

SUBSTANCE USE POLICY OF SCOIL MHUIRE, CLONDRA

This document should be read with the Code of Behaviour/Discipline Policy of the school.

This policy came into force on 20th September 2004. Reviewed June 2007; reviewed again June 2008 following assistance from Cuiditheoir. Further reviewed in March 2014. This current review takes place in April 2019.

Scope

This policy applies to all users of the premises at all times.

It is applicable to:-

- Pupils during school time and school related activities.
- Staff during school time while on the premises or during school related activities.
- Parents when visiting the premises and when asked to help with pupils during school related activities.
- To all other visitors to the premises.

Relationship to School's Mission/Vision/Aims

The characteristic spirit of the school (school ethos) has been developed and agreed with the partners in education.

The substance use policy reflects the school ethos in that we aim to provide a safe and secure environment for learning.

Rationale

Why is this policy necessary?

- The world in which we live presents young people with many challenges which affect their health and well-being. Exposure to illicit substances 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.
- 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 schools to have a substance use policy in place.
- The recent report from the National Advisory Committee on Drugs entitled 'Drug use prevention' (November 2001) underlines the importance of schools developing substance use policies.

Goals/Objectives

The substance use policy of Scoil Mhuire, Clondra is intended to:

- Inform the pupils and parents regarding the use of substances.
- To have clear procedures for dealing with drug-related incidents.
- Help the pupils develop healthy attitudes and skills re substances.

Current understanding in relation to alcohol, tobacco and drug use.

Our understanding of 'drugs' is 'A drug is any chemical which alters how the body works or how the person behaves or feels'. 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 or on which the taker may become physically or more often psychologically dependent. When we refer to a substance or drug we include medicines, nicotine, alcohol, solvents, illegal drugs – this list isn't exhaustive.

Our level of awareness regarding level and range of drug use in the immediate community and environs of the school is unknown.

Education concerning substance use

Education concerning substance use in Scoil Mhuire, Clondra will be provided within the broad context of SPHE through our two-year plan for SPHE. We will continue to use the Stay Safe and Walk Tall Programmes.

This content is dealt with on a continual basis through the SPHE programme and includes the following:-

<u>Junior & Senior Infants</u>	^ safe use of medicines ^ safety strategies for dangerous substances
<u>First & Second Class</u>	^ safe use of medicines ^ safety strategies for dangerous substances
<u>Third & Fourth Class</u>	^ safe use of medicines ^ safety strategies for dangerous substances ^ nicotine ^ alcohol ^ What is a drug?
<u>Fifth & Sixth Class</u>	^ safe use of medicines ^ safety strategies for dangerous substances ^ nicotine ^ alcohol ^ What is a drug? ^ illegal drugs

Considerations which inform the selection of content and methodologies include the strand unit we are covering in a given two month period.

Approaches to co-ordinate, involve teachers and allocate time include our two year plan. It is left to the discretion of the principal and class teacher to modify this programme as they need.

The use of an outside visitor/speaker to enhance the work done in the class should always be considered in the context of the full SPHE programme and should be undertaken in the presence of a teacher.

RULES

Medicines

1. Pupils are prohibited from having or using any medicines unless a teacher is informed in writing.
2. Staff do not administer medication unless in case of emergency.
3. Any medication on the premises will be stored to ensure wellbeing of pupils.

Nicotine

1. Smoking is prohibited on the premises.
2. Pupils are prohibited from having cigarettes, nicotine based products, matches or cigarette lighters.

Alcohol

1. Pupils and staff are prohibited from having or using alcohol/drugs/illicit substances on school premises.
2. Use of or possession of alcohol/drugs/illicit substances on the premises is prohibited except for the occasional instance with the permission of the Board of Management e.g. raffle.

Solvents

1. Pupils are prohibited from using solvent based products e.g. tippex, aerosol deodorants etc.
2. Where solvent based products are needed for school use, staff will take all necessary precautions to ensure well being of pupils.
3. Solvent based products will be stored safely.

Management of alcohol, tobacco, illegal drugs or solvents

Students and staff are forbidden from being in possession of or using illicit drugs, alcohol or solvents in the school premises.

The school and school grounds is a non-smoking area.

Parents/Staff

- If a teacher believes that a parent or member of staff is under the influence of any illicit drugs, alcohol or solvents s/he will immediately inform the Principal or Deputy Principal (DLP or DDLP) and consult on what action should be taken.
- Child safeguarding is our paramount concern and we will be informed by our Child Safeguarding Policy.
- School may need to contact the Gardaí or Tusla

Students

- If a teacher is believes that a student is under the influence of any illicit drugs, alcohol or solvents s/he will immediately inform the Principal or Deputy Principal (DLP or DDLP) and consult on what action should be taken.
- Parents will be notified.
- The school Child Safeguarding Policy will be consulted.

Any incidents of use/possession of items listed above will be recorded and kept on file by Designated Liaison Person or Deputy Designated Liaison Person.

Due care will be taken on deciding on the balance between a disciplinary or pastoral response.

Responding to Media

All discussion with media dealt with by Principal. (School issue)
All disclosures to school will be dealt with on individual basis.

Provision for training and staff development

Staff members are aware of the contribution they can make to the prevention of substance misuse within their own class by developing a supportive class environment and adhering to our two year implementation plan.

Staff members have been made sufficiently aware of and sensitive to the signs and symptoms of substance misuse by attending ongoing Walk Tall, SPHE and Stay Safe training and we intend to seek ongoing advice from the Public Health Nurse and the Local Garda.

Staff members will be made sufficiently aware of laws relating to alcohol, tobacco and drug use and how they relate to themselves, to the school and the students by consulting the local Garda.

Training can be accessed from the Midland Health Board and the Substance Misuse Prevention Project.

New staff, in particular, will be briefed on the substance use policy of the school on commencement of employment.

Parent education on SPHE and issues relating to substance misuse may be promoted in the school community by facilitating information seminars.

Implementation of the Policy

The policy will be available from the Principal to the Board of Management, Teachers and other staff members. 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. This policy will also be published on our website.

The policy will be regularly evaluated and updated where necessary.

The school wishes to make clear that the primary role of substance misuse prevention rests with the parents.

Any staff found in breach of these procedures may be referred to the chairperson of the Board of Management who may give

1. verbal warning
2. a reminder of the policy
3. if further incident occurs written warning
4. any other action deemed necessary.

Roles and Responsibilities

Success Criteria

The following indicators will be used to gauge the effectiveness of the substance use policy in Scoil Mhuire, Clondra.

- Well informed pupils and parents.
- Clear adherence to school procedures.

Monitoring Procedures

Monitoring of the policy will be ongoing and reviewed in the light of any incidents that may occur **or** a change in legislation.

Review Procedures

This policy will be reviewed as necessary but at latest June 2022.

RATIFICATION

This policy was ratified on _____

Signed: _____

Mr Denis Glennon, Chairperson, Board of Management, Scoil Mhuire, Clondra.

DLP	Designated Liaison Person
DDL	Deputy Designated Liaison Person
ESPAD	European School Survey Project on Alcohol and other Drugs
SPHE	Social Personal and Health Education