******St Joseph’s Adolescent School
Roll No. 20153N

**Social Personal Health Education Policy**

**Our School**

St. Josephs Adolescent School (SJAS) is recognised as a special school for adolescents experiencing mental health difficulties. It is funded by the Department of Education and Skills (DES) as a school for students with severe emotional and behavioural difficulties. SJAS is under the Primary Administration, DES. Our students are aged between 13 and 17 inclusive. The designated teacher-student ratio is 1:6. Students are admitted to SJAS via the affiliated hospital, Saint Vincent’s Hospital Fairview (SVHF), located on the same grounds. Teachers work as part of multi-disciplinary teams (MDT), comprising psychiatry, psychology, nursing, social work, speech and language, occupational therapy, and chaplaincy. The school has 6 classrooms and is detached from the hospital. Education is also provided in the hospital in the Adolescent Inpatient Unit (AIPU). On average, students spend between 6 to 10 weeks at our school so cohorts can vary considerably.

**School Philosophy and Mission Statement**

SJAS, under Catholic patronage, provides a therapeutic and supportive milieu within the school setting. The school exists to serve the student’s educational, psychological, physical, and spiritual needs. We believe that a holistic education is core to the adolescent’s rehabilitation. Our aim is to empower students through an enriched learning experience within a positive, caring, and respectful environment. We believe in the dignity of each individual, and core to this is a sense of inclusiveness and responsibility shared and practised by all.

# Social Personal and Health Education (SPHE)

The aim of SPHE is to support learners in their formative years to make choices for health and wellbeing. SPHE provides students with the opportunity to develop the skills and competence to learn about themselves, to care for themselves and others, and to make informed decisions to aid them now and into the future. SPHE also provides the context within which students can learn about the important moral, physical, social and emotional issues around relationships, sex and sexuality including where to get reliable information from trusted sources. The subject is student centred and experiential so that students learn to responsibly and respectfully discuss and develop their attitudes, beliefs, values, and opinions.

# Aims of teaching SPHE:

* to promote physical health and personal well-being
* to provide a framework for responsible decision making
* to develop skills for individual care of themselves and others
* to build self-esteem, self-confidence, and resilience
* to provide opportunities for discussion and reflection

# Subject Content

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| **The ten Junior Cycle modules are:**  | **The five areas of learning in Senior Cycle are:** |
| 1. Belonging and integrating
2. Self-Management
3. Communication Skills
4. Physical Health
5. Friendship
6. Relationships and Sexuality
7. Emotional Health
8. Influences and Decisions
9. Substance Use
10. Personal Safety
 | 1. Mental Health
2. Gender Studies
3. Substance Use
4. Relationships and Sexuality
5. Physical Activity and Nutrition
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| Each of these modules can appear in each year of the three-year cycle. | For each area of learning, there is a rationale and a list of learning outcomes outlining what students should understand and be able to do. (See *SPHE Senior Cycle Curriculum Framework*, p.18+). These learning outcomes draw on three interrelated perspectives:1. Emotional and social health and wellbeing2. Physical health and wellbeing3. Personal and group health and wellbeing There are five key skills identified as central to teaching and learning across the senior cycle SPHE curriculum:1. Information processing
2. Personal efficacy
3. Communication
4. Critical and creative thinking
5. Working with others
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(*National Council for Curriculum and Assessment*, NCCA)

**Organisation of SPHE in our School**

The teacher will treat all students with care and due sensitivity. An atmosphere of trust and openness is necessary to cultivate positive learning experiences and interactions between all. To this end, the teacher will consider and consult guidelines, resources, and lesson plans drawn up by the NCCA and establish clear goals for students to work towards.. Many SPHE aims are also naturally fulfilled across other subjects and interactions within the school.

**Subject Development**

The Principal organises subject training as necessary.

**Confidentiality**

The teacher will foster an inclusive, respectful environment wherein open discussion, listening, and learning are facilitated at all times in accordance with well-being. If a student should at all reveal an intimate encounter of his/her own, the teacher will engage appropriately and never dismissively. Student – teacher confidentiality limits pertain to:

* Child abuse – physical; emotional; sexual; neglect
* Intention to harm self or others
* Substance misuse
* Underage sexual activities

# Whole Staff

# This policy will be available in hard copies and on our computer T-drive system which is shared with SVHF.

**Reviewing the SPHE Programme**

The school will review this policy periodically after its ratification by the Board of Management (BOM). This policy may be reviewed and amended prior to that date, if necessary.

This policy was reviewed by the BOM on September 1st, 2020.

**Signed Signed**

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**Chairperson of Board of Management Principal**

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ **Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Date of next review:** first BOM meeting in the 2022-23 school year.