



Substance Use Policy

Scoil Mhuire, Newtownforbes, Co. Longford.

Roll Number: 19987J

Introduction:

'A drug is any chemical which alters how the body works, or how the person behaves or feels'

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 parents and pupils.

A. Scope of Policy:

This policy applies to students, teachers, auxiliary 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 was formulated by the staff of Scoil Mhuire using guidance and templates available to us.

B. Relationship to school mission statement:

This policy reflects the ethos of our school which states that we strive to develop the religious, spiritual, moral, intellectual, physical, emotional and social education of our students, thereby promoting the health and well being of our students.

C. Rationale:

The world in which we live presents young people with many challenges, which 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.

The Policy will focus on:-

1. Strategies for prevention of substance misuse problems.
2. Procedure 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 policy links in with other policies in our school which include Health & Safety, Code of Behaviour and Administration of medicine policies.

D. Aims of Policy

The aim of the substance use policy of Scoil Mhuire is primary prevention.

- To promote a safe and healthy environment for all users of school premises
- To raise awareness in the pupils re dangers of substance misuse
- To develop a healthy attitude and skills
- To enable children to make healthy choices around substance use both now and in the future
- To provide a comprehensive programme of education for all students in substance use issues
- The welfare, care, protection and education of the students in the school
- To equip BOM 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 self-esteem and self-awareness of students
- To manage incidents of substance use in a clear and consistent manner

We aim to protect our pupils from the harmful effects of substance misuse and try to prevent them from using tobacco, alcohol, solvents and illegal drugs. We aim to develop in our pupils' better self-esteem, through providing a positive school climate and atmosphere and through giving our pupils age appropriate information from educational programmes. We will work in partnership with parents and pupils to achieve these aims and promote a safe and healthy environment.

Policy Content:

A. Education Concerning Substance Use

'A drug is any chemical which alters how the body works, or how the person behaves or feels'

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.

Education concerning substance misuse in the school will be provided within broad context of SPHE units, Safety and Protection and Taking care of my body. These will be taught every second year in keeping with the overall curriculum. The content will be taught using Walk Tall lessons as provided by the Department of Education and will be modified to meet the needs of multi-class situations and Special Needs children.

An outside speaker may be invited to in to enhance the work being done by the class teacher. The school will adopt an age appropriate incidental approach to substance use with more formal lessons at senior level. The primary role of substance misuse prevention, rests with the parents.

The content includes:

Safe use of medicine - Junior and Senior Infants,

Safe use of medicine and dangerous substances in the home - 1st and 2nd class

Safe use of medicine,

dangerous substances
at home and in school,
nicotine and alcohol - 3rd and 4th class

Safe use of medicine,
dangerous substances
at home and in school,
nicotine and alcohol
and illegal drugs - 5th and 6th class

Material from the following programmes will be used:

- Walk Tall
- Stay Safe
- R.S.E.
- Science
- Alive O
- S.P.H.E.
- Making the Links
- Relationships and Sexuality programme (see Appendix)

B. MANAGEMENT OF TOBACCO / ALCOHOL AND DRUG RELATED INCIDENTS:

SUBSTANCES:

- Teachers do not administer medicine to children except in emergency or if the relevant Administration of Medicine form is fully completed.
- Pupils do not use or have medicine while at school that a teacher is not made aware of in writing
- Any medication on the school premises will be stored safely to ensure the well being of the children.
- Children are prohibited from having or using E.g. thinner for tippex, nail varnish or remover, aerosol deodorants, hair sprays in school.
- Parents are asked to ensure that any markers used by their children at school are water based and not solvent based.
- Parents who feel that their children require deodorants during school activities are asked to supply a stick or roll-on deodorant.

- Staff using solvent based products take all necessary precautions to ensure safety of children. (e.g. varnish, markers & tippex, white board markers etc.).

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

SMOKING:

THE SCHOOL IS A NO SMOKING AREA

- Students are not permitted to smoke or possess cigarettes/ matches/ cigarette lighters on the school premises or in any other place
- Visitors must comply with the no smoking policy
- Pupils found smoking on school premises will be reported to the Principal and parents will be informed.

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

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

The school will follow the following procedure in managing tobacco related incidents:

- 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 FREE AREA

- Pupils are not allowed to bring alcohol into the school or consume alcohol in school or during school activities
- If a teacher is of the opinion that a student is under the influence of alcohol, he/she will inform the Principal immediately and consult on what action should be taken. Where a student comes to school under the influence of alcohol their parents will be called to take them home.
- Students breaking these rules will be dealt with according to the school's disciplinary procedure.

- If any teacher becomes aware of a parent/guardian coming to collect a child obviously under the influence of alcohol and incapable of caring for their child all reasonable steps will be taken to protect the child.
- If alcohol is to be a prize in school raffles, it must be delivered to and collected from the school by an adult.

Alcohol related incidents

The school will follow the following procedures in managing alcohol related incidents:

- 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 Gardai will be informed if the person refuses to leave the premises.

ILLCIT 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 Gardai contacted to dispose of them. Teachers are advised not to transport illicit substances at any time

- If a teacher receives a disclosure about substance misuse, which has occurred during school time, or school related activity, parents will be informed and any further disciplinary action will be taken as required.
- Any disclosure made regarding an illegal activity will be passed on to the Gardaí for investigations.

- If there is evidence that the premises is being used for substance misuse the Gardaí will be informed. Substances found e.g. beer cans, bottles etc. will be disposed of safely. Any substance which is not easily recognisable or where there are suspicions that it is an illegal substance, the Gardaí will be informed and they will be asked to remove the substance
- 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 a Garda Juvenile Liaison Officer will be sought.
- The Board of Management will expect parents to inform the Principal or teacher if they suspect their child of drug taking.
- Any person who appears on the premises obviously under the influence of a substance will be asked to leave with the permission of the Board.
- If any teacher becomes aware of a parent/guardian coming to collect a child obviously under the influence of a substance and incapable of caring for their child all reasonable steps will be taken to protect the child.

Management of Illicit Drugs or Solvents incident

- 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 Gardai/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, Gardai, 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

Alive O Religion Programme

Children First Dept. of Health and Children

Making the Links Dept. of Education and Skills

Relationships and Sexuality Dept. of Education and Skills

PDST

Roles and Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the various parties in the school community to develop, implement and support this policy

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 BOM).

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
- To appraise this policy with regard to its suitability (see above roles)

Success Criteria

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

Monitor Procedures

This policy will be reviewed by Staff, Board of Management and Parents Representatives two years after its adoption and every second year after that date.

Timeframe

Every two years or as necessary eg should an incident occur in the meantime. This will take cognisance of changing information, legislation, developments in the school programme, and feedback from teachers, parents and students.

Ratification of Policy

Signed: _____
(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed: _____
(Principal)

Date: _____

This policy was ratified initially by the Board of Management on 23/11/2015, 16/05/2019 and _____.

Appendix 1

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 persons under the influence of drugs and / or alcohol. The term "in the workplace", in the preceding sentence includes all school related activities taking place under the supervision of a teacher, with the Board's approval, and 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, in the interests of the safety, health and welfare of the employee and others. In the case of employees who are at work under the influence of an intoxicant, disciplinary procedures may be implemented.

Should the Principal and / or Deputy Principal have reasonable grounds to believe that an employee of any contractor is unfit for work, due to being under the influence of an intoxicant, the Principal and / or Deputy Principal shall ask the contractor to remove his / her employee from the workplace.

If a member of staff has reasonable grounds to believe any person, other than a staff member or employee of a contractor, is unfit to be on the premises, due to being under the influence of an intoxicant, the staff member shall report his / her belief promptly to the Principal and/ or Deputy Principal, who shall ask that person to remove him / herself from the workplace.

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.

The Board of Management acknowledges its responsibility in promoting the welfare at work of teachers. An Employee Assistance Service (telephone 1800 411 057 or e-mail: eas@vhics.ie) is available to teaching staff. 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.

The Board of Management also acknowledges its responsibility in promoting the welfare at work of all other staff members. 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.

The Board of management shall consider all such reports and decide on the appropriate action to be taken in the circumstances of each particular case.

Appendix 2

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 Sunits 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 05786 93216 (Community and Alcohol & Drug Service)

Care Call 1800 411 057 (Mental Well Being at Work)