

Substance use policy



Scoil Naisiúnta Rónáin Naofa Cluain Lua

St. Ronan's N.S., Cloonloo, Boyle, Co. Sligo

Tel: 071 - 9663684

Definition: A drug is any chemical which alters how the body works or how the person behaves or feels.

Our policy will refer to the following substances:

- Medicines
- Nicotine
- Solvents e.g. aerosols, correction fluids, thinners nail polish remover, etc.
- Alcohol
- All illegal substances

Who this policy applies to and when:

- Pupils during school time and all related school activities.
- Staff while in charge of or in view of the pupils.
- Parents when visiting the school or on a school related activity.
- All visitors to the premises.

Mission Statement:

This policy is in line with our school ethos which aims to promote the well-being of all our pupils and a healthy environment.

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 students and respond appropriately to what are sometimes sensitive and emotive issues.
- The Education Act 1998 provides that schools should promote the social and personal development of students and provide health education for them.
- The National Drugs Strategy, 'Building on Experience' is now Government policy and it requires all schools to have a substance use policy in place.

- The November 2001 report from the National Advisory Committee on Drugs underlines the importance of schools developing substance use policies.
- 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.
- For the population as a whole, alcohol consumption per capita in Ireland has increased by 41% in the period 1989 to 1999, while the other EU Member States showed either a decrease or a modest increase. In 2002 Ireland had the second highest per capita consumption of alcohol in the EU.

Goals / Objectives:

1. We aim to help the pupils to develop a healthy attitude towards substances and an understanding of the dangers involved in substance misuse.
2. We aim to raise awareness among the whole school community regarding the dangers involved in substance misuse.
3. We aim to promote a healthy environment for all users of the premises.

Policy Content:

1. Education concerning substance use:

Education is provided within the broad content of SPHE, particularly within the units 'Safety and Protection' and 'Taking care of my body'. It is taught in two year cycles using lessons taken from the 'Walk Tall Programme'. (Dept. of Education and Science.) It will be left to the class teacher to modify the content in a multi- class situation. An outside speaker may be used to support what has already been taught in school by the class teacher e.g. Garda, health board worker, etc.

Actual Content:

Junior Infants-2 nd class	safe use of medicines Safety strategies for dealing with dangerous substances that might be found at school or at home.
3 rd / 4 th classes	as above plus be aware of the dangers of using alcohol or nicotine. Know and understand the meaning of the word drug.
5 th / 6 th classes	as above plus distinguish between legal and illegal drugs. Identifying those that are most commonly used and examine their affects.

2. Management of alcohol, tobacco and drug related incidents:

RULES IN OUR SCHOOL RE. SUBSTANCES:

Medicines:

1. Pupils are prohibited from having or using medicines in school without written permission.
2. If a parent feels their child requires medication during school hours it should be discussed with the principal.
3. All medicines on the premises will be stored safely to ensure the well-being of the pupils.
4. All adults working on the premises are responsible for their own medication and its safe storage.

Solvents:

1. Pupils are prohibited from having correction fluids, thinners aerosols, nail-varnish at school.
2. Markers brought to school by pupils should be water based.
3. Parents are asked that if pupils use deodorants after school based activities (e.g. swimming, football.) that they should be stick based or roll-on.
4. Staff using solvent based products to take every precaution to protect the well-being of the pupils.
5. All solvent products to be stored safely.

Nicotine:

Our school premises is a no smoking environment. Smoking is prohibited at all times by law. Children are prohibited from bringing in or using any nicotine product, matches or lighters.

Alcohol:

Use of or possession of alcohol on the premises is prohibited. Pupils are prohibited from having or bringing in any alcohol related product.

Illegal Substances:

Use of or possession of all illegal substances is prohibited.

Management of incidents:

If any pupil is found using or in possession of any of the above substances:

1. The substance will be confiscated.
2. The principal will be informed.
3. The incident will be investigated.
4. Parents/guardians will be informed.
5. Further disciplinary action will be taken if necessary.

If a child shows signs of intoxicating or unusual/strange behaviour the following steps will be followed:

1. Principal informed.
2. The incident will be treated as a medical emergency.
3. Incident will be investigated.
4. Parents/guardians will be informed.
5. Further disciplinary action will be taken if necessary.

Disclosure of use:

(a) during school time:

- inform principal
- investigate incident
- inform parents/guardians
- take disciplinary action if necessary.

(b) Outside school hours:

If information is received, it will be passed on to the child's own parents/guardians to investigate.

Any information regarding an illegal activity will be passed on to the Gardai.

Finding Substances on the Premises:

In the case of cigarette butts, beer bottles etc. These will be disposed of safely.

Gardai will be contacted to dispose of any substances suspected to be illegal.

Breaches of the Policy:

In the case of staff members the following steps will apply:

- They will be reminded of the policy
- A verbal warning will be given
- If caught again a written warning will be issued.
- Disciplinary action maybe taken.

If anybody arrives at the school in an intoxicated he/she will be asked to leave the premises immediately with the permission of the BOM. Gardai may be informed.

If any staff member becomes aware of a parent/guardian coming to collect a pupil obviously under the influence of a substance and incapable of caring for a child all reasonable steps will be taken to ensure the well-being of the pupil.

ALL THE ABOVE INCIDENTS WILL BE RECORDED. DUE CARE WILL BE TAKEN IN DECIDING ON A BALANCE BETWEEN A PASTORAL AND A DISCIPLINARY RESPONSE. IF AT ANYTIME CONCERNS ARISE ABOUT THE WELFARE OF A PUPIL THE CHILD PROTECTION GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES WILL BE FOLLOWED.

3. Staff training and development:

There is a shared understanding among the staff of the contribution that the SPHE programme can make to the prevention of substance misuse.

The principal has received training in the Walk Tall Programme.

The staff has received SPHE inservice training.

Parent information meetings may be organised as the need arises.

Roles and Responsibilities:

The partners in education namely The Board of Management, principal & staff, and the parents have a role to play in this policy.

Success Criteria:

The success of this policy will be judged on the following:

- Is there a healthy atmosphere in the school?
- The number of incidents
- How these incidents are handled.

Monitoring progress:

Monitoring will be ongoing and will take cognisance of the following:

- Changing information
- New legislation
- Feedback
- Developments in school based programmes.

Implementation:

This policy was first implemented in April 2006 when it was ratified by the Board.

Timeframe:

This revised policy will be reviewed in 2013 or earlier if the need arises.

This policy has been formulated by the Policy committee with the help of the SPHE/RSE support service

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|-----------------------|-------------------|
| • Parents | Silke O'Connor |
| • Teachers | Michael Heffernan |
| • Board of Management | Claire Conway |
| • Support Service | Mary Hough |

Ratification by the Board of Management:

Date: _____

Signature: _____