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To : Management Authorities of Second Level Schools

M22/00

Social, Personal and Health Education

The Department of Education and Science has approved the recommended syllabus for Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) at Junior Cycle which has been prepared by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment.

This syllabus, and the support service which will be put in place aim to affirm, support and provide a framework for the successful comprehensive SPHE programmes which many schools are already undertaking and to help and support other schools initiate and implement SPHE. It is intended that the new SPHE curriculum will be introduced on a phased basis over three years in all second level schools from September 2000 so that all students will have the opportunity to participate in a structured SPHE programme. SPHE aims:

- to enable students to develop personal and social skills,
- to promote self esteem and self confidence,
- to enable students to develop a framework for responsible decision making,
- to provide opportunities for reflection and discussion,
- to promote physical, mental and emotional health and well being.

The syllabus for SPHE will be sent to schools shortly and the Teacher Guidelines for SPHE will be sent in the Autumn.

The time allocation recommended for SPHE is the equivalent of one class period per week, (which most schools currently provide), organised in the manner that best meets the needs of the students and school organisation.

Support Services

The Departments of Education and Science, and Health and Children and the Regional Health Boards are planning an integrated support service for this initiative to build on the current collaboration. This support structure will be in place from September 2000 onwards. Details will be conveyed in due course when the arrangements are finalised.

Dissemination of Information

Please provide a copy of this circular to the appropriate representatives of parents and teachers for transmission to individual parents and teachers.

John Dennehy,
Secretary General.
April, 2000.