

# **Coláiste Choilm Tullamore**



## **Social, Personal and Health Education Policy**

## **School Details**

Name:	Coláiste Choilm
Address:	O'Moore Street, Tullamore, Co. Offaly
Phone number:	057 9351756
Category:	Voluntary Catholic Secondary School
Enrolment:	608

## **Introductory Statement**

Coláiste Choilm, Tullamore is a Voluntary Catholic Secondary School for boys under the Trusteeship of Bishop Thomas Deenihan of the Diocese of Meath. The Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) Policy has been developed following consultation between staff, parents, students, Principal and the Board of Management. In this policy document the term 'parent' is taken to include 'guardian'.

## **Policy Context and Rationale**

This policy is informed by:

- The Mission Statement of Coláiste Choilm, Tullamore
- The RSE Policy
- The Code of Behaviour
- The Child Protection Policy / Child Safeguarding Statement
- The Internet Acceptable Use Policy
- The Special Educational Needs Policy
- The Guidance Plan

## **Mission Statement**

To provide a caring Christian Education, in a community of pupils, staff, parents and management, where each individual is valued as a unique human being.

## **Ethos**

The ethos of Coláiste Choilm is to assist in the development of all aspects of the student, the spiritual, moral, intellectual, physical and social at all times guided by the Gospel values. In keeping with Catholic tradition, the school is guided by the teachings of Jesus Christ and the Gospel values. The school reflects these values in the day to day life of the school through Catholic religious' celebration, iconography, statuary, and symbols. Parents, students and staff are all expected to respect this tradition.

## **Definitions of SPHE and how it links with the school ethos**

SPHE is a subject that 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**

- 1) To enable students to develop skills for self-fulfilment and living in communities.
- 2) To promote students' self-esteem and self-confidence.
- 3) To enable students to develop a framework for responsible decision-making.
- 4) To provide opportunities for reflection and discussion.
- 5) To promote physical, mental and emotional health and well-being.

## **SPHE: Relationship to Characteristic Spirit and Ethos of the School**

SPHE will provide young people with skills to evaluate critically the wide range of information, opinions, attitudes and values offered today, in order that they will make positive, responsible choices about themselves and about the way they live their lives. While the school acknowledges that the home is the natural environment for the social, personal and health development of children, the Education Act of 1998 (Section 9, subsection d) requires all recognised schools to promote the moral, spiritual, social and personal development of students and provide health education for them. This will happen in consultation with their parents and in the context of the Catholic ethos of the school.

A summary of what the school currently provides for the general well-being of students, both formally and informally to support SPHE is included in Appendix 1.

SPHE aims to build on this existing commitment to the care and development of students within the school.

### **Outline of the Course Content**

SPHE is presented in ten modules, each of which appears in first and second year of the three-year Junior Cycle course. The emphasis will be on developing skills, understanding, attitudes and values important to all these areas.

The ten modules are:

1. Belonging and Integrating
2. Self-Management
3. Communication Process
4. Physical Health
5. Friendships
6. Relationships and Sexuality
7. Emotional Health
8. Influences and Decisions
9. Substance Use
10. Personal Safety

The Department of Education and Skills recognises that each school has flexibility within this framework to plan the SPHE course most suitable for the students and the school.

### **Teaching Methods**

Because SPHE 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 child-centred and appropriate to the age, stage and development of the student. The class atmosphere must be one of respect for the privacy of the individual and hallmarked by sensitivity and care.

### **How S.P.H.E. will be timetabled and taught**

SPHE is timetabled for one class period per week for students in First and Second Year. It is taught in the context of the Mission Statement of the school.

### **Staff Development, Training and Resources**

The value placed on SPHE by the school will be evident by the commitment on the part of School Management to develop a core team of SPHE teachers. Continuing professional development is an integral part of this programme. School Management is responsible for the relevant training needs of SPHE teachers. As part of the core curriculum, SPHE will have a budgetary allocation in line with its stage of development and its teaching methodologies and timetabled allocation. School Management is committed to the appointment of an SPHE Co-ordinator. School Management encourages and facilitates continuing professional development for new and existing teachers of SPHE.

### **Participation / Sensitive Issues / Confidentiality**

#### ***Participation:***

SPHE is a core curricular subject on the Junior Cycle curriculum and it plays a central role in educating students in Wellbeing. Relationships and Sexuality (RSE) is one module of the subject. Each parent has the right to withdraw their child from RSE (see Relationships and Sexuality Education Policy). If a student is withdrawn from the lessons pertaining to the sensitive elements of the RSE programme, parents must give a notice in writing to the school that they are withdrawing their child. The student may be accommodated in another teacher's classroom in the school. However, it will be necessary for parents of any student opting out of RSE to make suitable arrangements with School Management for the welfare of their child at these times. It is important to be aware that in these circumstances the school cannot be responsible for information subsequently passed on by participating students.

***Sensitive Issues:***

While it is acknowledged that teachers have a professional responsibility to impart the SPHE course content, the needs of the students will be addressed in a caring and supportive manner. Where it is appropriate, the school will refer students to other supportive links or services, internal or external to the school community e.g. Pastoral Care Team, Guidance Counsellor, etc. Class discussion will be of a general nature in accordance with the previously agreed ground rules and will not be personally directed. If any questions asked by students are deemed to be inappropriate, the teacher will refer the student to their parents or state that this information may be available at a later stage of the curriculum. 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, he/she should seek advice from the Principal. When deciding whether or not to answer questions the teacher should consider the age and readiness of the students, the SPHE / RSE programme content, the ethos of the school, the RSE policy and use their professional judgment.

***Confidentiality:***

The normal limits of confidentiality will apply to any information coming to the attention of the teacher. However, every effort should be made to ensure that this information is dealt with in a sensitive and discreet manner. It is important that students are made aware of the limits of confidentiality and that teachers do not give unconditional guarantees of confidentiality. Confidentiality should be respected unless the teacher feels that the child is at risk or where there are reasonable grounds to believe that a law may be broken. In such a case, the appropriate action should be taken in accordance with the procedures set down in the Child Protection Procedures for Post-Primary Schools, the school's Child Protection Policy / Child Safeguarding Statement and the Children First legislation (2017) or the school's Substance Use Policy, i.e. the teacher must inform the Designated Liaison Person and ensure that that all reporting procedures are complied with.

## **The Role of Visitors**

The SPHE teacher will consult with the Principal in relation to the suitability of guest speakers prior to their invitation to the school. All guest speakers will be made aware of and requested to comply with the school SPHE policy. The presentations of guest speakers will be negotiated with the relevant SPHE teacher before delivery to the students. It is normal practice for teachers to remain in the classroom while visitors are there. Preparatory and follow-up work, where possible, should be undertaken by the class.

## **How Parents and Students will be informed**

A full and complete syllabus, core resource materials and policy document will be available in the school if parents wish to review it. Parents will be informed of any substantial changes in the programme made by the Department of Education and Skills.

## **How Staff will be informed**

The policy is available for all staff in the school by its inclusion with the Policy Documents which are kept in the Principal's Office. A copy of the policy is included in the SPHE Department folder and is available on our school website: [www.colaiestechoilmtullamore.ie](http://www.colaiestechoilmtullamore.ie)

## **How the Board of Management will be consulted and informed?**

The SPHE draft policy will be discussed at a meeting of the Board of Management. The Board of Management may make input on the policy and make whatever changes deemed appropriate before ratification of the SPHE policy.

## **Review / Assessment / Evaluation**

The SPHE teachers and students will have the opportunity to engage in ongoing review of the policy and subject content both formally and informally. This will be done through students' feedback, in-class discussion and through the School Self-Evaluation surveys used in data gathering.

### **Ratification of policy**

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on 27/02/2019.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Principal)

### **Review of policy**

This Social, Personal and Health Education policy is reviewed in compliance with the Board of management's policy for the cyclical review of all school policies as set out in The School Plan.

## Appendix 1

Below is a summary of what our school currently provides for the general well-being of students, both formally and informally, to support SPHE.

- Policies, including the following: Admissions, Code of Behaviour, Anti-Bullying, Substance Abuse, Health and Safety, I.T., Guidance, Child Protection / Child Safeguarding Statement.
- Pastoral Care Team
- Year Heads
- Parents' Council and Student Council
- Cairde
- Sports and Games
- Guidance and Counselling
- Information Meetings for Parents
- Outside Speakers
- Study Skills
- Special Education Team
- Student
- Learning Support
- Induction Day for First Year / Transition Year
- Transition Year
- LCVP
- Open Night for Parents and Students
- Enterprises
- Subject Fieldtrips
- Student Retreats
- Green Schools

- School Music Show
- India Concert
- India Immersion
- School Masses
- Cross-Curricular links including Religious Education, Science, Health Education, CSPE, PE, ICT
- Transition Year Activities
- Parent-Teacher Meetings
- Young Social Innovators
- Chess Club
- Book Club