

# **Social Personal and Health Education Policy**

## **Mission Statement:**

*We seek to promote a caring and committed school community which will facilitate the education of our students and where each individual is valued as a unique human being.*

*“Is ar scáth a chéile a mhairimid”*

### **(a) School Background**

*Name and address of school: Borrisokane Community College  
Borrisokane*

*Description of School: Borrisokane Community College is a co-educational School under the management of North Tipperary ETB.*

*Mission Statement of School: We seek to promote a caring and committed school community which will facilitate the education of our students and where each individual is valued as a unique human being.*

### **(b) Definition of S.P.H.E.**

*S.P.H.E. 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.*

*SPHE provides learning opportunities and experiences which help students’ social, moral, cultural and personal development. It helps students grow and develop as individual people, and in their relationship to others as a family member, friend or citizen.*

#### *Aims of S.P.H.E.*

- *To enable students to develop skills for self-fulfillment and living in communities*
- *To promote self-esteem and self-confidence*
- *To enable students to develop a framework for responsible decision making*
- *To provide opportunities for reflection and discussion*
- *To promote physical, mental and emotional health and well-being*

*These aims are consistent with the mission statement of Borrisokane Community College 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 curriculum for S.P.H.E. is presented in ten modules, each of which appears in each year of the three year junior cycle as outlined in Appendix A and A1. The emphasis will be on developing skills, understanding, attitudes and values important to these areas.*

*The ten modules are*

- *Belonging and Integrating*
- *Self-management-a sense of purpose*
- *Communication Skills*

- *Physical health*
- *Friendship*
- *Relationships and Sexuality*
- *Emotional Health*
- *Influences and decisions*
- *Substance Use*
- *Personal Safety*

A First Year Transition Programme called Plain Sailing is incorporated into the First Year SPHE Programme.

*SPHE is delivered in the TY programme.*

*The Department of Education and Skills recognises that each school has flexibility within this framework to plan the S.P.H.E. programme in harmony with the students' needs and the school's resources*

*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 centered and appropriate to the age and stage of development of the student. A team approach is implemented in the planning and delivery of the programme. Folders are compiled of resources for all year groups which are shared. Additional resources are available in an SPHE lockers and SharePoint, an electronic storage of resources.*

The class atmosphere must be one of respect for the privacy of the individual, student and teacher, and hallmarked by sensitivity and care. S.P.H.E. is allocated one class period per week for 1<sup>st</sup> years before Christmas and two periods after Christmas. One class is allocated for 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> years, two class periods for transition years and is offered in 5<sup>th</sup> year and 6<sup>th</sup> year. S.P.H.E is always taught in the context of the mission statement of the school.

(d) ***Whole school commitment to the holistic development of students.***

Borrisokane Community College 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. S.P.H.E. is seen as building on this.

(e) ***Responding to student anxieties***

Friends for Life Programme is a school-based positive mental health programme. Each programme is similar in theoretical principles. However, each programme is age appropriate and had additional techniques for each stage of development. The programme we deliver is “My Friends Youth; skills for life” with first year students and “Ways to Well-being” with Transition Year students. The programme helps students to develop effective strategies to deal with worry, stress and change and to teach the skills required to reduce anxiety and promote resilience. It is beneficial for all students, irrespective of their anxiety level.

(f) ***Staff development, training and resource issues.***

School Management will encourage and facilitate teachers to attend relevant in service and training for the continued development of the SPHE programme in Borrisokane Community College As is the practice S.P.H.E. will have a budgetary allocation in line with its strategies of development, its teaching methodologies and time-tabled allocation.

(g) ***Participation, sensitive issues, confidentiality and referral.***

S.P.H.E. is a core curricular subject on the junior cycle curriculum and in transition year. It is also included in the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> year in the Religion programme and SPHE class. Relationships and Sexuality Education(R.S.E.) is one module of the programme. Each parent has the right to withdraw their child from some or all R.S.E. classes but are encouraged to provide alternative R.S.E. at home. It will be necessary for parents of any student opting out of R.S.E. to contact the school principal prior to the beginning of delivering the programme.

Where students are withdrawn from R.S.E. 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.

While an atmosphere of trust is a pre-requisite of S.P.H.E. class, the following limits of confidentiality must always be observed. The limits are outlined in Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children and DES Child Protection Procedures.

- Child Abuse- physical, emotional, sexual and neglect
- Intention to harm self or others
- Substance Use
- Underage sexual intercourse

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.

While it is acknowledged that teachers have a professional responsibility to impart the S.P.H.E. 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 the school. As far as possible this should be done in negotiation with the student. The teacher may inform the class of external support services relevant to the subject matter. This should be done within the context of the school ethos. SPHE teachers, where in doubt as to a certain course of action, are encouraged to discuss the issue with a relevant member of staff. Information revealed about a student should be on a need to know basis.

(h) ***The Role of Visitors.***

Visiting speakers are seen as complimenting and supporting the S.P.H.E. programme in the school. Teachers inviting speakers must:

1. Inform the principal in advance
2. Make the speaker aware of the ethos and S.P.H.E. policy of the school
3. Agree the content of the presentation in advance
4. Do preparatory and follow up where possible
5. Where possible a teacher ideally the SPHE teacher will remain with the class group during the visit.

(I) ***How parents and students will be informed.***

Present Junior and Senior cycle students will be informed of the policy through their SPHE class. All full and complete syllabus, core resource materials and policy documents will be available in the school and on SharePoint if parents/guardians wish to view them. Parents are informed through the student's journal prior to the teaching of the RSE programme.

(j) ***How staff will be informed***

This policy will be available for all staff in the school by its inclusion with the Policy Documents and on SharePoint.

(k) ***How the S.P.H.E. programme and policy will be reviewed and evaluated.***

The S.P.H.E. programme and policy will be reviewed and evaluated every year or as appropriate by members of the S.P.H.E. team. The S.P.H.E. policy will be reviewed in line with the schools' programme of School Development Planning.

(l) **Wellbeing**

The Junior Cycle provides for a new area of learning called Wellbeing. It will include learning opportunities to enhance the physical, mental, emotional and social wellbeing of students. S.P.H.E gives students the opportunities to learn about health and wellbeing through group work. S.P.H.E aims to promote positive self-esteem and the physical, social, emotional and spiritual wellbeing of a student. It will develop their ability to develop and maintain good relationships. Students will develop many skills including self-management, communication, coping and problem solving skill. RSE is an integral part of SPHE and Wellbeing.

Schools are required to teach 70 hours of SPHE across three years as part of Wellbeing. Also they are required to teach RSE as part of SPHE in each year.

Ratified by the Board of Management on 27<sup>th</sup> April 2006. Effective from Sept 2006.  
Reviewed May 2013 and June 2017

## Appendix A

<b>Module</b>	<b>Year One</b>	<b>Year Two</b>	<b>Year Three</b>
Belonging and Integrating	Coping with Change. Joining a new group. Appreciating Difference. Bullying is everyone's business. Coping with Loss	Looking back, Looking Forward Group work. Family ties.	Goal Setting for Third Year. Contract.
Self Management	Organising Myself. Organising my work at home and at school. Balance in my life.	What motivates me? Study Skills.	Organising my time. Planning for effective study. Coping with examinations.
Communication Skills	Express yourself Learn to listen. Passive, Assertive and aggressive communications.	Assertive Communications.	Learning to communicate. Communication in situations of conflict.
Physical Health	Body Care. Healthy Eating. Exercise.	Body Care. Feeling Unwell.	Physical Exercise. Relaxation. Diet..
Friendship	Making New Friends. A Good Friend.	The Changing Nature of Friendship.	Boyfriends and Girlfriends.
Emotional Health	Recognising Feelings. Respecting my Feelings and the Feelings of Others.	Self Confidence. Body Image.	Stress. Feelings and Moods.
Influences and Decisions	My Heroes.	Positive and Negative Influences. Making Decisions.	Making a good Decision.
Substance Use	Why use drugs? Alcohol: the facts. Smoking and its effects. Smoking: Why? Why not?	The effects of drugs. Alcohol and its effects. Alcohol? Why?, Why not? Cannabis and its effects. Cannabis: Why?, Why not?	Ecstasy: the realities. Heroin: the realities.
Personal Safety	Looking after myself.  Internet Safety	Accidents at home, school and farm/water. Feeling threatened. Internet Safety	Recognising unsafe situations. Violence. Help Agencies. Internet Safety

The Department of Education & Skills recognises that each school has the flexibility within this framework to plan the S.P.H.E. Programme most suitable for the student's needs and the school's resources.

## Appendix A

### **R.S.E. 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 marriage as a loving commitment
- Understanding of marriage in various cultures
- Deeper awareness of the importance of family life

## Appendix B

### Transition Year Programme

<b>Title of Subject or Module:</b> Social Personal and Health Education – Mental Health Matters
<b>Approximate Duration of Module:</b> 2 periods (35 mins) over eight weeks or 1 period over 16 weeks.
<b>Aim:</b> That students develop an understanding of Mental Health and Mental Ill-Health.
<b>Objectives/Desired Learning Outcomes:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• That students can distinguish between physical and mental health</li><li>• That students are aware of factors contributing to mental ill-health</li><li>• That students investigate and discuss various Mental Health Case Studies</li><li>• That students understand types of treatments and how to access them</li><li>• That students are aware of ways to protect Mental Health.</li></ul>
<b>Teaching and Learning Strategies:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Worksheets</li><li>• Discussion</li><li>• Video</li><li>• Group Work</li><li>• Pair Work</li><li>• Formal input by teacher</li><li>• Mind gym activities</li></ul>
<b>Content:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Physical and Mental Health</li><li>• Mental Ill-Health and Contributory Factors</li><li>• Qualities of a Mentally Healthy Person</li><li>• Mental Illness</li><li>• Treatment and Care</li><li>• Mental Health and You</li></ul>
<b>Assessment:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 5 Credits awarded<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ 3 credits for participation</li><li>▪ 2 credits for portfolio – diary format</li></ul></li></ul>
<b>Resources:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mental Health Awareness Pack</li><li>• Mental Health Video</li></ul>
<b>Links with other Subjects:</b> Science – linked with adrenaline usage Link with Home Economics – fitness and diet P.E. – Exercising to prevent Mental Illness
<b>Evaluation:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Discussion with students during and at the end of module</li><li>• Diary/Journal Feedback.</li></ul>



## Appendix C

Provision for holistic development of students in Borrisokane Community College (formal and informal).

- Teachers
- Chaplain
- Students Council
- Cairdre
- Prefects
- Rainbows
- R.S.E. Programme
- S.P.H.E. Programme
- Morning Notes
- Class Tutors
- Year Heads
- Journal
- Career Guidance Counselor
- Awards Ceremony
- Co-curricular activities
- Christmas Concert
- First and Sixth year Retreat
- Peer Education
- Employers – Work Experience
- Bus Shelter
- Canteen
- Walkway
- Community Education Prog.
- Programmes to suit all levels
- Parent Teacher Meetings
- Induction Evening
- Assessments
- Enrolment
- Open Night
- Intercom
- Visits to Primary Schools
- Check and Connect
- Homework Club
- Credits System
- Parenting Programme
- CPR Training for Students
- Behavioural Support
- Debates
- Principal & Deputy Principal
- Oratory
- Friends
- Extra Curricular Activities
- Parent’s Association
- Supervised Study
- Resource/Learning Support Teachers
- School Policies
- Talks – outside speakers
- School Tours
- Youth Group
- Mass & Services
- Religion Classes
- School Meal Vouchers
- School web site
- Book Scheme
- Coaching Skills training
- Positive Comments in Journal
- Special Needs Assistants
- Mentoring
- Team Teaching
- Cultural Activities
- Mixed Ability Teaching
- Study Skills Course
- Information Nights for Parents
- Leaving Certificate Applied
- LCVP
- School Magazine
- Local Paper Notes
- Parents Information Evenings
- Music
- Progress reports to Leaving Cert. students and parents
- TV Display in canteen
- Professional Counselling Support
- Friends for Life

## Appendix D

### **Friends for Life Programme**

The 'Friends for Life' programme is a school-based positive mental health programme. The programmes we deliver is "My Friends Youth" (12-16 years) with first year students.

The World Health Organisation cites 'FRIENDS for Life' as the only evidence-based programme effective at all levels of intervention for anxiety in children (WHO 2004).

Borrisokane Community College was involved in a pilot programme in 2011/2012 with the National Behaviour Support Service. All first years were tested, a group of 8 students were found to have anxiety levels. The programme was delivered once a week over ten weeks by two teachers for a double period. Two booster sessions were delivered in September of the following year. Another first year class had the programme delivered, again by two teachers over the 10 weeks. They also got 2 booster sessions. The students with high anxiety levels were tested again and their levels had dropped significantly after implementing the programme.

There are three main components in 'Friends for Life' based on CBT principles; (1) Learning/Behaviour, (2) Cognitive and (3) Physiological. The Learning/Behaviour component involves helping children and adolescents to problem solve, use coping skills, expose themselves gradually to feared situations, reward themselves for brave behaviour and to identify positive role models and support networks. The Cognitive component involves helping children and adolescents to use positive self-talk (green thoughts), challenge negative self-talk (red thoughts), evaluate themselves realistically and reward themselves. The Physiological component involves teaching children and adolescents to be aware of their body clues, to use relaxation techniques and to self-regulate.

The word 'FRIENDS for Life' is an acronym that helps children and adolescents to remember the coping steps to follow; F-Feeling Worried?, R-Relax and feel good, I – I can do it!, E-Explore solutions and coping step plans, N- Now reward yourself, D – Don't forget to practice and S- Stay cool!

Three teachers were trained in 2011 and they received three days training. Three teachers were trained in 2012 and they received two days training. The programme is delivered by two teachers to ensure that students receive the relevant attention to support their anxieties and fears. The groups meet once per week. Every student has a workbook which is kept in school and if written homework is required it is photocopied. Homework must be completed each week, family time together, healthy eating, going for a walk and relaxation.

A certificates and awards event is held at the end of the programme with refreshments provided.