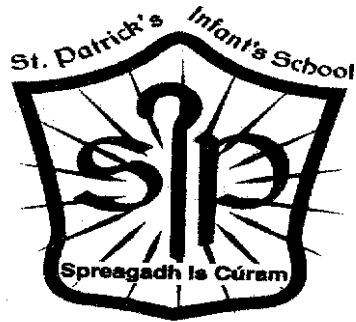


Saint Patrick's Infants N.S.

www.stpatricksinfants.net

18154D



Substance Use Policy

▪ **Title of Policy:**

Substance Use Policy of Saint Patrick's Infants' N.S

▪ **Scope:**

This policy applies to the staff, visitors, pupils and parents of Saint Patrick's School. It is applicable during school hours (including breaks) and during school related activities.

▪ **Relationship to Schools Mission Statement and Vision:**

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

The substance use policy reflects the school ethos:

"We aim to educate our children in a caring catholic environment allowing each individual child to develop to his/her unique potential."

▪ **Rationale:**

This policy was formulated by the parents, principals, staff and community to respond to the need for education and awareness on drug use and misuse in our community.

- 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" (Nov. 2001) underlines the importance of schools developing substance use policies.
 - The 2003 European School Survey Project on Alcohol and other Drugs (E.S.P.A.D.) report highlighted the seriousness of the problem among 16 year olds in Ireland, as compared to the other 34 E.S.P.A.D. countries surveyed. Alcohol was identified as being the dominant drug of misuse in Ireland, with girls ranking higher than boys in terms of regular alcohol use. In terms of drug

use in Ireland, there was a notable increase in lifetime use of any illicit drug between 1999 (32%) and 2003 (40%), up eight per cent.

- We will endeavour to educate children with regard to substance use.
- We will respond to incidents in a planned and consistent manner.

▪ **Definition of a Drug:**

For the purpose of this policy and our practice we define a drug as:

'Any substance, apart from food which changes the way the body functions physically, mentally or emotionally'.

▪ **Mission Statement:**

We the staff, parents and community in St Patrick's seek to enhance the health education and safety of our children by raising their self-esteem and developing in them an awareness of drug use and misuse in our community. Included in our policy is a commitment to inform parents of any/all incidents of smoking or other drug misuse by pupils in our schools and to refer as appropriate to local support services.

To facilitate our aim the following are undertaken in our schools:

1. Drugs awareness workshops for parents
2. Social Personal and Health Education programme
3. Grow in Love programme
4. Physical Education activities such as swimming, camogie, dance
5. Participation in the Health Promoting Schools Project

▪ **Goals and Objectives:**

The substance use policy of Saint Patrick's National School is intended:

- To ensure the welfare, care and protection of every young person as provided for in the Education Act, 1998 and the Education (Welfare) Act, 2000.
- To ensure that the schools comply with legislative requirements and principles of good practice

- To make a contribution, in the area of education and prevention through the SPHE programme
 - To minimise the dangers caused to children by drug misuse and drug misusers within schools/communities
 - To manage drug related incidents in a planned manner
 - To support parents and pupils in addressing drug misuse.
 - To develop a shared understanding of the term 'drugs' and to define the schools' agreed position in relation to drug related issues.
 - To equip schools to deal with issues relating to substance misuse in a planned and considered way and in accordance with their statutory responsibilities
 - To assist teachers in their classroom experience.
- **Content of Policy:**
- **Education concerning substance use**

Education concerning substance use in Saint Patrick's National School will be provided within the broad context of SPHE through the use of the following resources:

- ✓ Walk Tall
- ✓ Grow in Love
- ✓ Be Safe
- ✓ Stay Safe
- ✓ Materials from HSE for Health Promoting schools
- ✓ Drugs Task Force
- ✓ Youth Worker
- ✓ Community Garda
- ✓ H.S.C.L. co-ordinator
- ✓ Tusla
- ✓ N.E.P.S. psychologist
- ✓ Schools' Completion Programme

Considerations which inform the selection of content and methodologies include:

Selection of content and methodologies will reflect the active learning and teaching approach.

➤ **Management of alcohol, tobacco and drug-related incidents**

Incidents relating to (a) alcohol, (b) tobacco, and (c) drug use are addressed in the following manner

The schools do not permit the possession, use, or supply of drugs, in the school or school grounds, in school time, by any member of the school community.

Staff medication i.e. antibiotics, is allowed but must be kept in a safe secure place. Pupil medication is subject to the Health and Safety Policy Statement.

- Reporting Procedures are as follows:

Tobacco: Principal, Parents

Alcohol: Principal, Parents, Chairperson of Board of Management

If a parent is unable /unwilling to collect the child: Contact Social / Medical Services, Gardaí.

Drugs, Paraphernalia, Misuse of solvents:

Principal, Parents, Chairperson, Gardaí (Juvenile Liaison Officer)

- Parental Involvement
- Board of Management Involvement
- Gardaí Involvement
- Incidents requiring medical intervention

A pastoral response may be more appropriate than a disciplinary response.

The principal is designated to respond to the media in relation to “drug related incidents” they may be enquiring about.

➤ **Provision of 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 classroom environment and by implementing the Walk Tall programme.

Staff members are made aware of Walk Tall training courses.

Inventory of staff training:

The following permanent staff members have been trained by attending Walk Tall evening and day courses: Anne O'Connell, Margaret McCarthy, Vicky Sjaellaender, Laura Kenna, Mary-Claire Hogan and Lisa Sexton.

Sources of information: Walk Tall, Local Drugs Task Force

Walk Tall publication: *Understanding Substances and Substance Misuse*

The laws that are most relevant to the school are:

- Misuse of Drugs Acts, 1977 and 1984. Offences under these acts include Possession with intent to supply and Possession for personal use.
- There are other laws controlling tobacco, alcohol, solvents and medicines.

Further training needs we have in relation to the implementation of the substance use policy include ensuring regular training for all staff, including Special Needs Assistants.

- Staff will be facilitated in accessing courses to equip them with the skills, knowledge and attitudes to deliver an effective drugs programme.
- Staff will be offered drug information and drug awareness training through in-service training.
- Training can be accessed from Walk Tall, Local Drugs Task Force and Local Community Garda.

New staff, in particular, will be briefed on the substance use policy of the school through induction of new staff.

▪ **Roles and Responsibilities**

The responsibilities for teachers, parents and Board of Management, in the area of policy development, implementation and evaluation include review and evaluation of whole school plan in consultation with whole school community under the guidance of the Walk Tall Programme Support Service and PCSP cuiditheoir for SPHE.

▪ **Success Criteria**

The following indicators will be used to gauge the effectiveness of the substance use policy in St Patrick's Infants school

- Teachers' Planning and Preparation
- Feedback from teachers, pupils, parents/ community/Gardai/Health Boards/others
- Reduction of incidents relating to substance misuse

▪ **Monitoring Procedures**

Whole staff, parents, pupils and the Board of Management will be involved in the evaluation of this policy at regular intervals. Any changes will be incorporated into the amended policy.

▪ **Review Procedures**

The staff will evaluate the effectiveness of the substance use policy and ascertain what changes, if any, are necessary: annual meeting to review policy.

▪ **Timeframe**

This policy was reviewed in May 2017 by the policy sub-committee.

▪ **Implementation Date**

This policy will take effect immediately (May 2017). The Principal in conjunction with the Board of management will monitor and evaluate the policy to see that it is effective. This evaluation will take place annually.

▪ **Timeframe for Review**

This policy will be reviewed bi-annually and updated in line with initiatives and directives by the D.E.S unless otherwise decided by B.O.M.

This policy will be reviewed in May 2017.

▪ **Ratification, Review and Communication**

This policy was reviewed in May 2017.

These procedures will be implemented from May 2017.

Parents were notified of its existence and were invited to look and comment on the policy, which was displayed in the school's Reception and on the school's website.

This policy will be distributed to all BOM members at meeting level. A copy will be given to Parents' Association representatives. It will be available to parents on the school website and as a hard copy in reception. It will be communicated to teachers via the school's server and to Special Needs Assistants via a hard copy in reception and in the Principal's Office.

This policy shall be reviewed in May 2017 (or earlier if needs be) by the Board of Management and changed where deemed necessary and appropriate.