

Lurgan Junior High School

Relationships and Sexuality Policy

Whole School

Policy Rationale:

The United Kingdom Government, including Northern Ireland, is a signatory to the **1989 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)** and has agreed to uphold the rights of children and young people as set out in the Convention.

This means that all children and young people in Northern Ireland have a right to a good quality education in accordance with the Convention and therefore, we acknowledge the importance of providing high-quality Relationships and Sexuality Education that is relevant to the lives of the young people today.

The Department of Education Circular 2013/16 requires every school to have an up-to-date written policy on how it will address the delivery of Relationships and Sexuality Education.

The Department of Education Circular 2010/01 advises schools to take account of guidance issued by the **Equality Commission in March 2009** on eliminating sexual orientation discrimination in schools in Northern Ireland. This guidance relates to the **Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2006**.

Child sexual exploitation has been prioritised within the three year strategic plan of the **Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland (SBNI, 2013)**.

Relationships and Sexuality Education gives schools the opportunity to play a preventative role in child sexual exploitation by raising staff awareness of vulnerability factors and current indicators.

Effective RSE provision can help pupils to recognise potentially exploitative and dangerous situations, and teach them how to take preventative action.

The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety's Stopping Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse in Northern Ireland (2013–2020) public consultation document recognises that 'schools are in a unique position to promote and safeguard the welfare of all children' (**DHSSPS, 2013, page 43**).

Through the delivery of Relationships and Sexuality Education, children can explore their understanding of 'keeping safe' in an age-appropriate way. It will also help them develop appropriate behaviour to protect themselves (**DHSSPS, 2013**).

Mission Statement:

Lurgan Junior High School: empowering you to reach your potential, to feel respected, cared for and equal.

School Motto:

3R's - Self Respect
Respect for Others and
Responsibility for all your own learning, organisation and discipline

Policy Aims:

Schools are increasingly diverse spaces, reflecting wider societal change. This is acknowledged in the **Department of Education's Community Relations, Equality and Diversity in Education Policy C.R.E.D.(2011)**.

We believe our school should provide a safe, welcoming and inclusive environment: it should foster respect for difference, challenge prejudicial attitudes, and promote equality of opportunity for all pupils.

If we are to encourage children to be confident and respectful of themselves and others, and prepare them for life after school, the teaching of Relationships and Sexuality Education should be inclusive of all differences regardless of race, age, disability, ethnicity, religion, culture, gender and sexual orientation.

As a school we believe in the value of family life and marriage. However, we also believe that it is important to recognise the diversity of family life in today's society.

We believe all staff must be sensitive and respectful of difference, ensuring that no pupil ever feels or is excluded, or experiences bullying due to their family or home circumstances.

As a school we therefore aim to provide opportunities whereby our own young people can develop the skills, attitudes and values necessary to deal with the challenges which they will meet as they enter into personal relationships and friendships by:

- Working closely with various agencies and groups throughout Northern Ireland in order to avail of the most pertinent and currently relevant information available;
- Raising awareness, both with our school staff, pupils and parents;

- Ensuring that our provision addresses the pressures and dangers to which children may be exposed: in particular technology, the integral role it plays, and how it impacts on their lives;
- Ensuring that all staff are adequately trained;
- Delivering programmes that promote diversity and challenge myths and stereotypes.

Policy Objectives:

Through the delivery of the Personal Development Curriculum, and with the support of external agencies, our young people should be able to:

- Form values and establish behaviour within a moral, spiritual and social framework;
- Examine and explore the various relationships in their lives;
- Learn how to develop and enjoy personal relationships and friendships based on responsibility and mutual respect;
- Have a better understanding of diversity;
- Lay the foundations for developing more personal relationships in later life;
- Know how to stay safe in the digital world;
- Recognise and challenge inappropriate behaviour;
- Resist peer and media pressure;
- Make informed decisions based on their own internal self-respect and self-esteem;
- Make positive and responsible choices for themselves and the way they live their lives.

Management and Coordination of RSE in LJHS:

Co-ordinator responsible for planning and delivery:

Miss J Hanna (Personal Development)

Personal Development Teaching Staff 2015-2016

Miss J Hanna

Miss L Haughian

RSE Timetable Allocation

Specific Personal Development lessons are taught during LLW timetabled lessons – 1 hour per week. Classes rotate every seven weeks in Year 8 and Year 9 and every nine weeks in Year 10. These are generally mixed-gender classes unless single-gender issues arise.

The teaching of relationships and sexuality in Lurgan Junior High School is primarily approached through Personal Development lessons. During the three years in

which pupils attend our school, they will be introduced to the values, skills and information needed to equip them to build healthy interpersonal relationships.

Outside Agencies

At present, Lurgan Junior High School engages with the following outside agencies in the delivery of RSE.

Pupils and parents or carers may also be referred to these agencies for advice and support.

- The REACH Team, Lurgan.
- Love for Life – Waringstown.
- ADAPT Team – Lurgan.
- Youthnet – Belfast.
- CAHMS – Portadown.

Personal Development teachers will, at times, be assisted by various outside agencies in the delivery of RSE lessons.

Year 8

- **Personal Development** – ‘Health and the Whole Person’
- **Love for Life** – ‘I-Zone’ Presentation
- **R.E.A.C.H.** – Self Esteem and Relationships – ‘Changes’ Sessions

Year 9

- **Personal Development** – ‘Safety and Managing Risk’
- **Adapt Eating Disorder Team** – ‘Healthy Lives’ Presentation
- **R.E.A.C.H.** – Self Esteem and Relationships – ‘Values’ Sessions

Year 10

- **Personal Development** – ‘Health and Heart’ – Morals, Values and Beliefs
- **Love for Life** – ‘Icebergs and Babies’ Presentation
- **R.E.A.C.H.** – Year 10 Week – ‘Influences and Choices’ Sessions

Appendices A and B relate to the management of PD delivery by external agencies and encourage a shared values approach.

Staff Training

Staff development and training are regularly reviewed and updated. Senior members of Lurgan Junior High School staff attended specialised RSE training with the Sexual Health Training Team, Belfast Health and Social Care Trust.

Whole school staff training was also provided in 2014-2015 by Joanna Brown, RSE and LAC Co-ordinator, Sexual Health Training Team, Belfast Health and Social Care Trust.

Engagement with parents or carers

At Lurgan Junior High School, we acknowledge the role of the parent in their child's education. We aim to work in partnership with parents, keeping them informed of the role of any external agencies we bring into school and about the nature of the curriculum provided for pupils. We strive to ensure these are inclusive and also consistent with the school's Christian ethos.

ETI states that 'there is a need for parents to be involved more in developing the Personal Development curriculum in school and for them to be supported so that they can help keep their children safe outside of school hours' (ETI, cited in Marshall, R, 2014, page 105).

As a result, where appropriate we employ strategies such as:

- providing up-to-date parent or carer-friendly information leaflets, which encourage parents or carers to discuss any issues which may arise in the classroom with their children;
- holding awareness-raising workshops with parents; and
- share resources to educate parents or carers on, for example, how to ensure that their children are using social media safely and responsibly

Parents and Carers are assured that the teaching of Relationships and Sexuality Education in Lurgan JHS is complementary and supportive of their role as lead educators in this sensitive area, and will be delivered in the context of our school's Christian ethos.

Parents or carers have the right to have their children educated in accordance with their wishes. Therefore, whilst 'there is no legislative provision permitting parental withdrawal from sex education', schools can grant these requests on an individual basis **(Lundy, Emerson, Lloyd, Byrne and Yohanis, 2013, page 25)**.

If a parent or carer chooses to withdraw a child from all or part of Relationships and Sexuality Education, they must discuss the potentially detrimental effect that this can have on the child with the PD Coordinator or the Principal **(Lundy et al, 2013, page 25)**.

Parents should consider the social and emotional effects of the child being excluded, as well as the likelihood that the child will hear their peers' version of what happened or what was said in the classes, rather than the safe and reliable source of the teachers.

Dealing with specific sensitive issues

On occasion, certain sensitive issues may require consideration. When attempting to deal with these issues, the following procedures will be adopted:

A. 'Risky' Young People

These are young people who display behaviours which may be harmful to other in the school environment.

Whilst these young people have a right to an education, the school has also an obligation to ensure the well-being of its entire population. A risk assessment will be carried out and appropriate measures taken.

B. Pregnancy

Curricular delivery will always advocate abstinence as the acceptable option for all young people.

However, we aim to support any young woman who may become pregnant whilst enrolled at Lurgan Junior High School.

Following consultation and agreement with the young mother-to-be, referral may be made to the Education Authority's SAM (School Age Mothers) Project.

In the event of the school receiving information from a pupil re pregnancy, child protection guidelines will be followed.

C. Child Protection

If, for any reason, a young person is deemed to be at risk, they will be informed that confidentiality must be breached and the reasons for the breach. At all times, the young person will be supported throughout the process.

All external agencies utilised by Lurgan Junior High School must complete a Service Level Agreement contract.

D. Sexual Identity / Orientation Issues

We are aware that as young people grow up they can experience sexual identity and orientation confusion. This may be a temporary issue for some children but staff will always deal with all such issues sensitively.

If a pupil presents with sexual identity issues the main concern of the school is to support both the child and their parents. Contact with parents will be through the Vice-Principal's office.

A referral may be made to an appropriate outside agency, which can offer advice and support to the pupil and their family.

In specific cases, adjustments may be made to ensure pupils feel included and equal.

Bullying on the grounds of sexual identity or orientation will be dealt with in line with the school anti-bullying policy. Curricular delivery will advocate respect for diversity and inclusion.

Recording and Referral

Clear, concise and factual records should be made pertaining to the issues outlined above. These should be dated and initialled.

Q. How effectively do the care, advice and guidance and other support processes provided for learners safeguard their welfare, promote personal development and ensure achievement?

Indicators:

To evaluate this, consider the extent to which:

- the school has a caring ethos and shows a strong commitment to the welfare of the pupils and the staff;
- the pastoral care supports the pupils' learning;
- the school has comprehensive policies in line with DE guidance and implements them fully;
- the school has an on-going whole-school programme that, in consultation with stakeholders, addresses issues such as bullying, sectarianism, racism and good relations, and is integrated and consistent with the curriculum, reflected in day-to-day teaching and learning, part of the SDP and linked to pupil-support arrangements;
- the pastoral support is responsive to the needs of individual pupils addressing local and contemporary issues which affect their lives; and
- access is given to an appropriate range of personal and social services.

Other Indicators:

| Evaluation | Evidence |
|---|----------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Outstanding <input type="checkbox"/> Very Good <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Requires important improvement <input type="checkbox"/> Requires significant improvement <input type="checkbox"/> Requires urgent improvement | |

Policy Formation and Consultation Process

This policy was reviewed by the PD Coordinator in September 2015, in consultation with the Senior Executive Team, and with reference to updated CCEA guidance materials.

The RSE policy is reviewed annually and any necessary changes to the curriculum, procedures or additional training will be outlined through the School Development Plan.

The policy is available for staff in Private 9 and will be published for parents or carers through the LJHS website.

The policy will be reviewed annually by the PD Coordinator in light of updated guidance or training.

Comments or feedback should be addressed to Miss J Hanna.

This policy is set within the broader school context of Pastoral Care.

Linked policies include:

- Pastoral Care Policy
- Personal Development Curriculum Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Misuse of Substances Policy
- Positive Behaviour Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy