



Substance Use Policy Scoil Mhuire, Clontibret

Introduction

This policy addresses the education of children in relation to alcohol, tobacco, solvents and drugs and the procedures for managing incidents relating to these substances.

This policy applies to all users of the school building, students, teachers, ancillary staff, users of the school and visitors. It is applicable during school time and all school activities.

It applies to the school building, the school grounds and any location where school related activity takes place.

In this policy, our understanding of 'drugs' - "A drug is any substance which changes the way the body functions, mentally, physically or emotionally. This description includes many substances we normally think of as drugs as well as substances we might not usually consider to be drugs such as coffee, tea, alcohol, solvents and tobacco (Corrigan, 2003 cited in Best Practice Guidelines in Substance Misuse Prevention Education 2010)".

Aims of Policy

The aim of the substance use policy of Scoil Mhuire is primary prevention and education. The central objective of this substance use policy is the welfare, care and protection of children attending the school. 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.

Rationale

- The Education Act (1998) provides that schools should promote the social and personal development of students and provide health education for them.
- The Social Personal and Health Education curriculum, of which substance misuse prevention education is an integral part, is a mandatory subject on the primary curriculum and must be taught to all primary pupils from junior infants to sixth class (DES Circular 022/2010).



- The National Drugs Strategy (interim) 2009-2016 requires every school to have a substance use policy in place
- Action 21 of the National Drugs Strategy (interim) 2009-2016 mandates the Department of Education and Skills to monitor the implementation of substance use policies in schools through the whole school evaluation process as operated by the Inspectorate. It is also mandated to ensure that best practice is disseminated to all schools

OUR SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY AND MISSION STATEMENT

Scoil Mhuire is a Catholic Primary School under the patronage of the Bishop of Clogher. It promotes a Catholic ethos, while welcoming and respecting the values of children of all denominations.

Our aim is to impart Christian values and standards within a constructive learning environment. We endeavour to ensure that the individuality of the child is accommodated while acknowledging the right of each child to education in a relatively disruption free environment. Our Code of Behaviour shows caring and concern for each child and we nurture self-esteem, self-respect and respect for others.

We encourage the active learning of each child at his/her own pace and to his/her full potential. We strive to provide a well-ordered, caring, happy and secure atmosphere where the intellectual, spiritual, physical, moral and cultural needs of the pupil are identified and addressed.

Scoil Mhuire promotes excellence in teaching and learning.

We in Scoil Mhuire subscribe to the aims of education:

- To enable the child to live a full life as a child and to realize his or her potential as a unique individual.
- To enable the child to develop as a social being through living and co-operating with others and so contribute to the good of society.
- To prepare the child for further education and lifelong learning.

[Revised Primary School Curriculum]

RELATIONSHIP TO THE SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY AND MISSION STATEMENT

In our Mission Statement it is stated that, "We strive to provide a well ordered, caring, happy and secure atmosphere where the intellectual, spiritual, physical, moral and cultural needs of the pupil are identified and addressed."

The Substance Use Policy reflects the school ethos in that it is dedicated to the care of the whole school community and it aims to provide a safe and secure environment for learning.

The school environment endeavours to create a climate and culture which:

- values and practices respect in interpersonal relationships.
- helps children to take responsibility for themselves and others.
- provides outlets for creativity and enjoyable healthy pursuits and activities.
- provides a safe school environment.
- Strengthens the co-operation between parents/guardians, the school and the wider community in dealing with substance misuse prevention.

Goals and Objectives

Our goals and objectives in relation to substance use are:

- That the School Community will be better informed with regard to Substance Use in all its guises, by providing honest and age appropriate information on substances.
- To give children the confidence, skills and knowledge to make healthy choices.
- We seek to avert, or at least, delay the experimentation with substance and reduce the demand for legal and illegal drugs.
- We intend to highlight the clear procedures the staff of the school will follow in the event of a drug related incident.
- To minimise the harm caused by substances, by offering or facilitating supportive interventions.

POLICY CONTENT

Education Concerning Substance Abuse

Education concerning substance use in Scoil Mhuire will be provided, within the broad context of the subject of Social Personal and Health Education, which is developmental and delivered in the context of a supportive whole school environment. All classes will follow the Walk Tall SPHE



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Programme. This programme has tailored classroom materials to cater for diverse pupil population and makes an explicit link between Walk Tall and the content objectives of the Social Personal and Health Education curriculum (SPHE).

Formal SPHE lessons will be allocated one 30 minute slot weekly.

Our work will be reinforced by project work and the possibility of talks from local Gardaí and Public Health Nurses as long as the content of their talk is in keeping with the school curriculum on the topic.

Management of Alcohol, Tobacco and Drug Related Incidents

In Scoil Mhuire, we acknowledge that in all situations involving drugs, there needs to be a balance between the needs of the young person and the needs of the school community. Due care is important when deciding on a pastoral and or disciplinary response. Disciplinary procedures will be followed if school rules are broken and expulsion will only be an option when all else is failed.

Where a member of staff requires support, they will be referred to **Employee Assistance Service** provided by **Spectrum.Life** namely,

Wellbeing Together: Folláine le Chéile

1800 411 057

The school's shared understanding of a 'drug related incident' is:

- Any unusual or unbecoming behaviour resulting from intake or use of alcohol, tobacco or illegal drugs.
- Disclosures about drug abuse
- The sale or passing on of any illegal substance.
- The possession of alcohol, tobacco or illegal drugs on school grounds or at school related activities.
- Finding alcohol, tobacco, other drugs or related items (e.g. syringes) found on school property or during a school related activity.

Procedure:

Where there is no immediate danger to the pupil, it is important to take time to assess the situation before responding.

The reporting procedure for a “drug related incident” is:

- Any Staff member who encounters a drug incident must inform the Designated Liaison Person (DLP).
- Where a pupil confides in a member of Staff regarding drug use with a view to seeking help, the Staff member will report the case to the DLP and Child Safeguarding statement will be followed.
- It is important that, in all suspected or confirmed drug incidents, a limited number of people are involved in managing the incident. Staff will be informed on a ‘need to know’ basis.
- Parents will be informed and the "Code of Behaviour" invoked.
Parents will be involved by accepting the school’s Code of Behaviour and Enrolment Policies. They will be informed of an incident involving their own child and will be asked to accept responsibility, co-operate with the school authorities and with the Gardaí if necessary.
- Parents will be involved in incidents involving another child only if deemed necessary by the school authorities; if parents are aware that another child is involved in drug-related incidents under the scope of this policy they should inform the teacher, Principal
- In response to all incidents, parents will be advised to seek support from the relevant Community Care Agency.
- If a pupil has a drug problem, parents will be advised to make referral to a G.P. and /or Drug Treatment Centre.
- The Principal will liaise with the Garda Juvenile Liaison Officer (JLO) in the event of any drugs found on the premises. Gardaí will be informed regarding all incidences involving illegal drugs.

- In situations of confirmed use/possession or supply, then all the details will be recorded. The record will be retained by the School.

Management of Substance Related Incidents

Smoking - School Policy

- ◇ The school is a restricted smoking area; smoking is forbidden within the school boundaries.
- ◇ Pupils found smoking or in possession of cigarettes or e-cigarettes on school premises or during school activities will be reported to the Principal and his / her parents/ guardians will be informed.
- ◇ Visitors will comply with the restricted smoking policy.
- ◇ Tobacco will not be permitted as a prize for school raffles.
- ◇ Adults who have in their possession tobacco products for their own use must keep them in their possession at all times and out of sight and reach of children.
- ◇ A record should be kept of any incident which occurs.
- ◇ This document will be read with the Child Protection Policy and the Code of Behaviour Policy of the school.

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. Parents will be notified.
- ◇ Where a student comes to school under the influence of alcohol, their parents will be contacted and requested to remove them from the school until they are deemed fit to return.
- ◇ Students breaking these rules will be dealt with according to the school's Code of Behaviour.

- ◇ 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.
- ◇ If a parent who is under the influence of alcohol arrives to transport a child home, it must be reported to the Principal immediately. The child's safety is paramount. .
- ◇ If a staff member appears to be under the influence of alcohol, it will be reported to the Principal who will act in accordance with the Health and Safety Policy.
- ◇ A record should be kept of any incident which occurs.
- ◇ This document will be read with the Child Protection Policy and the Code of Behaviour Policy of the school.

Drugs and Solvents - School Policy

- ◇ Students are forbidden from being in possession of or using illicit drugs or solvents on the school premises.
- ◇ Illicit drugs found on school premises should be locked away and the Gardaí contacted to dispose of them.
- ◇ 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. Parents / guardians will be contacted and requested to remove them from the school until they are deemed fit to return.
- ◇ Where the school suspects trafficking of illicit drugs, an investigation will be carried out by the principal with the assistance of the Garda Juvenile Liaison Officer. Parents of any student involved will be informed.
- ◇ The school B.O.M. will expect parents to inform the Principal or teacher if they suspect their child of drug taking.
- ◇ All solvents used in the school are securely stored under lock and key.

- ◇ If a staff member appears to be under the influence of a substance, it will be reported to the Principal who will act in accordance with the Health and Safety Policy.
- ◇ If an adult appears to be under the influence of a substance when coming to collect a child, it must be reported to the Principal. The child's safety is paramount.
- ◇ A record should be kept of any incident which occurs.
- ◇ This document will be read with the Child Protection Policy and the Code of Behaviour Policy of the school.

Administration of Medicine

Storage and administration of medicines in school is dealt with in the Administration of Medicines Policy.

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 sentences 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 ensure, while at work, 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.



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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 counseling 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.

*In the case that the Principal / Deputy Principal is/are absent or is/are the offending person(s) the Acting Principal/ Acting Deputy / Most Senior Post Holder shall carry out the duties and responsibilities of the Principal / Deputy.

Provision for Training and Staff Development

The SPHE programme is delivered throughout the school and all staff is aware of the contribution that this makes to substance use education. Staff members are also aware of the contribution they can make to the prevention of substance misuse within their own class by developing a supportive class environment and informing the pupils while taking the age of the pupils into consideration and local circumstances.

All Staff members will have access to a copy of this policy.

Confidentiality

It is important that the limits of confidentiality be discussed with students before any disclosure is made. The wellbeing of the child and teacher must be a primary focus. It is important that in all suspected or confirmed drug incidents that a limited number of people are involved in managing the incident. People will be informed on a 'need to know' basis.

Roles and Responsibilities

All members of the school community have a role in the development, implementation and evaluation of the policy to ensure that the safety and welfare of all pupils is maintained and that we have a safe and secure environment for learning.

Success Criteria



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Feedback from the relevant parties on the effectiveness of the policy in dealing with an incident should it occur.

Review

This policy will be reviewed and evaluated regularly in line with new legislation and revised when necessary.

Ratification & Communication

This reviewed and amended policy was adopted and ratified by the Board of Management on the 27th April 2023.

A copy of the amended Substance Use Policy will be given to all Staff Members and it will be available to the school community on the Website.

Signed: Cathal McGlone
Chairperson

Date: 25th May 2023

Signed: Elizabeth Moorehead
Principal

Date: 25th May 2023



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Substance Abuse Report Form

Name of student: _____

Date on Incident: _____

Reporting Teacher: _____

Factual Account of Events:

Who has been informed?

What action has been taken?

Signed

Date
