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| **Merlin Woods Primary School Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) Whole School Plan** |
| * **Introductory Statement and Rationale**
1. **Introductory Statement**

The staff of Merlin Woods Primary School formulated this school plan for SPHE, in November 2011.SPHE is a shared responsibility between community, home and school, and parent contributions and involvement will be essential to the effective implementation of the SPHE programme in the school. This plan was drafted in February 2011 during an in-school training day, with the assistance of a local cuiditheoir from the Professional Development Service for Teachers and ratified by the B.O.M in January 2015.The plan was reviewed by the SPHE policy committee and an advisor for the PDST in October 2014.1. **Rationale**

Aspects of SPHE are taught through various programmes and initiatives such as Stay Safe, Walk Tall, Relationships and Sexuality Education and through our involvement in the Galway City Health Initiative. It has also been taught through integration with other subject areas such as Physical Education, Religion, Geography, etc.  |
| * **Vision and Aims**
1. **Vision:**

The vision and mission statement of our school is centred around integrated links of **Commitment, Community and Collaboration**, as outlined further in the front of our Plean Scoile. 1. **Aims:**

The children of Merlin Woods Primary School should be enabled to achieve the aims outlined in the SPHE curriculum, which include:* + to promote the personal development and well-being of the child
	+ to foster in the child a sense of care and respect for himself/herself and others and an appreciation of the dignity of every human being
	+ to promote the health of the child and provide a foundation for healthy living in all its aspects
	+ to enable the child to make informed decisions and choices about the social, personal and health dimensions of life both now and in the future
	+ To develop in the child a sense of social responsibility, a commitment to active and participative citizenship and an appreciation of the democratic way of life
	+ to enable the child to respect human and cultural diversity and to appreciate and understand the interdependent nature of the world

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| * **Content of Plan**

**Curriculum:**1. ***Strands and Strand Units:***

The curriculum is divided into three strands: Myself, Myself and others, and Myself and the wider world, each of which are divided into strand units. At the moment we are teaching these to infant and 4th class level and, as the school develops, we will teach to all class levels. Merlin Woods Primary School will teach five strand units each year, selected from each of the three strands. This ensures that the child will receive a comprehensive programme in SPHE over a two year period. Merlin Woods Primary School have created this timetable to reflect this approach:

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| **Strands** |  **Strand Units (Year 1 2014-2015)** | **Strand Units (Year 2 2015-2016)** |
| **Myself** | *Self-identity (Sept.–Oct.)* |  |
|  | *Safety and Protection (Jan-Feb)* |  |
|  |  | *Growing and Changing (Jan-Feb)* |
|  |  | *Taking care of my body (Mar-April))* |
|  | *Making decisions (3rd to 6th class) (Mar-Apr.)**(Safety and Protection – revision – Inf-II)* |  |
| **Myself and others** | *Myself and My Family (Nov.-Dec.)* |  |
|  |  | *My friends and other people (Nov-Dec)* |
|  |  | *Relating to others (Sept.-Oct.)* |
| **Myself and the wider world** |  | *Developing Citizenship (May-June)* |
|  | *Media Education (May-June)* |  |

1. ***Contexts for SPHE:***

**SPHE will be taught in Merlin Woods Primary School through a combination of the following three contexts:**1. **Positive School Climate and Atmosphere**

Merlin Woods Primary School has created a positive atmosphere by: * building effective communication, eg School booklet with policies, colourful fun termly newsletters, regular notes and texts home, principal being “visible” in the morning and home time.
* catering for individual needs, eg meeting with parents of children with different needs, setting differentiated homework, team teaching, inclass support and withdrawal, including a “challenge group” for stronger pupils.
* creating a health-promoting physical environment, eg bringing out PE equipment regularly for yard play time, regular reminders for pupils to wash their hands after using the toilet.
* developing democratic processes, eg making decisions with parents, such as Christmas celebrations, and with pupils, such as Golden Time
* enhancing self-esteem, eg taking photographs of school events and class teaching and learning, and displaying these across the school
* fostering respect for diversity, eg inviting parents of different nationalities in to talk to pupils, allowing children to speak in their first language
* fostering inclusive and respectful language, eg using positive language in class rules, “Positivity Day”
* developing appropriate communication, eg developing listener/speaker skills and group work in Aistear
* developing a school approach to assessment, eg using the Primary School Assessment Kit, regular Assessment *for* Learning.
1. **Discrete time for SPHE**

SPHE is allocated ½ hour per week on each teacher’s timetable in Merlin Woods Primary School. However on occasion, teachers may block more SPHE time to develop themes in more detail, such as Positivity Day, Friendship Week, Healthy Eating Week, Agri-Awareness, Healthy Heart Week, Lenten Campaign, etc. As the class levels progress, teachers of the middle to senior classes may also allocate 1 hour per fortnight to allow for more indepth exploration of a strand unit.1. **Integration with other subject areas and Linkage within SPHE**

Teachers will endeavour to adopt an thematic approach to SPHE by integrating it with other subject areas such as Language, Geography (My local area and Community), History, Religion, Visual Arts, Physical Education, etc, for example using the Big Book “Where’s my Teddy, Freddy?” to explore feelings and emotions. 1. ***Approaches and Methodologies:***

Merlin Woods Primary School believes that the approaches and methodologies used in SPHE are crucial to the effectiveness of the programme. Active learning is the principal learning and teaching approach recommended for SPHE, therefore we will endeavour to teach SPHE using a variety of strategies which include:* drama activities
* co-operative games
* use of pictures
* photographs and visual images
* written activities
* use of media
* information technologies and looking at children’s work

**Teachers may access resources for each methodology in folders on the school computer and in the staff room.**1. ***Assessment:***

Assessment is a central part of the everyday learning and teaching process in SPHE. It can provide valuable information on the child’s progress and on the effectiveness and suitability of the programme and the teaching methods being used.We use the following recommended informal tools for assessment in SPHE:* *Teacher observation, eg jotting observations down on post-its during Aistear play sessions, Teachers may use the list on pg 73 of the SPHE Curriculum.*
* *Teacher-designed tasks and tests*
* *Portfolios and projects, eg pupils each have their own scrap book to gather samples of work.*
* *Pupil Self Assessment, eg Two Stars and a Wish, Traffic Light System*
* *Pupil Teacher Conferencing*, cf National Assessment Guidelines, pg 24

See our School Assessment Policy for further details.1. ***Children with Different Needs:***

Teachers will endeavour to adapt and modify activities and methodologies in SPHE to encourage participation by children with special needs. The learning support and resource teachers will supplement the work of the class teachers where necessary. Merlin Woods Primary School will liaise with trained professionals/appropriate agencies when dealing with sensitive issues such as bereavement or loss to ensure that the children involved are fully supported (eg HSE, Barnardos).1. ***Equality of Participation and Access:***

Merlin Woods Primary School recognises and values diversity, and believes all children are entitled to access the services, facilities, or amenities that are available in the school environment. Ours is a mixed-sex school and we endeavour to challenge traditional stereotypes and ensure that equal opportunities are given to boys and girls to participate in discussion, debate, presentation, etc. Merlin Woods Primary School is under Roman Catholic school management, and we endeavour to provide for ALL members of the local community.**Organisation:**1. ***Policies and Programmes that support SPHE:***
	1. ***Policies/Programmes:***

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| * Code of Behaviour
* Enrolment Policy
* Health and Safety Policy
 | * Anti-bullying Policy
* Healthy Eating Suggestions
* Other Policies …
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* 1. ***Substance Use Policy:***

See Substance Use Policy* 1. ***Relationships and Sexuality Education:***

See Relationships and Sexuality Education Policy * 1. ***Child Protection:***

See Child Protection Policy1. ***Homework:***

SPHE homework, if prescribed in SPHE, will reflect the active learning approach and will reinforce information already taught during class. 1. ***Resources:***
	1. ***Programmes and Other Materials:***

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| * Stay Safe resource pack
* RSE packs
* Walk Tall packs
* “School Works” and photo pack
* “Working Together for Positive Behaviour”
* Webwise – internet safety
* Emotion colour cards
* Bí Folláin-media ed.
* Busy Bodies
* Making the links
 | * “Active Learning: 101 Strategies to Teach any subject”
* “Spraoi le chéile”
* Busy Breaks - Irish Heart Foundation
* Action for Life – Irish Heart Foundation
* Aistear manual
* School photographs
* Amnesty and Trócaire packs-developing citizenship
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* 1. ***Guest Speakers:***

When a guest speaker addresses the children in SPHE, the class teacher will remain in the classroom and make the speaker aware of this school plan and attached policies where relevant. Samples of guest spreakers: Gardaí, doctors, parents from other countries talking about their culture. 1. ***Individual Teachers’ Planning and Reporting:***

This plan in SPHE and the curriculum documents will inform and guide teachers in their long and short term planning in SPHE. “Making the Links” will be used by all staff in their planning. Each teacher will keep a Cuntas Míosúil and this will inform our progress and needs when evaluating and reviewing our progress in SPHE.1. ***Staff Development:***

The staff have attended training in the following areas when offered and this training will support an effective implementation of the SPHE programme:* *training in the Child Abuse Prevention Programme/ Stay Safe*
* *training in Incredible Years*
* *training in the Substance Misuse programme*
* *training in the Relationships and Sexuality Education programme /R.S.E.*
* *training in Circle work*
* *Aistear*
* *training in teaching methodologies, eg Using Puppets in the Infant Classroom*

Teachers are encouraged to attend SPHE-related courses and will share information/skills acquired at these courses with other members of staff during staff meetings or Croke Park Hour Professional Development workshops.1. ***Parental Involvement:***

Parental involvement is considered an integral part to effectively implementing SPHE as SPHE is a shared responsibilty. This plan and the curriculum documents are available for parents to inform them of the programme for SPHE, and they are welcomed as committee members on the Relationships and Sexuality Education Policy and Substance Use Policy. 1. ***Community Links:***

Merlin Woods Primary School believes that the local community has a very important role to play in supporting the programme in SPHE and endeavour to liasise with the members such as the Dental Hygienist, Health Nurse, Fireman, Vet, New Parent, etc. |
| * **Success Criteria**

The success of this plan will be evaluated through teacher’s planning and preparation, and if the procedures outlined in this plan have been consistently followed. We will also judge its success if the children have been enabled to achieve the aims outlined in this plan.Things we will look for1. The happy, healthy atmosphere in the school
2. The quality of interactions pupil/teacher, pupil/pupil, teacher/teacher, home/school
3. A positive change in certaian attitudes and behaviours, eg recycling
4. The type of language used and how it is used
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| * **Implementation**
1. **Roles and Responsibilities:**

Merlin Woods Primary School believes that the school community must be involved to successfully implement SPHE. Therefore the teaching staff will implement this plan with the support of the Board of Management, Parents and the Local Community. |
| * **Review**
1. **Roles and Responsibilities:**

It will be necessary to review this plan on a regular basis to ensure optimum implementation of the SPHE curriculum in the school. Paula O’Connor and Elaine Durkan are responsible for co-ordinating this review with staff.Those involved in the review will include:*Teachers**Pupils**Parents**Post holders/plan co-ordinator**BoM/DES/Others*1. **Timeframe:**

This plan will be reviewed in 3-5 years. |
| * **Ratification and Communication**

The Board of Management of Merlin Woods Primary School ratified this plan in January 2015. This plan is available to view at the school by the parents and is available on the downloads section of our school website.  |