

Policy on School Substance Use

November 2012

**Dunderrow National School
Dunderrow
Kinsale
Co Cork**

Tele: 021-4774041

The Substance Use Policy of Dunderrow National School was formulated by the following , representing parents, teachers, the Board of Management –

Noel Henderson	Maria O Donovan Joyce	Brendan Kellett
Catherine McGuinness	Mary Cottrell	Helen O' Callaghan

And has been reviewed in November 2012 – by parents, teachers, BOM and the local community.

Introduction

Dunderrow National School is committed to addressing the needs of the whole school regarding substance use.

- The school has an important role in terms of education, prevention, support and handling drug related incidents but it's role is to support parents/guardians who have a primary responsibility with respect to substance use education.

Our working definition of a *Drug* is -

- **Any substance which changes the way the body functions mentally, physically or emotionally.**
 - **Any chemical which alters how the body works or how the person behaves or feels.**
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Relationship to School's Mission/Vision/Ethos

The Ethos of Dunderrow National School states that we strive 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

The substance use policy reflects the school Ethos because it also aims –

- To provide a safe, secure and healthy environment for learning.
- To promote self-esteem and self-awareness of students.
- To promote positive health behaviour.
- To increase knowledge about health.

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- To engage the partners in the education process.
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Rationale – Circular 13/02

- This policy is necessary because the school wishes to provide for the needs of their students and respond appropriately.
 - The world in which we live presents young people with many challenges in relation to alcohol, tobacco and drugs which affect their health and well being
 - The Education Act 1998 provides that schools should promote the social and personal development of students and provide health education for them.
 - The National Drugs Strategy “Building on Experience” is now Government policy and it requires schools to have a substance use policy in place.
 - The recent report from the National Advisory Committee on Drugs entitled “Drug use and Prevention” (November 2001) underlines the importance of schools developing substance use policies.
 - The 1999 European School Survey Project on Alcohol and other Drugs (ESPAD) Report Alcohol was identified as being the dominant drug of misuse in Ireland whilst the use of tobacco and other drugs was above the ESPAD average.
 - For the population as a whole, alcohol consumption per capita in Ireland has increased by 41% in the period 1989 to 1999 while the other EU Member States showed either a decrease or a modest increase. Ireland now has the second highest per capita consumption of alcohol in the EU.
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Aims/Objectives

The aim of this policy is the welfare, care, and protection of every young person in line with the Education Act, 1998.

Our Objectives are to enable the Child to:

- Develop skills such as valuing themselves and others, communication, co-operative, decision making and critical awareness skills.
- To be aware of attitudes that affect people’s decisions and exploration of what seems to be the acceptability of certain drugs such as alcohol.
- To acquire accurate, age-appropriate information about drugs and to distinguish between myths and facts about drugs.

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Scope of Policy:

The Policy applies to

- To the entire school community, including students, all school staff, parents/guardians and users of the school building.
- At all times to school buildings and yard, all school related activities, sports and games field and school bus.
- To the possession, use or supply of drugs in the above named places – the only exception is for legitimate medicinal use and the school principal, Mrs. Mary Cottrell, has to be informed.

Policy Content:

Our policy is focused on these three areas:

1. Education concerning substance use.
2. Management of alcohol, tobacco and drug related incidents.
3. Provision for staff awareness raising, training and development.

1. Education concerning substance use.

Dunderrow National School is committed to providing education on substance use within the broad context of Social, Personal and Health Education.

The following considerations will inform the selection of content and methodologies –

1. Age appropriate information
2. A value system which supports primary prevention in a holistic, caring and supportive environment.
3. Active learning methodologies to practice specific skills.
4. Specific content objectives of the SPHE curriculum and resources such as in Appendix 1 (attached)

The School

- Will provide opportunities for pupils to develop skills, be aware of values and attitudes and acquire knowledge regarding substance misuse prevention through the SPHE curriculum.

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- Will teach the content objectives as set out over a two year period in the School Plan.
- Will provide a positive school climate and atmosphere.
- Will use an active learning approach as far as possible.
- Will draw on the expertise available within our community and the support of the Gardai.
- Will consider inviting outside visitors/speakers (e.g. Garda youth Liaison Officer, Policy related HSE personnel, Ms Margaret Dinneen, Registered Nurse) to work with the pupils, in the presence of a teacher, to enhance the work done in the context of the full SPHE programme with an emphasis on relationships and substance use.

Parents/Guardians and Local Community

- Will support the substance use policy and the teaching of SPHE.

Board of Management

- Will support teaching initiatives by providing funding where necessary.

2. Management of Alcohol, Tobacco and Drug-related incidents.

The School's position on alcohol, tobacco, and drug-related incidents include the following –

Over the counter drugs (solvents, glue, caffeine based etc)

- The school does not accept the misuse of solvent-based substances.
- All chemicals on school premises are locked away and prohibited for students use unless under a teacher's supervision.

Smoking & Tobacco

- This school is a restricted smoking area as clearly indicated by signs on the premises.
- Students and adults are not permitted to smoke or possess cigarettes on school premises, on school activities or on school trips.
- All persons on the school premises are required to comply with the restricted smoking policy.

Alcohol

- The school is an alcohol free zone.
- Students and adults are not permitted to possess or consume alcohol on school premises, on school activities or on school trips.

Illegal Drugs

- Students are prohibited from possession, use or supply of illicit drugs on school premises, on school activities or on school trips.
- Suspicion/rumour of drug use, possession or dealing on the school premises or during a school related activity.
- Selling/supplying legal/illegal drugs.
- School grounds being used for drug activity/use on the school premises (smoking on school premises/pupils experimenting with solvents, aerosols, sprays, etc.)
- Drug paraphernalia found on school property/finding substances.
- Disclosure about use.
- T-shirt/clothing/pencil case etc that have an open or underlying drugs message.

Medication

Procedures are in place for dealing with incidents requiring medical intervention as laid out in our school's policy on *Administration of Medication* or our *Health & Safety Statement*.

- All use of medication on school's premises, on school activities or on school trips comply with this Statement
- A student may not give another student any prescribed or "over the counter" medication.
- Incidents requiring medical attention will be dealt with by Ms. Leonora Cooney and Ms Vicky Phelan, who are suitably qualified in First-Aid.

In the case of substance misuse incident-suspected witnessed or reported the following procedures will be adopted –

Assess the Situation

- If the person is in immediate danger we will determine the nature of the substance if possible and contact parents and designated GP as outlined in Child's Registration Form in class file.

Recording of Drug-related Incidents.

- We will keep a factual, written account of the incident.
- All written documentation will be held confidentially by the school Principal, Mrs Mary Cottrell.

Who will be informed?

- People will be informed on a need to know basis so that confidentiality can be respected, however, total confidentiality cannot be guaranteed to a young person who discloses drug involvement.
- The Principal will be informed.
- The pupil will be informed about what is happening and why.
- The Chairperson of the Board of Management will be informed.
- Parents/Guardians will be informed in an incident which involves their own child.
- Parents/Guardians will be informed in an incident or accusation relating to another child but involving their child.
- Other agencies may also be involved such as –
 - ❑ Gardai – Junior Liaison Officer, in the event of a confirmed drug related incident (disposal of drugs etc.)
 - ❑ Statutory Health Authority Bodies (if seeking advice on a Child Protection issue)
 - ❑ The Legal Profession where legal advice is deemed necessary.

Disciplinary Procedures

- Incidents will be handled sensitively. We will endeavour at all times to have a balance between pastoral and disciplinary response.
- We will address the needs of the student(s) involved, the other students and the school.
- Sanctions and punishments will be implemented depending on the nature and severity of the offence.
- Pupils will be dealt with in accordance with school procedures regarding serious misbehaviour as in the schools Code of Discipline.

In our area Support Agencies are available to which a student involved in substance use could be referred.

If responding to the **Media** -

- The school will not comment on individual cases but will refer to the school's policy and the procedures in place to manage any drug-related incident.
- The Principal, Mrs Mary Cottrell, is designated to respond to "drug related incidents".

Provision for Training and Staff Development

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The Staff are aware of the laws relating to alcohol, tobacco and drug use and how they relate to themselves, to the school and the students-

- Scope of the policy – duty of care
- Expelling of Pupils.
- Illegal use issues, drugs on property, handling of drugs and related paraphernalia.
- Parents are bound by the Code of Behaviour.

This policy will be effective only if there is a strong commitment made to ongoing training of the whole school community. Dunderrow National School undertakes to provide the following in relation to each relevant group.

Staff

Opportunities will be provided to avail of training such as -

- In-service training in SPHE (PCSP)
- First-aid training (Health Promotion Unit)
- Drug awareness training and skills development (Substance Misuse Prevention Programme/Health Promotion Unit/Gardai).
- Information on the legislation relating to Schools and Drugs – Mrs Mary Cottrell.

New staff will be briefed on the substance use policy of the school by the Teacher in charge of induction – Ms Ellen Maria Glavin.

Timeframe

The reviewed policy will come into force in January 2013.....

It will be subject to review again in 2017.....or at an earlier date if applicable.

Implementation Programme

The Principal Mrs Mary Cottrell will ensure this policy is available to all parents on request. On enrolment of new pupils in Dunderrow National School, parents and guardians, on having been informed of contents will sign an acceptance. Details will be circulated to all concerned by the Principal.

This Policy was developed by representatives of the Board of Management, Parents and Staff of this school.

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Catherine McGuinness----- Parent
Mary Cottrell-----Principal
Noel Henderson-----Board of Management
Helen O' Callaghan-----Staff

Appendix 1

HSE Freephone 1800 507 400

A & E Departments	
Cork University Hospital	021-4546400
Mercy Hospital	021-4271971
The South Infirmary	021-4926100

Community Counselling Service (Alcohol & Drugs)	021-4212382
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Gardai

Juvenile Liaison Officer	023- 8852264
Anglesea Street	021-4522062
Kinsale Garda Station	021-4772302

Support Agencies to which a student involved in substance use could be referred.

Arbour House	021-4968933
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Youth Health Services Cork	021-4220490/1
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Cork Social & Health Project Western Road Cork	021-4278464
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