

SUBSTANCE USE POLICY OF SCOIL NAOMH EANNA

Definition of Drug:- In this policy when we refer to a drug we mean:

“A drug is any chemical which alters how the body works, or how the person behaves or feels” e.g.

- Medicines
- Nicotine
- Alcohol
- Solvents e.g. correction fluid thinner, aerosols, e.g. deodorants, hairsprays; nail varnish remover.
- Illegal substances.

Scope:

This policy applies to: -

- The premises at all times.
- The students during school time and school related activities.
- The staff including auxiliary staff during school time and school related activities while in charge of the children.
- The parents while visiting the premises and when asked to help out with the supervision of children during school related activities.
- All other visitors to the school.

Relationship to Mission Statement:

This policy reflects the overall ethos of our school which states:

We the staff of Scoil Naomh Éanna will work as a team in partnership with parents and the wider community, to encourage each individual to reach his/her potential, in a Christian environment.

Rationale:

- 1) 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 in Sligo. 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.
- 2) The National Drugs Strategy, ‘Building on Experience’ is now Government Policy and it requires schools to have a substance use policy in place.

Objectives:

- To promote a safe, healthy environment for all users of the school premises.

- To raise awareness among the whole school community re: the dangers involved in substance misuse.
- Help the children to develop healthy attitudes and skills around substances.

Content:

(1) Education concerning substance use will be provided within the broad context of SPHE through the strand units “Taking Care of my Body” and “Safety and Protection”. This content will be taught using the “Walk Tall” lessons provided by the Department of Education and will be modified to meet the needs of children in multiclass situation and any child with a special education requirement.

Junior and Senior Infants – p.19 “Safety and Protection”

- “Explore occasions when medicines, injections or pills are needed and the safety rules that apply when taking medicines”.

First and Second Class – p.30. “Safety and Protection”

- “Recognise and explore occasions when medicines are needed”.
- “Distinguish between substances in the home or school that are safe and those that are dangerous and seek permission before exploring them”.

Third and Fourth Class p.39. “Taking Care of my Body. p.44 “Safety Issues”

- As above including nicotine and alcohol.

Fifth and Sixth Class p.55 “Taking care of my Body” p.59 “Safety and Protection”

- As above including illegal drugs.

Management of Incidents:

Administration of medicine

Pupils.

No medicine will be administered to a pupil by a teacher:

- Without the consent of the teacher.
- Without a written request from parents that the medication should be administered to the pupil.
- Without the approval of the B.O.M.
- Without a letter of indemnity from the parents and board, in respect of any liability that may arise regarding the administration of the medication.

Children do not have or use any medication that a teacher is not made aware of in writing.

Any medication on the premises will be stored safely to ensure well being of the pupils.

Smoking:

- The school is a no smoking premises.
- Pupils, staff, visitors are prohibited from smoking.
- Pupils are prohibited from having cigarettes, matches or lighters on the premises or during school related activities.

Alcohol:

- Use or possession of alcohol is prohibited. (An exception will be made for celebration by staff/parents with permission of B.O.M.)

Solvents:

- Students are prohibited from having solvent-based products e.g. correction fluid thinner or aerosol deodorants during school hours or school related activities.
- Staff using solvent-based products will take all necessary precautions to ensure the safety of the children.
- Storage of solvents for cleaning purposes will be stored in a locked storeroom.

Illegal Drugs:

Use of illegal drugs on the school premises is prohibited at all times. Children, staff, parents and visitors to the school are prohibited from having or using illegal drugs on the school premises and during school related activities.

Management of alcohol, tobacco and drug related incidents.

Pupils

If a pupil is found using or suspected of using nicotine, alcohol or illegal drugs on the school premises, then:

- Principal will be informed.
- The substances will be confiscated.
- Incident will be investigated.
- A verbal warning will be given.
- Parents will be informed.
- If the offence is repeated without regard for the school rules, any further disciplinary action required will be taken. This may include suspension.

If a pupil displays unusual behaviour, which may be the result of substance use, e.g. cannot focus properly, incoherent, falling asleep etc., then:

- Parents are contacted.
- Medical advice may be sought.
- And any further disciplinary action on the pupil involved.

If the incident did not take place within school hours or during a school related incident, then the Principal, B.O.M. and teaching staff of the school will not be responsible for investigating or imposing disciplinary action on the pupil involved.

- Any information may be passed on to the pupil's own parents to investigate and deal with.

Any disclosure of illegal activity will be reported to the Gardaí immediately. Any disclosure of illegal activity may also be a cause of concern for the Health Board, under the 'Children First' Protection Guidelines.

Staff:

If a teacher must take medicine on the school premises, he/she is asked to do so out of view of the children and to keep such medication locked away and out of reach of the children.

Any staff found to be in breach of the policy will be reminded of the policy and any further disciplinary action may be taken as required.

Parents/Visiting Personnel:

Any parent found to be in breach of the policy will be reminded of the policy. If a staff member becomes aware of a parent or guardian coming to collect a child who obviously is under the influence of substances and has been rendered incapable of caring for the child, then all reasonable steps will be taken to ensure the safety of the child.

If necessary, Gardaí will be contacted. If it is a repeated occurrence, then it may also be a cause of concern for the Health Board, under the 'Children First' Protection Guidelines.

Any person appearing on the school premises under the influence of substances will be asked to leave the premises immediately, to ensure the safety of the children, with the permission of the board.

Due care will be taken to ensure a balance between a pastoral and a disciplinary response to all incidents.

Substance use in on school premises: -

Any bottles, beer cans etc. found on schoolyard will be disposed of safely. Gardaí will be informed that substance use took place on the school grounds. If substances found are not easily recognizable and where there is a suspicion that they may be illegal, Gardaí are informed immediately and asked to remove them. All incidents will be recorded.

Provision for training and staff development:

Staff will be given any further training or resources required for the implementation of the S.P.H.E. curriculum and the substance use policy in the school. All staff have received their SPHE Inservice. All members of staff have received “Walk Tall” training specifically on substances. Our parent body has had a talk on SPHE.

It is recommended in the Substance Use Policy Guidelines that all parents sign that they have read the guidelines and agree to be bound by them.

I have read the above policy and agree to be bound by it.

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Signature.