



Scoil Mhuire Moynalty

Substance Use Policy

Introduction

Scoil Mhuire Moynalty is committed to addressing the needs of the whole school in relation to drugs. The policy has been drawn up and accepted by the Principal, Teachers, Parents/Guardians, and Board of Management. It is important that parents/guardians actively work with the school to implement this policy to ensure their children's health and safety.

In this policy "Drug" means any substance which changes the way the body functions, mentally, physically or emotionally.

This policy was initially implemented in 2007 and has been reviewed and updated in recent years in line with best practice.

Rationale

The School recognises that drugs both legal and illegal are available in the local community and that the School, as part of that community, has an important role in terms of education, prevention, support and the handling of drug related incidents.

Relationship to School Ethos

As stated in the School's mission statement, Scoil Mhuire is committed to enabling students to fulfil their academic, intellectual, moral, spiritual, social, cultural and physical potential. It also is committed to fostering the development of personal responsibility. This is the ethos which guides the School Health Policy.

- The School does not accept the possession, use or supply of illegal drugs in the school, or on outside activities or in non school time by any member of the school community.
- The School does not accept the possession, use or supply of alcohol or tobacco in the school or on school activities by any student or staff
- The School does not accept the misuse of solvent based substances.
- The School must be informed in writing if a student has a medical condition and takes long term medication
- A student or teacher may not give another student any prescribed or "over the counter" medicine.
- All school related functions where pupils are present will be alcohol free

The policy is focused in three key areas:

1. Alcohol, Tobacco and Drug Education Programmes.
2. Managing Drug Related Incidents.
3. Training and Staff Development.

Aims and Objectives

- To provide an Alcohol, Tobacco and Drug Education Programme for all students, using the Walk Tall Programme
- To increase the self esteem and confidence of our students.
- To equip our students with personal and social skills.
- To enable our students to make informed, healthy and responsible decisions.
- To provide clear and age appropriate information on drugs.
- To minimise the harm caused by drug abuse by offering supportive interventions.

Policy Content

1. Alcohol, Tobacco and Drug Education Programmes

The School is committed to providing an Alcohol, Tobacco and Drug Education Programme for all students.

1. Teachers are offered Drug Awareness training, SPHE training or any relevant training through regular in-service training.
2. Outside speakers are used where appropriate to reinforce the work done in class.
3. Parents/Guardians will be consulted on the need for drug education and will be informed of what is happening in the School. Drug information and drug awareness sessions are organised for parents annually.
4. Student Drug Education will be achieved through:
 - SPHE Programme
 - Alive -O
 - Science
 - Outside speakers where appropriate.

2. Managing Drug Related Incidents

We acknowledge that in all situations involving drugs, there needs to be a balance between the needs of the student, the needs of the school community, the reputation of the school and legal considerations. Assessing a drug incident: If there is no damage to the student/s, it is important to:

- Take time to listen and assess before responding.
- Separate fact from rumour.
- In situations of confirmed use or possession or supply all details must be recorded and acted upon.
- Then complete an incident report.

Managing a drug incident

A limited number of people are involved in all suspected or confirmed drug incidents. People will be informed on a "need to know" basis. All written records will be held confidentially by the Principal or Deputy Principal. Parents/Guardians will be involved. They will be informed sensitively and support offered to them. In the case of illegal drugs the Principal or Deputy Principal will contact Gardaí - Juvenile Liaison Officer, and any drugs will be dealt with by Gardaí. In response to all incidents, pastoral support will be offered.

If a student has a problem then referral will be recommended. Parents/Guardians, staff and other students involved in the incident will be offered support. Confidentiality is a complex issue. It is important that the limits of confidentiality are discussed with students before any disclosure is made. The well being and welfare of the student and teacher must be a primary focus.

The Principal or Deputy Principal will handle all media enquiries. They will not comment on individual cases but will refer to the school policy and procedures in place to manage any drug related incident.

Disciplinary Procedures

Drug incidents are complex and in situations where the school rules regarding drugs are broken, sanctions and punishments will be implemented depending on the nature of the offence. These will be consistent with the School's Code of Behaviour

3. Training & Development

For Staff

- The School will facilitate training for staff involved in the SPHE programmes & Alive - O
- All staff will be offered drug information and awareness training where possible.
- First Aid training will be made available to all staff regularly.

Parents/Guardians

- The School in collaboration with the Parents Council will provide opportunities to attend information evenings.

Students

- The School will offer all its students drug education programmes within the context of their SPHE and religious instruction.

Success Criteria

The policy will be reviewed regularly at a whole school staff meeting to ensure that it is of practical benefit to the School and revised where necessary. The following areas will be reviewed

- Drug Education Programmes
- Management of Drug Related Incidents
- Staff Training

Ratification and Implementation

Implementation

This policy supersedes previous policies and is effective from _____

Ratification & Communication

This policy was reviewed and updated in collaboration with all staff, parents and Board of Management during November 2016

It will be available through our school website and/or administration office.

This policy was ratified and adopted by the Board of Management on the _____

Review

This policy will be reviewed and amended as necessary by means of a whole school collaborative process.

Signed _____

Fr. Joseph McEvoy
Chairperson, Board of Management

Date _____

Signed _____

Denise Ward
Principal

Date _____