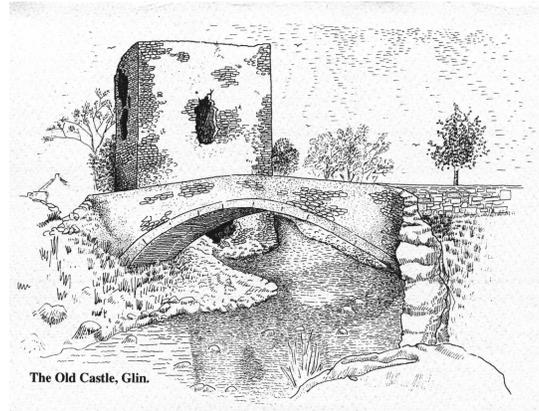


St. Fergus' National School



**Social, Personal and Health Education
(SPHE) Policy**

October 2025

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Introductory Statement

This SPHE Policy has been fully redrafted in September and October 2025. It builds on our former policy, responds to current Department of Education and Youth requirements, and incorporates the most up-to-date national guidance and circulars. In particular, it reflects the direction set out in the following;

- Circular 0056/2022 (School Self-Evaluation: Next Steps September 2022 – June 2026),
- Circular 0022/2010 (Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) Best Practice Guidelines for Primary Schools),
- Circular 0067/2025 (Primary Curriculum for primary and special schools) and
- Circular 0041/2025 (Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools).

This redraft is also grounded in;

- The Primary Curriculum Framework (NCCA, 2023),
- The Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice (2023),
- Towards High Quality Learning Experiences for All (Inspectorate, 2024),
- Looking at Our Schools (2022)
- NCSE Relate (2025) and Staff training in same,
- NCSE Sensory Spaces in Schools (2025), and
- Visual Supports within an Inclusive Learning Environment (NCSE, 2024).

It draws on

- NEPS Guidance on Reluctant Attendance and School Avoidance
- The Bí Cineálta Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools
- Digital Learning Framework for Primary Schools

Taken together, these circulars and frameworks ensure that St. Fergus' NS adopts a regulation-first, inclusive, universal design for learning (UDL) approach to SPHE, which places pupil wellbeing, voice, and agency at the centre of teaching and learning. This policy affirms our commitment to best practice in Irish education, ensuring alignment with Department of Education expectations, inspectorate guidance, and the ethos of our school community.

Rationale

The Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) curriculum plays a central role in supporting the holistic development and wellbeing of every pupil in St. Fergus' National School. Since the adoption of our original SPHE Policy in 2013, significant developments in national policy, curriculum frameworks, and Department of Education circulars as well as the global pandemic have placed an even greater emphasis on the integration of wellbeing, inclusion, child protection, and universal design for learning within school life.

The redrafting of this policy in September and October 2025 arises from:

- ✓ **Compliance with current requirements:** ensuring alignment with Department of Education and Youth circulars and statutory obligations, including child protection procedures, SPHE curriculum updates, and wellbeing guidance.
- ✓ **Responding to national frameworks:** embedding the vision and principles of the Primary Curriculum Framework (2023), the Wellbeing Policy Statement, The Primary School SPHE Curriculum (1999), and subsequent Departmental and Inspectorate guidance documents.
- ✓ **Inclusive practice:** reflecting best practice in supporting children with additional needs, as highlighted in NCSE resources such as *Relate* (2024), *Sensory Spaces in Schools* (2024), and *Visual Supports within an Inclusive Learning Environment* (2024).
- ✓ **Focus on pupil wellbeing and participation:** incorporating recommendations from *Looking at Our Schools* (2022), *Towards High Quality Learning Experiences for All* (Inspectorate, 2024), the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (updated 2023), and NEPS guidance on Reluctant Attendance and School Avoidance (2023).
- ✓ **Continuity and growth:** building on the strengths of our 2013 policy, while updating it to reflect new insights, legislative changes, and evolving school practices.

This rationale ensures that SPHE in St. Fergus' NS is not simply a curricular subject but a whole-school approach to supporting children's development in personal, social, and emotional wellbeing. It underscores our commitment to fostering resilience, empathy, respect, and inclusivity, and to preparing pupils for life-long learning and responsible citizenship in a rapidly changing world.

Vision and Aims

The vision of SPHE in St. Fergus' National School is firmly rooted in our Catholic ethos, where the dignity of every child is upheld, and each pupil is valued, included, and respected. We strive to nurture a caring and supportive environment that promotes self-esteem, wellbeing, resilience, and a strong sense of belonging. Guided by the principles of inclusion, universal design for learning, and national wellbeing priorities, SPHE enables all pupils to grow as confident, compassionate, and responsible members of their school and wider community.

Through SPHE, children will:

- Develop self-awareness, self-worth, and a positive sense of identity
- Build positive relationships, while fostering respect for diversity, equality, and inclusion
- Learn to understand and manage emotions, develop coping strategies, and strengthen resilience
- Recognise their rights and responsibilities within the school, community, and society

- Acquire the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that support healthy lifestyle choices and personal safety
- Cultivate empathy, kindness, and respect, while learning strategies to prevent and respond to bullying, in line with Cineáltas (2022) and Bí Cineálta (2025)

This vision ensures that SPHE is not only a curricular subject but also a whole-school practice that empowers pupils to thrive personally, socially, and academically, while reflecting the ethos and inclusive values of St. Fergus' NS.

3. SPHE Curriculum Framework

The SPHE curriculum is implemented using a two-year strand cycle, following PDST 'Making the Links'. Mandatory programmes such as Stay Safe, Walk Tall, and RSE are integrated across the strands. The Primary Curriculum Framework (2023) emphasises wellbeing as central to children's learning and development, and this informs our planning.

Strand	Year 1 (2025–2026)	Year 2 (2026–2027)
Myself	Self-identity; Taking care of my body; Growing and Changing	Safety and Protection; Making Decisions
Myself and Others	Relating to Others; My Friends and Other People	My Family; Relating to Others
Myself and the Wider World	Media Education; Developing Citizenship	Rights and Responsibilities; Environmental Care

In addition, themes of digital wellbeing, inclusion, regulation and restorative practice are embedded throughout.

4. Implementation of the SPHE Curriculum

In accordance with the Primary Curriculum Framework and the redeveloped Primary Curriculum for Ireland, SPHE, PE and Wellbeing are prioritised as core areas of learning. The curriculum is implemented through a balance of discrete SPHE provision, cross-curricular integration, and whole-school wellbeing practices, reflecting the flexible use of time now embedded within the new curriculum.

While the traditional timetable allocation of one 30-minute discrete lesson per week remains a baseline commitment, the Primary Curriculum Framework emphasises that schools may organise time more flexibly across the school year to ensure breadth, balance, and depth of learning. At St. Fergus' NS, Wellbeing is therefore delivered through:

- Discrete lessons: minimum 2 hours and 30 minutes (Jnrs - 2nd) - 3 hours weekly (3rd - 6th), allowing focused exploration of themes in a spiral and developmental way

- Cross-curricular integration: planned links with Religious Education, PE, SESE, Digital Learning, and Language to embed wellbeing and social learning across all areas
- Whole-school initiatives: wellbeing days, anti-bullying programmes, assemblies, student voice projects, and restorative practice approaches, ensuring SPHE permeates school culture

Implementation will use evidence-informed, active, and participatory methodologies that are developmentally appropriate and responsive to pupils' lived experiences. The Primary Curriculum Framework highlights the importance of wellbeing, inclusion, and universal design for learning (UDL); as such, teachers will incorporate:

- The planned use of sensory and regulation spaces (NCSE, 2025 – Sensory Spaces in Schools)
- Visual and environmental supports to scaffold participation (NCSE, 2024 – Visual Supports within an Inclusive Learning Environment)
- Regulation-first, relationship-based strategies (NCSE Relate, 2025)
- Alignment with the Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice (2023) and Anti-Bullying Procedures (2025)

This approach ensures that SPHE in St. Fergus' NS reflects the intent of the redeveloped Primary Curriculum — prioritising wellbeing, flexibility in timetabling, and pupil-centred learning experiences — while remaining consistent with Department of Education expectations and best practice in inclusive Irish primary education.

Whole School Climate and Atmosphere

The ethos and atmosphere of St. Fergus' National School provide the foundation for all SPHE learning and practice. In keeping with our Catholic ethos and the vision of the Primary Curriculum Framework, we are committed to creating a school climate where inclusion, kindness, fairness, respect, and wellbeing are embedded across every aspect of school life. This aligns with national expectations set out in the Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice, the redeveloped Primary Curriculum for Ireland, Looking at our Schools and inspectorate guidance in Towards High Quality Learning Experiences for All (2024).

At St. Fergus' NS, SPHE is supported through:

- A positive behaviour framework that is restorative in nature and aligned with Cineáltas: Action Plan on Bullying and Bí Cineálta
- The inclusive and intentional use of sensory and regulation spaces, ensuring all pupils can access learning in line with NCSE, 2024 – Sensory Spaces in Schools
- A Total Communication Approach, embedding the use of visuals and environmental supports to scaffold participation (NCSE, 2024 – Visual Supports within an Inclusive Learning Environment)
- The integration of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles into all teaching and learning to ensure equity, access, and participation for every pupil

- Active promotion of pupil voice and agency, through the Student Council, class discussions, wellbeing surveys, and whole-school initiatives, consistent with the Lundy Model of Participation and Department of Education policy on student voice

This holistic approach ensures that the ethos of St. Fergus' NS is not only lived out in daily interactions but is also explicitly aligned with Department of Education circulars, NCSE and NEPS guidance, and national curriculum priorities. In doing so, we embed SPHE as both a curricular subject and a whole-school practice, shaping a culture of care, belonging, and empowerment for all pupils.

Methodologies and Approaches

SPHE in St. Fergus' NS will be taught using active, inclusive, and evidence-informed methodologies. These approaches are designed to connect with pupils' lived experiences, ensure progression, and promote equity and inclusion.

Teaching approaches will include:

- **Active learning strategies**, such as drama, role play, co-operative games, debate, problem-solving, and project work, to engage pupils meaningfully in their learning
- **Circle time, structured dialogue, and class discussions**, fostering pupil voice, empathy, respect, and inclusion, consistent with the Lundy Model of Participation, and Preparation for Teaching and Learning Guidance
- **Stories, scenarios, case studies, digital media, and real-life contexts** to make learning authentic and developmentally appropriate, as emphasised in Department guidance on responsive teaching and planning
- **Visual and environmental supports** to aid comprehension, structure routines, and support transitions
- **Restorative practice** conversations and peer mediation to strengthen relationships and resolve conflict, in line with Bí Cineálta
- **Sensory-friendly approaches**, informed by RELATE, the Classroom Sensory Screening Tool and NCSE Sensory Spaces in Schools, ensuring regulation-first strategies and optimal engagement for all learners
- **Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles**, as set out in both the Primary Curriculum Framework and Department guidance, to ensure multiple means of engagement, representation, and expression for every pupil.
- **Wellbeing-focused methodologies**, embedding mindfulness, resilience-building exercises, and self-regulation practices

By drawing on the Preparation for Teaching and Learning Guidance, teachers at St. Fergus' NS will plan and deliver SPHE in a way that is progressive, intentional, and responsive, ensuring that learning is both coherent and inclusive while remaining fully aligned with Department of Education expectations.

Resources

A wide range of resources will be used to support the effective teaching and learning of SPHE in St. Fergus' NS. These include:

- Department of Education and NCCA-approved programmes such as Stay Safe, Walk Tall, and Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) materials, ensuring statutory content is delivered in line with national requirements
- Digital safety and wellbeing resources such as Webwise and the OIDE Wellbeing and SPHE supports, supporting pupils in developing digital literacy, online safety, and responsible use of technology
- NCSE resources including Sensory Spaces in Schools, Visual Supports within an Inclusive Learning Environment, the Classroom Sensory Screening Tool (2024), and NCSE Relate to ensure inclusive and regulation-first teaching strategies
- NEPS guidance on wellbeing, reluctant attendance, and school avoidance, which informs whole-school approaches to pupil engagement and resilience
- School-based resources, such as sensory spaces, calm corners, regulation tools, visual timetables, inclusive digital resources, and adapted learning materials, which reflect Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles in practice
- Local and community supports, including engagement with HSE health promotion officers, An Garda Síochána, and local youth services, which extend learning beyond the classroom into pupils' lived contexts

These resources are selected and used, ensuring they are age-appropriate, evidence-informed, and aligned with the needs of the pupils. The use of these resources, combined with the methodologies outlined in this policy, ensures that SPHE is taught in a way that is spiral, developmental, inclusive, and responsive, consistent with the Primary Curriculum Framework and the redeveloped Primary Curriculum.

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

Assessment in SPHE at St. Fergus' NS is formative, continuous, and developmental, focusing on the growth of pupils' skills, attitudes, values, and knowledge. It is not confined to academic outcomes but instead reflects the holistic nature of SPHE, where progress is measured in areas such as self-awareness, emotional regulation, empathy, relationships, and responsible decision-making.

In line with the Primary Curriculum Framework, the Preparation for Teaching and Learning Guidance, NCCA Assessment in the Primary School, Looking at our Schools and the Inspectorate publication Towards High Quality Learning Experiences for All, assessment in SPHE is designed to:

- Provide teachers with evidence to inform planning and responsive teaching
- Support pupils in recognising their own strengths, progress, and areas for growth

- Ensure alignment with the school’s Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice and whole-school approaches to inclusion and regulation
- Engage parents/guardians in a collaborative process of supporting pupil wellbeing both in school and at home
- A range of assessment strategies will be used, consistent with best practice in SPHE, Wellbeing, and inclusive education. These include:

<u>Assessment Tool</u>	<u>Application in SPHE</u>
Teacher Observation	Monitoring social interaction, emotional regulation, participation, empathy, conflict resolution, and resilience in daily classroom and playground contexts.
Teacher-Designed Tasks	Projects, roleplay reflections, drama activities, reflective journals, group discussions, Digital presentations, and class debates to assess understanding and application of SPHE concepts
Pupil Self-Assessment	Reflection sheets, wellbeing check-ins , peer feedback, and pupil surveys, empowering children to take ownership of their learning and wellbeing.
Portfolio Work	Collection of pupil work across SPHE themes, including artwork, written responses, digital media, and collaborative projects, showing progress over time in both knowledge and personal development.
Parental Input	Structured feedback on pupil wellbeing, social interactions, routines, and behaviour at home, supporting the partnership between school and parents in fostering resilience and positive relationships.

Assessment information will be used formatively to adapt teaching, summatively to report on progress at key stages, and holistically to support each child’s overall development. Feedback will always be constructive and developmental, consistent with restorative practice approaches, ensuring that assessment contributes positively to each child’s wellbeing and sense of belonging.

This approach ensures that assessment in SPHE is fully aligned with Department of Education and Youth expectations, is consistent with the Assessment in the Primary School Curriculum: Guidelines for Schools, and reflects the inclusive and child-centred ethos of St. Fergus’ NS.

Differentiation, Inclusion and SEN

SPHE will be accessible to all learners in St. Fergus' NS, including those in our Special Classes for Autism. Our approach is grounded in the principles of equity, inclusion, and Universal Design for Learning (UDL). Differentiation in SPHE will therefore be proactive, intentional, and responsive to the needs of all pupils.

Differentiation will be supported through:

- **Universal Design for Learning (UDL)** strategies: ensuring multiple means of engagement (choice, interest, motivation), representation (visuals, simplified language, digital supports), and expression (oral, visual, written, and creative outputs) so that every learner can access, participate, and achieve in SPHE.
- **Visual supports and communication aids** : use of visual timetables, key-word charts, social stories, communication boards, and augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) devices to scaffold participation for pupils with additional needs, particularly in our Classes for pupils with Autism.
- **Sensory spaces and regulation supports**: structured use of sensory rooms, calm corners, and regulation tools to allow pupils to manage arousal levels and re-engage with SPHE learning when ready. These spaces are integrated into planned SPHE provision as a proactive support, not just a reactive measure.
- **Co-regulation strategies** (NCSE Relate): staff will model and support co-regulation, providing relational safety and scaffolding for pupils to develop self-regulation skills over time. This includes predictable routines, safe adults, and restorative conversations as part of SPHE themes.
- **The Continuum of Support framework**: differentiation is layered to reflect universal, targeted, and individualised support. For example:
 - Universal: whole-class circle time and active learning with visual scaffolds.
 - Targeted: small-group social skills interventions, sensory breaks, or adapted stories.
 - Individualised: tailored regulation plans, individual visual supports, or one-to-one support for engagement in sensitive SPHE topics.
- **Autism-specific best practice**: SPHE lessons in our Special Classes will incorporate structured teaching approaches, social narratives, video modelling, role play for social scenarios, and the explicit teaching of social and emotional understanding. These approaches align with NCSE Autism Guidance, Department of Education expectations for special class provision, and Autism Good Practice Guidance for Schools, to support inclusive SPHE delivery.
- **Collaboration with parents and multidisciplinary teams**: recognising that differentiation in SPHE is strengthened when informed by parental input, SNA support, and professional advice (e.g., speech and language therapy, occupational therapy), ensuring consistency between home, therapy, and school contexts.

By embedding these practices, SPHE in St. Fergus' NS will not only be differentiated but also meaningful, accessible, and inclusive, enabling all pupils — regardless of ability, need, or background — to engage with, and benefit from, the holistic aims of the SPHE curriculum.

Parental Involvement

Parents are the primary educators of their children, and their active involvement is essential to the success of SPHE in St. Fergus' NS. In line with Department of Education guidance, our school seeks to foster a genuine partnership with parents, recognising that the values, skills, and attitudes developed in the home directly complement those taught at school. Parents share responsibility with the school for promoting positive relationships, resilience, empathy, and respect, and play a key role in reinforcing restorative and wellbeing approaches in daily life.

To support this partnership, St. Fergus' NS will:

- **Communicate** proactively with parents by sharing SPHE themes in advance through newsletters, the Aladdin system, and parent information sessions, ensuring transparency and opportunities for discussion.
- **Encourage** parental support in the implementation of Stay Safe, Walk Tall, and RSE lessons, reinforcing at home the messages of personal safety, healthy choices, and respectful relationships.
- **Provide** resources and guidance on school avoidance and attendance, informed by NEPS Guidance on Reluctant Attendance and School Avoidance (2023), so that parents can support their child's consistent engagement with school.
- **Involve** parents in whole-school wellbeing and anti-bullying initiatives, such as Intercultural Week, recognising the role of the home in modelling empathy, kindness, and respect.
- **Promote** restorative practice approaches by encouraging parents to use restorative conversations at home, mirroring the strategies used in school, so that children experience consistency in conflict resolution, accountability, and relationship repair.

By engaging parents as partners in these ways, SPHE becomes a shared responsibility, ensuring that pupils receive consistent messages of wellbeing, inclusion, and respect across both home and school settings.

Cross-Curricular Links

SPHE is not confined to a weekly lesson but is interwoven across the entire curriculum in St. Fergus' NS. By linking with other subject areas and with whole-school initiatives, SPHE themes become meaningful, practical, and relevant to pupils' everyday lives.

- **Physical Education (PE):** SPHE themes such as cooperation, teamwork, fair play, resilience, and healthy lifestyle choices are naturally developed in PE. Pupils learn about physical wellbeing, the importance of exercise, nutrition, and safe participation in physical activities.
- **Religious Education (RE):** Our Catholic ethos provides opportunities to connect SPHE with values of respect, compassion, empathy, care for creation, and social justice. RE lessons reinforce themes of belonging, moral decision-making, and living out the Gospel message in everyday life.

- **SESE (History, Geography, Science):** SPHE links with environmental care, sustainability, cultural awareness, and the exploration of human rights. For example, geography lessons on climate change link with wellbeing and responsible citizenship, while history provides opportunities to reflect on identity, justice, and fairness across societies.
- **Digital Learning:** Webwise resources, OIDE supports, and school-based digital programmes provide explicit connections between SPHE and digital citizenship. Pupils learn about online safety, respectful communication, cyber-bullying prevention, and the impact of digital technology on wellbeing.
- **Wellbeing SSE Plan:** Whole-school actions in our Wellbeing SSE cycle reinforce SPHE priorities, including restorative practice, anti-bullying strategies (Cineáltas, 2022; BÍ Cineálta, 2025), student voice, and mindfulness.

Beyond the classroom, the most important link of all is to real life. SPHE equips pupils with the skills they need to:

- Build and sustain positive friendships and family relationships
- Manage emotions and challenges in daily life with resilience
- Resolve conflicts respectfully through restorative practice
- Make responsible decisions about health, safety, and digital engagement
- Contribute positively to their community through inclusion, respect, and active citizenship

By embedding SPHE across subjects and in the lived experiences of pupils, St. Fergus' NS ensures that SPHE is not only an academic subject but a lifelong toolkit that prepares children to navigate the opportunities and challenges of the modern world.

Policy Linkages

This SPHE policy links with:

- RSE Policy
- Anti-Bullying
- Code of Behaviour
- Child Safeguarding Statement
- Attendance Policy
- Acceptable Use Policy
- Wellbeing Policy
- Wellbeing SSE Plan

Implementation, Monitoring and Review

This SPHE Policy will come into effect from January 2026. Its implementation is the shared responsibility of all staff members, under the guidance of school leadership and the Board of Management. Teachers will integrate its principles into daily classroom practice, while

Special Needs Assistants (SNAs), ancillary staff, and support personnel will contribute to promoting the inclusive and caring school environment that underpins SPHE.

The Principal and In-School Management Team will oversee the consistent implementation of the policy, ensuring that it is aligned with Department of Education requirements, the Primary Curriculum Framework and national guidance

Monitoring will include:

- Regular review of planning and classroom practice in SPHE
- Gathering feedback from pupils, staff, and parents on the effectiveness of SPHE provision
- Reviewing resources and methodologies to ensure alignment with best practice and inclusion guidelines (e.g., NCSE and NEPS supports)
- Ensuring that SPHE themes are visible not only in discrete lessons but also across the wider curriculum and in whole-school initiatives

The policy will undergo a formal review every three years, or sooner if required due to curriculum changes, updated Department circulars, or emerging school needs. The review process will be collaborative and consultative, involving:

- Staff: through structured discussion, feedback, and review of classroom practice
- Parents: via surveys, information evenings, newsletters, and consultation with the Parents' Council
- Pupils: through class discussions, the Student Council, and wellbeing surveys, ensuring pupil voice is central in line with the Lundy Model of Participation
- Board of Management: through formal review and ratification of the updated policy

Outcomes from each review will be documented, with clear recommendations and action points feeding into the school's School Self-Evaluation (SSE) process, particularly within the area of Wellbeing.

This systematic cycle of implementation, monitoring, and review ensures that SPHE in St. Fergus' NS remains a living policy, responsive to the evolving needs of pupils and staff, reflective of national and international best practice, and firmly embedded in the daily life and ethos of the school.

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management of St. Fergus NS on _____.

It will be reviewed in 2029 or sooner if deemed necessary.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

CHAIRPERSON

Appendix 1: Two-Year Strand Planning Table

This two-year cycle is designed to ensure that all SPHE strands and strand units are taught in a spiral and developmental manner, consistent with the Primary Curriculum Framework, the redeveloped Primary Curriculum for Ireland and Department of Education guidance. Content is revisited at increasing levels of complexity, adapted for the needs of each class group, including mainstream and special class settings.

Strand Overview

Myself: Developing self-identity, self-esteem, wellbeing, safety, and health awareness

Myself and Others: Building positive relationships, communication, empathy, and respect

Myself and the Wider World: Exploring citizenship, community, sustainability, and digital responsibility

Two-Year Strand Planning Cycle

Strand	Strand Unit	Year 1 - Focus	Year 2 Focus	Cross Curricular/Whole School Links
Myself	Self Identity & Wellbeing	Self-awareness, belonging, feelings, resilience, personal safety	Growth mindset, managing change, self-regulation, recognising strengths	PE (resilience, teamwork), RE (values), Wellbeing SSE, sensory & regulation spaces
	Taking Care of My Body	Healthy eating, hygiene, exercise, sleep routines	Puberty (senior classes), lifestyle choices, safety around medicines/substances	PE (healthy lifestyles), Science (body & health), Stay Safe
	Growing & Changing	Friendship, change and transition, personal safety	Puberty, relationships, decision-making	Walk Tall, RSE, Stay Safe, Circle Time
Myself and Others	Myself & My Family	Family roles, respect, and belonging	Diversity in family structures, equality, empathy	Religion (respect & inclusion), History (family & society), Bí Cineálta initiatives

	My Friends & Other People	Friendship skills, communication, kindness, conflict resolution	Restorative practice, peer mediation, online friendships	Webwise, Student Council, Circle Time
	Relating to Others	Listening, cooperation, empathy, inclusion	Anti-bullying strategies, restorative dialogue, respectful relationships	Bí Cineálta
Myself and the Wider World	Developing Citizenship	Rules, fairness, responsibility, active citizenship	Rights & responsibilities, diversity, sustainability, global citizenship	SESE (environment, history), Green Schools, Active Schools, Student Council
	Media Education	Recognising media influence, digital safety, advertisements	Responsible digital use, cyber-bullying, critical thinking	Webwise, Digital Learning Framework, PDST supports
	Environmental Care	Care for school and local environment, sustainability practices	Climate change, sustainable lifestyles, global responsibility	SESE (Science/Geography), Green Schools, Wellbeing SSE

Notes for Implementation

This plan is flexible and may be adapted to reflect emerging needs, national priorities, or Department circulars.

Content should be taught using UDL principles, with differentiation for pupils in special classes (Autism) and mainstream.

Cross-curricular and whole-school initiatives (e.g., Friendship Week, Wellbeing Days, Cineáltas, Green Schools) reinforce SPHE themes in lived school experience.

Teachers should reference Stay Safe, Walk Tall, RSE resources, Webwise, PDST supports, NCSE guidance, and NEPS frameworks when delivering specific units.

Appendix 2 – Assessment Schedule for SPHE

Assessment in SPHE is formative, continuous, and reflective of pupil progress in skills, attitudes, values, and knowledge. The following schedule sets out the strategies, timings, and responsibilities for assessment across the school year.

Assessment Tool	Frequency	Application in SPHE	Responsibility	Documentation / Records
Teacher Observation	Ongoing – daily / weekly	Monitoring social interaction, emotional regulation, participation, resilience, and empathy in classroom and playground contexts.	All class teachers / SETs	Teacher notes, Cuntas Míosúil, observation checklists
Teacher-Designed Tasks	Termly or at end of unit	Projects, reflective journals, role play reflections, digital presentations, and class debates used to assess understanding and application of SPHE themes	Class teachers	Samples of pupil work, digital submissions, teacher records
Pupil Self-Assessment	At least once per half-term	Reflection sheets, traffic-light check-ins, mood meters, wellbeing surveys, and pupil journals to build ownership of learning.	Pupils (supported by teachers)	Pupil reflection sheets, survey results, inclusion in portfolios
Portfolio Work	Ongoing	Collection of	Pupils and class	SPHE folder /

	reviewed termly	pupil work across SPHE strands, including artwork, writing, digital projects, and group tasks.	teachers	copy/portfolio for each pupil
Parental Input	Twice annually (parent meetings & reports)	Structured feedback on pupil wellbeing, social interactions, routines, and behaviour at home, ensuring consistency between home and school.	Parents, Class teachers	Parent-teacher meeting notes, school reports, Aladdin records
Whole-School Wellbeing Reviews	Annually (SSE cycle)	Surveys of pupils, staff, and parents to monitor effectiveness of wellbeing/SPHE provision and restorative practices.	Principal, Leadership Team, Student Council	SSE Wellbeing reports, analysed survey data
Standardised Pupil Voice	Every 2–3 years as per SSE cycle	Student Council feedback, class discussions, and wellbeing surveys to inform review of SPHE and Wellbeing SSE plan.	Student Council, Principal, SSE Coordinator	SSE documentation, Student Council minutes

Notes on Implementation

Assessment in SPHE is child-centred and developmentally appropriate, with emphasis on reflection, participation, and wellbeing rather than solely academic outcomes.

Assessment data feeds into Cuntas Míosúil, teacher planning, parent-teacher meetings, and the School Self-Evaluation (SSE) process in Wellbeing.

Teachers should differentiate assessment in line with the Continuum of Support, ensuring that pupils with additional needs, including those in Autism Classes, are supported appropriately.