

St. Nicholas' National School

Adare,

Co. Limerick



Roll No. 08926B

## School Self-Evaluation Report

Evaluation period: March 2018 – June 2019

Report issued in June 2019

- Introduction

### 1.1 The focus of the evaluation

A school self-evaluation of teaching and learning in St. Nicholas' National School was undertaken during the period of March 2018 and June 2019. During the evaluation, teaching and learning in SPHE was evaluated.

This is a report on the findings of the evaluation.

### 1.2 School context

- This is a rural, co-educational primary school under the patronage of Lady Geraldine Dunraven and with a Church of Ireland ethos.
- There are currently 76 pupils enrolled.
- There are five teachers, including a teaching principal and two support teachers.
- SPHE is taught at all levels, specifically timetabled plus use of discrete time.
- It reflects our school ethos, in respecting each other and ourselves in a kind and caring way.
- Two class groups are taught SPHE together e.g. 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> classes.

## 2. The findings

- Teacher observation, along with teacher surveys, show that teachers consider SPHE a vital and important subject area and that all aspects of the SPHE curriculum are covered over a two year period. A minimum of 30 minutes timetabled classes are taught each week.
- Specific time per week is taught with discretionary time where required. Teachers felt that Stay Safe was a fundamental part of SPHE and considerable time was given to this aspect of SPHE as well as anti-bullying programmes. The teachers adopt a variety of other programmes and are willing to try out new ideas. Pupils are grouped in correct class grouping so that all areas are covered in their eight years in primary school – co-ordinated way. SPHE is not just taught during prescribed time but all throughout the day.
- Pupils who were surveyed showed a positive attitude to SPHE. Although the younger children didn't understand the term Social, Personal, and Health Education, they were very aware of the programmes and the content of SPHE. They enjoyed circle time, pair and share work, games, discussion time and

easy booklets. Some pupils felt that there should be more time for mindfulness exercises. Their favourite activity was circle time. Most reported that they did not discuss SPHE at home with the exception of Stay Safe as it forms part of their homework.

- Responses from a survey of parents show that 96% of parents feel that there is a positive climate and environment in the school and that 80% consider that SPHE is a priority learning area and is taught as a priority in school. They were familiar with all the programmes taught in SPHE with the exception of Substance Misuse.

90% feel that healthy eating is promoted in the school and support the school in these endeavours.

57% agreed that SPHE lessons were discussed at home. It was noted that parents would like more information on what is being taught in SPHE lessons. 76% feel that they often receive information on what is being covered in SPHE.

- Teachers' SPHE lessons incorporate a variety of teaching methodologies including the use of circle time, drama, IT, talk and discussion, games and group/pair work.

Teachers feel that pupils in general have a positive attitude towards SPHE.

Teachers complemented the improvement in some of the programmes available e.g. Stay Safe and Walk Tall.

Teachers are willing to take part in CPD in this area. This year the school has used Zippy's Friends and Weaving Well-Being programmes to promote well-being and positive mental health.

### 3. Progress made on previously identified targets highlighted in the current School Improvement Plan.

- Each class has been exposed to an increased variety of concrete materials and games in Gaeilge.
- Greater use of drama in Gaeilge classes.
- Greater use of Gaeilge in assembly time.
- Greater use of interactive materials in each classroom in the teaching of Gaeilge.

## 4. Summary of school self-evaluation findings

### 4.1 Our school has strengths in the following areas of SPHE

#### Attainment of curriculum objectives:

- Pupils, in general, are engaging and performing in SPHE
- Pupils and parents, in general, have a positive attitude to SPHE.
- Teachers feel that SPHE is a priority area of the curriculum and use a wide variety of programmes.

#### Engagement in learning:

- Parents reported that their children generally like SPHE and have a positive attitude to SPHE in school.
- Parents show a willingness to support them and the school in the teaching of SPHE.
- Teachers also report a positive attitude to SPHE.

#### Teaching Approaches:

- Teachers use a range of methodologies including circle time, drama, IT, talk and discussion, games and group/pair work.
- External facilitators have been brought in to complement teaching of anti-bullying and in particular cyber-bullying.
- Teachers use a wide range of programmes including;

Stay Safe

Walk Tall

Bí Folláin

RSE

Weaving Well-Being

Mindfulness

Zippy's Friends

Friends for Life

Conflict Resolution

Webwise On-Line and associated material

4.2 The following areas are prioritised for improvement

- Greater home/school liaison
- Make parents aware of the programmes taught in SPHE class
- Use of home sheets as a connection between home and school.

4.3 The following legislative and regulatory requirements need to be addressed: