

SUBSTANCE USE POLICY

1. DEFINITIONS

A drug is any legal or illegal substance which when introduced into the body has a mind or mood altering effect, creates a change of perception and/or how the body functions. It may also have a social/psychological effect.

Drug paraphernalia is any item or items which may be used in association with a drug as defined above to produce the effects described.

2. General

- (a) Possession, use or supply of drugs in the school, on school trips or in non-school time by any member of the school community is strictly prohibited.
- (b) Students who are in possession of prescription drugs should ensure that they carry prescriptions or a note from his/her parents/guardians referring to same. In the case of a student who requires medication on an ongoing basis the appropriate Class Tutor should be kept fully informed by parents/guardians of the student's medical needs.
- (c) The School's zero-tolerance approach to substance abuse applies to all incidents regardless of when and where they occur.

3. Managing drug related incidents.

Smoking

- (a) Students in possession of tobacco or tobacco related items on school property or while engaged in school activities will have the offending substance or item confiscated.
- (b) Appropriate disciplinary measures will be implemented in accordance with the Code of Behaviour.
- (c) Parents/guardians will be informed and a full written record of the incident will be kept

Alcohol

- (a) Where alcohol is found on school property or in the possession of students while engaged in a school activity the following procedure will apply :
 - i. Students in possession of alcohol on school property or while engaged in school activity will have the offending substance confiscated.
 - ii. The Principal/Deputy Principal will be informed.
 - iii. Parents/guardians of students concerned will be contacted.

- iv. The student will be referred to the Pastoral Care Team.
 - v. Western Health Board Addiction/Outreach services may be contacted.
 - vi. Appropriate disciplinary measures will be implemented in accordance with the Code of Behaviour.
 - vii. A full written record of the incident will be kept
- (b) Where students are found under the influence of alcohol while on school grounds or engaging in a school activity the following procedure will apply :
- i. Medical assistance will be sought immediately.
 - ii. Staff will assess whether first aid is necessary and if so provide first aid.
 - iii. If the incident occurs on school grounds and the School Office is open the students concerned will be brought to the Office for supervision. Otherwise student will be placed under supervision by staff in an appropriate place, depending on when and where the incident occurs.
 - iv. All of the measures specified above with regard to students found in possession of alcohol may be implemented.
 - v. Appropriate disciplinary measures will be implemented in accordance with the Code of Behaviour.
- (c) Where students are found the influence of other drugs or in possession of drugs or drug paraphernalia the following procedure will apply :
- i. Medical assistance will be sought immediately.
 - ii. Staff will assess whether first aid is necessary and if so provide first aid.
 - iii. The Principal/Deputy Principal will be informed.
 - iv. Parents/guardians of the students concerned will be informed.
 - v. Members of the Pastoral Care Team will be informed.
 - vi. The Garda Síochána or appropriate police authorities will be informed.
 - vii. The offending substance or items will be confiscated.
 - viii. The Western Health Board Addiction Contact WHB Addiction/Outreach Services may be contacted.

- ix. Appropriate disciplinary measures will be implemented in accordance with the Code of Behaviour.
 - x. A full written record of the incident will be kept
- (d) Where this Policy refers to confiscation of materials the following procedures will be followed :
- i. The student concerned will be requested to permit a search of his/her property and/or to give up possession of the suspect material in the presence of the Principal/Deputy Principal, another adult nominated by the Principal/Deputy Principal and, if the student requests, another adult or a student nominated by the student concerned.
 - ii. Under no circumstances will staff attempt to effect a search of the person of a student. The student will simply be requested to present the contents of pockets, bags, lockers etc.
 - iii. If the student refuses to permit a search of his/her property and/or refuses to voluntarily give up the suspect material parents/guardians of the student will be contacted and requested to come to the School. Pending arrival of a parent/guardian the student will be kept under permanent supervision by school staff in an appropriate place.
 - iv. When parents/guardians have arrived the student will once again be requested to permit a search of his/her property and/or to give up possession of the suspect material in the presence of the Principal/Deputy Principal, another adult nominated by the Principal/Deputy Principal and the student's parents/guardians.
 - v. If the student continues to refuse to permit a search of his/her property and or to voluntarily give up possession of the suspect material the Garda Síochána will be contacted. The student and his/her parents/guardians will be requested to remain at the School pending the arrival of the Garda Síochána.
 - vi. The School may also contact the Garda Síochána in the event that the student's parents/guardians are unable to come to the School within a reasonable period of time from being requested to do so.
 - vii. The School may also contact the Garda Síochána where a student has complied with a request to permit a search of his/her property and/or has given up possession of suspect material if the School believes it appropriate that the Garda Síochána be contacted.
 - viii. Confiscation of suspect material by school staff will only be effected in the presence of witnesses as described above. This is to protect school staff and ensure that no issue can later be raised as to the source of the material in question.

- ix. Staff will make as little physical contact with the suspect material as is possible.
- x. The student concerned will be kept under constant supervision throughout the above process to prevent suspect material from being disposed of by consumption or otherwise.
- xi. A reference to the Garda Síochána includes the appropriate police authorities where an incident to which this procedure relates occurs outside of the Republic of Ireland.

4. External legal proceedings

- (a) Where students are the subject of legal proceedings relating to alcohol, drugs and/or drug paraphernalia the School may suspend students concerned or otherwise restrict their participation in the School in accordance with the School Code of Behaviour pending resolution of legal proceedings.
- (b) On the resolution of legal proceedings as described above sanctions may be imposed in accordance with the School Code of Behaviour.

5. Issues pertaining to drug and alcohol abuse are discussed in S.P.H.E., C.S.P.E., Biology, Home Economics and Religion classes. Experts in these areas frequently visit the school to heighten awareness of the problems associated with the misuse of alcohol and drugs and to offer solutions how to tackle these problems when and if they arise.