behaviour in all aspects of wellbeing education."
- When a need is identified through the implementation of the Wellbeing Promotion Process, Mallow CNS will select an external speaker in line with the best practice guidance as outlined in circular 42/2018. [Circular 42/2018.pdf](#)

11. Developing a positive school climate and atmosphere:

By promoting SPHE as an integral part of the school curriculum, we feel that the essence of SPHE is being allowed to permeate in the school and affect the members of our school community.

We undertake to create a positive atmosphere in our school by treating each other with respect and consideration. We will try to always live up to the ideals of good citizenship and genuine concern for the children in our care and the community in which we serve.



Integration

- GMGY
- S.E.S.E.
- ENGLISH
- VISUAL ARTS
- PHYSICAL EDUCATION

RESOURCES:

- Stay Safe programme
- Relationships and Sexuality Education programme
- Walk Tall programme
- SPHE Curriculum
- Mind Me, Mind You (Cycle Against Suicide)
- Smart Moves (ISPCC) - resilience for moving to secondary school
- Zippy's Friends
- Webwise
- Making the Links
- Fun Friends
- Friends for Life
- SALT programme
- All Together Now - Belong To LGBTQ+
- Zones of Regulation
- The Incredible 5 Point Scale
- Visiting Speakers

Success Criteria

The success of the programme will be assessed primarily by observation of the pupils and their attitudes towards themselves and others within the school environment. It will also be assessed through communication with the children's parents / guardians

Review:

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management in Feb 2026.

Signed: _____

Lu Al
Chairperson of the Board of Management

24/2/26
Date

Signed: _____

Aine O Connor
Principal

24.2.26
Date

