

Holy Angels National School

Clogher,
Claremorris,
Co. Mayo.
F12RC95



T: 094-9360316
E: principal@holyangelsns.ie
Web: www.holyangelsns.ie
Roll: 17482P

Substance Use Policy

Introduction

This policy was devised and formulated by the school community, involving Board of Management, parents and staff of Clogher National School, in accordance with the Rules and Regulations of the Department of Education and Skills and the C.P.S.M.A. and the agreement of the patron.

Ethos

Clogher NS is a co-educational, primary school, which strives to provide a well ordered, caring, happy and secure atmosphere where the intellectual, spiritual, physical, moral and cultural needs of the pupils are identified and addressed. While respect is paid to all religious and/or value systems, Clogher NS is a Catholic school under the patronage of the Archbishop of Tuam. This Substance Use Policy reflects the school ethos in that it aims to support and nurture a secure atmosphere within the school.

Scope of Policy

This policy applies to the whole school community, pupils, teachers, parents and ancillary staff and applies to all school related activities both on the school premises and elsewhere.

Aims of Policy

The aims of the substance use policy of Clogher NS are:

- 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.
- Self-esteem - 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.

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- Curriculum implementation – To provide education regarding substance abuse as part of the SPHE programme
- Clarify Procedures – To address procedures for managing incidents relating to these substances.

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, drugs and other harmful substances 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. EU studies indicate that alcohol is the dominant drug misused in Ireland whilst the use of tobacco and other drugs is above the EU average.

Monitoring and Review Procedures

A record will be kept in school by the Principal of all substance use incidents and the Board informed at the next Board meeting. A copy of this policy will be shared on our website www.holyangelsns.ie and available to view in hardcopy in school. This policy will be reviewed by the school community on a four year rotational basis.

Policy Content Education

- The primary source for pupils will be the SPHE programme, as reflected in the North Western Health Board resources, which contain, at each class level from third to sixth, a module on the dangers of substance use ie alcohol, tobacco, drugs and solvents. This programme is outlined in appendix 1.
- The specific issue of substance abuse prevention is addressed each year in 5th/6 th class as part of the Confirmation programme in compliance with the specific content objectives of the SPHE core curriculum statement of

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the D.E.S. Management of Alcohol, Tobacco, Drug and Solvent Related Incidents

- Young people are most at risk in relation to substance use in Clogher NS in recreational areas, on the way to and from school and at out of school related activities supervised by staff members.
- Incidents relating to alcohol, tobacco and drug use are addressed in the school's Code of Behaviour. The schools response to all incidents is primarily pastoral, ie to ensure that all pupils are safe, secure and supported to contribute positively to school life. However in instances of gross misbehaviour as defined by the schools 'Code of Behaviour' pupils may be suspended or expelled if involved in any drug related incident. The school's shared understanding of a 'drug related incident' is:
 - Any behaviour resulting from intake or use of alcohol, tobacco, toxic substances 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 (e.g. syringes) found on school property.

The school response where a 'drug related incident' takes place will vary depending on whether a child or adult is involved. The reporting procedure for such incidents is:

- **Step 1:** Witness to drug related incident informs Principal/ Deputy Principal

For a child under the influence of drugs:

- **Step 2:** Principal inform parents/guardians
- **Step 3:** Principal informs Chairperson of Board of Management
- **Step 4:** Gardai informed depending on seriousness of incident
- **Step 5:** Area Health Board informed for disposal of items

For adult under influence of intoxicants

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- **Step 2:** contact Tusla and follow Child Safeguarding Procedures. Where child at risk contact Gardai.

For child or adult in possession or supplying drugs,

- **Step 2:** Contact Gardai
- **Step 3:** Principal informs Chairperson of Board of Management
- **Step 4:** Area Health Board informed for disposal of items.

Parents will be involved through their acceptance of the school's Code of Behaviour and Admissions Policies. They will be informed of an incident involving their own child and will be asked to cooperate with the school authorities as per the Code of Behaviour and with the Gardai if necessary.

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. Parents and staff are also expected to refrain from smoking on school grounds as our school is a smoke free zone.

The role of the Board of Management is to:

- Implement this policy
- Monitor and evaluate it
- To ensure all staff members are aware of and implement the policy
- Ensure that all toxic substances are stored in a locked cupboard as per the school 'Health and Safety' Policy.
- Make decisions involving critical incidents
- To deal with the media in the event of a critical incident. (Critical Incidents Policy)

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;
- Copies of all relevant phone numbers are appended (see Appendix 2)

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- A local doctor from a local practice will be contacted to respond to a medical emergency in the school

The school has established an excellent rapport with the local Garda station and will invite representatives from the local Garda station to speak with senior pupils. At local level the following support agencies are available to which students involved in substance misuse might be referred:

TUSLA Helpline 1850 241 850

Castlebar Gardaí: 0949038200

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

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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 (**Wellbeing Together: Folláine le Chéile, telephone: 1800 411 057**) is available to all staff. In the event that substance abuse appears to be adversely affecting the performance and/or attendance pattern of any member of the staff, the Board of Management may request such staff member to contact the Employee Assistance Service.

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.

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Ratification and Review:

This policy was reviewed and ratified by the BoM at their meeting on 17th October 2024. It will be reviewed in the event of changing circumstances or guidance from the DES, or no later than October 2027.

Signed: _____

Chairperson, BoM

Date: _____

Signed: _____

Principal/ Secretary, BOM

Date: _____