



# MERCY SECONDARY SCHOOL MOUNTHAWK

Meánscoil na Trócaire Cnoc an tSeabhaic

## First Year SPHE

**Link to the 2023 Department of Education SPHE Specification**  
[Social, Personal & Health Education \(SPHE\)](#)

### Mercy Mounthawk School Curriculum

Module 1 - Coping with Change, Making Connections and Knowing Myself. (September)

#### Learning Outcomes

- 1.7 communicate in a respectful and effective manner and listen openly and sensitively to the views/feelings of others
- 1.8 reflect on the meaning and importance of empathy and discuss ways that it can be expressed
- 2.4 demonstrate skills and strategies to help make informed choices that support health and wellbeing and apply them in real-life situations that may be stressful and/or involve difficult peer situations.
- 3.4 appreciate the importance of setting healthy boundaries in relationships and consider how to show respect for the boundaries of others
- 4.3 consider the impact of stress and draw upon a variety of techniques to help self-regulate emotions and cope with the day-to-day stresses of life

#### Key Learning

Students will learn:

- Learn about SPHE and the topics that will be covered this year
- What a safe, comfortable and inclusive classroom looks and feels like
- How to connect with others in their base class through teambuilding and the creation of a class contract.
- Learn about the school and the supports available
- About core values and personal strengths
- About the link between self-identity, self image and self-esteem
- How to make new friends and cope with changing friendships and circumstances
- Discover positive self talk and learn how to be more self-compassionate in life
- Learn about themselves including techniques for self regulation
- The importance of empathy

## Module 2 - Setting Goals, Organisation and Study Skills (October) Guidance Related Modules

### Learning Outcomes

- 1.7 communicate in a respectful and effective manner and listen openly and sensitively to the views/feelings of others
- 1.9 demonstrate self-management skills, including setting personal goals, delaying gratification, and self-regulation of thoughts, emotions and impulses
- 4.2 recognise and acknowledge their emotions and recognise the links between thoughts, feelings and behaviour
- 4.3 consider the impact of stress and draw upon a variety of techniques to help self-regulate emotions and cope with the day-to-day stresses of life

### Key Learning:

#### Students will:

- Explore worries students may have starting post-primary school
- Describe resources which can be used during times of change and transition
- Give an overview of the structure of the year ahead
- Give students an indication when to expect holidays, exams, careers day etc. by examining the School Calendar
- Gain an overview of the school day by getting a greater understanding of the school timetable
- Explore what is needed for class each day
- Learn the importance of setting personal and academic SMART goals
- Explore how to set a meaningful, appropriate and challenging goal
- Examine different study techniques and figure out which works best for them
- Learn how to prepare mentally for exams and study
- Learn relaxation techniques to cope with stress relating to school

## Module 3: Relationships and Sexuality (November , December - A minimum of 6 classes)

### Learning Outcomes

- 1.1 explore the physical, social and emotional changes that happen during adolescence
- 3.4 appreciate the importance of setting healthy boundaries in relationships and consider how to show respect for the boundaries of others
- 3.2 examine benefits and difficulties experienced by young people in a range of relationships - friendships, family relationships, and romantic/intimate relationships
- 3.5 Reproduction and pregnancy
- 1.4 recognise the factors and influences that shape young people's self-identity, such as family, peers, culture, gender identity, sexual orientation, race/ethnic background, dis/abilities, religious

beliefs/world-views

### Key Learning

Students will learn

- The physical, emotional and social changes during adolescence
- Exploring ways of maintaining hygiene during puberty
- Changes that occur during puberty
- The difference between healthy and unhealthy relationships
- The importance of being kind and respectful in our relationships and friendships
- The human reproductive systems, pregnancy and birth
- The legal age of consent and the law including Coco's Law
- That we are all unique and different.
- Explore gender stereotypes and how they can affect our behaviour and relationships

### Module 4: Healthy Body, Healthy Mind - January & February

#### Learning Outcomes:

- 2.10 demonstrate how to access and appraise appropriate and trustworthy information, supports and services about health and wellbeing
- 2.1 consider the multifaceted nature of health and wellbeing, and evaluate what being healthy might look like for different adolescents, including how food, physical activity, sleep/rest and hygiene contribute to health and wellbeing
- 2.5 discuss the physical, social, emotional and legal consequences of using addictive substances - immediate and long-term
- 2.6 consider scenarios where, for example, alcohol, nicotine, drugs, food and electronic devices might be used to cope with unpleasant feelings or stress, and discuss possible healthy ways of coping
- 4.5 explore how emotional wellbeing can be affected by factors within our control, such as sleep, diet, exercise, substance use and online exposure, and factors beyond our control

### Key Learning

Students will:

- Explore what mental health is and what influences it
- Discuss different challenges that people face
- Examine coping tools to deal with stressors
- Learn what stress is and how stress can affect the teenage brain
- Explore ways to regulate our emotions
- Examine nutrition and healthy eating in teenagers
- Learn about the importance of personal hygiene, exercise, sleep and limiting screen time
- Identify what alcohol is and examine Irish law and alcohol use in Ireland

- Investigate the effects of alcohol on the teenage brain
- Explore what vaping is and examine how vapes are marketed
- Examine a case study on vaping
- Research the dangers of alcohol, smoking, vaping and drug use for both their physical and mental health.

## Module 5: Staying Safe and Practicing Empathy- Online and in School - March-May

### Learning Outcomes

- 1.6 discuss experiences/situations of bias, inequality or exclusion and devise ways to actively create more inclusive environments
- 2.8 discuss how to share personal information, images, opinions and emotions in a safe, responsible and respectful manner online and in person
- 2.7 assess the benefits and difficulties associated with their online world and discuss strategies for dealing with a range of scenarios that might arise
- 2.10 demonstrate how to access and appraise appropriate and trustworthy information, supports and services about health and wellbeing.
- 4.7 explain why noticing and responding to different kinds of abusive or bullying behaviour that can occur in person and online is important and discuss appropriate responses including, why, how, where and when to report

### Key Learning

#### Students will:

- Develop a better understanding of bullying behaviours
- Learn to spot the signs of bullying behaviour
- Learn why a bullying related incident should never be ignored
- Develop a better understanding of cyberbullying behaviours
- Learn why it is so important to have a relational and inclusive school, free from bias and discrimination
- How to be safe online with personal information and how to identify, deal with or report cyberbullying
- Explore respectful communication online
- How to identify and deal with bullying in school.
- Reflect on the school's Anti- Bullying Policy and discuss how they feel it can be improved
- Discuss what empathy is and why it is so important to practice in our everyday lives