



Swords Educate Together National School

Roll Number 20145 O

Learn Together Ethical Education Curriculum Policy

Sept 2024

General Information

Name of School	Swords Educate Together N.S.
Address	Applewood, Swords, Co. Dublin, K67 H0F6
Telephone	01 890 3899
Email	info@swordseducatetogether.ie
Denominational Character	Equality Based
Patron	Educate Together

Introduction

This policy was updated to reflect the implementation of the revised Learn Together Curriculum from September 2023. This policy is based upon the Educate Together Charter which we uphold in our school. This charter affirms that children of all social, cultural, religious, non-religious and ethnic backgrounds have a right to an education that reflects their individual identity while exploring the different values and traditions of the world in which they live.

The four principles of the Educate Together Charter are:

- Equality Based
- Democratically Run
- Co-Educational
- Child Centred

1. Rationale

This policy is intended to guide and inform teachers in their individual and collaborative planning for the Learn Together Curriculum.

2. Vision

SETNS is committed to our mottoes “No Child is an Outsider” and “All Different , All Equal” through our ethos, values and the relationships both within the school and with the wider community.

3. Broad Aims

The Learn Together Curriculum aims to enable pupils to:

- Become self-aware, reflective individuals with a secure sense of belonging and identity.
- Develop the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes that will facilitate them to live as ethical people who are empathetic, socially aware and committed to democratic principles and values global citizenship and equality.

- Develop and use critical thinking skills that will facilitate them to critique their world and empower them to give reasoned answers for their opinions, decisions and actions.
- Recognise their role as active members of a democratic society with the potential to take action that will lead to positive change.
- Develop ethical principles in relation to human rights, equality and justice, and apply these principles to their daily lives.
- Become familiar with the tenets and beliefs of the major religions and rational understandings of the world.
- Relate this learning to their individual experience in the context of their local, national and global community.

4. Curriculum Planning

The four strands of the Learn Together curriculum and their aims are:

1. The strand An Ethical Approach to the Environment:

- Develop a knowledge, understanding and respect for the natural environment and an appreciation of its fragility and vulnerability.
- Explore the interdependence of life and the impact of over-consumption on the planet.
- Recognise the importance of active citizenship in attempting to redress the impact of human over-consumption on the environment.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the urgency needed to protect the environment for present and future life on the planet.

2. The strand Equality and Justice:

- Develop a critical knowledge, understanding and awareness of issues relating to human rights, equality, culture, diversity, social justice and social inclusiveness.
- Develop a critical way of being, fostering questioning, analysis and open engagement with ethical and social justice issues.
- Feel empowered to become informed, ethical and active citizens.

3. The strand Values and Ethical Perspectives

- Develop a critical knowledge, understanding and awareness of right and wrong and a heightened awareness of social, ethical, and moral standards through reflection on life itself.
- Learn to explore their own identities and in doing so, strengthen and enhance their self-worth and self-esteem.
- Explore, understand and identify appropriate responses to the multitude and richness of human emotions.
- Identify values integral to personal development which can inform ethical decisions.
- Engage in philosophical discussion and enquiry.

4. The strand Belief Systems

- Develop knowledge and understanding of the richness of belief systems and worldviews, both religious and secular, and relate these to the human experience and day-to-day life.

- Develop an understanding of the right to hold and practise a belief or worldview and to change that belief at any time.
- Develop their knowledge of conceptual understandings as they relate to religious and secular beliefs.
- Relate aspects of religious and secular beliefs to individual experience, leading to enhanced mutual understandings.
- Develop an understanding that beliefs and the practice of beliefs can vary from culture to culture and individual to individual.

5. Structure

The curriculum is structured into four stages as follows:

Stage 1: Junior and Senior Infants (taught using a thematic and integrative approach).

Stage 2: First and Second Class (taught using a thematic and integrative approach).

Stage 3: Third and Fourth Class (taught by explicit element with linkage opportunities).

Stage 4: Fifth and Sixth Class (taught by explicit element with linkage opportunities).

For stages 1 and 2 we have allocated the themes monthly as follows:

Month	Stage 1		Stage 2	
	Junior Infants Theme	Senior Infants Theme	1 st class	2 nd class
Sept	We are all different	Values	We are all different	Our ET School
Oct	Feelings	Family	Our Environment	Exploring the Natural World
Nov	Our Environment	Exploring the Natural World	Feelings	Values
Dec	Catch up and revision Christmas/Hannukah	Catch up and revision Christmas/Hannukah	Catch up and revision Christmas/Hannukah	Catch up and revision Christmas/Hannukah
Jan	Fairness	Philosophy for/with children	Rights and Responsibilities (needs and wants)	Philosophy for/with children
Feb	Food	Love BS (Conceptual enquiry) Humanism / A / A	Food	Communication and Democracy
Mar	Remembering BS (conceptual enquiry) Christian to link with St Brigid (cross) St Patrick (shamrock)	Introducing Democracy	Special Clothes BS (Conceptual Enquiry) Hinduism	Giving things up BS (Conceptual enquiry) Islam- Ramadan
Apr	Seasons BS (conceptual enquiry) Humanism, Atheism, Agnosticism	We Can Make a Difference	Growing and Changing BS (Conceptual Enquiry) Buddhism	Celebrating BS (Conceptual enquiry) Sikhism
May	Making a Difference	Special Books BS (Conceptual enquiry) Judaism	Making a Difference	We can make a difference
June	Catch up and revision	Catch Up and revision	Catch up and revision	Catch up and revision

For stages 3 and 4, the elements of the strands are allocated as follows:

4 Strands	An Ethical Approach to the Environment	Equality and Justice	Values and Ethical Perspectives	Belief Systems
	Stage 3		Stage 4	
	3 rd class	4 th class	5 th Class	6 th Class
Sept	Democratic Process			
	Philosophy for/with children			
Oct	Examples of Environmental Initiatives			
	Ethical Values and Dilemmas			
Nov	Human Rights and Global Citizenship			
	Examples of Equality Based Initiatives			
Dec	BS: Belonging Christianity	BS: Sacred Buddhism	Trinity (Christianity)	Brahman (Hinduism)
Jan	Communication			
	BS: Symbolism Sikhism	BS: Ritual/Faith Hinduism	Torah (Judaism)	The Khalsa (Sikhism) Ummah (Islam)
Feb	Equality Issues Migration + Gender	Equality Issues Traveller/Roma and (Dis)ability	Equality Issues LGBT+ and Ageism	Equality Issues Poverty/Homelessness and Racism
Mar	Interdependence of Life -Oceans	Interdependence of Life -Bogs	Interdependence of Life Availability of water	Interdependence of Life Flora and Fauna
Apr	Values and Dialogues			
	Environmental Issues			
May	Equality based activism			
	Environmental Activism			
June	BS: Pilgrimage Islam (Hajj)	BS: Prophecy Judaism (Moses)	BS: Rationalism	BS: Nirvana
	Pride Month: Revision: Belonging, Diversity, Rights, Equality, Expression, Inclusion			

6. Context for Learn Together

- The Educate Together ethos and the Learn Together curriculum are underpinned by a human rights and responsibilities framework.
- Teachers and children will engage with the skills to promote, defend and apply human rights.
- The Learn Together Curriculum also works towards achieving Sustainable Development Goal 4 ‘Quality Education.’

- The curriculum directly underpins teaching that will ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and nonviolence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development.
- Links to relevant Sustainable Development Goals are outlined throughout the curriculum.
- The curriculum is spiral in nature. Teachers will help ensure that pupils experience continuity and progression throughout.
- The Belief Systems strand utilises a conceptual enquiry approach to exploring beliefs, enabling child-led learning.
- In line with the Primary Curriculum Framework, the Learn Together curriculum promotes all key competencies and particularly supports the development of:
 - Being an active learner
 - Learning to be a learner
 - Fostering Wellbeing

7. Approaches and Methodologies

Teachers will use a range of approaches and methodologies and ensure that lessons are delivered in a manner that acknowledges the range of learning styles:

- Affording pupils time to think, contemplate and reflect on a range of ethical, social and moral issues.
- Providing a safe and secure environment to express feelings, emotions, views and opinions.
- Modelling best practice through respectful relationships between all school community members.
- Ensuring a positive teaching and learning environment.
- Creating an atmosphere of team spirit and co-operation.
- Developing a physical environment that reflects the inter-cultural, inclusive nature of our school.
- Acknowledging the equality base nature of our Educate Together School through the celebration of difference and diversity.

8. Assessment

Teachers will use a wide range of assessment methodologies in order to ensure that concepts have been clearly understood and that learning of content and skills has taken place.

- Oral, written and project work
- Teacher observation during discussion, group work, role play and co-operative activities
- Teacher designed tasks
- Exploration of attitudes and the link between attitudes and actions
- Portfolio of children's work

9. Current Practices in SETNS

- In line with the Primary Curriculum Framework, two hours per week are designated to the Learn Together Curriculum.
- All teachers have access to The Learn Together Curriculum Document and resources pertaining to their class level.
- Learn Together is always an item on the staff meeting agenda.
- All children have a Learn Together hardback copy that stays with the child as they progress through the school.
- Each classroom has a designated Learn Together notice board / area.
- Each classroom has a poster of the Golden Rules.
- Our school anthem promotes our inclusive ethos.
- To promote the Democratic Process, children are elected by their peers on to the Green Team and the Student Council.
- There are designated displays throughout the school assigned to Learn Together Themes.
- We aim to hold an Open Evening at least every two years (where possible) that promotes our ethos and is linked to a Learn Together theme.
- Our ethos and Learn Together themes are promoted at school assemblies.

10. Whole School and Teacher Planning

- A whole school Learn Together Plan has been developed for each Stage of the curriculum. This is uploaded to the school Drive.
- Individual teachers will use this plan when creating their specific class level plan.
- All Learn Together work is recorded in the monthly reports.

11. Staff Development

- Staff needs will be assessed regularly and relevant organisations, communities, guest speakers will be accessed to provide training.
- Teachers will familiarise themselves with Intercultural Guidelines.
- On-line Resource Bank is provided by ET head office.
- Courses are made available to staff to attend outside of school hours. Funding may be granted by the BOM on request.

12. Parental Involvement

- Parents who are willing to be involved in activities in the school are welcome in SETNS where possible and appropriate.
- The school recognises parents and guardians as the primary educators of their children. They will be encouraged to engage with their children in developing their knowledge, skills and attitudes across the four strands.
- Parents from all cultural backgrounds will be encouraged to share their stories and experiences in a classroom setting to enhance the children's learning experience.

13. Implementation

The post holder for Learn Together, in consultation with ISM and BoM, will be responsible for the overall development of the Learn Together Curriculum within SETNS.

This policy will be further reviewed when deemed necessary.

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management:

Signed:.....
(Chairperson of the Board of Management)

Date:.....

Signed:.....
(Principal)

Date:.....