

Flourish

An RSE programme for Catholic Primary Schools
on the island of Ireland.



ST. TERESA'S
PRIMARY SCHOOL

Flourish RSE lesson structures and video links

Primary 1

Lesson 1 (I am me): Story- Art template- Reflection.

Lesson 2 (My Body): Song –Discussion- Simon Says-Story – Reflection.

Lesson 3 (I have a family): Poem -discussion- Game –Reflection.

Lesson 4 (I have Friends): Discussion about friendship pictures- Draw friends- Game- Reflection.

Primary 2

Lesson 1 (Growing and changing): Drawing handprints and discuss- Story- Reflection.

Lesson 2 (Keeping Safe) : Video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DlIuoGcCKNg> – discussion- Find dangers in the picture- Reflection.

Lesson 3 (My Family): Share family photos and discuss- Story- Charades- Reflection.

Lesson 4 (I can make choices): Discussion about choices- Easy and hard choices- Poem- Reflection.

Primary 3

Lesson 1 (I am unique): Chatting-Art activity- Other people are special too- reflection.

Lesson 2 (My Body): Senses walk- discussion- diagram of body- taste testers- reflection.

Lesson 3 (My family loves me): Chatting – Story: It's not fair- Art- Reflection.

Lesson 4 (My Neighbourhood): Chatting- Photos- Poem – Art activity- Reflection.

Primary 4:

Lesson 1 (The wonder of new life): Preparation for baby Visit-Baby visit- Baby visit- show and tell-art activity- song prayer- reflection.

Lesson 2 (We have feelings): Miming Feelings-Story: Leave me alone- Emoji's- Personal Space- Reflection.

Lesson 3 (Friendship and Fairness): A good Friend-Role-Play-Art- Reflection.

Lesson 4 (Decisions and consequences): Decisions-tricky decisions- Song 'There was an old lady who swallowed a fly' https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qC_xO2aN_IA – art- getting advice- reflection.

Primary 5:

Lesson 1 (Growing and changing): Prove it – Art – Poetry – Animal moms with their babies
<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/photography/article/animal-mothers-babies> - Reflection

Lesson 2 (Making the right choices): Every Choices – Art activity- Decisions in the family- Reflection.

Lesson 3 (Positive Role Models): Uncle Tom- Role Models- Could I be a role model? - Reflection

Lesson 4 (Why have rules?): Rules, Rules, Rules- Consequences- Simon says- Acrostic Poem- School rules- Reflection.

Primary 6:

Lesson 1 (Feelings): Feelings- Role play- feelings collage- Poem: Feelings- Reflection.

Lesson 2 (Bullying): Chatting about Bullying- Is it bullying? –Group Activity: Why do people bully? – Art – Activity – Reflection.

Lesson 3 (Puberty): Everything is changing- Body Changes Activity: Sorting changes in the body- Parents leaflet- reflection.

Lesson 4 (Environmental care): The Power of One- Small decisions art activity- Acrostic Poem- Reflection.

Primary 7:

Lesson 1 (Puberty): Chatting- Video - Puberty homework- reflection.

Lesson 2 (Emotions and relationships): Chatting- Mixed up feelings- Poem: Peer pressure- Brian storm solutions- Role play- poster- reflection.

Lesson 3 (Love): Chatting-Babies- Chatting- Love statements-poem- Reflection.

Lesson 4 (Safe Internet): My usage- video: <https://www.webwise.ie/classroom-videos/#classroom-videos-primary> – safety exercise – cyber bullying- reflection.

Busy Bodies Videos 1. Busy Bodies – Introduction video

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/176dAxFxh04oMWMfenMvJVvWacfYkDkZm/view?usp=sharing>

2. Busy Bodies - Changes at Puberty – video <https://drive.google.com/file/d/126QTe1kLEJOzkC76mf3mTl-HZsc1Sokq/view?usp=sharing>

3. Busy Bodies – What Happens to Boys? – video

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ljU6dofhcgtOtfwQUUd8vqyRBKY7V_k/view?usp=sharing

4. Busy Bodies – What Happens to Girls? – video https://drive.google.com/file/d/1bsIEz5Ui_cz78gS7Mb-axqvsQMk-5_o/view?usp=sharing

VISION for Catholic RSE in Primary Schools

Changes to Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) guidelines issued by the Department of Education in 1997 state that 'In Irish schools, RSE will provide structured opportunities for pupils to acquire a knowledge and understanding of human relationships and sexuality through processes which will enable them to form values and establish behaviours within a moral, spiritual and social framework.'¹ In delivering such a programme the Catholic school aims to provide a framework based on the teachings of Jesus Christ and reflecting the dignity of each person created in the image and likeness of God.

In his address to the Association of Management of Catholic Secondary Schools (AMCSS)/Joint Managerial Body (JMB) in May 2018, Archbishop Eamon Martin made the point that 'Catholic schools can assist parents and families by helping young people find moral reference points, by offering a morals and values framework, or roadmap, to guide them.'² He then went on to say that 'The Catholic school ought, therefore, to be a community inspired by Gospel values and transmitting Gospel values, including: the sacredness of human life; the dignity of the person; integrity; peace; tolerance; justice; honesty and truth; holiness; gentleness and compassion; mercy and forgiveness; purity; respect.'

¹ Department of Education, *Relationships and Sexuality Education: Policy Guidelines*, Dublin: Department of Education, 1997, p. 4.

² Keynote address by Archbishop Eamon Martin to JMB/AMCSS 31st Annual Conference Galway. Available at: <https://www.catholicbishops.ie/2018/05/03/archbishop-eamon-martin-address-catholic-schools-supporting-families-towards-a-better-education-of-children/>

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Pope Francis, in *Amoris Laetitia*, acknowledges that it is 'not easy to approach the issue of sex education in an age when sexuality tends to be trivialised and impoverished. It can only be seen within the broader framework of an education for love, for mutual self-giving.'³ There is no such thing as an 'ethos free' approach to RSE since it must be rooted in a particular value system. As Archbishop Martin said 'Catholic schools ... should help educate young people in taking responsibility and making well informed decisions regarding their choices, including being aware of their own values and those of others who may differ from them.'⁴

The *Catholic Preschool and Primary Religious Education Curriculum for Ireland* states the 'Catholic Religious Education always emphasises moral education.'⁵ This has sound roots in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* which says 'Jesus is presented as the model for living a Christian life.'⁶ The *Curriculum* goes on to say that 'moral education aims to develop the skill of making moral decisions with an informed conscience.'⁷ Relationships and Sexuality Education, therefore, must be taught in the Catholic School with reference to moral decision-making. It cannot be taught in some morally neutral way, since this would disregard the sacredness and dignity of each human being as a child of God.

It is equally important for the teacher in the Catholic school to present and teach RSE in a way that is relevant to a changing Ireland. In *Share the Good News: National Directory for Catechesis in Ireland*, inculturation is seen as a very important principle for Catholic Religious Education.⁸ We live in a culturally transformed Ireland which is reflected in the modern

classroom, made up of children from a diverse range of countries and religious beliefs. The assumptions of yesteryear in terms of faith formation within the family no longer stand. In many cases, the classroom will be the first, and possible only, place that the child considers their actions in terms of the teachings of the gospels. The teacher in the Catholic school, They must 'speak a language suited to today's children and young people'.⁹ This is particularly true in relation to RSE where sensitivity is key.

While in the past, the primary school was a safe haven where children were free from outside distractions and influences, now many children have mobile phones and tablets in their school bags and the influence of the internet pervades everything. Relationships and Sexuality Education in the modern Catholic school must take cognisance of this, and must teach children both to protect themselves and to be respectful of others in this environment. Pope Francis has described modern communications as 'a gift of God which involves a great responsibility'.¹⁰ It is the duty of RSE in the Catholic school to help the children develop a moral conscience around their internet usage for their own good and that of others.

The SPHE curriculum for primary schools determines what children will learn in terms of RSE as part of a spiral curriculum. The three strands, 'Myself', 'Myself and Others' and 'Myself and the Wider World' encompass issues to do with self-identity, taking care of my body, growing and changing, safety and protection as well as making decisions. Relating to others and developing citizenship are also covered.¹¹ The Catholic school must consider these topics within a moral framework that reflects the

³ *Amoris Laetitia*, 280.

⁴ Keynote address at JMB/AMCSS 31st Annual Conference.

⁵ Irish Episcopal Conference, *Catholic Preschool and Primary Religious Education Curriculum for Ireland*, Dublin: Veritas Publications, 2015, p. 26.

⁶ *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, Vatican: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1999, 459, 520, 564, 1698.

⁷ *Curriculum*, p. 27.

⁸ Irish Episcopal Conference, *Share the Good News: National Directory for Catechesis in Ireland*, Dublin: Veritas Publications, 2011, 16, 21, 29.

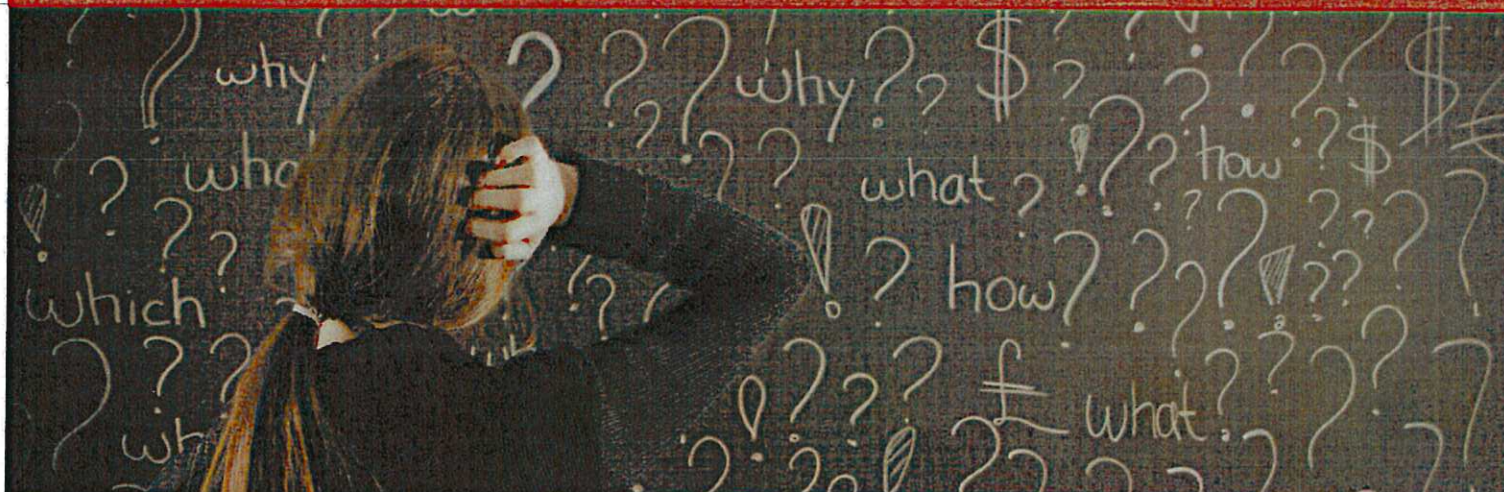
⁹ Congregation for the Clergy, *General Directory for Catechesis*, Vatican: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1997.

¹⁰ Pope Francis, Message of his Holiness for the 50th World Communications Day, Vatican: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2016. Available at:

http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/communications/documents/papa-francesco_20160124_messaggio-comunicazioni-sociali.html

¹¹ Department of Education and Science, *Primary School Curriculum: Social, Personal and Health Education*, Dublin: Stationery Office, 1999.

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teachings of the Church. The importance of language here cannot be overemphasised. The SPHE curriculum states that:

Language is ... powerful because it both creates and reflects a culture. Through SPHE children can begin to appreciate the connection between language and identity. A planned programme throughout the school also provides children with opportunities to explore the language used in various media and to recognise the values, attitudes and viewpoints being promoted and fostered.¹²

There is no morally neutral way for this to be achieved.

In teaching RSE the teacher in the Catholic school must be sensitive and aware of the family circumstances of the children in their care. Children do not choose their circumstances and should not be made to feel any form of 'otherness' by what is taught in class. In *Amoris Laetitia*, Pope Francis says, 'The Synod's reflections show us that there is no stereotype of the ideal family, but rather a challenging mosaic made up of many different realities, with all their joys, hopes and problems.'¹³ Love, commitment and respect are the cornerstones of family life and these must be reflected in the programme and presented in a compassionate way.

Children in the senior classes in primary school will be aware the existence of LGBTQI and some may question their own identity in this regard. The RSE programme in the Catholic school must not promote shame, but rather seek to affirm that every human being is made in the image and likeness of God and is loved by God as they are. The same moral obligation to respect and treat our bodies with dignity applies to people of all sexual orientation. However, the Church's teaching in relation to marriage between a man and a woman cannot be omitted.

The gift of love should underpin any RSE programme. Love is a gift from God. More than that, Jesus made clear that it is central to a Christian way of life. In John 13:24 Jesus said, 'A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.' So love in its purest sense, is what we were born to do. Within every tiny infant is the capacity to love. Pope Francis, in *Amoris Laetitia*, confirms the value of love by saying, 'Love opens our eyes and enables us to see, beyond all else, the great worth of a human being.'¹⁴ Throughout the RSE programme in the Catholic school, the children should learn the importance of loving themselves, the power of love within a family and the joy of loving others in a Christian, respectful way.

¹² Ibid., p. 7.

¹³ *Amoris Laetitia*, 57.

¹⁴ Ibid., 129.

I Am Me

SPHE STRANDS:

**Myself – Self-identity –
Taking care of my body –
Growing and changing**

Chatting

Chat with the children about themselves using questions such as:

- When you look in the mirror what do you see? Can you describe yourself? What colour hair do you have? What colour eyes? Do you have any teeth missing?
- Can you describe the things you like to do? Do you like playing football? Watching TV? Singing or dancing? Playing computer games? Climbing?
- Can you think of one word to describe yourself? E.g. Happy? Sporty? Fun? Quiet? Friendly? Kind? Gentle?

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Read the following story to the children:

Just me!

Emma and Liam's mum drove them to the station to meet Alison. The children were excited – they had never met Alison before. She was a friend who had gone to college with their mum years before. Mum said she was tall with red hair and that she was great fun. That's all they knew.

Standing on the platform they watched all the people stepping off the train. Next thing they heard a big shout 'There you are!' and Mum and Alison hugged each other. They were clearly very happy to see each other. When they had finished hugging, Mum introduced the children. 'This is Emma. She's five. And this is Liam. He's four.' The children shook Alison's hand.

Alison reached into her bag and took out two beautiful books and a bar of chocolate for each of the children. On the way back to the car she was looking at Emma carefully. 'Is she like your mother?' she asked Mum. 'I don't know really,' Mum replied, 'I think she's more like Tom.' Tom was the children's dad. 'No, I think she's more like your mum and your sister, Joan,' Alison insisted.

While the ladies in the front of the car were wondering who she was like, Emma was looking at the pictures in her book in the back and eating her chocolate. Eventually she looked up and said, 'I know who I'm like. I'm like me. Just me!' Everyone laughed and they made their way home.

When you have read the story ask questions such as:

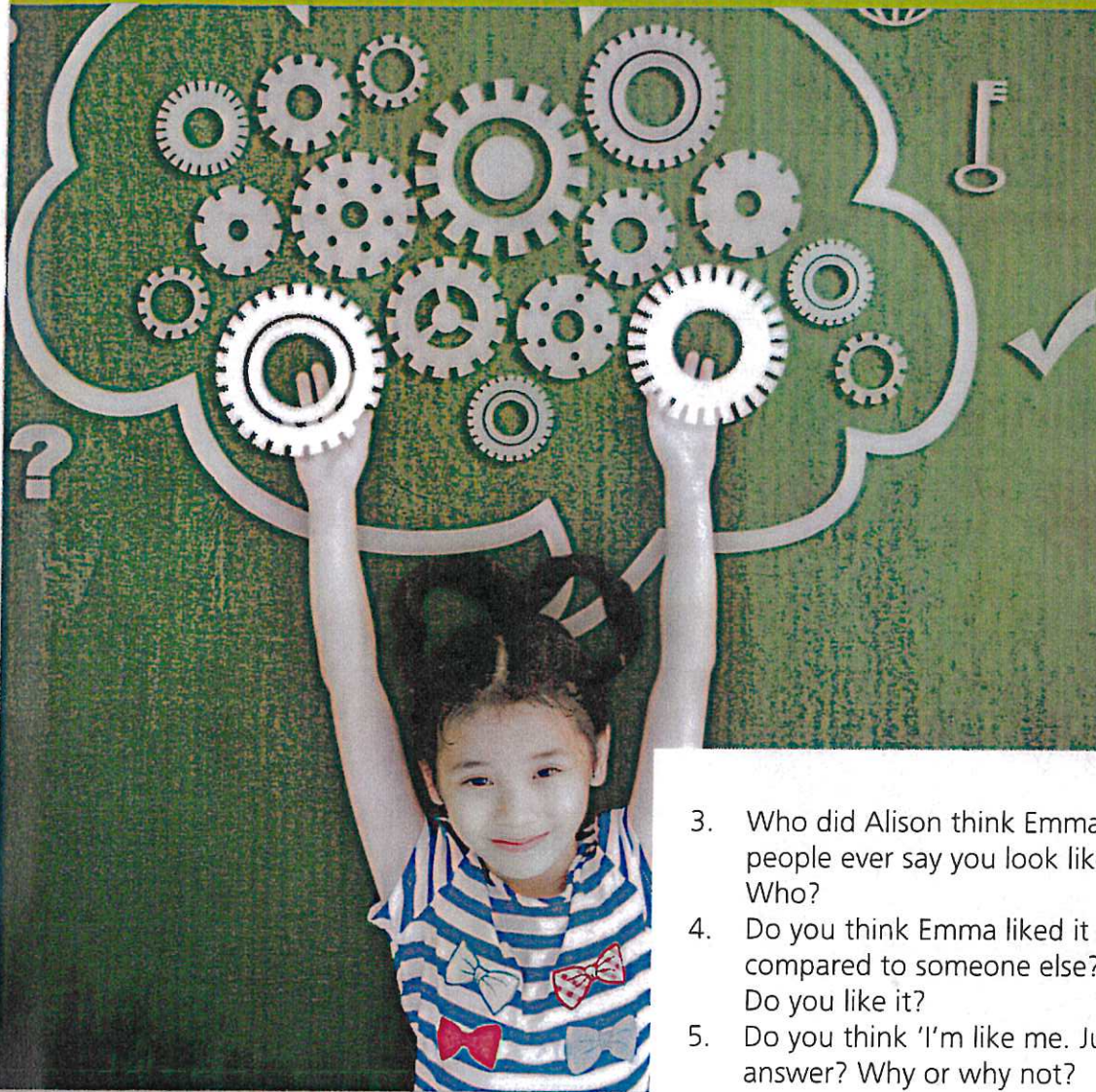
- Why were Emma and Liam at the station?
- What did Alison give them?
- What was the children's dad's name?
- What was Emma eating in the car?

Then ask some deeper questions such as:

1. When did the children's mum and Alison become friends? Did you ever meet any of your parents/guardians old friends? Talk about it.
2. How do you know they were pleased to see each other?

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3. Who did Alison think Emma was like? Do people ever say you look like someone else? Who?
4. Do you think Emma liked it when she was compared to someone else? Why or why not? Do you like it?
5. Do you think 'I'm like me. Just me.' was a good answer? Why or why not?

Art

Distribute the template entitled 'My Wonderful Body'. Invite the children to draw on the template to make it represent themselves.

Reflection:

Ask the children to close their eyes and sit really still. Then read the following:

Think of your favourite thing about yourself. Is it your hair? Is it your eyes? Is it the way you can sing? Or the way you can draw?

God made every one of us to be different and special. He wants us to take care of ourselves and to be good to ourselves.

Thank God for all the wonderful people he made; for your family, your friends, your neighbours, your teachers. Thank God for yourself. Amen.

My Body

SPHE STRANDS:

**Myself – Self-identity –
Growing and changing**

Listen

Invite the children to listen to the song 'My Body Clock' (*Alive O 4*). Alternatively, you can use the song 'I Am Special' (*Grow in Love: Junior Infants/ Primary 1, theme 2, lesson 2*).

When you have finished listening ask questions such as:

- How does your body tell you that you are hungry?
- What does your body do when you are sad?
- When you are listening to music what does your body do?
- How do you know when your body is tired?

Then ask deeper questions such as:

- When a baby is born what part of their body shows whether they are a boy or girl?
- Is it possible to know if a baby is a boy or girl before it is born? Did you ever see a scan of a baby in its mother's womb? What was it like?

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- Do you remember being in your mother's womb?
- How long do babies grow inside their mother?
- What changes have happened to your body since you were born? Do you like getting bigger? Why or why not?

Simon Says

Play a game of 'Simon Says' calling out instructions involving different parts of the body. For example... 'Simon says put your hands on your head.' 'Simon says touch your knee with your elbow.' If a child follows an instruction that doesn't begin with 'Simon Says' (e.g. 'Kneel down.') they are out of the game.

Story

Dimitri came home from school one day and sat at the table with his mum having a snack before starting his homework. His little sister Ava was in the high chair banging a spoon on the table. As Dimitri was taking his books out of his bag, he noticed a photograph on the table. It was mostly black with white shapes and lines on it. He hadn't ever seen a photo like it before.

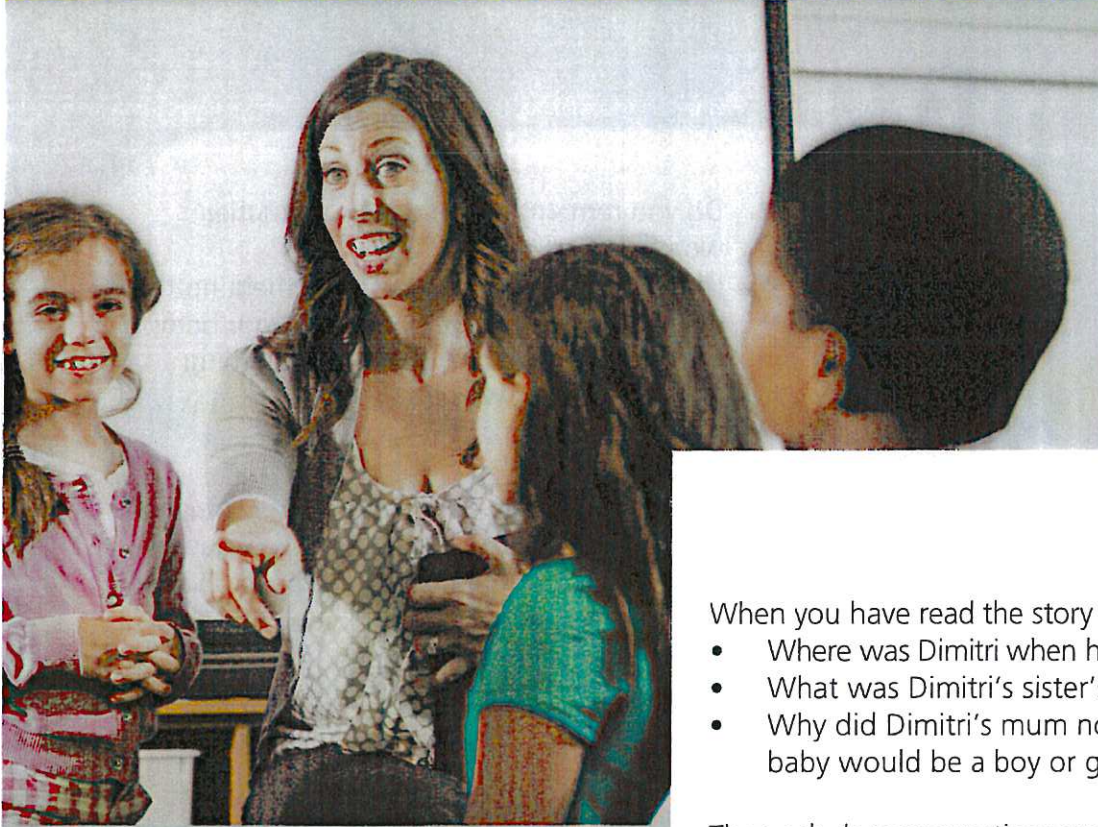
'What's that?' he asked his mum. 'It's a scan of your brother or sister,' Mum said, and she was smiling. Dimitri looked at Ava. 'It doesn't look like Ava,' he said, 'and anyway she's my sister, not my brother.' 'No it's not Ava,' said Mum. 'It's your new brother or sister that's growing in my tummy.' 'Another one!' said Dimitri. 'Yes, another one,' said Mum laughing. But we don't know yet whether it's a boy or girl.

Dimitri picked up the photo. 'I can't see a baby in it,' he said. 'Look carefully,' said Mum. 'Can you see a head, and a little fist?' 'Oh yeah,' said Dimitri. 'It's not very clear yet, but in another few months, when the baby is bigger, it will be much clearer and we might even be able to see if it's a boy or girl.' 'I hope it's a boy,' said Dimitri. 'We'll wait and see,' said Mum, 'but whatever God gives us we will be grateful for.'



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When you have read the story ask questions such as:

- Where was Dimitri when he saw the scan photo?
- What was Dimitri's sister's name?
- Why did Dimitri's mum not know if the new baby would be a boy or girl?

Then ask deeper questions such as:

- Do you think Dimitri was happy to be getting a new brother or sister? Why or why not?
- When someone is expecting a baby how can they take care of it?
- As the baby grows inside Dimitri's mum do you think she will need him to help her more? In what way?
- When the baby is born what kind of help will she need?

Reflection:

Show the children a picture of the nativity. Play some reflective music and read the following reflection:

Look at baby Jesus. He looks so small and helpless. An angel told Mary she would have a baby boy called Jesus. When he was in Mary's womb he grew and grew until he was ready to be born. Mary and Joseph fed him and looked after him. They wrapped him in warm blankets. They minded him when he was sick. They loved him just as your parents/ guardians love you. Jesus was a baby, just like you were a baby. God loves all of us, just like he loved Jesus. Close your eyes for a minute and thank God for sending Jesus. Together we say, 'Thank you God for babies. Thank you God for baby Jesus. Thank you God for me.'

I Have a Family



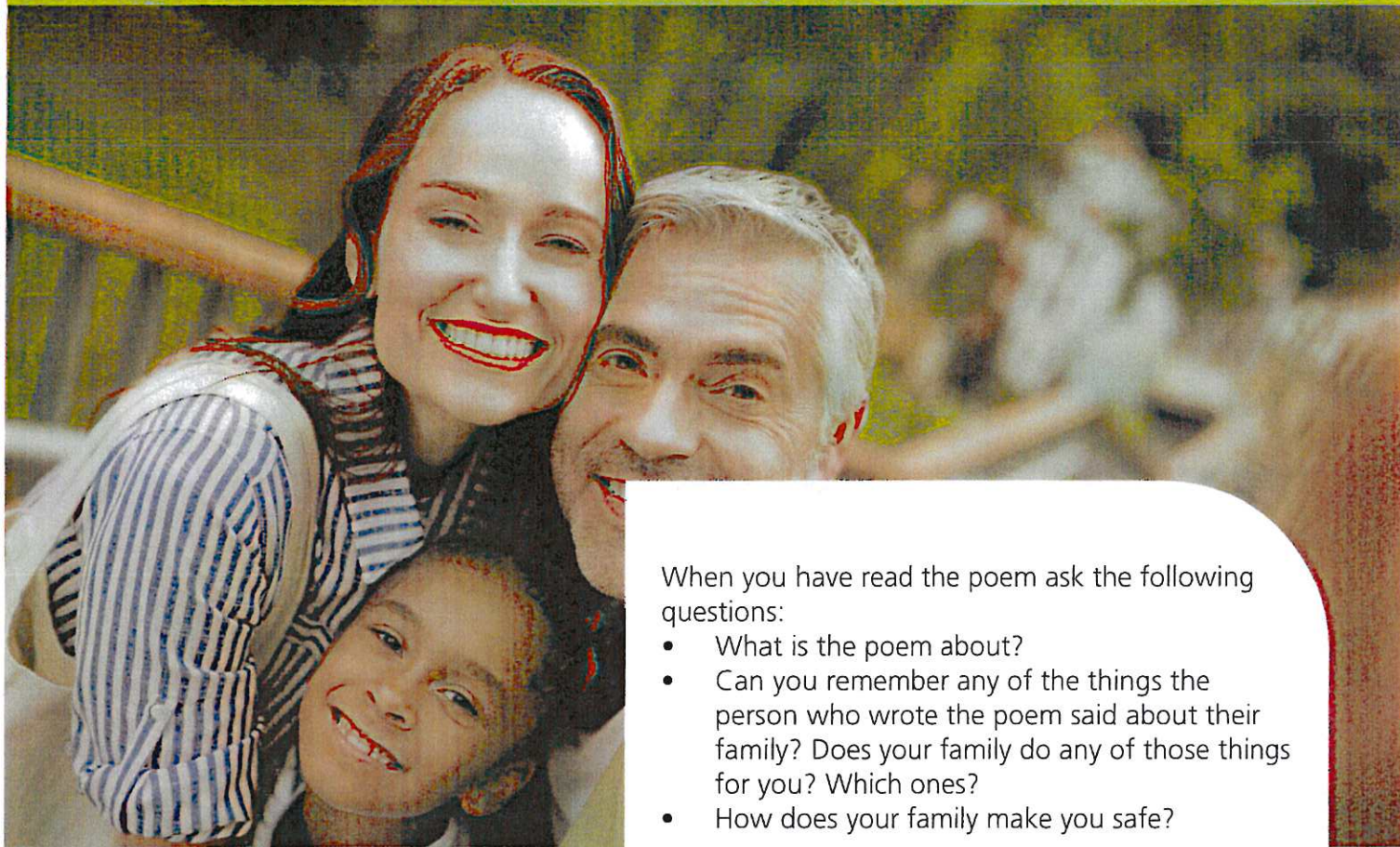
Poem: My Family

Who makes me happy and safe every day?
Who cares for me always and shows me the way?
Who tucks me into my bed every night?
And dries all my tears and cuddles me tight?
My family.

Who cares for me always and loves me so much?
Who hugs me and soothes me with their gentle touch?
Who can I turn to whenever I'm sad?
Who shows me the meaning of what's good and bad?
My family.

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When you have read the poem ask the following questions:

- What is the poem about?
- Can you remember any of the things the person who wrote the poem said about their family? Does your family do any of those things for you? Which ones?
- How does your family make you safe?

Then ask some deeper questions such as:

- Can you tell me how many people are in a family? Is it always the same number? Are families all the same?
- How do you show love for the people in your family?
- How do people in your family show love for you?
- What kind of things do families do together? What is your favourite thing to do with your family?
- When people argue in a family, how do they make up? How do you make up in your family?
- Who decides when it is time for bed or time to get up in your family? Is it important to do what your parents/guardians say? Why or why not?

Game

Invite the children to sit in a circle and very gently give a baby doll to one child. Ask the children to very gently pass the baby to each other and when they are holding it to say one way we can show love for our family:

e.g. I show love for my family by being kind or by playing nicely or by sharing my toys, etc.

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Reflection

Invite the children to close their eyes and sit quietly with their feet on the floor. Then read the following:

Think of the people who were in Jesus' family. There was Jesus, his mother Mary and Joseph. They lived in Nazareth. Joseph was a carpenter and Jesus used to help him sometimes when he was young. His mother Mary cared for him and taught him about God.

Families are all about love. Jesus' family loved each other just like your family do. God wants us to respect our parents and guardians. He wants us to do as our parents/guardians ask and to be nice to them. Joseph and his mother Mary cared for him, protected him and taught him about God. Thank you God for our parents and guardians. Thank you for our grandparents. Thank you for our brothers and sisters, aunts and uncles. Help us all to love each other every day. Amen.

I Have Friends



SPHE STRANDS:

**Myself and Others – My friends and other people –
Relating to others**

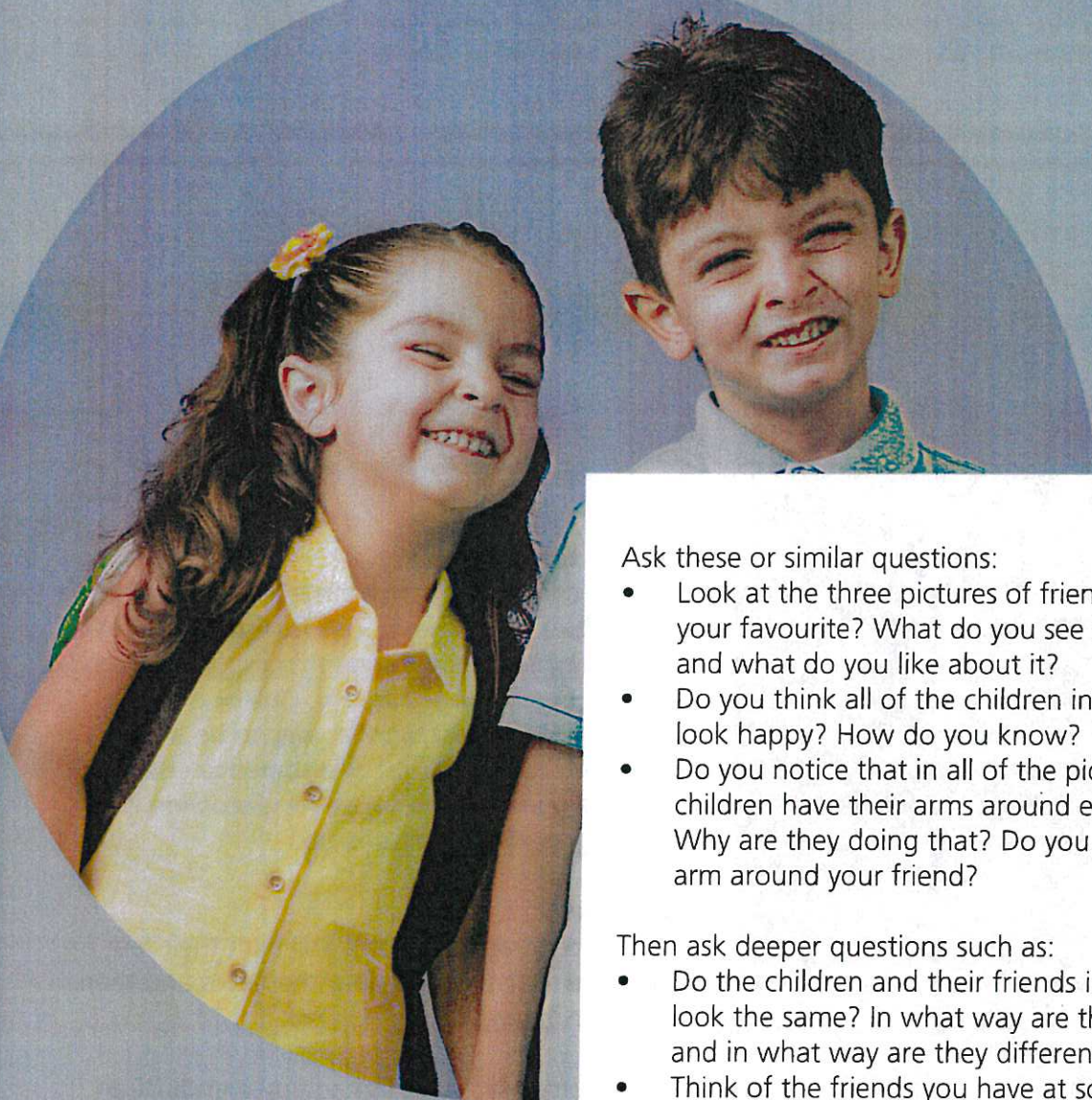
Chatting

Show the children these or similar images representing friendship.



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Ask these or similar questions:

- Look at the three pictures of friends and pick your favourite? What do you see in the picture and what do you like about it?
- Do you think all of the children in the pictures look happy? How do you know?
- Do you notice that in all of the pictures the children have their arms around each other? Why are they doing that? Do you ever put your arm around your friend?

Then ask deeper questions such as:

- Do the children and their friends in the pictures look the same? In what way are they the same and in what way are they different?
- Think of the friends you have at school and at home – are they all the same size? Is there anyone who has a different skin colour? Do they all have the same number of people in their family?
- How did you pick your friends? What do you like about them?
- Do you ever argue with your friends? Friends don't always agree. Why do people still stay friends even when they disagree or argue?

Art Activity

Invite the children to draw a group of their friends together.

Allow some time for the children to explain what they have drawn to the child beside them and to the whole class if time allows.

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Game: A Good Friend

Invite the children to sit in a circle and think of how they can be a good friend. Teacher sits in the circle and starts by suggesting something such as sharing your toys, playing together, etc. One by one the children must suggest another way to be a good friend. They cannot repeat one someone else has said. It is a good idea to pause for discussion if any interesting suggestions come up.

Reflection

Invite the children to sit really still with their feet on the ground. Ask them to close their eyes and then read the following:

Can you remember if Jesus had any friends? Can you remember any of their names? (Matthew, Mark, Luke, Peter, James, John, etc.) Jesus chose twelve special friends to help him to tell people about God. They were from lots of different places and different families.

Jesus asked us to love one another. When you are kind to your friends you are doing what Jesus asked you to do. Think of ways you can be kind to your friends.

Let's say a little prayer for our friends:

Thank you God for all my friends

We run and jump and play.

Help me to be kind to them

Every single day.

Amen.

Growing and Changing



SPHE STRANDS:

**Myself – Self-identity –
Taking care of my body –
Growing and changing**

Activity

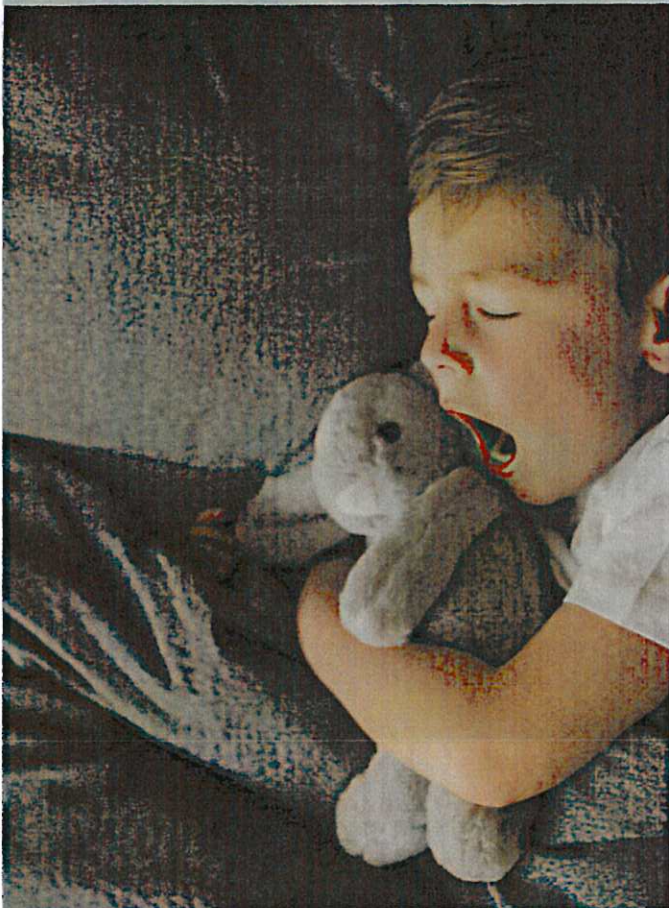
- Distribute a blank sheet of paper to each child and a crayon or colouring pencil.
- Invite them to draw around their non-dominant hand carefully and to colour it in.
- These can be displayed on the wall.

Chat to the children about their drawings using these or similar questions:

- Look around at other children's hand drawings – are they all the same size? Why or why not?
- Was your hand print always the same size as it is now? Why or why not?
- Are you the same height as you were last year? How do you know?
- Does everyone grow as they get older? When do people stop growing? Is it possible to get smaller? (e.g. older people)

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- What helps you to grow bigger and stronger? (e.g. healthy food, lots of sleep, exercise)
- What do you like about getting bigger? Is there anything you don't like?

Story: 'I Don't Want to be Big'

Ronan was six years old. He lived with his mam and gran in a small house in Dublin. He didn't have any brothers or sisters so he slept on his own in the smallest bedroom in the house. He loved his bedroom, but sometimes he was scared of the dark. His mam would read a story to him at night and give him a kiss as she was leaving the room. He always said, 'Don't forget to leave the door a little bit open,' and Mam always said, 'Don't worry I will.'

One night his mam read a story about a boy who was eight. The boy in the story had just learned to ride a big bike. He was allowed to stay up late and the story said he was not afraid of the dark now. 'I don't want to be big,' Ronan said to his mam. She laughed and said, 'Of course you do.' But when Mam went out of the room Ronan began to worry.

There were some things he liked about getting bigger. He liked that he was allowed to go next door to his friend's house on his own now and that Mam let him make his own breakfast. He liked that he was old enough to play football with the club and that he was taller than his cousin. But there were lots of things he didn't like about getting bigger. He worried that his mam would stop reading stories for him. She sometimes said, 'You're nearly big enough to read the story yourself now.' He wanted his gran to still hold his hand walking home from school. Her hand was so soft and she was so nice and kind. And he was definitely still afraid of the dark and was not ready to start closing the door at night.

The next night his mam came into his room to read the story she noticed that Ronan was very quiet. Then she saw a little tear in his eye and she asked,

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'What's wrong?' Ronan burst into tears and told her all the things he had been worrying about. Mam hugged him for a very long time. Then she patiently explained to him 'You will always be my little boy, Ronan. Everybody grows and changes but there is no hurry. You take as long as you like. One step at a time. Growing up is fun, I promise. Now let's think of all the great things you can do now that you couldn't do when you were four.'

When you have read the story ask questions such as:

- Why did Ronan not want to get bigger? Did you ever feel like that?
- Ronan was afraid of the dark. Are you afraid of anything? Who helps you when you're scared?
- Do you think growing up is fun? Why or why not?
- Can you think of something you can do now that you couldn't do when you were four? (e.g. button your jacket, tie laces, ride a bike, prepare food, etc.)
- Encourage the children to talk to their parents about growing up – how they have grown and changed since they were babies.

Reflection:

Invite the children to close their eyes and read the following reflection:

Sit very still with your eyes closed. Imagine when you were a tiny, helpless, baby. You couldn't walk or talk or feed yourself. Adults had to do everything for you. Then you learned to sit up ... and crawl ... and you said a few words. Eventually you could walk and talk all on your own.

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When you got good at walking and talking you tried to run and sing and jump and climb. You were always trying new things. Your arms and legs grew longer and stronger and your mind was always learning new things.

Now you are at school and you're even bigger again. You can do so much now that you couldn't do before and you will continue to grow and learn so much more.

We thank God for our amazing bodies and minds. We know we need to look after ourselves by eating well, sleeping and keeping ourselves safe. We also know that God wants us to take care of each other. Thank you God for my wonderful body. Thank you God for my family and friends. Thank you God for me.

Keeping Safe

A young girl with brown hair in pigtails, wearing a yellow dress with white polka dots, is shown from the waist up. She is looking towards the camera with a slight smile. Her right arm is raised, and her hand is near her head. The background is a textured, dark greenish-blue.

SPHE STRANDS:

Myself – Taking care of my body – Growing and changing – Safety and protection

Video

- Invite the children to watch the following video showing the Safe Cross Code: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DIIuoGcCKNg>
- Play the video a second time and invite the children to stand behind their chairs and try the dance moves shown on screen.

Chatting

Chat to the children about road safety using questions such as:

- Can you remember any of the things the video told us to remember when we are crossing the road?
- Why is crossing the road dangerous?

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- Is every road dangerous to cross? Why or why not?
- The video tells us how to be careful and keep ourselves safe when we are walking on the roadside. How can you be careful if you are a driver? Why is it very important that drivers are careful? (They could hurt or kill someone.) How can you be careful if you are a cyclist? Could a cyclist hurt someone if they weren't careful?



Activity

Show the children the following (or similar) image showing dangers in the home.

Discuss the potential hazards/danger using questions such as:

- Do you see anything dangerous in the picture? Tell me one thing that you see and what you think might happen next.
- What should this family be more careful about?
- Sometimes when we are careless we might be the cause of someone else getting hurt. Can you think of ways you can keep other people safe by being more careful – at home, in school, in town?

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Reflection

Invite the children to close their eyes and to sit very still with their feet on the floor. Then read the following:

Jesus wants us to love ourselves and to love others. He asks us to take care of each other. Think of all the ways your family takes care of you. Help us to keep ourselves safe and to be careful not to hurt anybody else.

Together we will say the 'Angel of God' prayer:

Angel sent by God to guide me
Be my light and walk beside me
Be my guardian and protect me
On the path of life direct me.
Amen.

My Family

SPHE STRANDS:

**Myself and Others – Myself
and my family – Relating to
others**

Photos

Invite the children to bring in a photo of their family at a special occasion.

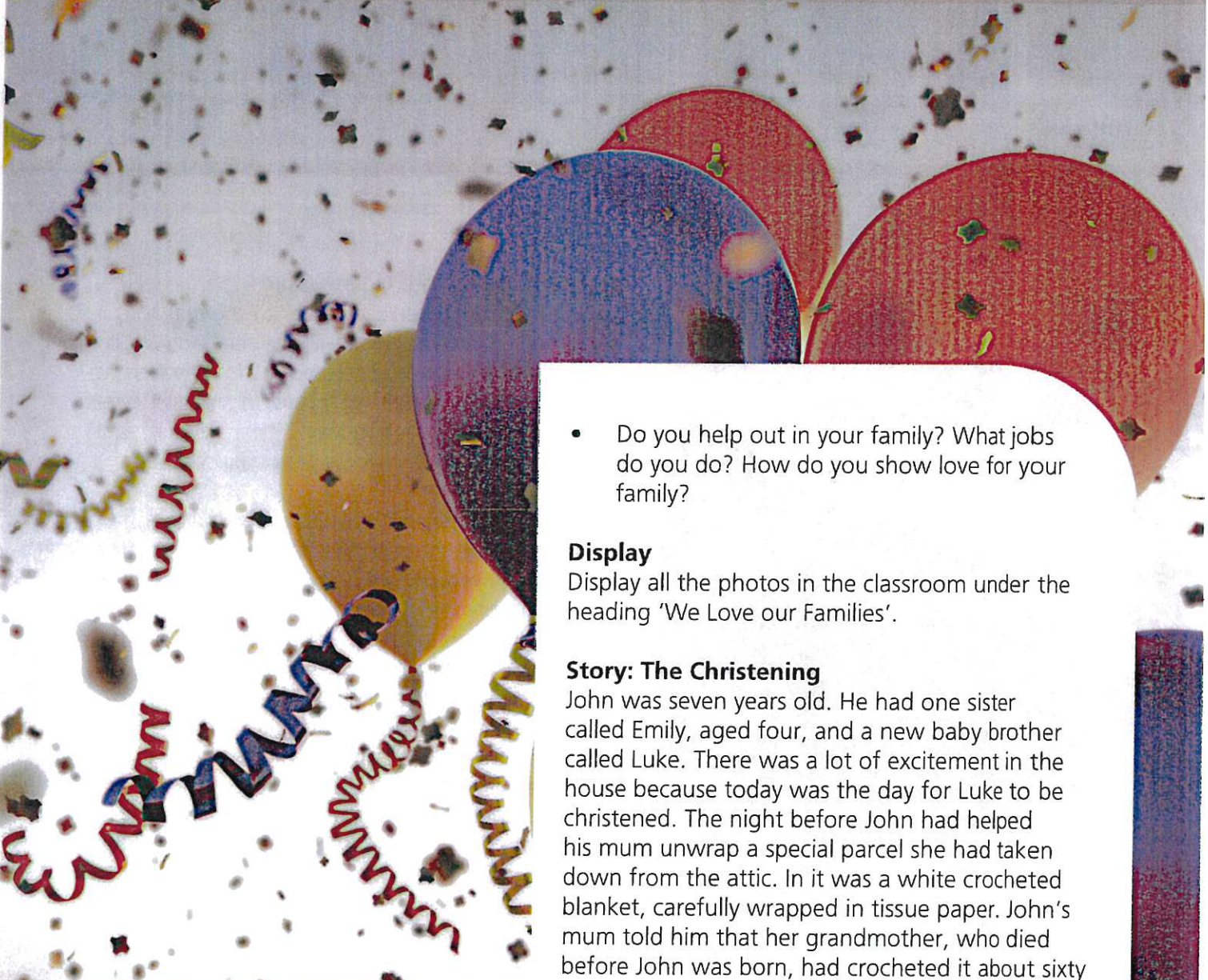
Take time to allow each child to tell the child beside them about their photo first and then, if time allows, to tell the class.

Some general questions such as the following might be useful:

- Can you remember when this photo was taken? Was it a happy day? Why or why not?
- All of our family photos are different but each person in your own picture is important to you. They all look after you and mind you. Is there anyone else who minds you?
- Are your aunts and uncles and cousins in the picture? Who else is part of your family? Do you have a favourite cousin or aunt or uncle? Tell the child beside you about them and why you love them so much.
- Why is it important to be part of a family?

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- Do you help out in your family? What jobs do you do? How do you show love for your family?

Display

Display all the photos in the classroom under the heading 'We Love our Families'.

Story: The Christening

John was seven years old. He had one sister called Emily, aged four, and a new baby brother called Luke. There was a lot of excitement in the house because today was the day for Luke to be christened. The night before John had helped his mum unwrap a special parcel she had taken down from the attic. In it was a white crocheted blanket, carefully wrapped in tissue paper. John's mum told him that her grandmother, who died before John was born, had crocheted it about sixty years ago and that all of her family used it for their Christening ceremonies. 'Wow! Sixty years!' John exclaimed, 'It's an antique!' 'Well, not quite,' said his mum, 'but it's very precious to this family.'

Uncle Eamon and Auntie Clare would be arriving soon. They were going to be Luke's godparents. Mum explained to John that this was a very important job and that she knew that Eamon and Clare would play a special part in Luke's life from now on. 'Does that mean that they will prefer him to me?' John asked, looking disappointed. 'No, no not at all', Mum said, 'they still love all of us. You have your own godparents, don't you?' John said 'Oh, yes. Uncle Bill and Mary. I'm really looking forward to asking them to my First Holy Communion.'

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Just then, Dad walked in and asked John to help him move the kitchen table over to the wall to make more space for when all the relations would arrive for food after the ceremony. 'I love when we move the kitchen table,' John said, 'It means there's going to be a great family day.' 'There sure is,' said Dad, 'Now help me blow up these balloons.'

John and Emily helped blowing up the balloons while their mum dressed the baby all in white. 'Where will everyone sit?' asked John, 'We don't have enough chairs.' 'Don't worry,' said Dad, 'Some people can stand and eat at the counter-top and we'll take it in turns to sit. The important thing is that we're all together.' Suddenly John ran out of the room and came back in struggling to carry a large straight-backed chair. 'What are you doing?' asked Dad, 'I told you we didn't need more chairs.' 'But you forgot something important,' answered John, 'Granny just got her hip replaced. I want this chair for her.'

Dad gave John a big hug. 'You're such a kind boy,' he said, 'and you think of everything.' 'I love Granny,' said John 'and I love all my family. This is such a special day.'

Having read the story ask questions similar to the following:

- What was the special occasion the family was getting ready for?
- How did they get the house ready?
- How did John help? Did Emily help at all? Did Luke? Why or why not?
- Do you like family occasions? Why or why not?
- Why did Dad give John a big hug? Did you ever think of something that everyone else in your family forgot?
- Do you have something special like the Christening blanket that was made by someone in your family? Talk about it.

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Caring for My Family – Charades

- Invite a child to come forward and, without speaking, to mime an activity they do to help care for their family at home – it could be rocking a baby, sweeping the floor, giving a hug, tidying up, etc.
- Whichever child guesses correctly has the next turn to mime.

Reflection

Invite the children to close their eyes and read the following reflection:

Imagine you are at home with your family. Say their names quietly in your head. Think of all the love you have for each one. Try to remember something kind one of your family members did for you recently. Thank God for that person. Now think of something nice you did for a member of your family. Thank God for all the love you share in your family. Now think of someone in your wider family, maybe your aunt, uncle, granny/grandad or cousin. Thank God for all your relations and all those who love you. Showing love in families is great. Thank you God for the gift of my family.

I Can Make Choices

SPHE STRANDS:

Myself – Growing and changing

**Myself and Others –
Relating to others**

**Myself and the Wider World
– My school community**

Chatting

Invite the children to chat about choices by asking questions such as:

- Does anyone know what a choice is?
- Can you think of any choice you made today? (What to have for breakfast, what to bring for lunch, where to sit in the car, who to talk to in the yard, etc.)
- When you go home after school what choices might you make? (When to do homework, what to watch on TV or PlayStation, whether to play outside or inside, to eat a biscuit or not, etc.)

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Choices have consequences:

Read the following scenarios to the children discussing each one in turn.

1. Imagine you are playing with your friend. Another child comes over and asks to play. Will you tell them to go away or will you let them join in?

- How will they feel if you tell them to go away? How will you feel?
- Did anyone ever tell you to go away? How did you feel?
- Why might you say 'go away.' Would you feel bad later or would you be happy with your decision?
- Do you think we should be friendly to each other? Why or why not? Do you like when people are friendly to you?

2. Your mammy has been doing housework all day. Will you say 'I'm hungry. Is the dinner not ready yet?' or will you offer to help her?

- How will Mammy feel if you complain that the dinner is late?
- How will she feel if you offer to help? How will you feel?
- Why might you complain that the dinner is late? Do you ever forget how Mammy or Daddy are feeling and just think about how you are feeling? Is that a good idea? Why or why not?
- Do you think it's a good decision to offer to help when you can?

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3. You have to choose what lunch to bring to football training on Saturday. Will you bring a fizzy drink, crisps and chocolate or water, a sandwich and a small treat?

- Which decision do you think is the best for taking care of your body?
- How do you feel when you make decisions that keep you strong and healthy?
- It's good to have a little treat from time to time, but how do you feel if you have too many treats?

Summarise by explaining to the children that as we get older we make more and more decisions for ourselves. Some are good and some are not so good. But all our decisions have consequences. It's good to think of the consequences before you make a decision rather than afterwards.

Easy/Hard Choices

Ask the children if they think that some decisions or choices are easier than others – for example what to have for breakfast or what to buy in a sweetshop?

Then read out the following and invite the children to put up their hands if they think it is easy and to keep their hands down if they think it is hard.

- Breakfast – cereal or toast?
- Going to the sweet shop or toy shop?
- Writing with a pen or pencil?
- Going to bed early or late?
- Helping your mum or watching TV?
- Wearing tracksuit or jeans?

Invite the children to divide a page in half and to draw a difficult decision they made. On one side draw the decision they made and on the other what they decided not to do.

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Poem: I Don't Know What to Do

It's hard to make decisions
I don't know what to do.
Will I do whatever I want
Or should I think of you?

I want to play with Jenny
But Jenny is with Sue.
I'm scared to ask if I can play –
I don't know what to do.
It really hurts my feelings
If people just don't care.
I'll try to make good choices
At home and everywhere.

Reflection

Invite the children to sit very still with their feet on the floor and to close their eyes. Then read the following:

Jesus had lots of friends. He told them that they should treat each other the way they wanted others to treat them. He wants us to be kind to each other, and to treat each other fairly. Think of your friends and all the fun things you do together. God wants us to look after ourselves too and to make good choices for our bodies and minds. Thank you God for giving us lots of good things to choose. Help us to make good decisions every day. Amen.

I Am Unique

SPHE STRANDS:

Myself – Growing and changing – Safety and protection

Chatting

Chat to the children about things they like to do using questions such as:

- What is your favourite flavour of ice cream? Why do you like it?
- What do you like to do on Saturdays? Talk about it.
- What food do you really not like to eat? Why?
- What is your favourite colour? Did you always like that colour or did you have another favourite before? Chat to the person beside you about their favourite colour and their lucky number.

Art Activity

Distribute an A4 page to the children and invite them to divide it in half drawing some of their favourite things on one side and their least favourite things on the other.