



Holy Family Community School
Education is Opportunity
Substance Use Policy

Title:	Substance Use Policy
Approved by:	The Board of Management
Date:	23 rd October 2024
Responsibility for implementation:	All Staff
Policy Review Date:	23 rd October 2027

Substance Use Policy

Introduction

The Holy Family Community School is committed to the wellbeing, care and protection of the whole school community. The school's mission statement underpins and informs the following policy on substance use.

This policy has been formulated by representatives of the whole school community (staff, students, parents and the Board of Management) in accordance with Guidelines from the Department of Education and Science and the National Drugs Strategy 2001-2008. It applies to all school related activities and to the whole school community.

We recognise that legal and illegal substances e.g. alcohol, tobacco, illegal drugs etc. are available in the local community and that the school being part of this community has and will have drug incidents which need to be handled in a consistent and sensitive way. This policy seeks to enable this by offering guidance and procedures to the whole school community for dealing with drug related incidents. It acknowledges the important role the school community plays in drug education.

Copies of this policy will be available on the school website and all new staff; new students and their parents will be able to access it online.

In this policy, the term '**drug**' denotes '**any substance which changes the way the body functions, mentally, physically or emotionally**' and includes

- alcohol,
- tobacco,
- medicines,
- over the counter remedies e.g. paracetamol etc.,
- illegal drugs,
- solvents e.g. glue, tippex, etc.,
- cleaning agents,
- gases,
- aerosols,
- laboratory chemicals,
- etc.

This is not an exhaustive list.

This policy is focussed on 4 key areas:

- 1. Drug Education Programmes;**
- 2. Managing Drug Related Incidents;**
- 3. Training and Staff Development;**
- 4. Monitoring, Review and Evaluation.**

1. Drug Education Programmes

Our educational aims in relation to Drug Education are:

- To increase the self-esteem and confidence of students;
- To equip students with personal and social skills;
- To enable students to make informed, healthy and responsible choices;
- To provide honest and age appropriate information on drugs;

These aims will be met through the following:

- Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) and Religious Education (RE) are core subjects which will deliver the above aims;
- The SPHE Co-ordinator, SPHE Department, Chaplain and RE Department will work together in delivering the above aims;
- All teachers involved in SPHE and RE will be given the opportunity to avail of in-service training;
- The Pastoral Care System (See Code of Behaviour and Discipline) will support these aims;
- Parents will be made aware of the school's substance use policy through Information Meetings and the use of outside speakers at the Parents' Association Annual General Meeting.

2. Managing Drug Related Incidents

Drug Incidents

Drug related incidents might involve the following:

- Drug related emergencies when the person may be unconscious;
- Possession of a legal / illegal drug on the school premises, on the way to or from school or on a school related activity;
- Use of a legal / illegal drug on the school premises, on the way to or from school or on a school related activity;
- Selling / supplying legal / illegal drugs on the school premises, on the way to or from school or on a school related activity;
- Suspicion of drug use, possession or dealing;
- Intoxication / unusual behaviour;
- Disclosure by another person / person seeking help from a member of staff;
- Legal / illegal drug paraphernalia found on school property.

The School Approach

The whole school community needs to be aware of and alert for the signs of drug use and changes in behaviour. All incidents will be assessed individually. Due care will be taken to discern between allegation, suspicion and direct evidence of drug use.

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 and the reputation of the school. Disciplinary procedures will be followed if the Code of Behaviour and Discipline has been breached (See Code of Behaviour and Discipline). Serious breaches may result in expulsion.

Confidentiality

On Health and Safety grounds, total confidentiality cannot always be offered to a person who discloses a drug related incident. However, every effort will be made to protect the identity of the source of information. It is important in all suspected or confirmed drug incidents that a limited number of people are involved in managing the incident. Information will be restricted to the Principal, Deputy Principal, Chaplain / Guidance Counsellor, Year Head and persons directly involved in the case and only disclosed on a strict 'need to know' basis. Parents will be informed of all drug related incidents including intoxication / unusual behaviour / suspicion of drug use.

Procedures for Managing Drug Related Incidents

1. Assess the situation. In the event of a **medical emergency**, seek medical assistance and if possible, do not leave the person on his/her own. Contact a parent / guardian / close relative and inform them that medical assistance has been sought.
2. Taking relevant precautions, remove drugs and drug paraphernalia to the Principal's office, the Deputy Principal's office or other safe place and seek medical assistance.
3. **Report the incident** to the relevant Year Head, the Deputy Principal, Principal or Chaplain who will investigate (See Confidentiality above) and record the facts of the case (See Incident Report Form).
4. The Year Head, Deputy Principal, Principal or Chaplain will inform parents/ guardians of the outcome of their investigations and will inform the Gardai if there are illegal drugs / drug paraphernalia involved. During extra-curricular activities, the teacher in charge will assume these duties.
5. The Year Head, Deputy Principal, Principal or Chaplain will arrange a meeting with parents / guardians, Gardai / JLO and other relevant parties.
6. With due regard for the Health and Safety of all students and to employer Health and Safety responsibilities, care will be taken in deciding on the balance between a

pastoral and a disciplinary response to a drug related incident. Where appropriate, referral to **counselling services** will be offered / recommended. If necessary, **sanctions** will be applied as per the Code of Behaviour and Discipline. Students and their parents have the right to **appeal** a decision to the Board of Management.

7. The Principal or Deputy Principal or a nominated spokesperson will handle all **media** queries. The school will not comment on individual cases but will refer to the school policy and the procedures in place to manage any drug related incident.

3. Training and Staff Development

All staff will be offered drug information and awareness training and first-aid training. The school will provide opportunities for parents and members of the Board of Management to attend information evenings and workshops on issues relating to drugs and the school's substance use policy. The school will offer all of its students drug education programmes within the context of their SPHE classes.

4. Monitoring, Review and Evaluation

The Substance Use Policy Committee will review the policy every 3 years. Ongoing review and evaluation will take cognisance of changing information, legislation, developments in the school-based programme and feedback from parents/guardians, teachers and students. The policy will be revised as necessary in the light of such review and evaluation and within the framework of school planning.

Appendix 1 - Emergency Contact List

In an emergency	Tel:	999 or 112
Gardai		
Rathcoole (Community Garda, Liam Sex)	Tel:	01-6667900
Clondalkin Juvenile Liaison Office	Tel:	01-6667900
Tallaght Juvenile Liaison Officer	Tel:	01-6666000
Naas Juvenile Liaison Officer (David Prendergast)	Tel:	045-884300
Tallaght Drugs & Alcohol Task Force	Tel:	01-4649303
Clondalkin Drugs & Alcohol Task Force	Tel:	01-4579445
Hospitals / Doctors		
Tallaght (The Adelaide and Meath Hospital)	Tel:	01-4142000

Naas (General Hospital)	Tel:	045-849500
St. James's Hospital	Tel:	01-4103000
Crumlin Children's Hospital	Tel:	01-4096100
Poisons Control Unit	Tel:	01-8092166
St. James's Hospital National Burns Unit	Tel:	01-4162326
Poisons Information Services, Beaumont Hospital	Tel:	01-8092166
Rathcoole Medical Centre	Tel:	01-4589655
Newcastle Medical Centre	Tel:	086-3182629
Saggart Medical Centre	Tel:	01-4586805 / 089-0476666
Education		
State Examinations Commission	Tel:	090-6642700
Department of Education, Dublin 1	Tel:	01-8896400
TUSLA (Cherry Orchard)	Tel:	01-6400650
NEPS Psychologist	Tel:	01-8892700
ACCS	Tel:	01-4601150
Trade Unions		
ASTI	Tel:	01-6040160
TUI	Tel:	01-4922588
Fóras	Tel:	01-8171500
Local Clergy		
Fr. Joseph Ryan (Rathcoole)	Tel:	087-2403791
Rev. Alan Ruffli (Clondalkin & Rathcoole)	Tel:	01-4592160

HSE

Mary Mercer Centre Tel: 01-4585700
Cherry Orchard Social Worker Tel: 01-6400650
TUSLA, Vista Primary Care, Naas Tel: 045-839300

Buses and Local Schools

Dublin Bus, Pearse Street Tel: 01-7034533
Dublin Bus (Alan Silver – school contact person) Tel: 086-8850411

Local Counselling Services

Rape Crisis Centre Tel : 01-6614911 / 1800-778888
Pieta House Lucan Tel: 01-6010000

Ballyfermot
Jigsaw, Tallaght

Tel: 01-6235606
Tel: 01 5380087

Appendix 2 – List of First Aiders, list of De-Fib Locations

Safety Representatives	Ann O' Gara
Safety Officer	Ingrid Fallon
Occupational First Aiders	O' Gara, Ann Phipps, Joanna Ryan-Clarke, Caroline Quinn, Elaine
Basic First Aiders	Cafferty, Aoife Gifford, Kayleigh Kavanagh, Jessica Keating, Ailbhe Mulcair, Maggie Murphy, Áine
Defib Locations	Main Reception (under near the alarm system) Main Staffroom in Phase 3 (inside the door) PE Hall

INCIDENT REPORT FORM

Name(s): _____

Date & Time of Incident: _____

Teachers Name: _____

Details of Incident:

Details of Medical Assistance:

Incident Reported to:

Signature: _____

Date: _____