

# CTI Clonmel



## Raheen College & Gaelcholáiste Chéitinn



September 2024  
**Social, Personal, Health Education  
&  
Relationship & Sexuality Education**



Policy Area	Schools
Document Reference number	CTI/SPHE.RSE/040/2
Version	2
Document Drafted by	Central Technical Institute Clonmel
Date previous version: adopted by SLT noted by TETB	28 <sup>th</sup> June 2021 7 <sup>th</sup> September 2021
Date Reviewed / Amended by School	September 2024
Date Reviewed / Ratified by BoM	20 November 2024
Date noted / to be noted by TETB	28 January 2025
Policy Review Date	Every two years
Date of Withdrawal of Obsolete Document	20 November 2024  Policy Reference No. CTI/SPHE.RSE/040/1 Version No. 2

## SOCIAL PERSONAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION POLICY

### (A) SCHOOL BACKGROUND & ETHOS

Name and address of school:	Central Technical Institute, Clonmel incorporating Raheen College and Gaelcholáiste Chéitinn
Description of School:	CTI Clonmel is a co-educational vocational school under the management of Tipperary ETB.
Mission Statement of CTI Clonmel	The role of our school is to facilitate the students of Clonmel and its environs in the acquisition of general and specialised education.  This policy is aligned to our core values of care, community, respect, equality and excellence.

### ETB Ethos and Core Values

CTI Clonmel is under the patronage of Tipperary ETB. ETB schools are state, co-educational, multid denominational schools underpinned by the core values of:

- Excellence
- Care
- Equality
- Community
- Respect



As the state provider of education, the ETB sector defines a 'multidenominational' school in the following way: In ETB schools, all students are given equal opportunities for enrolment in line with the Education (Admissions to School) Act 2018. Once enrolled, our schools strive to provide all students with equal opportunities to engage with the curriculum and school life. In all aspects of school life all members of our school communities are treated equitably regardless of their race, gender, religion/belief, age, family status, civil status, membership of the Traveller community, sexual orientation, ability or socio-economic status.

Our schools provide a safe physical and social environment that reinforces a sense of belonging to the school community and wider society. They strive to enable every student to realise their full potential regardless of any aspect of their identity or background. Our schools promote a fully inclusive education that recognises the plurality of identities, beliefs and values held by students, parents and staff. We prepare open-minded, culturally sensitive and responsible citizens with a strong sense of shared values.

In ETB schools, students of all religions and beliefs are treated equally. The school environment and activities do not privilege any particular group over another whilst at the same time acknowledging and facilitating students of all religions and beliefs. With the above mission statement in mind this SPHE & RSE Policy has been developed and feeds into our Wellbeing Policy, Whole School Guidance Plan and DEIS Plan. It is a document in which the school in a systematic way defines the SPHE and RSE programme it offers, and states how resources are organised to deliver the programme.

#### **(B) DEFINITION OF Social, Personal Health Education- SPHE**

SPHE (Social Personal and Health Education) is a programme which provides students with the unique opportunity to develop the skills and competence to learn about themselves and others and to make informed decisions about their health, personal lives and social development.

#### **Aims of SPHE Specification 2023**

This course aims to:

1. build students self-awareness and positive self-worth
2. develop the knowledge, understanding, skills, dispositions and values that will support them to lead fulfilling and healthy lives
3. empower them to create, nurture and maintain respectful and loving relationships with self and others
4. and enhance their capacity to contribute positively to society.

These aims are consistent with the mission statement of CTI in that they foster the personal development of the individual by preparing the student for a meaningful and fulfilled life within the community.

### **(C) OUTLINE OF PROGRAMME, CONTENT AND TEACHING METHODS.**

The **2017 Specification** for SPHE in junior cycle follows the NCCA short course specification which follows four strands, “*Who am I?*”, “*Minding Myself and Others*”, “*Team Up*” and “*My Mental Health*” each of which appears in each year of the three-year junior cycle. SPHE is, therefore, both spiral and developmental in nature. Within these strands are “learning outcomes” which are covered throughout the duration of the three-year short course. These strands and learning outcomes are outlined in Appendix A. The emphasis will be on developing skills, understanding, attitudes and values important to these areas. It should be noted that the current cohort of 3<sup>rd</sup> year students in both Gaelcholáiste Chéitinn and Raheen College are following the 2017 Specification.

The **2023 Specification** for SPHE in junior cycle is designed to support students in developing a positive sense of self and a capacity to care for themselves and others. It is designed around four interconnected strands and three cross-cutting elements. The four strands are Understanding myself and others, Making healthy choices, Relationships and sexuality and Emotional wellbeing. The three elements are awareness, dialogue, and reflection and action. Further detail is available in Appendix B

The Department of Education recognises that each school has flexibility within this framework to plan the SPHE programme in harmony with the students’ needs and the school’s resources. In CTI, all junior classes have one SPHE Class per week over the three years of junior cycle. All junior cycle students must complete one CBA in SPHE over the three years.

Currently, 5<sup>th</sup> Years in Gaelcholáiste Chéitinn, and in the coming year 5th Years in Raheen College, will have one class a week of SPHE on the timetable. In CTI, RSE is delivered through SPHE in Junior Cycle for a minimum of 6 lessons, to ensure that all students are provided with the required curriculum. RSE is part of transition year and is currently part of the Religion (RE) programme in senior cycle and is taught to LCA students.

### **SPHE Teaching Methodology**

Because the programme is primarily skills-based, teaching methods must be of an experiential nature with an emphasis on discussion, reflection, and classroom participation. These teaching methods will be student centred and appropriate to the age and stage of development of the student. For those students in 3<sup>rd</sup> year (2024/2025), junior cycle SPHE consists of completion of the 100-hour short course. This includes the completion of a Classroom Based Assessment, which in CTI is currently completed in 2<sup>nd</sup> year. They will also keep an SPHE Personal Learning Diary with reflections on their learning after each class. Results will be recorded on their Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement.

A team approach is implemented in the planning and delivery of the programme. The SPHE team are part of the overall Wellbeing Team and meet regularly to review, plan and evaluate SPHE in the school. Folders are compiled of resources for all year groups which are shared for all staff through a subject department folder on Microsoft Teams.

The class atmosphere must be one of respect for the privacy of the individual, student and teacher, and hallmarked by sensitivity and care.

### **(D) WHOLE SCHOOL COMMITMENT TO THE HOLISTIC DEVELOPMENT OF STUDENTS.**

CTI recognises that the primary responsibility for the moral, spiritual, social and personal development of children lies with their parents. However, this school has a long tradition of supporting parents in this role.

A summary of what the school provides both formally and informally to promote the holistic development of our students is included in Appendix C. SPHE is seen as building on this. While specific teachers are tasked and charged with the responsibility of the delivery of the programme, we see every teacher as a teacher of SPHE in that they from time to time see opportunities to promote healthy lifestyles and encourage responsible and mature decision making. There is a whole school approach to key areas of SPHE including Anti-Bullying, Inclusivity, Healthy Minds and Bodies.

### **(E) STAFF DEVELOPMENT, TRAINING AND RESOURCE ISSUES.**

As CTI has been involved in SPHE for a number of years, a core group of teachers are in place and the senior leadership team (S.L.T.) is committed to the continuous professional development of all staff. In-career development is an integral part of this programme. S.L.T. is responsible for responding to the relevant needs of SPHE teachers for training. Teachers are encouraged to attend SPHE training. As is the practice SPHE will have a budgetary allocation in line with its stage of development, its teaching methodologies and time-tabled allocation. S.L.T. recognises the value of an SPHE co-ordinator.

### **(F) PARTICIPATION, SENSITIVE ISSUES, CONFIDENTIALITY AND REFERRAL.**

SPHE is a core subject on the junior cycle curriculum as part of the school's wellbeing programme. It is also included in the 5th and 6th year in the Religion programme. Social and Health Education is also a core subject at L.C.A. level. Relationships and Sexuality (RSE) is one module of the programme. RSE is mandatory in accordance with the guidelines of the Department of Education. However, each parent has the right to withdraw their child from some or all RSE classes (see more information in the RSE section below) but are required to provide alternative RSE at home. It will be necessary for parents of any student or student over 18 opting out of RSE to contact the school prior to the beginning of RSE module. This is in line with circular 0037/2010.

Where students are withdrawn from RSE the school cannot take responsibility for any versions of class content passed onto them by other students. Class discussion will not be personally directed and will be of a general nature, in accordance with the previously agreed ground rules.

If a student feels unable to ask a question in a classroom situation they will be allowed to hand in a written question. The teacher will use his/her professional judgement to determine whether the question will be dealt with in a classroom situation or privately with a student afterwards. Teachers will consider the age and stage of the students, as well as the curriculum content when considering how to answer any questions.

While an atmosphere of trust is a prerequisite of SPHE class, the following limits of confidentiality must always be observed. The limits are outlined in the Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment which is accessible by all staff. Staff have been trained to recognise the types of abuse and to understand that there are four types of abuse:

- Child Abuse- physical, emotional, sexual and neglect
- Intention to harm self or others
- Substance Use
- Underage sexual intercourse - the age of consent is 17

Where possible students should be informed of these limits before making a disclosure. The SPHE teacher should outline the limits to the class at the beginning of the school year and inform the students that the teacher is a mandated person.

While it is acknowledged that teachers have a professional responsibility to impart the SPHE course content, the needs of our students will be addressed in a caring and supportive manner. Where it is appropriate, the teacher may refer students to other supportive links within and outside the school. As far as possible this should be done in negotiation with the student. SPHE teachers, where in doubt as to a certain course of action, are encouraged to refer the student to the student support team. The SPHE Coordinator is a member of the student support team. However, if the issue pertains to Child Protection the staff members should only discuss this with the DLP, in line with school policy.

### **(G) EXTERNAL PROGRAMMES AND FACILITATORS**

In line with circular letter 43/2018, CTI adopts the following procedures when using external programmes and facilitators.

#### **Use of External Programmes/External Facilitators**

Use of programmes and/or external facilitators can play a role in supplementing SPHE and RSE Programmes and/or external facilitators are most likely to be effective when they:



- are part of a whole school approach and address an identified need
- are delivered to class groups with the involvement of school staff and the appropriate involvement of parents/carers
- enhance protective factors which predispose students to positive outcomes in the face of adversity such as: facilitating supportive adult pupil relationships, strengthening life skills, helping students believe in their capacity to overcome hardship and building a sense of mastery over life circumstances
- adopt a planned implementation process, for example, incorporate needs analysis, use evidence informed programmes and track and evaluate outcomes for students
- are implemented and used in a school in a sustained way over a number of years in order to bring about lasting effects and benefits

#### **Guidance for Engaging External Facilitators**

When engaging external facilitators schools are advised to consider the following best practice criteria:

- External facilitators supplement, complement or support an identified component of the school's Wellbeing Promotion Process.
- External facilitators are approved by the SPHE coordinator/principal in consultation with the relevant teaching staff.
- All materials proposed for use by the external facilitator must also be agreed in advance by the SPHE coordinator/principal and teacher involved
- All external facilitators are compliant with the school's child safeguarding statement and other relevant school policies and procedures.
- External facilitators are aware of the schools SPHE policy
- The SPHE coordinator/principal is happy that any vetting obligations that arise under the Vetting Act and in line with Circular 0031/2016, for such external facilitators.
- Programmes used are delivered by facilitators who are qualified to work within the specific area of content and with the students for whom the programmes are designed.
- Relevant school staff liaise with facilitators in advance of the delivery.
- Preparatory work is done with the class in advance of the visit by the class teacher

- External facilitators always work under the guidance and supervision of the relevant classroom teacher who remains in the classroom with the students at all times and retains a central role in the delivery of the subject matter. Absence of the teacher may undermine the integrity of the curriculum, and the credibility and professionalism of the teacher. It may also compromise the safety of the students.
- Relevant school staff are informed of the details of the programme being provided by external facilitators.
- Parents/carers are consulted and made aware in advance of the content of the programmes provided by external facilitators.
- External facilitators and programmes are evaluated by students and teachers with regard to the subject matter, messages communicated, methodology and proposed learning outcome.

#### **Appraisal of Appropriate Use of External Facilitators**

When appraising appropriate use of external facilitators, teachers/SPHE coordinator should consider the following best practice criteria:

- Facilitators supply comprehensive information to the school about their organisation, programme content and programme methodology.
- Facilitators demonstrate an understanding of the D.E.S.'s Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice and appropriate educational training and qualifications.
- Facilitators demonstrate skills in facilitating and managing groups and students. Facilitators demonstrate an understanding of the general organisation and structure of schools.
- Facilitators show an understanding of the role of school management, school support structures, roles of support staff and other relevant support services in the event of a challenging situation arising.

#### **Appraisal of Appropriate Use of Programmes**

When appraising the appropriate use of programmes, schools should consider the following best practice criteria:

- The programme or input supports/complements the whole school Wellbeing Promotion Process which includes the social personal and health education, physical education and civic, social and political education curricula.
- Consideration is given to the programme's sustainability and whether the programme will bring about lasting effects or if its benefits will end on the completion of the programme.
- The programme is appropriate for the educational stage of the students, and includes evidence informed content and methodology with clear educational outcomes.
- The programme content is appropriate for the age, gender and cultural background of students.
- The programme does not focus on a single topic or use shock tactics, and does not directly or indirectly raise an unhealthy awareness of, for example, topics such as suicide, self-harm or eating disorders.
- The programme and its outcomes have been independently evaluated and/or informed by research and evidence.
- The programme does not place an unreasonable onus on students to take an unduly high level of responsibility for the wellbeing of their peers.

## **RELATIONSHIPS AND SEXUALITY EDUCATION (RSE)**

### **Definition of Relationships and Sexuality Education**

RSE is a developmental process through experiential learning in which pupils participate to help cultivate a healthy attitude towards themselves and others, particularly in the area of sexuality and relationships.

Our RSE policy is located within the overall context of the SPHE programme and the characteristic spirit of the school. Our RSE programme aims to

- build on the primary programme which strives to help young people learn, at home and at school, about their own development and about their friendships and relationships with others.
- provide young people with information and skills to evaluate critically the wide range of information,

opinions, attitudes and values offered today, in order that they will make informed positive, responsible choices about themselves and the way they live their lives.

It is acknowledged that in a course of limited duration these aims are aspirational.

### **The aims of our Relationships and Sexuality Education programme**

Relationships and sexuality education, which is located in the overall framework of Social, Personal and Health Education, has as its specific aims:

- To help pupils understand and develop friendships and relationships
- To promote an understanding of sexuality
- To promote a positive attitude to one's own sexuality and in one's relationship with others
- To promote knowledge of and respect for reproduction
- To enable pupils to develop attitudes and values toward their sexuality
- To provide opportunities for pupils to learn about relationships and sexuality in ways that help them think and act in a moral, caring and responsible way.

It is acknowledged that in a course of limited duration these aims are aspirational.

Appendix D has the full breakdown of RSE curricular content. The RSE policy acknowledges the importance of RSE being taught in the context of Wellbeing / SPHE Health Education and a whole-school climate that is inclusive and respectful. SPHE/Wellbeing provides opportunities for students to develop personal and social skills which foster integrity, self-confidence and self-esteem while nurturing sensitivity to the feelings and rights of others. Parents / Guardians will be requested to complete Appendix E to allow their son/daughter to participate or not in the RSE class.

### **Relationships and Sexuality Education within Social Personal and Health Education**

Social Personal and Health Education is spiral, developmental in nature and age appropriate in content and methodology. The RSE programme is designed to follow this principle and pattern. Apart from the specific lessons of RSE, SPHE covers other areas which would be pertinent to the development of a healthy attitude to sexuality in oneself and one's relationship with others. SPHE deals with many issues such as self-esteem, assertiveness, communication and decision-making skills - all of which can contribute to the effectiveness of the RSE programme.

## **Guidelines for the management and organisation of Relationships and Sexuality Education in our school**

1. Arrangements regarding the teaching of the programme and the deployment of staff will be made by the S.L.T.

### **2. Informing and Involving Parents:**

Parents are the primary educators of their children and their role in education concerning relationships and sexuality is seen by the school as very important. The policy is published on the school website. It is brought to parents' attention during parent induction for new students. This policy has been designed in consultation with Parents' Association representatives and the views expressed by parents are taken into account when reviewing the policy. A printed copy of this policy is made available to any parent on request to the school Office.

### **3. Offering Advice:**

The school's function is to provide a general education about sexual matters and issues and not to offer individual advice, information or counselling on aspects of sexual behaviour and contraception - however sources of professional information and advice will be identified when appropriate. Teachers may provide pupils with education and information about where and from whom they can receive confidential sexual advice and treatment, e.g., their doctor or other suitable agency. Advice offered should not be directive and should be appropriate to the age of the pupil.

### **4. Explicit Questions:**

It may not be appropriate to deal with some explicit questions in class. It is important that students understand that teachers are mandated persons and there are limits to confidentiality within an RSE class. Teachers may choose to say that it is not appropriate to deal with that question at this time. If a teacher becomes concerned about a matter that has been raised s/he should seek advice from the SPHE co-ordinator or the Principal. When deciding whether or not to answer questions the teacher should consider the age and readiness of the students, the RSE programme content, the ethos of the school and the RSE policy.

## **5. Confidentiality:**

It is school policy that in circumstances where a pupil is considered at some risk of any type of abuse or in breach of the law, the teacher must refer this immediately to the Principal. The Principal will decide whether to inform the parents and/or appropriate authorities and may arrange for counselling.

The following is also school policy:

- teachers must not promise absolute confidentiality
- pupils must be made aware that any incident may be conveyed to the Principal and possibly to parents if the Principal decides that it is in the best and/or vital interests of the pupil to notify parents
- teachers must use their professional judgement to decide whether confidence can be maintained having heard information
- teachers must indicate clearly to pupils when the content of a conversation can no longer be kept confidential - the pupil can then decide whether to proceed or not.

The Child Protection Guidelines for Post Primary schools state in 4.1.1. and 4.2.1. below.

*4.1.1 If a member of staff receives an allegation or has a suspicion that a child may have been abused, or is being abused, or is at risk of abuse he/she should, without delay, report the matter to the Designated Liaison Person in that school. A written record of the report should be made and placed in a secure location by the Designated Liaison Person. The need for confidentiality at all times, as previously referred to in Chapter 1 Paragraph 1.2 of these guidelines, should be borne in mind. The supports of the school should continue to be made available to the child.*

*4.2.1 If the Designated Liaison Person is satisfied that there are reasonable grounds for the suspicion or allegation, he/she should report the matter to the relevant health board immediately.*

## **6. Withdrawing pupils from the RSE programme:**

- This policy is available on the school website. Parents are provided with a printed copy of this policy upon request.
- Parents are asked to opt in or opt out as part of the new parent induction process.

- Parents do not have to give reasons for withdrawal, but we respectfully invite them to do so - sometimes we can then resolve misunderstandings. Parents who choose to opt out of RSE must make an appointment to see the principal and Appendix F is used to guide this conversation. Once a parent's request to withdraw is made, that request must be complied with until revoked by the parent.

## **7. Using visiting speakers and others**

The same procedure for visiting speakers applies as with SPHE (see above)

## **8. Homosexuality**

Teachers do not promote any one life-style as the only acceptable one for society and therefore it is inevitable and natural that homosexuality will be discussed during a programme of sex education. One of the advantages of exploring issues concerning homosexuality is the opportunity to correct false ideas, assumptions and address prejudice.

## **9. Contraception**

This topic will be dealt with in an age appropriate, open manner, looking at all sides of the issues in a non-directive way.

## **10. Additional Educational Needs (A.E.N)**

Children with additional needs may need more help than others in coping with the physical and emotional aspects of growing up; they may also need more help in learning what sorts of behaviour are and are not acceptable, and in being warned and prepared against abuse by others. Specialist teachers may be required to support the provision of RSE for students with A.E.N.

## **11. RSE content in other subjects**

Please note that: Issues such as over population and birth control are met in a minor way in subjects such as Geography and RE. However, as any discussion is limited and set within the context of the other subject concerned, it does not constitute part of the RSE Programme.

## **12. Links to other Policies and Plans**

Appendix G shows how the RSE policy has been considered in the development and review of this policy.

### **Ongoing Support, Development and Review**

#### **Training:**

1. All teachers involved in this work do not necessarily have to be 'experts' on the issues concerned. However, they do require sensitivity to the needs of the group, an ability to deal with questions openly/honestly and a preparedness to refer to more expert advice if necessary. The skills acquired in general teaching apply also to health education. Furthermore, many teachers have training in related areas such as counselling. Some teachers have expert training in the specific areas of health, relationships and sexuality education and will be encouraged to train other teachers.
2. The school will facilitate teachers to obtain expert training in this field, bearing in mind the overall budgetary framework and the need for the ongoing teaching and learning programme of the school to continue with as little disturbance as possible.

#### **Resources:**

The school will purchase appropriate RSE teaching materials which have been identified by staff as useful and which have been approved by the Principal, within the normal budgetary framework and as general school resources allow.

#### **Monitoring, evaluating and reviewing the RSE programme:**

We are committed to monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of this programme. Specifically important to the RSE Programme are:

- pupil feedback
- staff review and feedback
- parental feedback



**(H) HOW PARENTS AND STUDENTS WILL BE INFORMED**

Present students will be informed of this policy through their SPHE and Religion class. Parents will be informed that the policy is on the school website. When a child enters the school, parents/guardian(s) will be asked to read and sign the attached form in appendix E and return it to the school. The school will strive to keep parents informed of the contents of the SPHE/RSE programmes and policies. Policies are available to parents on request.

**(I) HOW STAFF WILL BE INFORMED**

This policy will be available for all staff in the school by its inclusion with the Policy Documents. An SPHE team is available, and all staff have access to it.

**(J) HOW THE SPHE AND RSE PROGRAMME AND POLICY WILL BE REVIEWED AND EVALUATED.**

The SPHE and RSE programme and policy will be reviewed and evaluated on a bi-annual basis by the Student Support team. The opinion of the students will be included as part of the review. The SPHE/RSE policy will be reviewed in line with the schools' programme of School Development Planning.

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on \_\_\_\_\_ [date]

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
*Chairperson of the Board of Management*

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
*Principal*

Date of next review: \_\_\_\_\_

# APPENDIX A

## SPHE JUNIOR CYCLE COURSE SPECIFICATION 2017

### Learning outcomes

<b>Students learn about</b>	<b>Students should be able to</b>
How I see myself and others	1.1 appreciate the importance of building their own self-esteem and that of others 1.2 welcome individual difference based on an appreciation of their own uniqueness
Being an adolescent	1.3 participate in informed discussions about the impact of physical, emotional, psychological and social development in adolescence 1.4 recognise how sexuality and gender identity is part of what it means to be human and has biological, psychological, cultural, social and spiritual dimensions
Self-management	1.5 identify short, medium and long-term personal goals and ways in which they might be achieved 1.6 apply decision-making skills in a variety of situations 1.7 source appropriate and reliable information about health and wellbeing
My rights and the rights of others	1.8 explain how stereotyping can contribute to a person's understanding and experience of rights and wellbeing 1.9 appreciate the importance of respectful and inclusive behaviour in promoting a safe environment free from bias and discrimination

## SPHE JUNIOR CYCLE COURSE SPECIFICATION 2017

### Learning outcomes

<b>Students learn about</b>	<b>Students should be able to</b>
Being healthy	<p>2.1 evaluate how diet, physical activity, sleep/rest and hygiene contribute to self-confidence, self-esteem and wellbeing</p> <p>2.2 critique the impact of the media, advertising and other influences on one's decisions about health and wellbeing</p> <p>2.3 describe what promotes a sense of belonging in school, at home and in the wider community and their own role in creating an inclusive environment</p> <p>2.4 distinguish between appropriate care giving and receiving</p>
Substance use	<p>2.5 demonstrate the personal and social skills to address pressure to smoke, to drink alcohol and/or use other substances</p> <p>2.6 reflect on the personal, social and legal consequences of their own or others' drug use</p> <p>2.7 critique information and supports available for young people in relation to substance use</p>
Respectful communication	<p>2.8 use the skills of active listening and responding appropriately in a variety of contexts</p> <p>2.9 use good communication skills to respond to criticism and conflict</p>
Anti-bullying	<p>2.10 describe appropriate responses to incidents of bullying</p> <p>2.11 appraise the roles of participants and bystanders in incidents of bullying</p> <p>2.12 review the school's anti-bullying policy and internet safety guidelines explaining the implications for students' behaviour and personal safety</p>

## SPHE JUNIOR CYCLE COURSE SPECIFICATION 2017

### Learning outcomes

<b>Students learn about</b>	<b>Students should be able to</b>
Having a friend and being a friend	3.1 establish what young people value in different relationships and how this changes over time
	3.2 evaluate attitudes, skills and values that help to make, maintain and end friendships respectfully
	3.3 recognise their capacity to extend and receive friendship
The relationship spectrum	3.4 explain the different influences on relationships and levels of intimacy
	3.5 analyse relationship difficulties experienced by young people
Sexuality, gender identity and sexual health	3.6 describe fertility, conception, pre-natal development and birth, and the particular health considerations for each
	3.7 explain what it means to take care of their sexual health
	3.8 demonstrate assertive communication skills in support of responsible, informed decision-making about relationships and sexual health that are age and developmentally appropriate
	3.9 reflect on the personal and social dimensions of sexual orientation and gender identity
Media influence on relationships and sexuality	3.10 critically analyse the use of sexual imagery and gender stereotyping in various forms of media
	3.11 critique the influence of media on their understanding of sexuality and sexual health

## SPHE JUNIOR CYCLE COURSE SPECIFICATION 2017

### Learning outcomes

<b>Students learn about</b>	<b>Students should be able to</b>
Positive mental health	4.1 explain what it means to have positive mental health
	4.2 appreciate the importance of talking things over, including recognising the links between thoughts, feelings and behaviour
	4.3 practise some relaxation techniques
Mental health and mental ill-health	4.4 participate in an informed discussion about mental health issues experienced by young people and/or their friends and family
	4.5 appreciate what it means to live with mental ill-health
	4.6 critique mental health services available to young people locally
	4.7 explain the significance of substance use for one's mental health
Dealing with tough times	4.8 practise a range of strategies for building resilience
	4.9 use coping skills for managing life's challenges
Loss and bereavement	4.10 explain the wide range of life events where they might experience loss and bereavement
	4.11 outline the personal, social, emotional and physical responses to loss and bereavement
	4.12 compare how loss and bereavement are portrayed in a variety of contexts and cultures
	4.13 describe how they might care for themselves and be supportive of others in times of loss or bereavement

The Department of Education recognises that each school has the flexibility within this framework to plan the SPHE Programme most suitable for the students' needs and the school's resources.

# APPENDIX B

## SPHE JUNIOR CYCLE COURSE SPECIFICATION 2023



### **Strand 1:** Understanding myself and others

This strand focuses on developing self-awareness and self-esteem and building some of the foundational skills and dispositions needed for healthy relationships and to thrive in life, including communicating and negotiating, listening, showing empathy, respecting difference, and self-management/self-regulation.

### **Strand 2:** Making healthy choices

This strand offers opportunities for students to consider how they can make healthy choices to support their wellbeing. It explores what being healthy might look like for a teenager, what helps or gets in the way of making healthy choices and how to access reliable information to support good choices. Students will also practice the skills needed for making healthy decisions and come to understand contextual factors, such as family, peer, media and social pressures, that influence decisions. Junior Cycle Specification Social, Personal and Health Education 12

### **Strand 3:** Relationships and sexuality

This strand explores the cognitive, physical, emotional and social aspects of relationships and sexuality through a positive, inclusive, rights and responsibilities-based approach. The focus is on family relationships, friendships, romantic and potential sexual relationships in the future.

#### **Strand 4: Emotional wellbeing**

This strand primarily focuses on nurturing emotional wellbeing and promoting positive mental health. It helps students develop problem solving and coping skills for dealing with the emotional ups and downs of life, explores how they can support themselves and others in challenging times and discusses where/how to find support, if needed. The four strands are underpinned by three cross-cutting elements that are foundational for effective teaching and learning in SPHE. These are: • Awareness • Dialogue • Reflection and action.

#### **Awareness.**

Awareness is the ability to understand one's own thoughts, emotions, values and behaviour. It includes understanding how different factors influence our sense of self and how we live our lives, including the influence of family, peers, the internet, gender, culture and social norms. This element also includes an awareness that to be human is to be in relationships and that we all share a common humanity and dignity, have rights and responsibilities.

#### **Dialogue.**

Through dialogical teaching and learning students are facilitated to engage with a diversity of viewpoints; discuss and reflect on their own perspectives, values, and behaviours and those of others; enlarge their understanding of topics of relevance to their lives; and come to informed, thoughtful decisions based on their personal values, with due regard to their own rights and responsibilities and the rights and responsibilities of others. Respectful dialogue is aided by presuming a diversity of backgrounds, identities, cultures and experiences in every classroom and seeing this as a resource for learning.

#### **Reflection and action.**

This cross-cutting element focuses on students reflecting on what they have learned and coming to their own personal insights and conclusions in response to their learning. It enables students to consider how the learning can inform their choices, behaviour and relationships, and discerning what it means for their lives now or for the future. Learning in SPHE is a 'praxis'; an ongoing process of critical reflection and action, nurtured by dialogue with others.

## APPENDIX C

### PROVISION FOR HOLISTIC DEVELOPMENT OF STUDENTS IN CTI (FORMAL AND INFORMAL).

- Teachers
- Principal & Deputy Principal
- Class Tutor
- Special Needs Assistants
- Student Council
- Book Scheme
- RSE Programme
- SPHE Programme
- Students Council
- Extra-Curricular Activities
- School Completion Programme
- Parent's Association
- JCSP
- Supervised Study
- Homework Club
- Resource/Learning Support Teachers
- School Policies
- Check and Connect
- Talks – outside speakers
- School Tours
- Positive Comments in Journal
- Career Guidance Counsellor
- Religion & Beliefs Classes
- Awards Ceremonies
- Attendance Awards
- School Newsletters - celebrating student achievements
- Co-curricular activities
- School Show
- Sport programmes
- Progression opportunities
- Team Teaching
- Mixed Ability Teaching
- Study Skills
- Academic tracking - including target grades and effort grades
- Canteen
- Cultural Activities
- Debates
- Parent Teacher Meetings
- Information Nights for Parents
- Induction Programme
- Leaving Certificate Applied
- Enrolment
- Open Night
- Local Paper Notes
- Intercom
- Visits to Primary Schools
- Music
- Professional Counselling Support
- HSCL support
- Employers – Work Experience



# APPENDIX D

## RSE CURRICULUM CONTENT

### Development of themes at Junior Cycle.

#### Human Growth and Development

- Awareness of changes in the human cycle.
- An understanding of the physical and emotional changes that take place in males and females at puberty and appreciation of variation
- Knowledge of sexual organs and their function
- An appreciation of hygiene associated with puberty
- An awareness of the sometimes-conflicting feelings, moods and emotions characteristic of adolescence
- Development of a language for the expression of emotions
- An understanding of fertility, conception, pregnancy and birth
- Awareness of implications of sexual activity
- Understanding of sexually transmitted diseases, with particular reference to HIV/AIDS

#### Human Sexuality

- An awareness of what it is to be female and male.
- An awareness of stereotyping and its influence on attitudes and behaviour
- An appreciation of equality and difference
- Information on and sensitivity to sexual orientation
- Awareness of discrimination
- Respect for sexuality
- Developing skills for personal safety
- Awareness of sexual abuse and rape including identification of help agencies within and outside the school.

#### Human Relationships

- Developing skills for self-awareness
- Developing skills for building and maintaining self esteem
- Awareness of the qualities valued in friendships and how friendship patterns change
- Developing skills for establishing and maintaining relationships
- Awareness of roles and responsibilities in relationships and families
- Identifying groups students belong to, behaviour in these groups and response to peer pressure

## **Development of themes at Senior Cycle.**

### **Human Growth and Development**

- Understanding the structure and function of sex organs
- Awareness of fertility
- Awareness of the importance and methods of family planning
- Understanding of pregnancy and the development of the foetus
- Appreciation of the importance of health care during pregnancy
- Recognizing the range of human emotions and ways to deal with these
- An understanding of the relationships between safe sexual practice and sexually transmitted diseases with particular reference to HIV/AIDS

### **Human Sexuality**

- Understanding of what it means to be male or female
- Exploration of some of the issues pertaining to equality
- Understanding the concept of sexual harassment and its different forms
- Awareness of sexual abuse and rape, including legal issues and the identification of help agencies in these areas
- Skills for making choices about sexual activity
- Laws in relation to sexual activity
- Exploration of the range of attitudes, values and beliefs regarding sexual behaviour in modern society
- Understanding the nature of peer pressure
- Developing skills for resolving conflict
- Development of an awareness of the complex nature of love and loving relationships
- Understanding what it means to be LGBTQIA
- Understanding marriage as a loving commitment
- Understanding of marriage in various cultures
- Deeper awareness of the importance of family life

## **RSE Programme in Raheen College & Gaelcholáiste Chéitinn**

### **First year lessons:**

- (1) Class Rules for RSE, physical changes in the body, emotional and social changes during puberty.
- (2) Human reproductive system – Male.
- (3) Human reproductive system – Female and menstruation.

- (4) Sexual Intercourse and conception.
- (5) Peer pressure, Healthy friendships and Consent.
- (6) Questions and Answers.

**Second year lessons:**

- (1) Building a healthy relationship and relationship pressures.
- (2) The influence of friends, social media and mass media on sexuality and relationships.
- (3) Pregnancy and stages of pregnancy.
- (4) The law on sexting and sharing of intimate content. Consent Laws.
- (5) When online sharing goes wrong and victim blaming.
- (6) Understanding Gender and using correct terminology.
- (7) Questions & Answers.

**Third year lessons:**

- (1) Consent Laws. Sharing of intimate content.
- (2) Rights and responsibilities in relationships.
- (3) Sexual orientation and coming out to self/others.
- (4) Teenage pregnancy and contraception, Cervical, Ovarian & Testicular Cancers
- (5) Prejudice and Discrimination towards gender and sexual orientation.
- (6) Questions and Answers.

**Fourth year lessons:**

- (1) Online Sexual Coercion and exploitation as a crime. Consent Laws.
- (2) How online sexual coercion and exploitation occurs and how it affects young people.
- (3) Responding to sexual exploitation and victim blaming.
- (4) Transgender identity. Prejudice and discrimination.
- (5) Questions and Answers.

**Fifth year lessons:**

- (1) What we value in relationship/healthy relationships. LGBTQ+
- (2) The influence of self-esteem on relationships.
- (3) Human reproduction and fertility.
- (4) Contraception methods.
- (5) Sexually Transmitted Infections.
- (6) Questions & Answers.

**Sixth year lessons:**

- (1) Understanding and communicating boundaries.
- (2) Consent Laws and decision making.
- (3) Understanding male and female fertility and infertility.
- (4) Sexually Transmitted Infections.
- (5) LGBTQ+
- (6) Questions & Answers.

## APPENDIX E

Form to be filled if a Parent/Guardian wishes their child to/not take part in the RSE curriculum.

Dear Parents/Guardians

### Junior Cert Cycle SPHE - RSE

The SPHE Social/Personal/Health Education programme is a compulsory subject in the Junior Cert curriculum as specified by the Department of Education & Skills as set out in circular 0037/2010. It is delivered to the students each week for one class period. Please find enclosed our SPHE policy which includes a summary of the programme which covers the course content over the three years. One part of the programme is the module known as RSE - Relationships & Sexuality Education.

Parents are required to consent to their son/daughter participating in this module.

If you do not wish your child to avail of this module you need to contact the school.

I **do not consent** to my child availing of this programme.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent / Guardian signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
SPHE coordinator

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## APPENDIX F

### What we do if a request for withdrawal from the RSE programme is made by a parent:

- we discuss the nature of the concerns with the child's parent and if appropriate attempt to reassure them (initially such discussion takes place at a meeting with the Year Head and SPHE Co-ordinator, the Principal may become involved if necessary).
- we consider whether the programme can be amended or improved in a way that will reassure parents - care is taken not to undermine the integrity of the RSE programme and the entitlement of the other pupils, e.g., it may be appropriate and desirable to have single sex classes for some sections of the RSE programme.
- we attempt to ensure that where a pupil is withdrawn there is no disruption to other parts of their education.
- we point out that pupils who have been withdrawn are vulnerable to teasing - we therefore attempt to cause minimal embarrassment to the pupil and minimal disruption to the programme.
- we also point out that pupils may receive inaccurate information from their peers.
- we offer the parents access to appropriate information and resources.

## APPENDIX G

### Links to Other Policies and Plans:

The following policies and plans have been considered in the development and review of this policy:

- A. Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2017)
- B. Education Act 1998
- C. Framework for Junior Cycle 2015
- D. Junior Cycle Wellbeing Guidelines 2017 and updated 2021 Guidelines
- E. DEIS Plan
- F. Wellbeing Plan
- G. Whole school Guidance Plan
- H. Anti-Bullying Policy
- I. Substance Misuse Policy
- J. Health and Safety Plan
- K. Code of Positive Behaviour Plan
- L. Critical Incident Management Plan
- M. Additional Education Needs Plan