



ST. JOHN'S P.S. HEALTH EDUCATION POLICY

Reviewed Spring 2024
Next review Spring 2027

St. John's is a small rural school drawing children from a close-knit community of mainly village and farming backgrounds. We seek to make our school a welcoming place, bright and interesting where the teaching is child-centred with the support and co-operation of the parents.

The Governors, Principal and Staff of St. John's school believe that health education seeks to develop the child socially, intellectually, morally and spiritually. We hope to make the children in our school feel 'of worth' and instil sound moral values, confidence, security and decision-making skills. We hope to establish respectful attitudes towards others and to achieve a healthy lifestyle.

Rationale for Health Education in school

1. It links directly with our Catholic ethos as well as with the PDMU curriculum.
3. Schools have a responsibility along with parents, to encourage young people to develop a healthy lifestyle.
4. Health Education is founded on exploring attitudes, values, skills and knowledge and we hope to instil in our pupils the opportunity to form clear values and responsible attitudes with regard to health.
5. Health Education helps us adopt a preventative approach in terms of the health of young people. We are aiming to prevent the children smoking, vaping, drinking, taking drugs, adopting poor eating habits.

SCHOOL AIMS

1. To give children experience of a wide variety of subjects and activities through a broad and balanced curriculum.
2. To develop morals and values.
3. To provide a happy and secure environment.
4. To help children achieve their potential and experience success in a variety of contexts.
5. To encourage children to use their individual talents.
6. To help each child to develop and learn according to his or her ability.
7. To help each child to respect themselves and each other and the environment.
8. To develop in pupils, self-confidence, independence, self-discipline and self-esteem.
9. To develop in pupils personal and social skills.
10. To promote close links between home, school and community.
11. To promote a positive attitude to health and fitness.

Areas of Health Education

- 1. The School Environment/School Ethos**
- 2. Staff**
- 3. Parents**
- 4. Present youth culture/pupils**
- 5. The Curriculum**
- 6. Teaching methods**
- 7. Outside agencies**
- 8. Evaluation**

School Environment/School Ethos

Health Education should help pupils develop a healthy lifestyle. It should be taught within the concept of a health promoting school where the Board of Governors, Staff and relevant agencies work together in a planned way to promote the health of everyone in the school community. It should take place in an environment which places emphasis on building good relationships, promoting self-esteem and reducing stress for children and staff.

Staff

Health Education will be taught by all class teachers. All our staff are committed to the concept of the health promoting school and will be regularly updated on new initiatives, findings and strategies in Health Education. Where possible staff will be given training in specialist areas of the subject eg drugs education and first aid. On occasions teachers may involve outside speakers to complement the planned programme for Health Education. We will keep our staff updated by attending courses and updating our policy every two/three years.

Parents

Health Education should include strong parental involvement. We understand the importance of Health Education being closely linked with parents and we will try to have their support as much as possible eg providing us with useful medical information and helping their children to have healthy eating habits.

Present Youth Culture/Pupils

We are aware of the ever increasing changes occurring in modern living and the pressures which our pupils could face eg drugs, smoking and alcohol. We hope to keep ourselves aware of the changes which could occur in our community and recognise that within a particular group of pupils a range of values and attitudes will exist.

The Curriculum

Health Education should identify opportunities to address the three statutory objectives of this Cross Curricular theme. (Health in the context of personal development, social development and in relation to the environment). We are also aware that any other statutory requirements are met. We aim to ensure that the two dimensions -

- attitudes, values, clarification and interpersonal skills

- knowledge, understanding and cognitive skills

are given equal importance. We will ensure that it is incorporated into schemes of work and complement other teaching/learning classroom activities. We will take account of the emotional, social and physical development of pupils and suit the level and experience of the child.

Teaching Methods

Our staff will use classroom methodology which emphasises child-centred activities suited to each teacher's class size. We are aware that health education allows for planned and incidental learning opportunities which can develop behaviour conducive to good health. We will provide opportunities for pupils to develop responsible attitudes and the knowledge and skills necessary to make informed decisions; also improving communication skills and increasing self-esteem.

Outside Agencies

Health Education should provide opportunity for outside agencies who share our values and are aware of our approach to Health Education. We will ensure that any visitors are able to communicate at a level appropriate to the emotional and intellectual development of our pupils. We hope to reinforce the work of the outside agency with appropriate follow-up work.

Evaluation

Health Education should be designed to inform teaching programmes. It should include strategies for pupil self-evaluation. We will also include teacher evaluation in the delivering of the Health Education Programme.

Implementing our Policy

The Role of the Health Education Co-ordinator

We see the role of the Health Education Co-ordinator in our school as someone who will:-

- **give health education the high profile which it merits within the concept of the Health Promoting School**
- **be responsible for co-ordinating working groups in drawing up policies for specific health issues**
- **liaise with SMT to have policies adopted by Board of Governors**
- **ensure that Health Education topics are adequately covered across the curriculum**

- **ensure that identified gaps in provision are addressed in consultation with staff, parents and or/pupils as appropriate**
- **initiate appropriate training in the light of specific needs identified by staff**
- **ensure that the school health policy is being implemented and reviewed as needs arise**
- **liaise with education and health professionals to access up-to-date resources and methodologies which would then be disseminated to appropriate staff**

Organisation

Health Education will be taught within specific subjects in the curriculum eg PDMU, RE, English and PE.