



Our Lady's Girls' National School
Ballinteer Avenue
Dublin 16
19396J

Substance Misuse Policy

Scope of Policy:

This policy applies to students, teachers, auxiliary staff members, users of the school premises, visitors, i.e. every person who enters the building. It is applicable during school time – including breaks and to all school related activities. It applies to the school building and grounds and to any area where a school related activity takes place, e.g. School Tour.

Aims of Policy:

The aim of the substance use policy of Our Lady's Girls' National School is primary prevention. We aim to protect our pupils from the harmful effects of substance misuse and try to prevent them from using tobacco, alcohol, solvents and illegal drugs. We aim to develop in our pupils' better self-esteem, through providing a positive school climate and atmosphere and through giving our pupils age appropriate information from educational programmes. Children are taught about the harmful effects of substance misuse in SPHE lessons in senior classes (SPHE Policy & Planning).

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

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 alcohol, tobacco and drugs 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 report from the National Advisory Committee on Drugs entitled 'Drug Use Prevention' (November 2001) underlines the importance of schools developing substance use policies. The school authority in Our Lady's Girls' National School has a moral and legal obligation to ensure compliance with the criminal law.

Implementation:

Copies of the policy were distributed to the staff for consultation, then to the Board of Management members for ratification. When ratified and amended, copies were given to:

- All staff members
- Parents' Association
- School Community (Published on our Website)

Prescribed Drugs / Administration of Medicines:

- School staff will take responsibility for administering medication only when a written request has been made to the Board of Management and an Indemnity Form completed, indemnifying the board
- In situations where children are deemed capable by their parents of taking prescribed medication during school hours or on a school related activity, parents must notify the school in writing, stating the name of the medication, the exact dosage and giving permission for the child to take the medication themselves, in the presence of their teacher or school staff member. Any medication i.e. inhalers etc. must be clearly labelled with the child's name
- Children must not share medicines
- Children must not bring over the counter medication to school or on school related activities. This medication should be kept by the teacher or in the school office. It can only be taken when supervised (see above).

Policy Content

Management of Alcohol, Tobacco and Drug Related Incidents:

The Board of Management believe that young people are most at risk in relation to substance use in ~~Our Lady's Girls' National School~~ recreational areas, on the way to and from school and at out of school related activities supervised by staff members of Our Lady's Girls' National School.

The school's shared understanding of a 'drug related incident' is:

- Any unusual or unbecoming behaviour resulting from intake or use of alcohol, tobacco or illegal drugs.
- The sale or passing on of any illegal substance.
- The possession of alcohol, tobacco or illegal drugs on school grounds or at school related activities.
- Disposal of drugs or related items found on school property.

The reporting procedure for such incidents is:

Step 1: Witness to drug related incident informs teacher/staff member/Principal.

Step 2: Principal inform parents/guardians.

Step 3: Principal informs Chairperson of Board of Management.

Step 4: Gardaí are informed depending on seriousness of incident.

Step 5: Area Health Board informed for disposal of items.

Parents will be involved by accepting the school's Code of Behaviour and Enrolment Policies. They will be informed of an incident involving their own child and will be asked to accept responsibility, co-operate with the school authorities and with the Gardaí if necessary.

Parents will be involved in incidents involving another child only if deemed necessary by the school authorities; if parents are aware that another child is involved in drug-related incidents under the scope of this policy they should inform the teacher, Principal or a Board member.

The role of the Board of Management is to:

- Ratify this policy
- Implement this policy
- Monitor and evaluate it
- To sponsor/provide training for staff members
- Make decisions involving critical incidents
- To deal with the media in the event of a critical incident.

This policy puts the following procedures in place to deal with an incident requiring medical intervention:

- 'Universal Precautions' will be applied; e.g. wearing of proper protective gloves etc., washing and making safe an area after an incident; provision of a bin to dispose of needles or other unsuitable appliances.
- First Aid training will be sought by the school for staff members, who will be qualified and certified to assist with medical emergencies
- Important Contact Numbers and Useful Links are provided in this policy (see Appendix 1).
- Contact will be made with a local doctor/clinic in case of emergencies

The school has established a good rapport with the local Gardaí at Dundrum Garda Station and will invite representatives from the local Garda station to speak with senior pupils, where possible and appropriate. Other outside agencies and community health representatives may also be invited in to speak ~~also~~.

Whether or not to inform the Gardaí of minor incidents will be at the discretion of the Principal and the Chairperson of the Board of Management, but they will be involved in any serious substance abuse incidents.

At local level the following support agencies are available to which students involved in substance misuse might be referred:

- School Completion Programme
- TUSLA Child and Family Agency
- CAMHS
- YoDA (HSE Youth Drug and Alcohol Service)
- Drug Education Officer
- HSE Drugs and Alcohol Helpline
- Community Gardaí in the event of media interest in relation to a 'drug related incident', the matter will be referred to the Board of Management and the Chairperson will issue a prepared statement to the media.

Management of Persons in the Workplace Under the Influence of Drugs and/or Alcohol

The Board of Management shall ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that pupils and other persons in the workplace are not exposed to risks to their safety, health or welfare from persons under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol. The term "in the workplace", in the preceding sentence includes all school related activities taking place under the supervision of a teacher, with the Board's approval, and both within and away from the school premises.

Every school employee shall, while at work, ensure that he or she is not under the influence of an intoxicant as required by Section 13 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005.

Should the Principal and/or Deputy Principal have reasonable grounds to believe that a staff member is unfit for work, due to being under the influence of an intoxicant, the Principal and/or Deputy Principal shall ask that person to remove him/herself from the workplace, in the interests of the safety, health and welfare of the employee and others. In the case of employees who are at work under the influence of an intoxicant, disciplinary procedures may be implemented.

Should the Principal and/or Deputy Principal have reasonable grounds to believe that an employee of any contractor is unfit for work, due to being under the influence of an intoxicant, the Principal and/or Deputy Principal shall ask the contractor to remove his/her employee from the workplace.

If a member of staff has reasonable grounds to believe any person, other than a staff member or employee of a contractor, is unfit to be on the premises, due to being under the influence of an intoxicant, the staff member shall report his/her belief promptly to the Principal and/or Deputy Principal, who shall ask that person to remove him/herself from the workplace. If a member of staff has reasonable grounds to believe that a parent or adult collecting a pupil from school or presenting themselves on the premises for another reason is unfit to be on the premises or to take care of the said pupil, the Principal and/or Deputy Principal will be informed and the duty of care will apply to the pupil. All necessary steps will be taken to protect the pupil and safeguard their best interests.

In the event that a staff member or any other person, referred to above, refuses a reasonable request to remove him/herself from the premises, the Principal and/or Deputy Principal may call the Gardaí to forcibly remove the person in question.

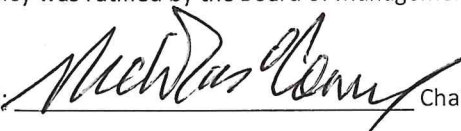
The Board of Management acknowledges its responsibility in promoting the welfare at work of teachers. An Employee Assistance Service (telephone: 1800 411 057 or e-mail: eas@vhics.ie) is available to teaching staff. In the event that substance abuse appears to be adversely affecting the performance and/or attendance pattern of any member of the teaching staff, the Board of Management may request such staff member to contact the Employee Assistance Service.

The Board of Management also acknowledges its responsibility in promoting the welfare at work of all other staff members. In the event that substance abuse appears to be adversely affecting the performance and/or attendance pattern of any member of the non-teaching staff, the Board of Management may request such staff member to seek counselling or other professional intervention.

All incidents, relating to the presence of persons at school, under the influence of an intoxicant, shall be recorded and reported as soon as possible to the Board of Management.

The Board of Management shall consider all such reports and decide on the appropriate action to be taken in the circumstances of each particular case.

This Policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 13/3/23

SIGNED:  Chairperson Board of Management

SIGNED:  Principal

Appendix 1:

Important Contact Numbers:

HSE Drugs & Alcohol Helpline 1800 459 459 (Mon- Fri between 9:30am-5:30om)

Email: helpline@hse.ie

The HSE National Drug Treatment Centre, 30/31 Pearse Street, Dublin 2 01-6488600

TUSLA Child and Family Agency www.tusla.ie

Dundrum Garda Station: +35316665600 D14 NA09

Ballinteer Health General and Family Practice: 01 - 2984644

HSE Drugs and Alcohol Helpline 1800 459 459 Email: helpline@hse.ie

YoDA (HSE Youth Drug and Alcohol Service) Kilnamanagh Tymon Primary Care, Addiction Treatment Service, Airton Square, Airton Road, Dublin 24. 01-921497

www.yourmentalhealth.ie

www.bodywhys.ie

www.headstrong.ie

www.spunout.ie

www.childline.ie