



LUCAN EDUCATE TOGETHER

POLICY ON RELATIONSHIP AND SEXUALITY EDUCATION

Lucan Educate Together National School caters for over four hundred primary school pupils. Our school is a multi-denominational and co-educational school. There are two classes at each level in the school from Junior Infants to Sixth class. There are also two classes which cater for children on the autistic spectrum. The school is run under the ethos of 'Educate Together'.

Our School Philosophy:

Lucan Educate Together National School is a school under the ethos of 'Educate Together'. The Educate Together Ethos is comprised of four pillars, each of which is reflected in how relationship and sexuality education is promoted and delivered within our school.

Child Centredness:

It is our aim that all activities that the children engage in, within the RSE programme, are at all times, child centred and age appropriate.

Democratic:

Each member of the school community has both an individual and collective responsibility for the children's education. As a school community we, Teachers, Parents and the members of the board of management promote and show the children how to have positive relationships on an informal and formal level. This is central to RSE's place within the SPHE programme. Relationship education encompasses negotiation *skills*, *conflict resolution*, *social greetings and daily dealings with both adults and children in the school setting*. *During the RSE programme* the school aims to respect each person's ideas, opinions and experiences. The right to express these will be respected.

Equality based Education:

We up-hold, respect and accept equality of beliefs, whether religious or non-religious. We celebrate diverse lifestyles held by children, parents, staff and members of the wider community.

Co-Educational:

Through the RSE curriculum each child is encouraged to explore his / her unique potential in an environment that offers equal opportunities and equal respect for boys and girls. We promote each child's development of their self-identity, their gender identity being an important part of this. In this, each child is encouraged to appreciate the unique difference between boys and girls, while not promoting gender stereotyping. We are committed to fostering a sense of respect, understanding and friendship between boys and girls.

Definition of Relationship and Sexuality Education:

In our school, Relationship and Sexuality Education is a lifelong journey, where, our children learn about their development and about their friendships and relationships with others.

Central to relationship and sexuality education is the promotion of positive self image and respect for themselves and others.

Aims of RSE:

The aims of RSE are:

1. To enhance the personal development, self esteem and emotional well being of each child.
2. To encourage the child to develop healthy friendships and relationships
3. To foster an understanding of, and a healthy attitude to human sexuality and relationships in a frame- work of our school ethos.
4. To enable the child to be comfortable with his or her own sexuality and that of others while growing and developing.
5. To enable the child to understand and respect that love, sexual intimacy and reproduction are natural parts of our lives.
6. To inspire in the child an appreciation of birth and new life.

Relationship of Relationship and Sexuality Education (RSE) to Social Personal and Health Education (SPHE):

SPHE – social personal and health education is a central part of the Primary school curriculum. In SPHE the children will develop a broad range of attitudes, skills and understanding relevant to their own health and well being, to other people and to the

society in which he / she lives. Through formal and informal instruction the children will deal with scenarios, stories, and examples which will help inform their actions, behavior and decisions in the many situations that he/she may encounter and deal with as everyday part of life and living. RSE is an integral part of Social Personal and Health Education (SPHE) and must be taught in this context to keep its perspective and to give it proper emphasis.

Social, Personal & Health Education:

Relationships and sexuality education is a natural and important part of SPHE. In relation to specific sexual education the following topics will be covered.

Infant Classes:

My Body: Identify external parts of the male and female body:
Head, eye, ears, nose, breast, skin, hips, navel, vagina, penis, bottom, knee, leg, foot.

First & Second Classes:

My Body: Name and identify external parts of the male and female body and their associated functions:
Mouth: swallowing, chewing food, breathing.
Nose: breathing, smelling
Penis: passing urine
Urethra: passing urine
Vagina: opening where a baby leaves the Mother's womb.
Breasts: feeding a baby
Navel: where a baby was joined to its Mother before being born

Third Class:

Birth and New Life: Sequence and discuss the stages of development of the baby in the womb.

Fourth Class:

Physical Development: Menstruation – boys and girls will be taught separately

Fifth Class:

Physical Development: Identify and explore the physical changes that occur in males and females with the onset of puberty.

Female and Male: Hormonal changes
Changing body shape physical growth
Development of breasts growth of testicles and penis

Appearance of pubic hair, underarm and facial hair.
Onset of menstruation (periods)
Breaking of the voice
Beginning of ovulation
Beginning of sperm production
Onset of nocturnal emissions (wet dreams)

Sixth Class:

Physical Development: The reproductive system of both the male and the female. Understand how sexual intercourse, conception and birth take place within the context of a committed loving relationship.
Recognising that physical changes are an on-going process of growth and development which is common to everyone.

What the School Currently Provides:

- ✓ Promotion of a caring and respectful atmosphere on a daily basis.
- ✓ Lessons dealing with the enhancement of self confidence and self esteem through the Walk Tall Programme.
- ✓ The Stay Safe programme
- ✓ PE programme
- ✓ Ethical Core Curriculum
- ✓ Lessons dealing with personal safety, for example, road safety, water safety, fire safety, through the 'Be Safe' Programme.
- ✓ Promotion of positive friendships throughout the year and during friendship week.
- ✓ Positive Behaviour Management and anti-bullying policies.

Guidelines for the Management of R.S.E in our School:

Lesson plans from National Council for Curriculum and Assessment will form the basis of our teachings in RSE. Teachers will deliver the lessons in their own class in class and where deemed appropriate a male teacher may teach the lesson to the boys in the class and a female teacher will teach the girls in the class. From time to time invited speakers may come to the class. Before this happens the content of the topic or talk will be discussed with the class teacher and the visitor will be made aware of our school ethos. Parents have a right to withdraw their child from RSE lessons. Similarly a Teacher has a right to decline to teach the RSE lessons, in this instance the RSE co-ordinator will make arrangements for another Teacher to take over this part of the programme. It is planned that RSE lessons will be taught in a block of two/three weeks during the Spring Term. From time to time the children may have questions that teaching staff cannot answer. At this time diversion strategies such as these below may be used.

“that’s something that we’ll talk about when you’re older”
“Could you talk to your Mum, Dad, Aunty about that?”

“this year we’re just concentrating on we’ll look at that in the future.

A question box may be put in the class so that pupils can ask a question privately – questions are screened. If and when Teachers are asked questions that may give rise to concern the Teacher will refer to the policy for guidelines or may refer the child to his/her own parents / guardians for further detail. The rights of pupils are respected and confidentiality is a priority.

Before R.S.E lessons each year Parents/Guardians will receive information about the lesson content and will be asked to give their consent for their child’s participation in the lessons.

Provision of On-going Support, Training, Development and Review:

As required, staff will be provided with training. The Board of Management will support the implementation of this RSE policy by ensuring that RSE materials are available in the school. Teaching staff are responsible for the delivery of the R.S.E programme. A resource library is set up to enable Parents / Guardians to borrow books / videos/ dvd’s to support their child in his or her learning and development in the area of RSE. The PTA will be supported in accessing speakers for PTA meetings on RSE.

The success of the RSE Policy will be assessed by:

- Positive feedback from pupils, parents and staff.
- Self assessment by the pupils.
- Positive attitudes towards developing relationships.

Looking at the Draft Policy and the Road to Implementation:

The first step in the process of drafting our school’s policy on RSE was to invite members of the school community to volunteer to join a policy formation team. This was done through the school newsletter. A group of 8 – 12 Parents, Teachers and members of the Board of Management then had four meetings where the steps in drafting the policy were discussed and decided upon. The whole school staff also examined and added their contributions to the draft policy. The draft of the RSE policy was presented to the Executive Committee and the Board of Management for their approval. Each household then received a copy of the policy and the school community had a chance to add to, comment on or query the content of the RSE policy. In an attempt to receive as much feedback as possible on the draft policy there was a feedback form and prompts with the draft policy document. After any changes deemed necessary the Policy on RSE was brought before the Executive Committee and Board of Management for final approval. Implementation of the RSE policy began in the school year 2010/2011.

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: