



SUBSTANCE USE POLICY

INTRODUCTION

This policy applies to students, teachers, ancillary staff members, users of the school premises, visitors i.e. every person who enters the building. It is applicable during school time – including breaks and to ALL school related activities. It applies to the school building and grounds and to any area where a school related activity takes place, e.g. School Tour.

This policy is to be read in conjunction with Health & Safety, SPHE, Administering of Medicines, Child Protection and Code of Behaviour Policies.

RELATIONSHIP TO SCHOOL'S MISSION/VISION/AIMS

- Promotes holistic development of the pupil encouraging respect for self, society and world;
- Dedicated to the care of the whole school community;
- Provides a safe and secure environment for learning;
- Supports those who are experiencing difficulties;
- Seeks to engage the partners in the education process;
- Seeks to support a healthy lifestyle for all, in a safe, supportive and non-threatening environment.

RATIONALE

- To meet the demands of a changing world. The world in which we live presents young people with many challenges that affect their health and well-being. Exposure to alcohol, tobacco and drugs is part of this reality. Schools need to reflect upon how they might provide for the needs of their student cohort and respond appropriately to what are sometimes sensitive and emotive issues;
- Education Act (1998) provides that schools should promote the social and personal development of students and provide health education for them;
- The 1999 European School Survey Project on Alcohol and other Drugs (ESPAD) Report highlighted the seriousness of the problem among sixteen year olds in Ireland, as compared to the other 29 ESPAD countries surveyed. Alcohol was

identified as being the dominant drug of misuse in Ireland whilst the use of tobacco and other drugs was above the ESPAD average;

- National Drugs Strategy, *'Building on Experience'* is now Government policy and it requires schools to have substance use policy in place;
- The report from the National Advisory Committee on Drugs entitled 'Drug Use Prevention'² (November 2001) underlines the importance of schools developing substance use policies.

GOALS / OBJECTIVES

- To provide a comprehensive programme of education for all students in substance use issues;
- Central objective of this policy is the welfare, care, protection and education of the students in the school and to equip B.O.M. and staff to deal with issues relating to substance use in a planned and considered way in accordance with their roles and responsibilities;
- To promote positive health behaviours;
- To provide a safe and healthy environment;
- To promote self-esteem and self-awareness of students;
- To manage incidents of substance use in a clear and consistent manner.

EDUCATION CONCERNING SUBSTANCE USE

What is a drug? A drug can be defined as a chemical, which causes changes in the way the human body functions mentally, physically or emotionally. For the purpose of this policy we are concerned with drugs which have the power to change a previous mood and the way a person thinks about things and drugs or which the taker may become physically or more often psychologically dependent.

The school will adopt an age appropriate incidental approach to substance use with more formal lessons at senior level.

THE SCHOOL WISHES TO MAKE CLEAR THAT THE PRIMARY ROLE OF SUBSTANCE MISUSE PREVENTION RESTS WITH THE PARENTS.

Education about alcohol, tobacco and drugs will be carried out by teachers through the S.P.H.E. programme, which is taught in our school. We would also draw on the expertise of the Gardaí, Health Board etc.

Material from the following programmes will also be used:

- Walk Tall
- Stay Safe
- R.S.E.
- Science
- Follow Me
- S.P.H.E.
- Relationships and Sexuality
- Making the Links

When it is necessary to use glue, varnish or other similar products in the school, the dangers will be explained and they will be used under supervision. As a general rule, where possible, these substances will be used during last class in a ventilated room/space. **Children are not allowed to use Tippex in school nor to bring it to school.**

Outside speakers may be invited to speak to enhance/supplement work done in school, will work within the curriculum boundary and in the presence of a teacher. Parental Consent/Parental involvement will be sought where appropriate/relevant.

MANAGEMENT OF TOBACCO/ALCOHOL AND DRUG RELATED INCIDENTS

Incidents involving alcohol, tobacco and drug use might include:

- Use or suspected use of alcohol, solvents, drugs, tobacco on the school premises or during a school-related activity;
- Intoxication/unusual behaviour;
- Disclosure about use;
- Finding these substances and/or associated paraphernalia;
- Possession and/or supply on the school premises or during a school related activity;
- Other.

The school should respond to incidents involving alcohol, tobacco and drug use in a planned and considered way. In certain cases it may be necessary to seek legal advice. Due care will be important in deciding on the balance between a pastoral and a disciplinary response. An appropriate pastoral response to an incident involving alcohol, tobacco and drug use may include referral to a support agency.

Smoking

- The school is a no smoking area;
- People are not permitted to smoke or possess cigarettes/tobacco products on the school premises or on school related activities;
- Pupils are not permitted to possess cigarettes/tobacco products on the school premises or on school related activities;
- Tobacco will not be permitted as a prize for school raffles.

Management of tobacco related incidents

The school will follow the following procedure:

- Inform the principal;
- Investigate incident, clarify, confiscate and store;
- Inform parents;
- Record incident in writing;
- Refer to Code of Behaviour.

Alcohol

- The school is an alcohol restricted area;
- People will not be allowed to bring alcohol into the school or to consume alcohol in school or during any school related activities;
- If alcohol is required for an adult only school function on school grounds, permission shall be sought from B.O.M.;
- If alcohol is to be a prize in school raffles, it must be delivered to and collected from the school by an adult.

Management of alcohol related incidents

The school will follow the following procedures:

- Inform the principal;
- Investigate incident, clarify, confiscate and store;
- Inform parents;
- Record incident in writing;
- Refer to Code of Behaviour.

In the event of a teacher suspecting or being of an opinion that a student is under the influence of alcohol he/she must immediately inform the Principal and the incident will be dealt with in accordance with the Code of Behaviour.

In the event of aggressive or intimidating behaviour by any member of the public on the school premises, the incident will be recorded and the Gardaí will be informed if the person refuses to leave the premises.

Illicit drugs and solvents

- People are forbidden from being in possession of or using illicit drugs or solvents in the school or on school premises;
- If a teacher is of the opinion that a person is under the influence of illicit drugs or solvents she/he will inform the Principal/Deputy Principal;
- Investigate incident, clarify;
- Confiscate substance/s and store same in the presence of a witness;
- Inform parents;
- Record the incident;
- Proceed as per Code of Behaviour;
- Seek advice from Gardaí / Health Board regarding follow up, counselling etc.;

The Board of Management will expect parents to inform the Principal or teacher if they suspect that their child is taking drugs

Prescribed Drugs / Administration of Medicines

- School staff will take responsibility for administering medication only when a written request has been made to the Board of Management and an Indemnity Form completed, indemnifying the board;
- In situations where children are deemed capable by their parents of taking prescribed medication during school hours or on a school related activity, parents must notify the school in writing, stating the name of the medication, the exact dosage and giving permission for the child to take the medication themselves. Any medication i.e. inhalers etc. must be clearly labelled with the child's name;
- Children must not share medicines;
- Children must not bring over the counter medication to school or on school related activities.

PROVISION FOR TRAINING AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT

In-service training for staff is assisted by support from the Primary Curriculum Support Programme, Health Boards, Gardaí, other agencies:-

S.P.H.E.	Revised Curriculum
R.S.E.	Dept. of Education and Skills
Stay Safe	Dept. of Health and Children
Walk Tall	Dept. of Education and Skills
Follow Me	Religion Programme
Children First	Dept. of Health and Children
Relationships and Sexuality	Dept. of Education and Skills
Making the Links	Dept. of Education and Skills

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Role of Board of Management

- To ensure that a policy is in place and is implemented and reviewed;
- To provide for appropriate Staff Development so that all staff are provided with up to date factual information about the signs and symptoms of drugs use and about drugs and their effects;
- To support staff in the implementation of this policy;
- To appraise this policy with regard to its suitability and the effectiveness of its implementation and to make recommendations for improvement where appropriate.

Role of Principal/Deputy Principal

- To formulate draft policy in consultation with the teaching staff, parents and Board of Management;
- To monitor its implementation and to ensure that it is reviewed by the review date;
- To investigate all referrals in accordance with this policy;
- To liaise with parents and other outside agencies including the Gardaí
- To implement this policy and to support other teaching staff in its implementation;
- To arrange appropriate staff development;
- To appraise this policy with regard to its suitability (see above under B.O.M.).

Role of Teaching Staff

- To advocate positive healthy lifestyle and decisions;

- To treat the threat of possible drug use as a serious threat to the welfare of pupils and the school community;
- To inform themselves regarding the signs and symptoms of drug use and about drugs and their effects;
- To be alert to any disclosure by pupils regarding their own or others involvement in drug taking activity;
- To bring any such information or suspicion to the attention of the Principal;
- To implement this policy;
- To appraise this policy (see above as in role of Principal)

Role of Parents

- To educate their children about substance abuse (age appropriate);
- To support this policy and to co-operate fully with the school in its implementation;
- To bring to the attention of the school authorities any conditions their child/children may suffer from which may require specific medication;
- Parents should advise the school if they suspect that their own child may be involved in substance misuse.

SUCCESS CRITERIA

That tobacco, alcohol and/or drug related incidents will be dealt with effectively and that reasonable suspicions are reported and acted upon.

MONITORING PROCEDURES

This requires vigilance on the part of everybody, teachers, parents, students, other staff or visitors to the school. Monitoring also requires that any concerns or reasonable suspicions be reported immediately to the Principal/Deputy Principal.

MANAGEMENT OF PERSONS IN THE WORKPLACE UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF DRUGS AND/OR ALCOHOL

- The Board of Management shall 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 people under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol. In the workplace includes school related activities taking place 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;
- Should the Principal and/or Deputy Principal have reasonable grounds to believe that a staff member is unfit for work, due to being under the influence of an intoxicant, the Principal and/or Deputy Principal shall ask that person to remove him/herself from the workplace. Disciplinary procedures may be implemented;
- If a member of staff has reasonable grounds to believe that a parent or adult collecting a pupil from school or presenting themselves on the premises for another reason is unfit to be on the premises or to take care of the said pupil, the Principal and/or Deputy Principal will be informed and the duty of care will apply to the pupil. All necessary steps will be taken to protect the pupil and safeguard their best interests;
- In the event that a staff member or any other person, referred to above, refuses a reasonable request to remove him/herself from the premises, the Principal and/or Deputy Principal may call the Gardaí to forcibly remove the person in question;
- In the event that substance abuse appears to be adversely affecting the performance and/or attendance pattern of any member of the teaching staff, the Board of Management may request such staff member to contact the Employee Assistance Service (telephone: 1800 411 057 or e-mail: eas@vhics.ie);
- In the event that substance abuse appears to be adversely affecting the performance and/or attendance pattern of any member of the non-teaching staff, the Board of Management may request such staff member to seek counselling or other professional intervention;
- All incidents, relating to the presence of persons at school, under the influence of an intoxicant, shall be recorded and reported as soon as possible to the Board of Management, who shall consider all such reports and decide on the appropriate action to be taken in the circumstances of each particular case.

LIST OF USEFUL RESOURCES

1st & 2nd Class

SPHE Strand Myself

Strand Units Taking care of my body

Content Objective 8

Safety and protection Safety Issues

Content Objectives 5, 6

Resources:

Walk Tall 1st Class P. 60 – 65

Walk Tall 2nd Class P.43 – 47, 77 - 91.

3rd & 4th Class

SPHE Strand Myself

Strand Units Taking care of my body

Health and well-being

Content Objectives 4, 5, 6

Safety and protection

Safety Issues

Content Objective 4

Resources

Walk Tall 3rd.Class P.101 – 118

Walk Tall 4th.Class P. 87 – 107

5th& 6th Class

SPHE Strand Myself

Strand Units Taking care of my body

Health and well-being

Content Objectives 3,4,5,6

Safety and protection

Safety Issues Content Objectives 5, 6

Resources

Walk Tall 5th.Class P. 110 – 126

Walk Tall 6th Class P.91 – 140

Useful phone numbers:

- HSE CADS (Community and Alcohol & Drugs Service)
CADS Portlaoise, 1 Coote Street, Portlaoise, Co. Laois.
Email: sec.cadsportlaoise@hse.ie Tel: 0578692516
CADS Tullamore, Midlands Regional Hospital Tullamore, Arden Road, Tullamore,
Co. Offaly.
Email: sec.cadstullamore@hse.ie Tel: 057 93 15801
- Care Call 1800 411057 (Mental Well Being at Work)

REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed by Staff, Board of Management and Parents Representatives as required but especially when an incident has occurred.

RATIFICATION

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on date below.

The policy will be available in the school for parents to view.

This policy has been made available to school personnel and published on the school website.

Ratified by Board of Management on: 1st December 2021

Signed: _____

Chairperson

Principal