

Substance Use Policy



A. Framework.

The school sees itself as having a role in the process of enabling students to increase control over and improve their health. We endeavour to promote the wellbeing of students by: -

1. Providing a safe and healthy environment.
2. Promoting positive health behaviours.
3. Increasing knowledge about health.
4. Promoting the self-esteem and self-awareness of students.
5. Working in partnership with the parents and pupils.

To this end, in response to the encroaching drug culture in our society we feel the need to implement a comprehensive policy to address the problem of substance misuse. The success of this policy will be assessed against the above aims.

The Principal and Staff Teachers, following consultation with the Steering Committee, parents and the BOM, will be responsible for the implementation of this Policy.

It will be the responsibility of the Principal Teacher to co-ordinate a review of this Policy (see Time Frame).

B. Substance Use Policy.

1. Introduction.

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 Policy will focus on:

- 1) Strategies for prevention of substance misuse problems i.e. Walk Tall, Alive-O and SPHE.
- 2) Procedures for dealing with drug incidences in the school.
- 3) Guidelines and information for teachers to improve their response to the problem of substance misuse.

This document should read with the Code of Behaviour /Discipline policy of the school.

2. Implementation of the Policy.

The policy will be available from the principal to the BOM, Teachers and other staff members.

Parents and guardians will be given a copy of the policy on enrolment of their child in the school. Enrolment will be on acceptance of this and certain other school policy documents by them.

The school wishes to make clear that the primary role of substance misuse prevention rests with the parents.

3. Prevention.

A. Education.

It is accepted amongst educationalists that education about alcohol, tobacco and drugs is best carried out by teachers through the inclusion of SPHE in the curriculum. This SPHE Programme would also draw on the expertise available from the community i.e. Parents, Gardaí, and Health Service Executive.

B. Smoking

- The school is a non smoking area.
- Students are not permitted to smoke or possess cigarettes on the school premises or in any other place.
- Visitors will comply with the restricted smoking policy.
- Pupils found smoking on school premises will be reported to the Principal and parents will be informed.
- Tobacco will not be permitted as a prize for school raffles.

C. Alcohol.

- The school is an alcohol free area.
- Pupils will not be allowed to bring alcohol into the school or to consume alcohol in school or during any school activities.
- If a teacher is of the opinion that a student is under the influence of alcohol, s/he will immediately inform the Principal and consult on what action should be taken.
- Where a student comes to school under the influence of alcohol, their parents will be called in to take them home.
- Students breaking these rules will be dealt with according to the school's disciplinary procedure.
- If alcohol is required for an adult only school function, permission shall be sought from the BOM
- Alcohol may be used as prizes in school raffles but shall only be collected by an adult.

D. Illicit Drugs and Solvents

- Students are forbidden from being in possession of or using illicit drugs or solvents in the school premises.
- Illicit drugs found on school premises should be locked away and the Gardaí contacted to dispose of them. Teachers are advised not to transport illicit substances at any time.
- If a teacher is of the opinion that a student is under the influence of illicit drugs or solvents, s/he will immediately inform the Principal and consult on what action should be taken.

- Where the school suspects trafficking of illicit drugs, an investigation will be carried out. Parents of any student involved will be informed. The advice and assistance of the Garda Juvenile Liaison Officer will be sought.
- The school BOM will expect parents to inform the Principal or teacher if they suspect their child of drug taking.