De La Salle College Churchtown

Social, Personal & Health Education Policy

De La Salle College Churchtown

Whole-School SPHE Policy and Programme

School Ethos and Context

De La Salle College Churchtown is a co-educational post-primary school grounded in Lasallian values of faith, service, community, respect, and holistic formation. Our SPHE programme supports the personal, social, emotional, and physical development of all students from 1st–6th Year.

SPHE is a core component of the school's Wellbeing Programme and is delivered in line with:

- NCCA Junior Cycle SPHE Specification (2023)
- NCCA Senior Cycle SPHE Framework (2023)
- Oide SPHE & RSE Support Materials
- Wellbeing Guidelines for Junior Cycle
- RSE Guidelines (DES)
- Child Protection Procedures for Post-Primary Schools
- School Code of Behaviour & Bí Cineálta Anti-Bullying School Policy

Aims of Whole-School SPHE (1st - 6th Year)

SPHE aims to ensure students:

- Develop emotional, social, physical, and mental wellbeing
- Build effective communication, empathy, and conflict-management skills
- Form healthy, respectful relationships
- Understand identity, inclusion, equality, and diversity
- Engage critically with digital life, online safety, and media influences
- Develop resilience, coping strategies, and help-seeking skills
- Receive inclusive, age-appropriate, evidence-informed RSE
- Prepare for independent adult life, decision-making, and transitions

These aims reflect NCCA learning outcomes and Oide best-practice guidelines.

Cross-Curricular Integration

SPHE is embedded across the entire curriculum. Subject departments collaborate to reinforce Wellbeing learning.

Examples:

- **PE:** physical health, fitness, body image, teamwork
- **Religion:** ethics, values, empathy, respect, social justice
- **Science:** human development, reproductive health, substance education
- **Home Economics:** nutrition, consumer awareness, personal care
- **CSPE:** rights, responsibilities, democracy, active citizenship
- **English:** communication skills, media literacy, expression
- **Digital Literacy/ICT:** online safety, cyberbullying prevention, digital footprints
- **Guidance:** career wellbeing, transitions, decision-making

Cross-curricular links are highlighted in Wellbeing planning and reinforced during annual school wellbeing initiatives.

Inclusion & SEN Planning

Aligned with UDL (Universal Design for Learning) principles and Oide inclusive practice guidelines.

Supports include:

- Differentiated materials and varied modes of response
- Visual supports, vocabulary lists, graphic organisers
- Pre-teaching of sensitive concepts when necessary
- Additional processing time or alternative assessment formats
- Use of assistive technology
- Close collaboration with SEN team
- Adaptation of sensitive RSE content to ensure emotional safety

Teaching & Learning Methodologies

SPHE is taught using experiential, student-centred approaches.

Methods include:

- Group work, pair work, and collaborative tasks
- Scenario-based learning and case studies
- Inquiry-based projects
- Reflective journaling

- Role-play and drama
- Values clarification activities
- Use of digital learning tools

Teachers maintain:

- Clear boundaries and safe discussion guidelines
- Respect for privacy and confidentiality limits
- Inclusive and student-voice-driven learning spaces

Use of ICT in SPHE

ICT enhances SPHE in the areas of wellbeing, digital citizenship, and media literacy.

Examples:

- Webwise resources and modules
- Digital wellbeing lessons
- Teacher-created multimedia presentations
- Safe use of online surveys and reflection tools
- Virtual or remote guest speakers
- Use of assistive tools (text-to-speech, audio recordings)

ICT usage adheres to school Acceptable Use Policy.

Resources

The SPHE department uses approved, age-appropriate, evidence-informed resources.

These include:

- NCCA SPHE / RSE Toolkit (Junior & Senior Cycle)
- Oide digital and print resources
- Webwise lessons
- HSE: Healthy Ireland, sexual health materials, substance awareness packs
- SPHE textbooks
- Teacher-created booklets and visuals
- Workshops and external speakers (approved by SMT)

Resources are reviewed annually to ensure alignment with current guidelines.

Assessment, Feedback & Reporting

Assessment in SPHE is primarily formative and reflective, as per NCCA and Oide recommendations.

Approaches:

- Self- and peer-assessment
- Reflective journals and wellbeing tasks
- Skills demonstrations
- Classroom-based activities
- Short projects and presentations

Feedback includes:

- Oral feedback
- Written comments on tasks
- Digital annotation or reflection prompts

Reporting:

- **Junior Cycle:** CBA in 2nd or 3rd Year
- **Senior Cycle:** Modular reporting through school system
- Wellbeing indicators recorded where relevant

Literacy & Numeracy Development in SPHE

Literacy:

- Explicit teaching of terminology (emotions, relationships, health)
- Reading tasks using articles, policies, and infographics
- Structured reflective writing
- Oral communication, debates, and presentations

Numeracy:

- Reading/interpreting data (graphs, statistics)
- Creating and analysing surveys
- Time management activities (study planning, stress control)

Whole-School SPHE Programme (1st–6th Year)

1st Year

Identity, belonging, friendships, emotional wellbeing, puberty, digital safety, healthy lifestyle, introduction to RSE, anti-bullying.

2nd Year

Decision-making, respectful relationships, inclusion, substance awareness, digital citizenship, body image, stress coping, developing RSE.

3rd Year

Consent, relationships, exam stress, risk behaviour, coping and resilience, sexual health foundations.

Transition Year

Personal development, resilience training, advanced consent workshops, substance awareness, digital footprints, first aid, volunteering.

5th Year

Relationships and communication, mental wellbeing, sexual health, adult life skills, digital ethics, body image, stress management.

6th Year

Independent living, college/workplace wellbeing, consent and personal safety, sexual health, stress regulation, help-seeking.

Programmes reflect updated NCCA learning outcomes and Oide RSE guidance.

Sensitive Issues & Child Protection

Teachers:

- Follow Children First and Child Protection school procedures
- Cannot promise confidentiality
- Must report concerns to the DLP
- Avoid personal disclosure prompts
- Deliver all content sensitively and professionally

Visitors to SPHE

Visitors (e.g., workshops, speakers) must:

- Be approved by Senior Management

- Complement the teacher, not replace them
- Use content aligned with NCCA/Oide guidance
- Be supervised at all times
- Provide inclusive, evidence-informed material

Staff Wellbeing and Professional Learning

The school recognises that staff wellbeing is vital. Supports include:

- Collaborative planning
- Professional learning (Oide, NCCA, DES, other relevant CPD offered)
- Peer support and mentoring
- A positive and respectful staff culture

Monitoring, Evaluation & Review

The SPHE policy and programme are reviewed annually by the SPHE department and Senior Management.

Review processes include:

- Student and parent feedback
- Staff reflection and planning meetings
- Wellbeing indicator data
- Updates from NCCA, Oide, HSE, DES

Ratification

Presented to the Board of Management for approval.

Chairperson: _____

Date: 15/9/2026