



Our Lady's School

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Dear Parent,

We hope your daughter has settled into First Year and is developing good organisational skills and friendships with her peers across her whole year group. During the first term, Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) classes were focussed on topics such as 'Who Am I?' and 'Minding Myself and Others'. These topics will continue to be discussed throughout the Wellbeing SPHE programme.

Wellbeing SPHE in Post-Primary schools is a programme for students in the Junior Cycle which builds on the experience of primary level learning. The goal of SPHE is to raise appropriate awareness of social, personal, health and wellbeing issues so students can become more confident in making their own life choices. SPHE should also help them create and maintain supportive relationships.

SPHE is allocated one 40-minute period per week and is a heavily discussion-based subject, allowing the students to have their voices heard and their opinions considered. There is no written examination in SPHE, but each student completes a passage in her 'SPHE Journal' each week. This reflection will allow students to keep track of her growth and progress in each class. The workbook we use works perfectly in line with the new Wellbeing programme in the new Junior Cycle.

The Aims of Wellbeing in SPHE are:

- To promote physical, social, mental, emotional health and wellbeing.
- To promote self-acceptance and self-confidence.
- To enable students to develop a framework responsible for decision making.
- To provide opportunities for reflection and discussion.
- To enable students to develop skills for self-fulfilment and living in communities.

Each student will participate in all four modules that comprise the Wellbeing SPHE curriculum at Junior Cycle:

1. **Who Am I?**- Learning how to study/ Be Safe/ How I See Myself and Others
2. **Minding Myself and Others**- Being Healthy/ Substance Abuse/ Respectful Communication/ Anti-Bullying
3. **Team Up**- Friendship/ The Relationship Spectrum/ Sexuality, Gender Identity & Sexual Health/ Media Influences on Relationships & Sexuality
4. **My Mental Health**- Positive Mental Health/ Mental Health /Mental Ill-Health/ Dealing With Tough Times/ Loss and Bereavement

Each of these modules will be taught on an annual basis at Junior Cycle and will look at various topics that are appropriate to the age and maturity level of the year group.

During this term in Our Lady's, we will continue our focus on Relationships and Sexual Education and I would like to outline the topics which will be discussed at each year level. The SPHE team would be most grateful if parents could discuss the RSE topics with their daughter and support our efforts. According to the NCCA "*It is recognised that parents are the primary providers of RSE to their children. The function of the school is to play a supportive role in this area*"

Students will partake in six classes on RSE during the coming weeks. See below a table with the outline of 1st-3rd Year modules.

1st Year RSE	2nd Year RSE	3rd Year RSE
Appreciate the value of friendship	Understand that your friendships can change throughout your life	Appreciate that relationships change over time
Explore how friendships may change over time	Think about what type of friend you are to others	Learn about romantic relationships
Identify the qualities of friendship	Learn how to handle difficulties in your friendships	Reflect on their own values as regards a romantic relationship
Think about how you are as a friend	Understand the different relationships in their life	Analyse some of the romantic relationship difficulties experienced by a young person
Recognise the physical changes that take place in boys and girls during puberty	Appreciate that all families have differences and similarities	Identify some possible warning signs of an unhealthy relationship
Learn about the parts of the male and female reproductive system and what they do	Discuss ways of starting a new relationship	Practice skills in ending a relationship respectfully
Understand how pregnancy begins	Learn about respecting themselves and others in different kinds of relationships	Understand safety while dating or in a relationship
Define the term stereotyping	Explore the importance of having boundaries in relationships and setting their own personal boundaries	Explain what is meant by sex, sexuality and sexual health
Be aware of the nature of stereotyping	Revise parts of the reproductive systems	Be aware of some issues faced by transgender teenagers
Explain the terms sexuality and sexual orientation	Learn about fertility. Conception, prenatal development and birth	LBGT+: Facing prejudice
Explore ways of supporting someone who is lesbian or gay	Appreciate how important it is for the mother to look after her health during pregnancy	Discover what Irish law says about the age of consent for consent for sexual activity
	Explore some personal and social dimensions of sexual orientation and how the school is an inclusive environment	Recognise the challenges of being a teenage parent
	Explore the influences of social media on their lives	Learn about Sexually Transmitted Infections
		Understand the nature of media influences on sex and sexuality

We would like to make you aware of this module due to the fact that your daughter may have some specific questions that she may not wish to discuss in class. Parents' co-operation is vital to the success of this SPHE curriculum.

If you have any queries regarding this module and its implementation, please do not hesitate to contact the school.

Yours Sincerely,

Ms M. Gorby
Principal

Ms J. Reilly
SPHE Subject Co-ordinator