



Substance Use Policy

Ratified
May 2020

Ennis National School



Substance Use Policy

Scope

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.

Relationship to School's Mission/Vision/Aims

- Promotes holistic development of the pupil encouraging respect for self, society and world
- Dedicated to the care of the whole school community
- Provides a safe and secure environment for learning
- Supports those who are experiencing difficulties
- Seeks to engage the partners in the education process
- Seeks to support a healthy lifestyle for all, in a safe, supportive and non-threatening environment

Rationale:

- To meet demands of changing world. The world in which we live presents young people with many challenges that 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

- Education Act (1998) provides that schools should promote the social and personal development of students and provide health education for them
- The 1999 European School Survey Project on Alcohol and other Drugs (ESPAD) Report highlighted the seriousness of the problem among sixteen year olds in Ireland, as compared to the other 29 ESPAD countries surveyed. Alcohol was identified as being the dominant drug of misuse in Ireland whilst the use of tobacco and other drugs was above the ESPAD average
- National Drugs Strategy, '*Building on Experience*' is now Government policy and it requires schools to have substance use policy in place.
- The report from the National Advisory Committee on Drugs entitled 'Drug Use Prevention – Overview of Research' (November 2001) underlines the importance of schools developing substance use policies.

Goals/Objectives

- To provide a comprehensive programme of education for all students in substance use issues
- Central objective of this policy is the welfare, care, protection and education of the students in the school and to equip B.O.M. 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 positive health behaviours
- To provide a safe and healthy environment
- To promote self-esteem and self-awareness of students
- To manage incidents of substance, use in a clear and consistent manner

Policy Content

A. Education Concerning Substance Use

What is a drug? 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 will adopt an age appropriate incidental approach to substance use with more formal lessons at senior level.

THE SCHOOL WISHES TO MAKE CLEAR THAT THE PRIMARY ROLE OF SUBSTANCE MISUSE PREVENTION RESTS WITH THE PARENTS.



Education about alcohol, tobacco and drugs will be carried out by teachers through the S.P.H.E. programme, which is taught in our school. We would also draw on the expertise of the Gardai, Health Board etc.

Material from the following programmes will also be used:

- Walk Tall
- Stay Safe
- R.S.E.
- Science
- Grow In Love
- S.P.H.E.
- Making the Links
- Bí Folláin
- Relationships and Sexuality

When it is necessary to use glue, varnish or other similar products in the school, the dangers will be explained and they will be used under supervision. As a general rule, where possible, these substances will be used during last class in a ventilated room/space.

Outside speakers may be invited to speak to enhance/supplement work done in school, will work within the curriculum boundary and in the presence of a teacher.

Parental Consent/Parental involvement will be sought where appropriate/relevant.

B. 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, E-cigarettes 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
- Other

The school should respond to incidents involving alcohol, tobacco and drug use in a planned and considered way. In certain cases, it may be necessary to seek legal advice. Due care will be important in deciding on the balance between a pastoral and a disciplinary response. An appropriate pastoral response to an incident involving alcohol, tobacco and drug use may include referral to a support agency.

Smoking

- The school is a no smoking area
- People are not permitted to smoke or possess cigarettes/tobacco/E-cigarette products on the school premises or on school related activities



- Pupils are not permitted to possess cigarettes/tobacco/E-cigarette products on the school premises or on school related activities
- Tobacco will not be permitted as a prize for school raffles

Management of tobacco related incidents

The school will follow the following procedure:

- 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 restricted area
- People will not be allowed to bring alcohol into the school or to consume alcohol in school or during any school related activities
- If alcohol is required for an adult only school function, permission shall be sought from B.O.M.
- If alcohol is to be a prize in school raffles, it must be delivered to and collected from the school by an adult

Management of alcohol related incidents

The school will follow the following procedures:

- 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.

Illicit drugs and solvents

- People are forbidden from being in possession of or using illicit drugs or solvents in the school or on school premises



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 (PDST), 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
Grow In Love	Religion Programme
Children First	Dept. of Health and Children
Making the Links	Dept. of Education and Skills
Bí Folláin	Mid-Western Health Board
Relationships and Sexuality	Dept. of Education and Skills

Roles and Responsibilities:

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 Gardai
- 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 B.O.M.).

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.

Monitoring Procedures

This requires vigilance on the part of everybody, teachers, parents, students, other staff or visitors to the school. Monitoring also requires that any concerns or reasonable suspicions be reported immediately to the Principal/Deputy Principal.

Review 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 (with literature updated) e.g. should an incident occur in the meantime.

Useful phone number:

- HSE CADS 05786 92516
(Community, Alcohol and Drugs Service)

Ratification of Policy

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on _____ [date].

This policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website and provided to the Parents' Association. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron if requested.

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed by the Board of Management once in every second school year. Written notification that the review has been completed will be made available to school personnel, published on the school website and provided to the Parents' Association. A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department.



Signed: _____
(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed: _____
(Principal)

Date: _____

Date: _____

Date of next review: September 2022

