

## 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 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 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: -

- Providing a safe and healthy environment.
- Promoting positive health behaviours.
- Increasing knowledge about health.
- Promoting the self-esteem and self-awareness of students.
- 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:**

- Strategies for prevention of substance misuse problems i.e. Walk Tall, 'Crew Network', Alive-O, Social Personal & Health Education, (SPHE).
- Procedures for dealing with drug incidences in the school.
- Guidelines and information for teachers to improve their response to the problem of substance misuse.

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

### **Implementation of the Policy**

The policy will be made available from the principal to the Board of Management, teachers, other staff members and parents, on request.

All parents and guardians will be provided with a copy of the policy and new parents/guardians will be provided with a copy on enrolment of their child in the school. Enrolment will be on acceptance of this and other school policy documents by them.

The school wishes to make clear that the primary role of educating children about substance misuse prevention rests with the parents/guardians who are the primary educators of their children.

### **Prevention**

*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, Health Boards and private companies.*

### **Smoking**

- -The school is a restricted smoking area.
- -Students are not permitted to smoke or possess cigarettes on the school premises or in any other place.
- -Staff may only smoke in the Designated “Smoking Area” which will be out of view of children.
- -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.

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

### **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. Markers, glues, paper thinners, etc. should be kept in filing cabinet/ teacher's desk in each classroom.
- Solvents such as glues, paper thinners (*Tippex*), spray paints, de-odorant sprays, etc. deemed to have harmful effects on pupils, will not be allowed to be used by students unsupervised.
- -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.

**Policy adopted by the Board of Management. 29/4/2003 Reviewed 2010**