

Social Personal and Health Education Policy

1. Our Lady of Mercy College is a Catholic All-girl school under the trusteeship of CEIST. Teachers deliver the RSE of the programme in this context.

2. Mission Statement:

Our Mission Statement states that the core value of Our Lady of Mercy College, Beaumont is respect for all and the nurturing of individual potential, academically, spiritually and culturally as a member of the school community and in the spirit of the Mercy Ethos.

3. Rationale:

Our vision of education gives priority to the integration of the spiritual, intellectual, moral, physical and emotional development of the individual student. The work of the school is not an enterprise conducted in isolation but is very much influenced by the cultural and social mores of the time. The school is therefore challenged to address the cultural reality in which the students live and must aim to equip students with the skills necessary to cope in a world that is challenging and presents choices all the time.

In Our Lady of Mercy College, Beaumont, we hope to develop persons who feel confident in responding to such choices. Such young people are responsible and inner directed and choose freely in response to an informed conscience.

The SPHE programme in this school takes place within a Catholic understanding of human development and sexuality and recognises the dignity of the individual. The programme addresses contemporary topics which are dealt with at a level appropriate to the age of the student and within a moral framework in keeping with the characteristic spirit of the school.

4. Aims:

The subject aims to contribute towards the student's development in a holistic manner. This includes all aspects of the students' development including aesthetic, creative, critical, cultural, emotional, intellectual, moral, physical, political, and social development for personal and family life, for working life and for living in a community. This is achieved through a structured, cyclical programme in accordance with the D.E.S. guidelines and the characteristic spirit of the school.

5. Subject Objectives:

1. Be self-confident and have a positive sense of self-esteem.
2. Develop and enhance the social skills of communication, co-operation and conflict resolution.
3. Develop some of the skills and abilities necessary for participating fully in groups and in society.
4. To provide opportunities for reflection and discussion.
5. Make decisions, solve problems and take appropriate actions in various personal, social and health contexts.
6. Develop an understanding of healthy living, an ability to implement healthy behaviour and a willingness to participate in activities that promote and sustain health.
7. Develop a sense of safety and an ability to protect herself from danger and abuse.
8. Become aware of, and discerning about, the various influences on choices and decisions.
9. 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.
10. Create and maintain supportive relationships both now and in the future.

11. Develop a sense of personal responsibility and come to understand her sexuality and the process of growth, development and reproduction.
12. Respect the environment and develop a sense of responsibility for its longterm care.
13. Appreciate and respect the diversity that exists in society and the positive contributions of various cultural, religious and social groups.
14. Develop a tolerance for others, and a respect for difference, considering the diverse nature of the profile of pupils in Our Lady of Mercy, Beaumont.
15. To promote physical, mental and emotional health and well-being.

6. Class Organisation and Timetabling:

SPHE is allocated one class period per week for all Junior Cycle students. Classes are organised in mixed ability groupings.

Personal Development may be covered as a module in first year or through Tutor Classes. Personal development is also covered in transition year.

In organising the learning environment, the teacher will be careful to create an atmosphere which respects the privacy of each individual student and treats each student with sensitivity and care. Active learning methods are used to ensure that students actively participate in their own learning.

Contemporary topics and issues which emerge in this class are dealt with at a level appropriate to the age of the student and within a moral framework, in keeping with the school ethos.

7. Planning for students with special needs:

Consultations take place with the relevant staff in connection with the SPHE programme. Otherwise, contact is made at the discretion of the teacher.

8. Content and teaching methods:

SPHE comprises ten modules. These are re-visited each year as the students mature and their needs and abilities change. The emphasis is on building life skills and developing attitudes and values in relation to the areas explored.

Ten modules of SPHE:

- Belonging and Integrating
- Self Management
- Communication Skills
- Physical Health
- Friendship
- Relationships and Sexuality (RSE)
- Emotional Health
- Influences and Decisions
- Substance Use
- Personal Safety

Methodologies:

- Group Discussions
- Case Studies
- Brainstorming
- Role Play
- Pair-work

- Artwork
- Narrative Expression
- Games – Icebreakers
- Games – Simulation
- Debates
- Project Work.

9. Confidentiality:

At the beginning of each academic year, students are informed that complete confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. Information may have to be passed on at the discretion of the SPHE teacher to the Designated Liaison Person, year head or Guidance Counsellor as appropriate.

10. Cross-curricular links:

Links are made with the following departments:

- Home Economics re healthy living
- Religion re RSE
- Biology re RSE
- Art re posters to highlight issues, e.g. substance abuse
- Physical Education
- English- Media Studies
- Student Council and prefects.
- Whole School Activities
- Social Skills Programme

11. Staff development and subject development

SPHE staff members engage in professional development on an ongoing basis. The SPHE team avails of the in-service training continuously on offer by the SPHE support service.

12. Visitors:

While visitors to the classroom can be a useful addition to SPHE, the delivery of the programme remains the responsibility of the teacher.

Visiting speakers are familiarised with the school SPHE policy prior to engaging with students.

13. Parents:

The school acknowledges the role of parents/guardians as the primary educators of their children. The programme seeks to support parents in this challenging task.

Parents are introduced to, and familiarised with SPHE/RSE programme and methodologies at the annual Parent Teacher meetings. Parents are given an overview of the syllabus and questions can be clarified.

In the case of RSE if parents require further discussion/clarification this is accommodated by the school.

14. Assessment, record keeping and reporting:

All student work is kept by the individual student. Written work, class projects, class presentations and general class participation is used by the teacher to assess student engagement within the programme.

Evaluation sheets and end of Module reviews are completed by students at the end of each topic.

Regular department meetings take place and a record is kept of each meeting (see SPHE file).

Discussion and consultation takes place with school management when appropriate.

An assessment grade and comment on student participation in SPHE class is given on Junior Cycle school reports.

15. Whole school support for SPHE:

- PE classes for all students and a variety of extra curricular sporting activities.
- Bullying is addressed through a whole school approach.
- Tutor Classes are timetabled at intervals throughout the year.

16. Links to related Policies

Pastoral Care Policy

Guidance and Counselling Policy

Special Needs Policy

Anti Bullying Policy

Substance Use

Critical Incident Policy

RSE Policy

17. Resources available:

Access to ICT, Computers, data projectors, photocopier and internet.

Library and demonstration room for visiting speakers.

18. Review

We review policies every three years or as required. Staff, Students, Parents and Board of Management will be involved in the review.

Reviewed & ratified June 14th 2017