



**OUR LADY OF GOOD COUNSEL BOYS' SCHOOL**  
JOHNSTOWN, DÚN LAOGHAIRE, CO. DUBLIN  
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## **Substance Use Policy**

### **Introduction**

This policy addresses the education of children in relation to alcohol, tobacco, solvents and drugs and the procedures for managing incidents relating to these substances.

A drug is any substance which changes the way the body functions, mentally, physically or emotionally. This description includes many substances we normally think of as drugs as well as substances we might not usually consider to be drugs such as coffee, tea, alcohol, solvents and tobacco (Corrigan, 2003 cited in Best Practice Guidelines in Substance Misuse Prevention Education 2010).

### **Rationale**

The school acknowledges that it has an important role to play in drugs education, particularly in terms of prevention. The central objective of this substance use policy is the welfare, care and protection of children attending the school. We believe that the entire school community needs to work together and that co-operation is essential to the acceptance and implementation of the policy.

This policy applies to Teachers, Parents/Guardians, Pupils, Board of Management (B.O.M.), and all school personnel.

- The Education Act (1998) provides that schools should promote the social and personal development of students and provide health education for them.
- The Social Personal and Health Education curriculum, of which substance misuse prevention education is an integral part, is a mandatory subject on the primary curriculum and must be taught to all primary pupils from junior infants to sixth class (DES Circular 022/2010).
- The National Drugs Strategy (interim) 2009-2016 requires every school to have a substance use policy in place
- Action 21 of the National Drugs Strategy (interim) 2009-2016 mandates the Department of Education and Skills to monitor the implementation of substance use policies in schools through the whole school evaluation process as operated by the Inspectorate. It is also mandated to ensure that best practice is disseminated to all schools
- 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.

### **School Ethos**

The school believes that the Personal and Social development of each member of the school community is important. Good relationships are fostered, people feel valued and respected and there is genuine tolerance, fairness and support for those in difficulty.

As a health promoting school we have an important role in enabling students to increase control over and improve their health.

The well being of students is enhanced by:

- Providing a safe and healthy environment
- Promoting positive attitude towards health
- Increasing knowledge about health
- Actively promoting self-esteem and self-awareness
- Working in partnership with the parents/guardians and pupils

### **Prevention**

Education about the use of substances, prescription and over the counter drugs, alcohol, tobacco, solvents is best carried out by teachers through the inclusion of SPHE in the curriculum. Parents also have a pivotal role to play in this regard.

### **The Policy focuses on:**

Education concerning substance use in Our Lady of Good Counsel Boys' National School will be provided within the broad context of SPHE.

The primary resource used for the delivery is Substance Misuse Prevention Education at all class levels is the 'Walk Tall' Programme.

Parents are informed about substance misuse prevention education.

The school ensures compliance with the Best Practice guidelines in the delivery of Substance Misuse Prevention Education in line with DES Circular 0022/2010.

Considerations which inform the selection of content and methodologies include age appropriateness of suitability of material for the cohort of children.

This document should read with the Code of Behaviour/Discipline Policy of the school and the Administration of Medicines Policy.

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

Assessment of the particular situation

Managing the incident

Considerations include:

- o Manage any medical emergencies in the first instance
- o Inform and consult with the principal
- o Involve parents, Gardaí and HSE (as appropriate)
- o Referral to other appropriate intervention
- o Balance a pastoral care approach with disciplinary procedures
- o Maintain confidentiality
- o Designate one person (only) to deal with media enquiries, if indicated/appropriate
- o Record a factual account of the incident. Report the incident (if indicated)

### **Types of Incidents**

- o Use/ suspected use of alcohol, drug, tobacco on the school premises or during a school related activity
- o Intoxication/ unusual behaviour
- o Disclosures about abuse
- o Finding alcohol, tobacco, other drugs and/or associated paraphernalia

- o Possession and/ or supply on the school premises or during a school related activity

### **Smoking – School Policy**

- The school and its environs are a non smoking area.
- Visitors will comply with the non smoking policy.
- Pupils found in possession of tobacco products on school premises will be reported to the Principal and his parents will be informed.
- Adults who have in their possession tobacco products for their own use must keep them in their possession at all times and out of sight and reach of children.
- The school’s Child Protection Policy will be consulted.
- A record should be kept of any incident which occurs.

### **Alcohol – School Policy**

- Pupils are not allowed to bring alcohol into the school or to consume alcohol in/on the school premises or during any school activities.
- If a teacher is of the opinion that a student is under the influence of alcohol, s/he will immediately inform the Principal, Deputy Principal or the SPHE post-holder and consult on what action should be taken. Parents will be notified. In such an instance the school’s Child Protection Policy will be consulted.
- If a staff member appears to be under the influence of alcohol, it will be reported to the Principal who will act in accordance with the Health and Safety Policy.
- If an adult appears to be under the influence of alcohol when coming to collect a child, it must be reported to the Principal, Deputy Principal, or SPHE post-holder. The child’s safety is paramount.
- If alcohol is required for an adult only school function, permission shall be sought from the B.O.M. (An exception to this is when donations of alcohol are made by parents for the annual Christmas Fair. ID will be required to claim any prizes of an alcoholic nature.
- A record should be kept of any incident which occurs.

### **Drugs and Solvents – School Policy**

- Students are forbidden to be in possession of or using illegal drugs, solvents or aerosols in the school premises
- All solvents used in the school are securely stored.
- Illegal drugs found on school premises will be locked away and the Gardaí contacted to dispose of them.
- If a teacher is of the opinion that a student is under the influence of illegal drugs or solvents, s/he will immediately inform the Principal, Deputy Principal or SPHE post-holder and consult on what action should be taken. His parents will be notified. The school’s Child Protection Policy will be consulted.
- If an adult appears to be under the influence of a substance when coming to collect a child, it must be reported to the Principal, Deputy Principal, or SPHE post-holder. The child’s safety is paramount.
- A record should be kept of any incident which occurs.

### **Administration of Medicine**

- Specific school policy exists and medicines will be administered in accordance with same.
- Trained First-Aid Personnel are on hand- training must be renewed every three years.
- Storage – Substances which may be misused will be securely stored in line with Health and Safety Statement

In addition to the above, at all times, there will be an appropriate, balanced pastoral response. Teachers and school personnel are aware of the need for strict confidentiality in matters relating to substance use.

The Garda schools Programme is in operation for 5<sup>th</sup> Class.

### **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 class environment and implementation of active learning methodologies as recommended in the SPHE curriculum.

Procedures are adopted in the school in relation to the administration of medicines in the school and staff are adequately informed of same.

Staff members have been made sufficiently aware of and sensitive to the signs and symptoms of substance misuse.

Staff members have been made sufficiently aware of laws relating to alcohol, tobacco and drug use and how they relate to themselves, to the school and the students.

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

### **Parental Involvement.**

All parents have access to this policy document and other related policies: Health and Safety, Child Protection, Code of Behaviour, Anti-Bullying.

### **Success Criteria.**

Feedback from all parties.

Effectiveness of policy in dealing with incidents.

### **Roles and Responsibilities.**

Teachers, parents and the Board of Management are responsible for the implementation of this policy.

### **Review of the Policy**

The policy will be reviewed in June 2023 or earlier if necessary in light of any new legislation or if an incident requires so.

This Policy was adopted by the BOM on:

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Michael J. Hunt  
Chairperson B.O.M.

Date :

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Neil Cadogan  
Principal

Date :