

Cabinteely Community School



Substance Use Policy (Reviewed 2011)

The following policy was developed originally in 2003 through a collaborative approach involving representatives of the teaching staff, the Parents' Council, the Student Representative Council, the student body and the Board of Management of Cabinteely Community School.

MISSION STATEMENT

“We wish to provide all students with an ordered, disciplined, caring and supportive environment which will encourage and develop the pupils’ self- image, confidence and their psychological and physical well-being.”

RATIONALE FOR THE POLICY

This policy has been put in place out of a concern to:

- promote the health and welfare of the whole school community.
- provide the protection necessary to all members of the school community.
- encourage pupils to accept responsibility for their actions.
- outline procedures to be followed in the event of a drug-related incident in the school.

DEFINITION

A drug, for the purpose of this policy is understood to be a chemical substance, which changes how the body functions, either physically, mentally or emotionally. The policy aims to address the following areas:

- Tobacco
- Alcohol
- Solvents
- Illegal substances
- Abuse of “over the counter” medicines and prescribed medication

We recognise that substances, both legal and illegal are available in the community. This policy was drafted in consultation with parents and with representatives of the student body, through the Student Representative Council, in the belief that both school and home have an important role to play in the education about drug use and in the prevention of drug abuse. The policy will deal with the repercussions of substance use on school premises and during extra-curricular activities. It will also look at the efforts within the school to educate pupils on the effects in their lives of substance abuse.

PRESENT AND PROPOSED EDUCATIONAL PROVISION

The school community recognises that the most effective education in this area aims at enhancing self-esteem and developing social competence, as well as providing information.

On-going:

- We aim to provide a drugs education programme for all students in the context of Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) classes.
- In Sixth Year, drugs education is again dealt with as a module within the context of the Ballygall Project.
- Invited speakers for Transition Year and Leaving Cert Applied class groups
- Second Year pupils have had a number of programmes from the Parents Group which promotes healthy options to drug use and the 'Just Say No' programme.
- Leadership programmes for Prefects.
- Drug use and abuse is dealt with in Religion classes within the Ethics and Morality Module. The vast majority of pupils in the school are obliged to take the Religion classes as part of the core curriculum.
- In-service programmes for teachers of SPHE have been facilitated.
- Pastoral Care within the school, including the Care Team and the Chaplain, offer support to all pupils.
- Support for parents through the Home/School Office.
- The provision of extra-curricular activities, especially Sport.

Proposed:

- A Substance Awareness Week, which we found useful before.
- Invited speakers on an ad hoc basis
- Project work
- Pupil involvement
- Provision for staff training

- Parental development through the Home/School Office.
- A programme of fitness and fun through sport for all first year pupils

A CODE OF BEHAVIOUR TO PROMOTE HEALTH IN THE CONTEXT OF DRUG ABUSE

The school aims to encourage a healthy lifestyle for every member of the school community. For this reason, the school's code of behaviour states that:

- Tippex and aerosols are not allowed in school and will be confiscated.
- Smoking in any part of the school building or grounds is forbidden and illegal.
- Illegal substance possession and/or use is strictly forbidden, as is possession and use of alcohol; misuse of prescribed and/or un-prescribed drugs or other harmful substances.
- Violation of this rule may lead to expulsion.

DEALING WITH DRUG-RELATED INCIDENTS WITHIN THE SCHOOL

Any staff member who is concerned about the behaviour of a pupil should consult immediately with the Principal or Deputy-Principal. The first priority will be to address the immediate health issues.

In the event that any student is found to be:

- in possession of prohibited substances or of drug-related equipment on the premises
- under the influence of prohibited substances on the premises
- using prohibited substances on the premises
- supplying prohibited substances on the premises

the following actions may be taken:

- the Principal or Deputy Principal will be informed immediately.
- Parents will be contacted and a doctor if this is deemed necessary.
- In all cases, parents will be informed and depending on the seriousness of the situation, may be asked to attend at the school immediately.
- Any drugs found will be confiscated and illegal drugs will be handed over to the Gardai.
- The JLO will be informed.

In instances where there are serious grounds for suspecting possession or use of prohibited substances,

1. Students' bags, jackets may be confiscated with a view to searching same. This will not be done without the prior consent of parents.
2. The school always reserves the right to search student lockers which are school property, without the consent of students or parents.
3. The school reserves the right to inform the Gardai of any incidents in this context that may arise.
4. The present policy on smoking is reasonable. Smoking is illegal on school premises and is a danger to the health of others. If a student is found smoking the matter should be reported to the parents and the pupil will receive a Saturday detention for the first offence and suspension for subsequent offences.
5. For the protection of other students, any student suspected of, or found to be using prohibited substances will not be allowed to return to class, but will be placed under the supervision of the Principal, Deputy Principal or other nominated person. In this case, parents will be asked to attend at the school immediately to take the student home.
6. The Board of Management may request that a pupil undergo medical drug testing.
7. Where a pupil on a school trip is suspected of being, or is found to be, under the influence of a substance a teacher should take care of the pupil and seek medical attention if it is deemed necessary. If feasible the pupil should be brought home by a teacher and parents will be informed.
8. Parents and pupil should assume responsibility following the school's handing over of the pupil. They will be offered the services of our Guidance Counsellor; the Drugs Task Force; referral to Teen Counselling or other available counselling services.
9. Return to the school (if appropriate) will be contingent upon the parents satisfying the school that they have begun the process of seeking help for their child.
10. In all circumstances, illegal or suspected illegal substances will be handed over to the Gardai.

The Board of Management of the school will be the final arbiter regarding the student's position in the school.

The following interventions will apply if there is suspicion of distributing, or actual distribution whether for profit or not:

1. Where a pupil is suspected of distributing or where it is reported to a teacher that a student is distributing substances, the matter will be rigorously investigated before the pupil is challenged or the parents notified.
2. If, after the investigation, the Principal exercising her duty of care, forms the opinion that the student may be distributing substances the Principal shall be obliged to bring the matter to the attention of the parents.
3. If the suspicion is confirmed the parents will be informed and will take the pupil home.

4. The JLO will be informed. As part of our duty of care the services of the Guidance Counsellor will be given to the pupil and parents. The services of other bodies as mentioned at 9. above will be advised.
5. Where a pupil on a school trip or an extra-curricular activity arranged by the school but outside the actual premises, is suspected or found to be distributing substances to other students, the teacher will immediately inform the Principal or in her absence the Deputy Principal.
6. Where a pupil is found to be distributing substances the Principal will recommend to the Board of Management that the pupil be expelled from the school.

Note:

1. All care will be given to protect the identity of those who give information in good faith.
2. The school's authority and duty of care extends to cover students on their way to and from school, at all times during school hours and when in school uniform or on school trips and outings.

SANCTIONS

The following sanctions shall apply to pupils who are found engaging in the use of forbidden substances:

Smoking

First offence	Saturday Detention.
Subsequent offence	Suspension. Meeting of parent and pupil with Year Head

Alcohol (using or distributing)

First offence	10 day suspension. Pupil and parents must meet with the school Guidance Counsellor and the Year Head.
Subsequent offence	The Principal may refer the matter to the Board of Management and may recommend expulsion from the school. The Educational Welfare Officer will be informed.

Distributing Illegal Substances

First offence	The Principal will recommend to the Board of Management that the pupil be expelled. The Educational Welfare Officer will be informed.
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PROMOTION OF THIS POLICY

In order to promote this policy parents and students will be informed of this policy prior to the enrolment of the student. A copy of the policy will be made available to parents and students on request.

The policy will be reviewed again on an on-going regular basis.

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

Signed: _____ Signed: _____

(Chairperson of Board of Management) (Principal)

Date: _____ Date: _____