

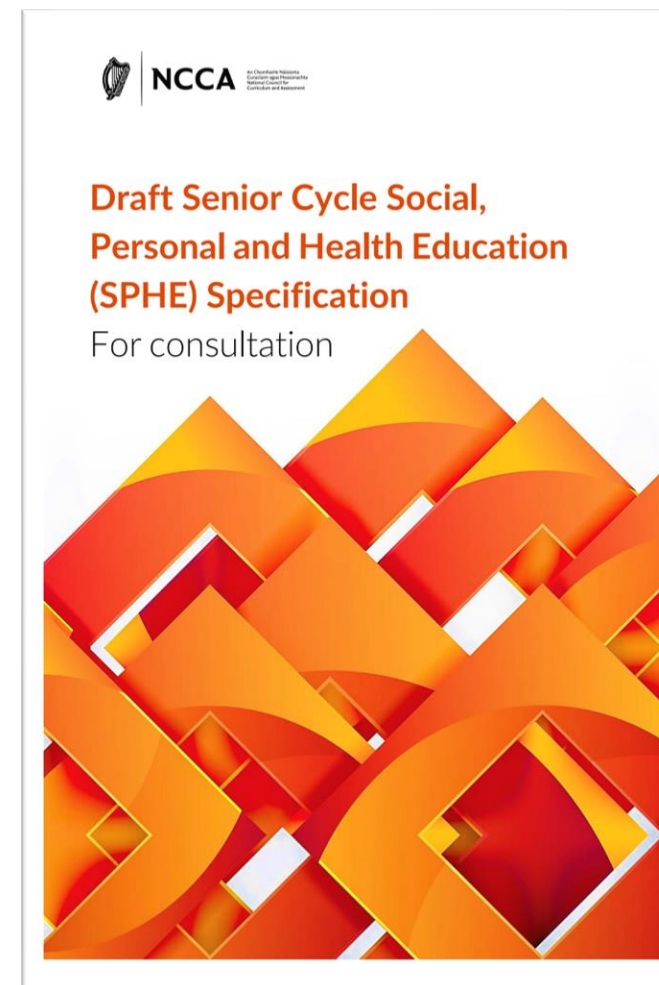
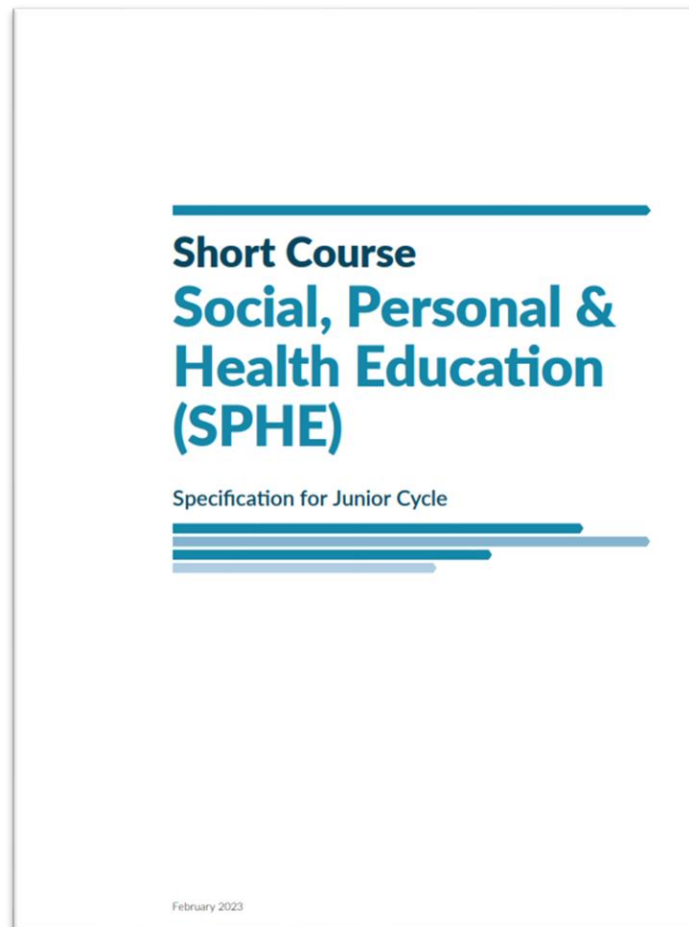
Social, Personal and Health Education
Leadership workshop

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In today's workshop
our aims are...

- To gain a deeper insights into SPHE curricular changes - why change is needed, and what are the actual changes versus misinformation/speculation
- To discuss how best to address concerns and questions arising with staff and/or parents
- To discuss what school leaders can do to build effective practice in SPHE

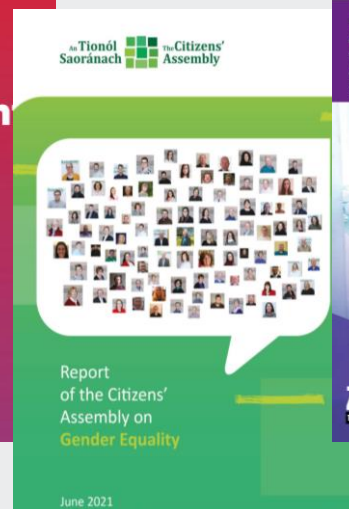
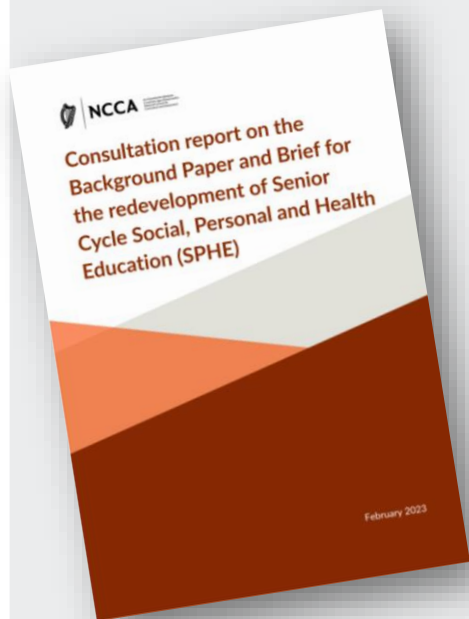


Opening question

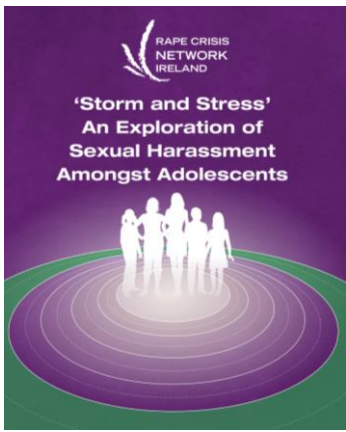
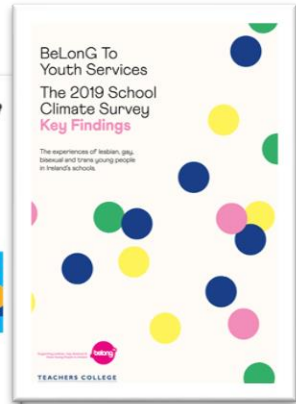
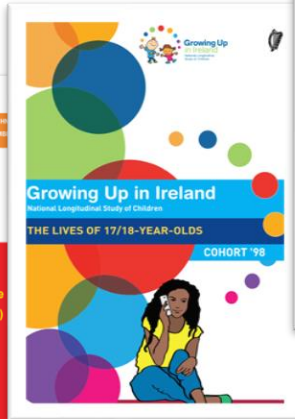
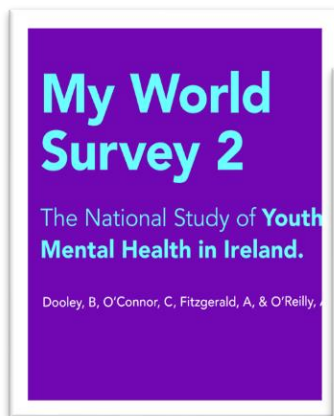
From the perspective of a school leader, why do you need to be familiar with SPHE in a way that mightn't be needed for other subjects?

Considerations that inform SPHE developments

- Consultations with students, parents, teachers and civil society
- Review of provision for SPHE in upper secondary education across other countries/jurisdictions
- National policy and international commitments
- Research related to the lives and experiences of young people growing up in Ireland today



Updated curriculum is grounded in research and evidence about the world of adolescents today



Thinking of your students

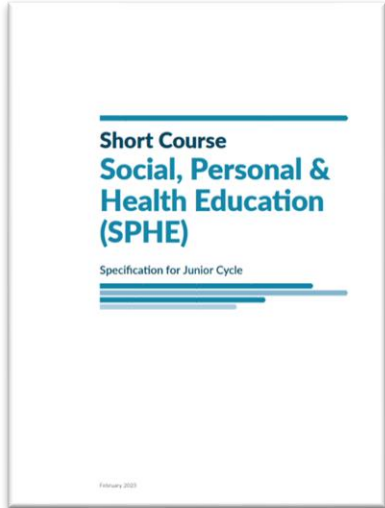
In pairs, discuss this question and jot down your thoughts

What are the main social, emotional and/or health issues that you're noticing students in your school are dealing with?

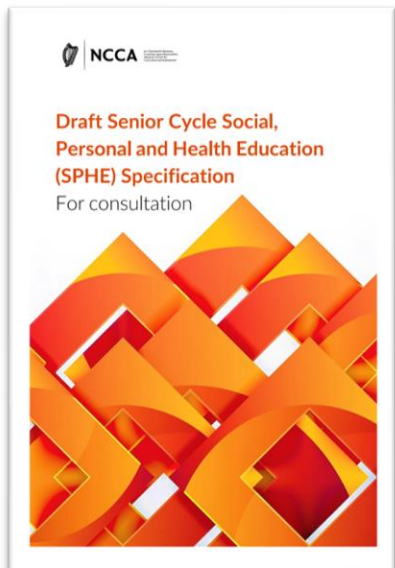
Then in pairs, review the Learning Outcomes in the SPHE updated course and see if/where these issues are being addressed?



Some distinguishing features of the updated curriculum



- Progression of learning across Junior and Senior Cycle SPHE (on a mandatory basis)
- Clarity of learning – while maintaining flexibility to respond to individual school/classroom circumstances
- Fewer learning outcomes to allow for greater depth of learning
- Adopts a positive and strengths-based approach
- Promotes independent and critical thinking (including ability to critique social and cultural norms)
- Adopts an approach that is inclusive, grounded in principles of equality and human rights (values-based)
- Relationships and sexuality education is integrated across all the strands



Addressing concerns or questions related to SPHE

In small groups share your ideas on

1. What school leaders can do to preempt or minimise concerns?
2. How would you advise handling incidents where a parent requests withdrawal?



Some suggestions

1. What school leaders can do to pre-empt or minimise concerns?

- Make explicit your school's values – in word and deed

*The SPHE specification is grounded in **values** of respect, equality, inclusivity, responsibility, dignity, compassion and empathy*

- Pro-actively communication with parents – school website, 1st yr information evening, PT meetings, other opportunities
- Phase out SPHE textbooks (Instead direct teachers to - [Resources for teaching and learning in SPHE \(curriculumonline.ie\)](#))
- Assign confident, skilled teachers to SPHE

Share information on what **is** being taught

Slide show for parents at [this link](#)

NCCA Junior Cycle Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE)
Information for parents

Junior Cycle SPHE

The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) is currently working on updating the Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) curriculum from primary through to senior cycle education. The new Junior Cycle SPHE course will be introduced in schools in September 2023.

Why SPHE matters

Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) provides a safe classroom setting where students can discuss and learn about important aspects of their lives. Within this space, students can grow in awareness, and develop the understanding and skills they need to maintain healthy lives, make healthy choices and build caring and respectful relationships.

SPHE places a strong focus on developing the important life skills that young people need growing up in a fast changing and complex world. Specifically, it focuses on developing the social and emotional skills of self-awareness, self-management, responsible decision-making, social awareness and relationship skills.

SPHE is a key pillar of the junior cycle Wellbeing programme in all schools as it helps students identify well-being themes in...

What will students be learning in SPHE?



Learning in the course is divided into four strands with each setting out important learning for students. These strands are:

- Understanding myself and others
- Making healthy choices
- Relationships and sexuality
- Emotional wellbeing

Teaching and learning in SPHE focuses on

- **awareness building** so that students understand their own thoughts, emotions, values and behaviour and how different factors influence these
- **respectful dialogue** which gives students opportunities to hear and to discuss a diversity of viewpoints and enlarge their understanding on topics of relevance to their lives.
- **students reflecting** on what they have learned and coming to informed thoughtful decisions about how the learning can help them in their lives now or in the future.



NCCA

Strand 3 | Relationships and Sexuality

Learning Outcome: 3.8	Students should be able to appreciate the importance of seeking, giving and receiving consent in sexual relationships, from the perspective of building caring relationships and from a legal perspective.
Pre-learning:	Before addressing Learning Outcome 3.8, students need to have engaged with related learning outcomes, such as learning about the signs of healthy, unhealthy and abusive relationships (3.3), gender equity and stereotypes (1.5), communicating in a respectful and effective manner (1.7) and the importance of empathy (1.8).

What is the important learning?

The purpose of Learning Outcome 3.8 is to open up conversations with young people about consent as a core part of all healthy relationships, which involves recognising and respecting one's own boundaries and the boundaries of others, always checking whenever one is unsure, and being able to show empathy. This conversation starts with friendships before moving onto romantic/intimate relationships.

It's important that young people discuss why consent matters, beyond a legal lens. In other words, through the lens of respectful and caring relationships.

In teaching about consent, the complexity of factors that influence a young person's capacity to exercise consent need to be discussed. These include self-awareness, self-esteem, capacity to communicate assertively, the influence of alcohol/substances, peer pressure, pop culture and social norms. Discussion of sexual consent also relates to an understanding of harmful gender stereotypes.

Possible questions to explore through this learning outcome:

- What does a healthy relationship look like?
- Is consent an important aspect of how we relate to people? Why/not?
- What is happening when a person is giving consent in everyday situations? What are they saying, what are they doing (i.e. verbal and non-verbal)? What does it look like not giving consent?
- What are the key messages about consent online and in the media, for example in music videos, games? How might these messages affect attitudes?
- What might impact on/affect a person's ability to (1) ask for consent (2) give consent (3) withhold consent? (prompts: age, confidence/skills, use of alcohol/substances, balance of power in the relationship, peer pressure, social norms, pop culture, etc)
- What are the implications of breaking the law around consent in sexual relationships? What are the other, non-legal, impacts?
- In the context of consent in sexual relationships, what are the available supports and services? How can people access these supports and services?

Possible follow-on learning outcomes:
The influence of pornography on sexual expression (3.10) and/or the risks and consequences of sharing sexual imagery online (2.9)

Go to the SPHE Toolkit for teaching resources linked to LO 3.8


PowerPoint

jc-sphe-school-presentation_slides...

Download Save to OneDrive Start Slideshow

NCCA **Purpose of this presentation**

- Why?** • To explain the context for changes to the Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) curriculum
- What?** • To provide an overview of what's included in the updated Junior Cycle SPHE curriculum
- What next?** • To sign-post where to go for more information and share your views on further SPHE developments



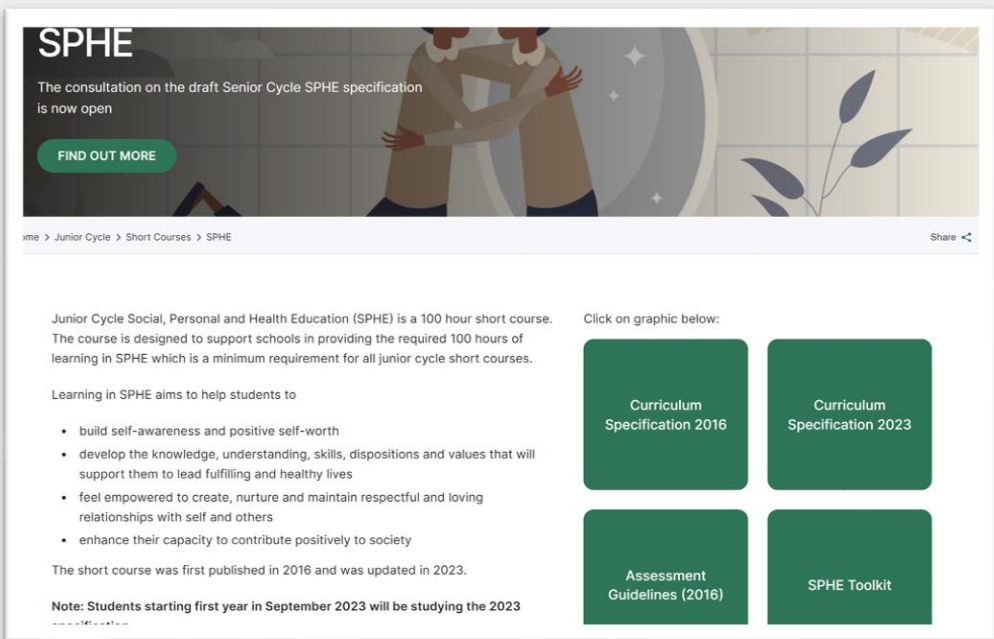
An tSraith Shóisearach Junior Cycle

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SPHE online Toolkits

www.curriculumonline.ie

There are two versions of the Toolkit, one for the 2023 SPHE course and one for the 2016 SPHE course. Each Toolkit has three sections. Click on the relevant section of the 2023 or 2016 Toolkit graphic to access the materials.



SPHE
 The consultation on the draft Senior Cycle SPHE specification is now open

[FIND OUT MORE](#)

Home > Junior Cycle > Short Courses > SPHE

Junior Cycle Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) is a 100 hour short course. The course is designed to support schools in providing the required 100 hours of learning in SPHE which is a minimum requirement for all junior cycle short courses.

Learning in SPHE aims to help students to

- build self-awareness and positive self-worth
- develop the knowledge, understanding, skills, dispositions and values that will support them to lead fulfilling and healthy lives
- feel empowered to create, nurture and maintain respectful and loving relationships with self and others
- enhance their capacity to contribute positively to society

The short course was first published in 2016 and was updated in 2023.

Note: Students starting first year in September 2023 will be studying the 2023

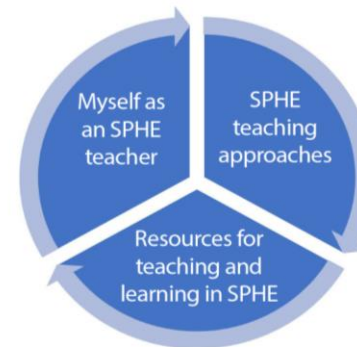
Click on graphic below:

Curriculum Specification 2016	Curriculum Specification 2023
Assessment Guidelines (2016)	SPHE Toolkit

2023 Toolkit



2016 Toolkit




Understanding Myself and Others 1

Making Healthy Choices 1

Relationships and Sexuality Education 1

Emotional Wellbeing 1

Activities to support the teaching of the updated Junior Cycle SPHE Curriculum 2023



Some suggestions on how to handle incidents where a parent requests to withdraw their child

Share a copy of the specification and other information.

Direct their attention to...

[JC_SPHE_Short_Course_2023.pdf \(curriculumonline.ie\)](#)

The rationale and aim (pages 4-5) and the learning outcomes (pages 14-17) are most relevant.

If meeting with parents

- Show openness and understanding without being apologetic
- Don't try to change their world-view or opinions
- Stress the values and approach that underpins teaching and learning in SPHE – explain alignment of your school's values and those of SPHE
- Point out the breadth of learning in SPHE (of which RSE is just a part)
- Correct misinformation so that they can make an informed decision

*‘No
curriculum
development
without
teacher
development’*

Professional Development for SPHE teachers

Updated teaching resources

Information and supports for parents

Leadership support at school and system level





Where can I find CPD support for SPHE teachers?

Your first port of call - www.Oide.ie www.curriculumonline.ie and gov.ie [wellbeing in education](#))

- **NEPS** – provide a range of resources and training related to mental health
- **HSE** - [HSE Education Programme - HSE.ie](#) (open this link to find SPHE training events) such as the following:
Skills for facilitation in SPHE (for JC) ***Mindout*** and ***Know the Score*** (for SC)

- **WEBWISE** - provide a range of resources and CPD – check out those relevant to SPHE
- **NGOs (below is just a sample of organisations which support learning in aspects of SPHE)**

[Bodywhys](#), [Belong2](#), [Dublin Rape Crisis Centre](#) (Bodyright and Let's get real), other regional Rape Crisis Centres, [CONSENT Education Project](#) (Galway), [Jigsaw](#), [Spunout](#), [Foróige](#) (Real U programme), [National Youth Council of Ireland](#) (NYCI)

- **Special Education Needs**

National Council for Special Education website <https://www.sess.ie/resources>

Middletown Centre for Autism: <https://www.middletownautism.com/> offer online CPD related to teaching RSE to students with SEN





Supporting effective enactment of SPHE: considerations for school leaders

Review of current provision and capacity

Consultation with teachers before timetabling

Build a small team

Teacher engagement in professional learning opportunities

Teacher engagement in professional collaboration

Maintaining and building parental support

Thoughtful engagement with external agencies/facilitators and local supports

Allocation of appropriate timetable time



For reflection ...

In the context of your school, what would you need to put in place to build effective SPHE practice across all year groups?



Go raibh míle maith
agaibh