

# Substance Use Policy

This policy applies to all pupils, teachers, staff, parents, visitors and users of the school buildings.

## Vision Statement for SPHE

### Origin & 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.
- ✦ 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 requires schools to have a substance use policy.
- ✦ The 1999 European School Survey Project on Alcohol and other Drugs (ESPAD) 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.

*Guidelines Pg 1 & 2*

### Aims & Objectives

The aim of this policy is the welfare, care and protection of each pupil in line with the Education Act 1998.

The objectives are to enable each child to:

- Develop a sense of personal responsibility
- Develop an understanding of healthy living
- An ability to implement healthy behaviour and

- A willingness to participate in activities that promote and sustain good health.
- Make decisions, solve problems and take appropriate actions in various personal, social and health contexts.
- Become aware of and discerning about the various influences on choices and decisions.
- Begin to identify, review and evaluate the values and attitudes that are held by individuals and by society and to recognize that these affect thoughts and actions.
- Develop some of the skills necessary for participating fully in groups and in society.
- Become aware of some of the individual and community rights and responsibilities that come from living in a democracy.

*(SPHE Curriculum Statement Pg 10)*

### Policy Content

Education concerning Substance Use  
 Management of Incidents  
 Training and Staff Development

### Education Concerning Substance Use

Education concerning Substance Use will be provided within the broad context of Social Personal Health Education which is timetabled on our curriculum since September 2003.

The following considerations will inform the selection of content and methodologies:

- Age appropriate information
- A value system that supports primary prevention in a holistic, caring and supportive environment.
- Active Learning to practice specific skills.

### Resources used will include:

- Walk Tall Programme
- Bí Folláin

- NWHB Health Promotion Programme
- We hope to invite external speakers to work with the pupils in conjunction with the teacher. This will enhance the work done in the context of the SPHE programme.

### Management of Alcohol, Tobacco and Drug Related Incidents

Smoking: Smoking is prohibited in the school, on the school premises or on any school related activities. Should a pupil be found to be smoking or in the possession of cigarettes the parents/guardians will be contacted as soon as possible.

#### Alcohol

Should a pupil be found intoxicated or in the possession of alcohol the parents/guardians will be contacted immediately.

#### Drug Incidents

Should a pupil be considered to be under the influence of a substance or in possession of a substance the parents/guardians will be contacted. The Chairperson of the BOM will be informed that the Gardai are being contacted. We will record all actions taken.

If a suspicious substance is discovered in the school building/on the school grounds the Gardai will be contacted.

All actions taken will be recorded.

- ❖ **Disciplinary procedures will be considered if school rules are broken.**
- ❖ **The welfare, care and protection of the young person will at all times inform our actions.**
- ❖ **Confidentiality will be considered of paramount importance.**