

S.P.H.E.

SPHE plays a vital role in the education of students at St Conleths Community College. The SPHE department aims to promote all round student wellbeing, giving students the tools to develop into a mentally and physically healthy person who is informed, responsible and self-confident.

At junior level each class group in each year has one 40 minute class of SPHE per week. Throughout the three years of the Junior Cycle similar subjects are addressed and revisited each year in more depth according to the students' level of maturity. A Scheme of Work suitable for each year group is compiled by the SPHE teachers at the beginning of each school year. Modules covered in the Junior Cycle include:

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

At senior cycle SPHE is timetabled for one period per week for Transition Year and 5th Year students. RSE is covered within this timeframe. This structure allows for more personal and intimate discussion due to smaller groups and an opportunity for the SPHE teacher and students to develop a relationship more in keeping with the sensitive nature of the topics. 6th years are timetabled for one SPHE class per week for the whole year.

Our SPHE teaching methodologies at both junior and senior level include:

- Class Discussion
- Icebreaking and Role-playing Games
- Analysing and reacting to Case Studies
- Artwork, campaign posters etc.
- Brainstorms
- Project Work

RSE Programme:

Society today leaves children exposed to increasing influences particularly where sex and sexuality are concerned. Over the past decade we have witnessed the media deliver information on sex and sexuality that indirectly promotes and perhaps encourages behaviour that can often compromise young peoples' self-esteem, morals and core values. The RSE programme aims to deliver age-appropriate and practical information that encourages students to rise above the pressure and expectations of their peers and society. It informs students of the practical/physical and emotional/moral elements of the subject, empowering them to make healthy and correct decisions that impact on their lives in a positive and affirming way.

Junior Cycle

The SPHE Syllabus is presented in ten modules, three of which are closely related to Relationship and Sexuality Education. The themes of RSE, as per Department of Education SPHE Curriculum Junior Cycle are incorporated into this schedule. (See www.sphe.ie)

The RSE topics are:

- Me as unique and different
- Friendship
- Changes at adolescence
- Reproductive System
- Images of Male and Female
- Respecting myself and others

Senior Cycle

The three themes of RSE, as per Department of Education Senior Cycle SPHE Curriculum Framework are incorporated into this schedule. (See www.sphe.ie)

The three themes of RSE are:

- Human Relationships
- Human Sexuality
- Human Growth and Development

Confidentiality

The nature of the SPHE class often leads to discussion on various sensitive topics and students are informed that should they need to speak to a teacher about anything that comes up in class they may approach the SPHE teacher if they feel comfortable doing so. However, students are informed that should the teacher feel that the student or students in question are at risk, that they are obliged to report the situation to the DLP – Designated Liaison Person, to ensure the safety and welfare of the student or students in question.

Our Resources

We have a resource press that contains all of the relevant, up to date and age appropriate department material recommended for use in teaching. SPHE resources are updated and managed by the dept. head and are available for use to all SPHE teachers. These resources include text books, leaflets, posters and DVD's. We are currently using the Minding Me 1, 2, 3, set of textbooks at Junior Level.. All of our SPHE teachers receive the most up to date in-service training when available from the SPHE support service. Courses are run annually and are available to teachers as needed to enable them to teach SPHE using the most current and effective methods.