

Best Practice Guidelines

- No.1** This pack provides students with a range of opportunities to use and engage with digital technology. It is advisable to familiarise yourself and make the students aware of the schools Acceptable Use Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, Child Safeguarding Statement, Code of Behaviour, Smart-Phone Policy and Assessment Policy. Be aware of all the supports available to you and to the students in your school. It is important to be well informed on the school's relevant policies.
- No.2** Teacher preparation is required for each module as many of the activities require and encourage the use of digital technology. It is advisable to check any technology before using it in the classroom.
- No.3** Students are required to complete tasks throughout the programme using a range of digital technologies. It is recommended that students keep a digital record/portfolio of activities using the school VLE or other file storage services (Google Drive, OneDrive, school network, etc.). **Before beginning the programme, it is advisable to set up a class folder where each student can save/record their work.**
- No.4** Module 1 of the programme deals with sensitive issues that can impact on the wellbeing of students in your class. For this reason, it is advisable that teachers have completed the introduction to SPHE two-day course before delivering this programme.
- No.5** Check how students are emotionally, before and after Module 1; Online Wellbeing. This could be done by asking students how they feel about the topic about to be explored, before the lesson and by then asking if their feelings have changed at the end of the lesson. You could also use an ice-breaker game to check how students are emotionally. A simple game involves asking students what the weather is like with them. The students then describe their emotional state through a weather forecast (e.g. "There was a damp and dreary start to the day in Tom Town but things have started to pick up now and we might even get some sun in the evening"). It is important that teachers are aware of the school's child protection policy and that they follow its procedures carefully in cases where students make sensitive disclosures in the SPHE class.
- No.6** Establish ground rules around classroom behaviour and etiquette before attempting to introduce any sensitive topics addressed in this programme. See Appendix 1 for sample ground rules and tips on facilitating respectful and constructive discussions.
- No.7** Know your students well and be aware of any possible issues they may have before teaching each module.
- No.8** Inform your students of the supports available to them and highlight how each support can be accessed. If necessary, arrange for introductions before modules take place. Webwise provide a helpful list of supports and services available here: www.webwise.ie/parents/where-to-find-help
- No.9** Liaise with the guidance counsellor or class tutor before embarking on Module 1 of the programme.
- No.10** Sufficient time should be left for debriefing at the end of the modules. The suggested activities might sometimes take longer than indicated. Feel free to alter and omit activities to ensure that you address the specific needs of your class. **A sample plenary activity is included in Appendix 3 to provide an opportunity for self reflection for students at the end of each module.**
- No.11** Ensure that the core elements of the programme are highlighted to staff and parents.
- No.12** Regularly communicate signposts to support for students if issues relating to any lessons arise.
- No.13** **The programme encourages the use of digital tools and media throughout. Some suggested tools and resources are included within each module.**

Best Practice Guidelines for Students with SEN

- To ensure these modules are accessible to all students it is advisable to consult and collaborate with the SEN department. They may provide advice pertaining to students with SEN in terms of differentiation, thus ensuring that the students can access the material, participate in the modules and benefit from a full understanding. This is essential as students with SEN can be particularly vulnerable.
- No.1** Due consideration should be given to planning for differentiation prior to the modules being delivered. Vocabulary may need to be pre-taught to students with SEN to ensure that there is a full understanding of the content. A vocabulary list of recommended words to aid clarification and accessibility for SEN students is provided and a glossary of key terms (Appendix 4). Worksheets in this resource have been developed to allow for differentiation.
- No.2** Teachers should be familiar with the SPHE guidelines for students with mild general learning disabilities: www.sphe.ie/downloads/pdst_resources/PP_SPHE.pdf. 'SPHE also explores growth, change, and personal and safety issues. This is important to students with mild general learning disabilities, since their inability to cue into social situations can often leave them more vulnerable to abuse and exploitation. The development of personal care skills is fundamental in the presentation of self to others. Much work is required in the area for these students, and careful planning for this section, in the context of RSE and the Stay Safe programme, is recommended'.
- No.3** Consultation with parents of students with SEN may need to occur before the modules take place. If the student has access to an SNA, the role and responsibility of the SNA will need to be very clearly defined.
- No.4** When establishing classroom ground rules with students with SEN, it's a good idea to represent these ground rules visually. Rather than develop a list of rules, it might be best to have students create pictures to show the expected behaviour.
- No.5** It is very important to follow through on how to get help, particularly if students have poor social and communication skills.
- No.6** Teachers of students with mild general learning disabilities may also find the NCCA guidelines for Post-Primary Social, Political and Environmental Education helpful for Module 4. The guidelines are available at: www.ncca.ie/media/2504/pp_spee_cspe.pdf
- No.7** Additional teaching resources recommended to support students individual learning needs should be deployed in accordance with the guidelines provided in the DES Circular No 0014/2017 available at www.sess.ie/documents-and-publications/circulars.