



LUCAN EDUCATE TOGETHER

SUBSTANCE ABUSE POLICY

Scope of Policy:

This policy applies to the school community of Lucan Educate Together namely the students, teachers, special needs assistants, auxiliary staff members, visitors, i.e. every person who enters the school grounds. It applies to the school building and grounds and to any area where a school related activity takes place, e.g. school tour, after school activities.

The school's shared understanding of a "substance misuse or a drug related incident" is:

- Any unusual or unbecoming behaviour resulting from intake or use of alcohol, tobacco or illegal drugs or medication.
- The sale or passing on of any illegal substance,
- The possession of alcohol, tobacco or illegal drugs on school grounds or at school related activities
- Disposal of drugs or related items (e.g. syringes) found on school property.

Aims of Policy:

The primary aim of the substance use policy of Lucan Educate Together is prevention. We aim to protect our pupils from the harmful effects of substance misuse and to educate them about tobacco, alcohol, solvents and illegal drugs. We aim to develop in our pupils' a healthy self-esteem, through providing a positive school climate and atmosphere and through giving our pupils age appropriate information from educational programmes.

- To ensure the welfare, care and education of all our pupils is provided for as outlined in the Education Act 1998 and the Education Act 2000.
- To reinforce the school's role in the prevention of alcohol, tobacco and other drug-related problems.
- To standardise and document the school community's agreed position on and accepted procedures for dealing with substance-related incidents and problems.
- To provide a planned and co-ordinated response to substance -related problems
- To identify a sequence of events that will be followed when an incident of prohibited drug-use occurs and incorporates appropriate disciplinary measures.
- To clarify roles, rights and responsibilities of all school community members, in relation to alcohol, tobacco and other drug-related problems.
- To ensure that the school staff are not placed at risk by their actions through a clear statement of the school's legal and procedural responsibilities
- To support staff by providing clear guidelines to follow if alcohol, tobacco and other drug-related problems occur.

Relationship to School's Mission, Vision and Aims:

Our substance use policy reflects the ethos of Lucan Educate Together.

It is

- Child –centred – the policy is based on the welfare of every student.
- Democratic – children, staff and parents will all have an input into this policy
- Multi – denominational –the policy is non-racist and non- discriminatory
- Co-educational – the policy respects both sexes

Rationale:

Why is this Policy Necessary?

The world in which we live presents young people with many challenges, which affect their health and well-being. Exposure to alcohol, tobacco and drugs is part of this reality. As a school we need to reflect upon how we might provide for the needs of our student cohort and respond appropriately to what are sometimes sensitive and emotive issues.

The Education Act 1998 provides that schools should promote the social and personal development of students and provide health education for them. The National Drugs Strategy '*Building on Experience*' is now government policy and it requires schools to have a substance use policy in place. The recent report from the National Advisory Committee on Drugs entitled '*Drug Use Prevention*' (November 2001) underlines the importance of schools developing substance use policies.

The school authority in Lucan Educate Together has a moral and legal obligation to ensure compliance with the criminal law.

Management of Persons in the Workplace:

Under The Influence of Drugs and / or Alcohol:

The Board of Management will ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that pupils and other persons in the workplace are not exposed to risks to their safety, health or welfare from persons under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol. The term "in the workplace", in the preceding sentence includes all school related activities taking place under the supervision of an adult, with the Board's approval, both within and away from the school premises.

Every school employee shall, while at work, ensure that he or she is not under the influence of an intoxicant as required by Section 13 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005.

Procedures to follow, when dealing with an incident, involving substance use.

When a child is involved:

- Any responsible adult can inform the Principal /Deputy of incident.
- Ensure child involved is in a safe place and in no immediate danger to themselves or others.
- Seek medical intervention if necessary.
- Contact family immediately.
- Consult with the family regarding appropriate support from the school, e.g. medical advice or counselling.
- Ensure that a quiet place (e.g. small meeting room, Principal's office) can be made available for students/staff, if applicable.
- Official records should be kept at this point and all involved are reminded of the need for confidentiality.
- The incident will be reported to the BOM and appropriate sanctions for the misbehavior will be determined by our Code of Behaviour.
- If incident involves a number of children, we will refer to the Critical Incident Policy for the correct procedures to follow.
- It should also be noted that a single incident of serious misconduct may be grounds for suspension (NEWB Code of Behaviour Guidelines p.71)

B. When a member of staff is involved

- Any responsible adult may inform the Principal / Deputy Principal of an incident
- The Principal and/or Deputy Principal may ask the person involved to remove him/herself from the workplace, in the interests of the safety, health and welfare of the employee and others. Provision will be made to ensure staff member gets home safely.
- Medical intervention will be sought if necessary.
- A formal meeting will take place between the Principal / Deputy and the staff member involved.
- Official records will be kept at this point and all parties involved reminded of the need for confidentiality.
- Other interventions may be required over time to resolve the issue e.g. counselling/ medical advice (Employee Assistance Service Ph: 1800 400 057 or e-mail eas@vhics.ie)
- The case may be brought before the Board of Management. The B.O.M. will discuss the case and decide if disciplinary procedures are required.
- A serious incident of misconduct may be grounds for informing the Gardai.
- A single incident of serious misconduct may be grounds for informing the DES.

C. When a member of the school community with a duty of care is involved.

- The Principal/Deputy Principal will be informed of incident.
- All necessary steps will be taken to protect the pupils and safeguard their best interests.
- Medical intervention for the individual will be sought if necessary.
- The Principal/ Deputy will inform the Gardai of the incident if deemed necessary.
- Official records will be kept at this point and all involved reminded of the need for confidentiality.
- Other interventions may be required over time to resolve the issue e.g. counselling/ medical advice.
- The case may be brought before the Board of Management. The B.O.M. will discuss the case and decide if sanctions are required.

The following procedures are adhered to in dealing with an incident requiring medical intervention:

- 'Universal Precautions' are applied; e.g. wearing of proper protective gloves , washing and making safe an area after an incident
- If available, staff with First Aid training may assist while waiting for emergency services.
- A defibrillator is available in the hall.
- All phone numbers of relevant agencies are displayed in the office.
- A doctor from a local medical practice has agreed to respond in the event of a medical emergency in the school
- All staff are aware of the Critical Incident Policy, its team members and procedures.

Contact with the Gardai regarding minor incidents will be at the discretion of the Principal and the Chairperson of the Board of Management. However all serious substance abuse incidents will be reported.

Content of Plan

Curriculum:

1. Strands and Strand Units:

- Myself
- Taking care of my body
- Safety and protection
- Making decisions

2. Contexts for Substance Use:

- Discrete time - Substance Use is part of the SPHE programme which is formally taught for a half hour slot each week.
- Integration with other subjects for example, SESE, Ethical Core Curriculum (see Curriculum Teacher Guidelines pg 5, 31-32 and 36-41.)
- Positive school environment and climate.
- In our school we strive to uphold our ethos, which encourages the holistic development of each child. Central to this idea is developing respect for our own bodies and for each other. The child centred and democratic nature of our school setting supports the effective delivery of the SPHE curriculum

3. Approaches and Methodologies:

- To facilitate the many styles of learning a diverse range of methodologies are used including; active learning, discussion, drama, debate, role play, collaborative learning. See page 6 Curriculum.

4. Assessment:

The primary emphasis is on informal assessment but will be complimented by the following

- Pupil portfolios
- Teacher observation
- Designed tests and tasks
- *Project work*

5. Children with Different Needs:

The curriculum will be differentiated to cater for the needs of individual children. It will also be adapted for the children in our Outreach classes so that each child can access the curriculum fully. Teaching methodologies will take cognisance of children who do not have English as their first language. A child centered approach will ensure equal opportunities for learning for all children.

6. Equality of Participation and Access:

All children regardless of their belief system or culture will have access to the curriculum. Children with special needs will have access on an appropriate level.

7. Policies and Programmes that support Substance Use Policy:

Regular meetings and assemblies are held with the children to promote positive behavior and enable children to make good choices with regard to various aspects of their lives.

Ethical Core Curriculum – The Learn Together Live Together programme supports the S.P.H. E. programme by its commitment to the four key principles of Educate Together.

- Child Protection Policy
- Stay Safe Programme
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Code of Behaviour
- Healthy Eating Policy
- Administration of medicines policy
- Walk Tall Programme

8. Resources:

The Walk Tall, Be Safe and RSE programmes are available at all class levels.

9. Individual Teachers' Planning and Reporting:

Each teacher will refer to the SPHE contents when preparing their long term and short term plans. Teachers can discuss content at curriculum / staff meetings.

Our Cúntus Míosuils will provide a review of content taught in relevant year groups.

10. Staff Development:

Staff will be informed of any new developments or resources at staff meetings. Staff will be given opportunities to attend relevant courses. The BOM will endeavour to update resources on a regular basis.

11. Parental Involvement:

Parents are welcome to discuss any concerns they may have about Substance Use. The PTA will endeavour to invite speakers on the subject of Substance Use and parents are encouraged to attend these meetings.

12. Community Links:

Outside agencies may be invited to inform the children about substance use e.g. effects of smoking by a healthcare professional. All external facilitators must be approved in advance by the principal and the BOM. Visitors must work under the guidance and the supervision of the class teacher. Parents are made aware of any visitors or agency proposing to engage with pupils in the classroom and school.

13. Implementation Procedures

Copies of this policy will be circulated to all staff members for their input and observations. Following this, the policy will be amended as necessary. As a next step the policy will be presented to the BOM and the Executive for their consideration and ratification.

14. Monitoring and Review Procedures

A record will be kept in school of all substance use incidents. The policy will be reviewed annually, in the light of changing information / legislation and

subsequent to a substance related incident .A copy of this policy will be issued to all staff members and a reminder of its contents will be given at the first staff meeting of each year.

Activity:	Date:
Reviewed:	
Ratified by Board of Management:	
Effective from:	
Next Review Date: *	

*** Unless reviewed at an earlier date if deemed necessary by a change in law, Department policy, or to reflect changing school circumstances.**

Signed: _____

Chairperson:

Signed: _____

Principal: