

SUBSTANCE USE POLICY

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 person's mood or on which the taker may become physically or psychologically dependent.

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 well being 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 Policy will focus on: -

1. Strategies for prevention of substance misuse problems e.g use of Walk Tall Programme, SPHE lessons and general talks on the dangers of misuse of drugs through assemblies and guest speakers.
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.

Implementation of the Policy

The policy will be available from the principal or the B.O.M., 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 other school policy documents by them.

The policy will be regularly evaluated and updated where necessary.

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

Prevention

Education:

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

Smoking

School Policy

- The school is a non smoking area.
- Students are not permitted to smoke or possess cigarettes on the school premises.
- Visitors will comply with the no 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.

Alcohol

School Policy:

- 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 B.O.M.
- Alcohol will not be used as prizes in school raffles.

Illicit Drugs And Solvents

School Policy:

- 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 B.O.M. will expect parents to inform the Principal or teacher if they suspect their child of drug taking.

