

Substance Use Policy
Scoil Mhuire na nGrást
Belgooly

1. Introduction

The staff of the school, in collaboration with the Board of Management, devised the following policy statement.

2. Rationale

The reasoning behind the drafting of the policy can be summarised as follows-

- Responding to the challenges modern society presents to young people in the form of easy availability of drugs, alcohol and tobacco, and as educators, we have a duty to respond to this challenge
- The Education Act 1998 obliges a school to promote Health Education and the Social and personal development of students
- Ireland has the second highest consumption of alcohol per capita in the E.U. which makes alcohol the dominant drug of misuse in this country.
- Schools are required to have a policy on Substance Use in place under the National Drugs Strategy

3. Relationship to School Ethos

The school ethos strives towards the provision of a caring well ordered, happy, child-friendly, secure atmosphere, where the physical, psychological, moral, intellectual and spiritual needs of the pupils are adequately catered for.

This policy attempts to reinforce those ideals through –

1. providing a safe and healthy environment
2. promoting health awareness
3. promoting respect and self-esteem
4. working in partnership with parents and pupils

4. Aims and Objectives

- In addition to providing and promoting secure environments, respect and health awareness, the school strives towards raising awareness of substance abuse amongst the student population
- Developing a framework for education relating to substance use and for the management of incidents that may arise
- Provision of adequate staff training and development using outside expertise to ensure early detection of possible substance use

5. Roles and Responsibilities

- a) The Principal has overall responsibility for the implementation of policy
- b) The class teachers have responsibility for the delivery of the S.P.H.E programme and the various other related resource supports.
- c) Parents engage in and support school policy. The primary role of substance misuse prevention rests with parents
- d) The Board of Management is responsible for all issues relating to Health and Safety in the school

6. Internal School Provision

The S.P.H.E curricular programme provides the cornerstone of the schools internal provision. Within the broad context of S.P.H.E, specific programmes such as Walk Tall and Alive O are used.

Tobacco

Scoil Mhuire na nGrást is a no smoking area. Visitors will comply with the no smoking policy. Students found smoking on the school premises will be reported to the Principal by staff, and parents will be informed. The child will be dealt with according to the school's disciplinary procedures.

Alcohol

Scoil Mhuire na nGrást is an alcohol free area and students are forbidden to bring alcohol into the school premises or consume alcohol on the school premises or during out of school activities. If a teacher is of the opinion that a student is under the influence of alcohol the teacher will talk to and listen to the child in question and then inform the Principal who will decide on what action is required, which will normally involve contacting parents / guardians. The child will be dealt with as per the school Code of Behaviour Policy. **Visitors will comply with the school's alcohol free area policy.**

Drugs and Solvents

Students are forbidden to use, promote or supply illicit drugs / solvents on school premises. The school will endeavour to strike a balance between a pastoral and a disciplinary response should an incident occur and support agencies are available to the school should the need arise. These support agencies include –

- Health Service Executive
- Family Doctor
- Social Worker
- Gardaí
- Clergy
- Education Welfare Office
- Junior Liaison Officer
- Teachers
- Pharmacist

It is the policy of the school to contact the Gardaí when drugs are found on the school premises. Where there is disclosure, investigation will be left in the hands of the Gardaí. Where there is no disclosure, all parents will be informed by letter and an emergency meeting of parents may be convened if deemed appropriate. Parents will always be contacted

in individual cases. If medical intervention is required, a designated teacher will monitor the student until a doctor / ambulance arrives.

Note: The Board of Management reserve the right not to entertain any media enquiries in the event of an issue of national concern occurring on the school premises, and there is absolutely no onus on the Principal to deliver a statement on behalf of the school unless the B.O.M, in consultation with Principal and staff, consider it appropriate to do so.

Illicit drugs/solvents found on the school premises will be stored in the Principal's office under lock and key until handed over to Gardaí.

7. Guest Speakers

The policy welcomes guest speakers on issues relating to illicit substances. All guest speakers will work under the following parameters –

- a) The teacher must be present during the talks
- b) The speaker must come with a recommendation from other Principals or the H.S.E.
- c) The speaker must have an understanding of the level of maturity of the children
- d) The speaker will be conscious of the fact that parents may smoke and drink and will keep this in mind during all interactions with children

8. Training and Staff Development

The school is assisted in professional development by the Professional Development Service for Teachers (PDST), the Health Service Executive (H.S.E), the Walk Tall Support Office, the local Gardaí and the S.P.H.E programme.

9. Curriculum Planning

Middle Classes

Aim	Provision	Resources
To assess risky behaviour such as smoking, tasting alcohol etc. S.P.H.E Text page 43	Circle Time Stay Safe Photos Brainstorming	Walk Tall 4 – Page 92 Photos
To identify substances in the home / school that may be dangerous if not used properly	Walk Tall 3/4 – Page 104	Walk Tall 3/4 – Page 106
Awareness of dangers of tobacco, alcohol, drugs. Reasons why people choose to drink/smoke	News / Stories Videos Role Play Parental Role	T.V. advertisements Newspaper articles Teacher / instructor
Categorisation of substances info <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helpful • Harmful • Legal • illegal 	Garda Visit Media Pictures Videos	T.V. advertisements Teacher instruction
Understanding drugs and solvents and the appropriateness and	Teacher instruction Parent input	Understanding Drugs Health Promotion Unit

inappropriateness of both		
Accessing people who are concerned with Health and Welfare	Discussion Visiting Presenter	Visit from H.S.E.

Senior Classes

Aim/Objective	Provision	Resources
Promoting Health and Safety in the School/home	Teacher Instruction Discussion Parental Reinforcement	Earthlink Walk Tall Road Signs
Identifying harmful substances	Garda Talk for parents / teachers S.P.H.E	T.V. Advertisements Photos
Preventing Accidents	Informal class discussion	Media Photos
Awareness of medicines / solvents	Parental involvement Teacher Instruction	Walk Tall
Identifying environmental risks	Nature Walks In-class instruction	Media Videos Visiting Speaker

10. Success Criteria

- (1) Monitoring of behaviour in classrooms, corridor, yard, and on out of school activities
- (2) Appropriate intervention when an incident occurs
- (3) Openness in discussing issues relating to substance use
- (4) Positive feedback from all stakeholders

11. Implementation

The policy is currently being implemented.

12. Communication, Ratification and Review

Once ratified, this policy will be communicated to parents and will be made available for viewing in the school office. Parents and guardians will be given a copy of the policy on enrolment of their child in the school. Enrolment will be on acceptance of this and other school policy documents by them.

The Board of Management approved the Substance Use Policy at its meeting on 26 March 2012 and will review should any incident make such a review necessary.

13. Resources

- Walk Tall
- Understanding Drugs (Health Promotion Unit)
- Stay Safe
- National Advisory Committee on Drugs
- Building on Experience (National Drugs Strategy) E.S.P.A.D (1999)
- S.P.H.E. Curriculum Stands
- Child Protection Guidelines for Primary School (NCCA 1999)
- “On My Own Two Feet” – SPHE guidelines, DES.
- “Drug Use Prevention” – www.nacd.ie