JUNIOR CYCLE

CIVIC, SOCIAL AND POLITICAL EDUCATION (SHORT COURSE – MARCH 2021 VERSION)

Rationale

Civic, Social and Political Education (CSPE) contributes to building the skills students need to contribute positively to a democratic society and to promote sustainable living. It gives them an understanding of social, economic and political structures at local, national and global levels and the opportunity to imagine and create ways in which they can make a difference to the lives of individuals and communities. CSPE builds on related learning experiences in primary education. It helps students to question, critique and evaluate what is happening in the world; provides students with an understanding of their human rights and social responsibilities; prompts students to consider how to create a more sustainable future for all; fosters an awareness of what it means to live responsibly in a democracy; and most importantly, it places active reflective citizenship at the centre of the learning process by providing students with the opportunity to take action and influence change around local, national and global issues.

CSPE is a core pillar of the well-being programme within junior cycle as it enables students to grow in awareness of how their well-being is connected to the well-being of others, locally and globally. It also develops students' sense of responsibility for the well-being of others and provides opportunities for students to gain confidence, resilience and a sense of agency as they participate in actions and connect with a wider community working to help build a more equal, just and sustainable future.

Aim

The short course in CSPE aims to inform, inspire, empower and enable young people to participate as active citizens in contemporary society at local, national and global levels, based on an understanding of human rights and social responsibilities.

Structure

Learning outcomes in the junior cycle Civic, Social and Political Education short course specification are divided into three strands, each with three distinct strand elements. Strand One (Right and Responsibilities) is a foundational strand.

There is potential for teachers to include LGBTQ+ content and perspectives into their teaching and assessment of learning outcomes in junior cycle Civic, Social and Political Education.

Sample learning outcomes with scope for inclusion of LGBTQ+ content and perspectives include:

Strand One: Rights and Responsibilities

ELEMENT: Human dignity: the basis for human rights

1.1 Discuss what it means to be human and to live in a community with rights and responsibilities

1.2 Create a visual representation to communicate a situation where human dignity is not respected

1.3 Explain the hierarchy of human needs and how this relates to human rights

1.4 Access and interpret numerical data showing local and global distribution of basic resources and patterns of inequalities

ELEMENT: Human Rights instruments

1.5 Share stories of individuals or groups who inspire them because of their work for human rights

1.6 Create a timeline tracing the origin of the concept of human rights, showing five or more key dates, events, people and documents

1.7 Communicate an understanding of the importance of the UDHR, UNCRC and theECHR1 in promoting human rights

1.8 Identify examples of social, cultural, language, economic, civic, religious, environmental and political rights

1.9 Outlines different perspectives in situations where there is an apparent conflict of rights or an abuse of rights

1.10 Show an appreciation of their responsibility to promote and defend their individual human rights and those of others

Strand Two: Global Citizenship

ELEMENT: Local and Global Development

2.5 Examine case studies or personal testimonies of people experiencing poverty or inequality from different contexts and countries and how they are working to overcome this

ELEMENT: Affecting global change

2.8 Identify one person and one institution with power and influence in the world today, explaining the role of each

2.9 Analyse one global issue or challenge, under the following headings: causes, consequences, impact on people's lives and possible solutions

2.10 Evaluate how they can contribute to responding to one challenge currently facing the world

Strand Three: Exploring Democracy

ELEMENT: The meaning of democracy

3.2 Describe decision-making processes and the roles of different groups in their class/school

3.5 Compare two or more systems of government, taking particular note of the ways in which the state interacts with its citizens, and citizens can shape their state

ELEMENT: The law and the citizen

3.7 Identify laws that directly relate to their lives

3.8 Explain how laws are made, enforced and evolve over time

3.9 Explain the role and relevance of local, national and international courts

3.10 List the nine grounds under which discrimination is illegal in Irish law, with examples

3.11 Investigate how individuals or groups have used the law to bring about change in society

ELEMENT: The role of the media in a democracy

3.12 Explore the role of different media in generating information and news and assess the pros and cons of each

3.13 Examine case studies of the use of digital or other media in one of the following:
• a social justice movement
• a political election or referendum
• a criminal investigation
• an environmental movement

Ideas for Teaching and Learning:

Facilitate your students to:

- Negotiate their own ground rules for acceptable behaviour in the classroom when considering gender, sexuality and LGBTQ+ issues

- Investigate the activist strategies employed by LGBTQ+ rights campaigners, such as Harvey Milk (1930-1978) or Dr Lydia Foy (1947 -). See: https://milkfoundation.org/about/harvey-milk-biography/ (Harvey Milk);https://www.teni.ie/gender-recognition/dr-lydia-foy/ (Dr Lydia Foy).

- Watch Rory O'Neill's (Panti Bliss) 20-minute TEDx Talk (Dublin 2015) and make links between what is said and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and/or the European Convention on Human Rights. See: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hIhsv18lrqY

- Compare LGBTQ+ rights in three different countries (e.g. Ireland, Hungary and Uganda). See: https://ilga.org/maps-sexual-orientation-laws

- Debate whether gathering LGBTQ+ data has the potential to help or hinder in terms of advancing equality.

- Profile LGBTQ+ inclusion initiatives in the school

- Draft a set of next-step recommendations for LGBTQ+ inclusion in their school to be presented to one or more of the following decision-makers: student council, school management team, parents' association, and board of management. See: UNICEF Rights Respecting Schools https://www.unicef.org.uk/rights-respecting-schools/resources/teaching-resources/guidance-assemblies-lessons/framing-inclusion-through-rights/

- Examine Irish legislation with relevance to LGBTQ+ people, e.g. Equal Status Acts, Hate Crime legislation etc.
- Investigate the role of the European Convention on Human Rights and the European Court of Human Rights on LGBTQ+ rights and equality
- Coordinate school or community-based activities as part of Stand-Up Awareness Week

Belong To LGBTQ+
Youth Ireland

Belong To is a national organisation supporting LGBTQ+ youth.

Since 2003, we have worked with LGBTQ+ young people across Ireland offering safety and support through our services. Let your students and youth groups know about Belong To and what supports are available for them including LGBTQ+ youth groups, crisis counselling with Pieta and digital support services.

For educators, we offer online training, support and initiatives such as the LGBTQ+ Quality Mark. For youth workers, we support a National Network of LGBTQ+ youth groups and run the Rainbow Award – an action-focused accreditation programme that supports a whole-organisation approach to safe and supportive services for LGBTQ+ youth.

Learn more at www.belongto.org