



Harold's Cross
ETSS

Substance Abuse and Misuse Policy

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1. Scope

a) The phrase 'Substance Use', in this document, refers to the use and abuse of any of the following:

- Alcohol
- Tobacco
- Illegal drugs or controlled substances and all substances covered by the Misuse of Drugs Act (1977)
- Paraphernalia associated with illegal drugs or controlled substances and all substances covered by the Misuse of Drugs Act (1977)
- Solvents
- Prescribed medication
- Non-prescribed medication, including vitamins, herbal remedies etc
- E-cigarettes
- Legal and illegal highs

b) This policy applies to all members of the Harold's Cross ETSS (the 'School') community: students, teachers (full-time, part-time and teachers of individual students), ancillary staff, parents/ guardians and any users of the school buildings.

c) This policy applies to every area of the School buildings and grounds with the following exceptions: (i) materials stored in the Science laboratory for use in Science classes (ii) special functions authorised by the Principal/Board of Management.

d) This policy applies to students in school, while travelling to and from school, while in the vicinity of the school or while on any school related activity at home or abroad. Reports of, or information pertaining to, the possible supply, possession or use of drugs by pupils off the School premises or any other breach of the Substance Use Policy will be communicated to parents. The School does not accept responsibility

for taking disciplinary action in such cases but reserves the right to take action where there is a threat to the health and safety of pupils and/or to the reputation of the School.

2. Relationship to School's Mission Statement

Harold's Cross ETSS is dedicated to creating a coeducational, learner-centred, caring, happy and positive environment where equality and democracy are celebrated and nurtured. We are committed to enabling students to become creative, empathetic, life-long learners who are prepared to meet the challenges of the 21st century in a sustainable and ethical way. We embrace collaborative educational practices both in our school and through engagement with the wider community. Through the process of teaching and learning we aim to inspire, support and challenge all students to develop their skills and passions. In doing so, we dedicate ourselves to empowering all students to truly understand themselves and others better so that when they leave school they are ready to actively engage in society and to lead purposeful, fulfilling and happy lives.

The School's Substance Use Policy is rooted in our mission to educate our students in a safe, disciplined and caring environment. Our aim is to prepare students to be responsible citizens and to enable them to make informed, healthy and responsible choices. The topic of Substance Use is one of great and increasing concern that places a particular responsibility on the school to create and maintain structures and policies that are effective, transparent, ethical and caring.

3. Rationale

The School recognises that substance use and abuse are issues that affect everybody in Ireland. Current research has provided us with evidence that teenagers in Ireland are widely involved in the use of alcohol, tobacco, legal and illegal highs and drugs and that this negatively affects health and well-being.

The inappropriate use or possession of legal or illegal drugs within the School will be regarded as a serious disciplinary matter. This policy seeks to identify occasions and activities in School where substances may be used or misused, and to know how to

respond. The Education Act (1998) states that the School curriculum should promote the social and personal development of students. It also states that each school should provide health (and drug) education for them.

4. Goals and Objectives

This policy aims:

- a) To promote a healthy, safe and drug-free environment for all in the School.
- b) To enable our students to make healthy and appropriate life choices.
- c) To put clear, transparent and fair procedures in place for dealing with incidents relating to Substance Use.
- d) To provide education and training for staff in coping with Substance Use incidents.
- e) The school policy aims to co-operate fully with the strategic plan adopted by the government under the National Drugs Strategy 2001–2008 and made mandatory for schools in circular 18/02. 5

5. Policy Content

(i) Education regarding Substance Use

A. Social, Personal & Health Education (SPHE) Syllabus/Personal and Social Development (PSD)/Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE)/Citizenship and Ethical Education. SPHE is the main subject through which students are educated in relation to Substance Use. It is a mandatory subject for all students in Junior Cycle and follows the Department of Education & Skills syllabus (see Appendix B).

B. Civic Social and Political Education (CSPE) Topics related to Substance Use are covered vis-a-vis citizenship and the law.

C. Speakers Outside speakers are occasionally used to supplement the above courses for students. Continuous Professional Development (CPD) is provided for staff through SPHE in-service. The School holds information evenings for parents from time to time. Requests for these will normally come through the PSA.

D. Ethical Education This subject provides a platform for students to discuss the moral and philosophical underpinnings of modern society. Included in this is age-appropriate debate and discussion about drug and substance use and misuse.

E. Citizenship This class provides an understanding of the legal framework regarding drug use and misuse.

(ii) Administration of Medication to Pupils

As a statement of principle, prescription or non-prescription medication required by a pupil should be administered at home by parents/ guardians or by the pupil's medical provider wherever possible. We recognise that in some cases and under some circumstances it may be necessary for a pupil to receive medication during school hours.

We require that parents request permission in writing from the School for their son/ daughter to take prescription medication at the School. Under no circumstances whatsoever is any medication to be given or administered by a student to another student or misused in any way. Any such incident will be considered a serious breach of discipline.

As part of its enrolment procedure, the School requests full medical information for each student, in addition to parental permission for the School to administer nonprescription medication (eg: paracetamol) when necessary.

Special Medical Conditions

Where a pupil is suffering from a chronic medical condition requiring constant or regular medication, parents or guardians will be required to present the School with a Medical Action Plan (see Appendix C).

Exemptions

Emergency health procedures, including emergency administration of medication are not subject to this policy. Drugs or medicines provided or administered by the public health authority to prevent or control an illness or disease outbreak (such as meningitis) are not governed by this policy. In advance of an over-night trip in Ireland or abroad, a separate medical information form will need to be signed by parents/ guardians and students.

Privacy

Proper consideration is at all times given to the right to privacy of both pupils and parents/guardians in relation to medical information. Within the constraints of the need for supervision, the pupil's right to privacy in the administering of medication will be respected.

(iii) Management of alcohol, tobacco, e-cigarettes and other substances:

(a) The use of tobacco, e-cigarettes and alcohol is forbidden in all parts of the School and grounds at all times.

(b) The use of illegal drugs or controlled substances and associated paraphernalia, and all substances covered by the Misuse of Drugs Act (1977) is forbidden in all parts of the School and at all times.

(c) Solvents may only be used for their legitimate function by members of staff, and by pupils when under the direct supervision of a member of staff.

(d) Medication of any kind may only be used in accordance with the terms of this policy document.

(iv) Management of alcohol, tobacco, e-cigarette and drug-related incidents.

Management of incidents involving pupils in which School rules relating to Substance Use have been breached fall under two headings: disciplinary and pastoral care.

(a) Disciplinary: As with any disciplinary incident, such incidents are dealt with under the School's Code of Behaviour. It should be noted that it is illegal for any person to smoke tobacco or to use e-cigarettes anywhere on the School 7 premises and that consumption of alcohol by those under 18 except in the family home and with parental consent is illegal. It is not normally the policy of the School to report incidents involving the management of alcohol, tobacco, e-cigarette and drug related incidents to An Garda Síochána unless there is reason to believe that a criminal act has taken place e.g. the supply or sharing of drugs or associated paraphernalia to/with another student. Sanctions for breach of the stipulations outlined in this policy may include exclusion from school trips, suspension and expulsion. Generally, the Principal will refer the following to the Board of Management with a recommendation for expulsion:

- Students who sell or distribute or who otherwise involve others in the use of illegal substances at or outside of the school.

- Students who sell or distribute or who otherwise involve others (who are not members of the school community) in the use of illegal substances and where there is a threat to the good name of the school and to the operation and upholding of good order at the school as a result of this.
- Students who have previously been suspended for possession of illegal substances and or drug paraphernalia and who are found in possession of illegal substances and/or drug paraphernalia for a second time. In the case of incidents related to prescription or non-prescription medication, each instance is investigated as with any disciplinary incident and dealt with on its merits.

b) Pastoral care: as part of our duty of care to pupils, the School supplies both pupils and parents involved with information on counselling and, if deemed appropriate to the individual situation, referral to an appropriate support agency/medical practitioner. The School reserves the right to insist on counselling or other professional support for a pupil/s found in breach of this policy. Return to school after a suspension may be conditional on this.

(v) Staff Action

(a) Where a pupil or pupils are believed to be in possession, or under the influence of a prohibited substance, or in possession of drug paraphernalia:

1. The pupil/s should be supervised while the Principal or Deputy Principal are informed and asked to come to the scene.
2. In their absence a person nominated by the Principal or Deputy Principal may be informed.
3. If necessary, the pupil/s may be asked to bring their belongings to the school office. The teacher supervising may not search the bag or locker of the pupil/s.
4. Pupils and their belongings (including schoolbags and lockers) should only be searched by the Principal or Deputy Principal, or in their absence, a person nominated by the Principal or Deputy Principal, in the presence of a parent or guardian, even if the pupil gives his or her consent. In the event of parental consent not being given, an Garda Síochána may be asked to intervene.

5. All staff involved in any incident, will, at the earliest possible opportunity, make a written record of what occurred and forward it to the Principal. The account should explicitly outline the 'who, what, where, when, why' of the incident from the perspective of the staff member.

6. All students involved in any incident will be required to make a written record of what occurred. This will normally happen in school. The account should explicitly outline the 'who, what, where, when, why' of the incident from the perspective of the pupil.

b) Further investigation of such incidents will be conducted by the Principal and Deputy Principal or their nominees in accordance with the Code of Behaviour. The parents/guardians of pupils involved will be informed at the earliest possible opportunity.

The School recognises the importance of limiting the number of people involved in investigating and managing a substance abuse/misuse incident. It is the aim of the School only to involve those properly concerned with an incident. However, students and parents will be made aware of the following:

- The duty of the teachers and staff of the school community preclude them from offering total confidentiality to any student when they come into contact with a substance abuse incident or suspected substance abuse incident.
- The School may be required to contact, as appropriate and according to statutory child protection procedures, such authorities as the Gardaí, Túsla and the HSE.
- The School may be duty bound to notify certain persons about the incident and/or the outcomes of the incident investigation under statute, regulations or DES guidelines.

(c) Incidents relating to breaches of the Policy should be considered confidential and must not be discussed with any pupils, parents or staff.

(d) All external inquiries relating to such incidents, including media inquiries will be dealt with by the Principal and/or the Chairman of the Board of Management.

(vi) Ongoing Support / Intervention

In the case of a student attending the school following a drug or alcohol related incident, the School reserves the right to stipulate conditions and interventions which it deems necessary to assist the student in question and/or other students, the school community and the needs of the school. These conditions may include external counselling, ongoing testing for drug abuse and ongoing consultation with external agencies.

(vii) Training and Staff Development

The Principal shall ensure that all staff receive adequate direction and training in recognising and dealing with the issues surrounding Substance Use. This includes familiarity with the signs and symptoms of substance abuse: knowledge of the laws applying to alcohol, tobacco, e-cigarettes, drug paraphernalia, drug use, legal and illegal highs (including codeine/ herbal 'remedies' and other chemicals that can be bought legally or illegally) knowledge of the procedures to be followed in any incident in which they may be involved and familiarity with the School's Substance Use Policy. Where possible, a General Practitioner will be invited from time to time, to update staff on Substance Use and Misuse.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

The following is a summary of the roles of the various constituent parts of the School in relation to the Substance Use Policy.

Students are responsible for being familiar with and observing the Policy and, through the Student Council, taking part in the monitoring and evaluation process on a regular basis.

Parents/ guardians / carers have primary responsibility for the education of their children whose values are formed in the home. The influence of parents regarding the behaviour and attitudes of their children to drugs is of paramount importance in the support and implementation of this policy. Parents/guardians are responsible for being familiar with and observing the Policy and, through the PTA, taking part in the

review, monitoring and in the evaluation of the process at the appropriate time. They are required to assist and cooperate fully with the School as it seeks to deal justly and effectively with any incidents which may arise. The PTA at the request of parents will fund and sponsor relevant talks for parents on this topic.

Any parent/ guardian who becomes aware of drug use on the school grounds, on school trips at home or abroad or in any way related to the School is requested to inform the Principal, Deputy Principal, Junior, Senior or Transition Year Coordinator. Remaining silent about drug use is never acceptable.

All teaching staff are responsible for familiarising themselves with the provisions of the Policy, its implementation within their own areas of responsibility and participating in the general monitoring and evaluation of the Policy.

Ancillary staff are responsible, under the general authority of the school management for familiarising themselves with the provisions of the Policy and for bringing to the attention of the relevant authorities any matters that may arise in this area.

From September 2017 the SPHE Programme Co-ordinator, the Guidance Counsellor are responsible for developing, implementing and monitoring the SPHE curriculum in the School.

The Deputy Principal is involved in the day-to-day running of the school and as such will often be the first point of contact for a teacher who encounters an incident.

The Principal is responsible for the day-to-day implementation of the Policy, for ensuring that in-service training takes place and that all staff are adequately trained and informed to implement the Policy.

The Board of Management determines the values on which the operation of the School is based. It has final approval of the contents of the Policy and the power to make any subsequent amendments to the Policy.

7. Monitoring, Evaluation and Review procedures.

This policy will be formally adopted by the Board of Management when it is formally constituted

This policy will be monitored, evaluated and reviewed on an ongoing basis as part of the school planning process in conjunction with staff, the PTA, the Student Council and the Board of Management.



Approved and Signed by: _____

Gerry McKeivitt, School Manager/ on behalf of Parton, Educate Together

Date: 03/11/2021_____

Medical Details

This is required to ensure the school has an accurate record of medical conditions including your doctor's contact details in the event of a medical issue arising during school activities.

Please note it may be necessary to disclose this information to staff.

Doctor's
Name

Name of Practice

Address of
Practice

Phone No of Practice

Do you have
a Family
Medical
Card?

Yes No
(Please tick the relevant box)

Does the
student
require
glasses?

Yes No
(Please tick the relevant box)

Does the student have
any hearing difficulties?

Yes No
(Please tick the relevant box)

Does the
student have
any of the
conditions
listed?

(Please tick the relevant box)

Asthma

Diabetes

Epilepsy

Anaphylaxis

Narcolepsy

Other (Please specify)

Procedures to follow for
this condition if
required.

Any other medical concerns/information of relevance?

Is your child on any regular prescription medication? (We need to know this in case we are asked to provide this information to a medical practitioner in an emergency situation. This information will be treated in the strictest confidence.)

YES NO

Please outline whether your child will need to take this medication at school and if they are capable of managing their own medication, or if they require assistance. Full details of dosage needed and if assistance is required. If in doubt, you should make an arrangement to meet the Principal.

Does your child have a serious allergy which might require intervention by a member of staff?

(e.g. a peanut allergy) YES NO

If 'Yes' then please specify the allergy and the action to be taken by staff if this allergic reaction occurs. (e.g. contact parents, give specific emergency treatment, call ambulance etc.)

Authorisation

In the event of an accident or illness, I/we authorise *North Wicklow Educate Together Secondary School* or its representatives to take the necessary steps to provide basic medical support (as outlined above) and to administer general First Aid and that no liability shall attach to *North Wicklow Educate Together Secondary School* or its representatives provided that the pharmaceutical distributors' instructions are adhered to.

Signed: _____ (Parent/Guardian/Carer 1)

Signed: _____ (Parent/Guardian/Carer 2 where applicable)

Date: _____

Appendix B

Education concerning Substance Use in the SPHE Course

Copies of the full syllabus for Junior Cycle are available at the Department of Education and Skills website www.education.ie

Year	Topic
First	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Why drugs?•Alcohol•Solvents•Smoking and Its Effects•Smoking: Why, Why not?
Second	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Alcohol and Its Effects•Alcohol: Why, Why not?•Illegal highs and legal highs•Cannabis and Its Effects•Cannabis: Why, Why not?
Third	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•The effects of drugs•Ecstasy: realities•Heroin: realities
TY	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Alcohol and mental health•Resisting Peer Pressure•Alternatives to drug use, smoking and drinking

Appendix C

Action Plan for Pupils with a Medical Condition

Name: _____

Address: _____

Class: _____

Medical Illness: _____

Usual Medical Treatment when pupil is well:

He/she displays the following symptoms when unwell

Medication to be used/ action to be taken when symptoms develop at school:

I parent/ guardian authorise the school to administer the above medication in the event of emergency. I further authorise the school to contact

Doctor: _____

Phone Number: _____

or to contact a local Medical Centre or in an emergency for an ambulance to be called.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

In an emergency I can be contacted at: _____