



Bandonbridge National School

Substance Use Policy

Date of ratification: 2010

Date of review: Summer 2018

Introduction:

Bandonbridge N.S. is committed to addressing the needs of the whole school regarding substance use.

The school has an important role in terms of education, support and handling of substance use related incidents, but its role is to support the 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.

These include: Nicotine, Alcohol, Solvents, Illegal Drugs, Over the counter medicines, Prescription medicines, Caffeine based products such as Red Bull.

Relationship to the characteristic spirit of the school:

The ethos of this school states that all “pupils experience a sense of caring and belonging; they are treated fairly, and their spiritual, moral and religious development is encouraged, as is their intellectual, social and academic development”.

The Substance Use Policy reflects the school’s 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 attitude towards health
- to increase knowledge about health
- to engage the partners (i.e. parents, guardians, staff & students) in the education process

Rationale:

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, and the Education (Welfare) Act, 2000, provides that schools should promote the social and personal development of students and provide health education for them
- The Public Health Tobacco Act, 2002, prohibits smoking in the workplace

- 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

Aims and Objectives

The aim of this policy is the welfare, care and protection of every young person in our school, in line with the Education Act, 1998, and Education Welfare Act, 2000.

Our objectives are:

- to provide a comprehensive programme of prevention education in substance misuse for all pupils in the context of Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) in the Primary School.
- to develop skills in the child such as valuing themselves and others, decision-making, critical and communication awareness skills
- for the pupils to acquire accurate, age-appropriate information about drugs
- to ensure the children are aware of the sections in the school's Code of Behaviour relating to substance use and the consequential sanctions
- to equip the school community to deal with issues relating to substance use in a planned and considered way and in accordance with its statutory responsibilities.
- to support parents and pupils and staff in understanding and addressing substance misuse.

Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to students, teachers, parents and everybody who uses our school buildings, school yard and surrounding environment.

This policy applies:

- to the entire school community, including students, all school staff, parents/guardians, and users of the school building.

- to school buildings and yard during school hours, excluding social and fundraising events organised by the Board of Management or Parent Association, to all other school related activities, including any school outing or trip, sports and game field and school buses.
- to the possession, use or supply of drugs, including alcohol and tobacco, in the above-mentioned places – the only exception is for legitimate medicinal use when the school principal must be informed (see Administration of Medication Policy)

Guidelines

Our policy is focussed 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:

This 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-

- Information must be age, developmentally, culturally and environmentally appropriate
- A value system which supports primary prevention in a holistic, caring and supportive environment
- Active learning methodologies to practice specific skills
- Specific content objectives of the SPHE curriculum and resources.

Bandonbridge 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
- will teach the content objectives as set out over a two year period in the School Plan for SPHE
- 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 Gardaí

- will consider inviting outside visitors/speakers to work with the pupils, in the presence of a teacher, to enhance the work done in the context of the full SPHE programme.

Parents/guardians and Local Community

- Parents/guardians are encouraged to support the school's efforts to educate pupils in substance misuse prevention and to manage substance use incidents.

Board of Management

- will support teaching initiatives by encouraging ongoing staff training on drug information and awareness including First Aid Training, providing funding where necessary.

2. Management of Substance Related Incidents:

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

Over the counter products:

- the school does not accept the misuse of over-the-counter drugs, solvents, aerosols, glue, and caffeine-based drinks
- chemicals on school premises are stored securely and prohibited for student use unless under a teacher's supervision.
- all cleaning agents must be stored out of children's view in appropriate cupboards and store rooms.
- markers with a solvent base, Tippex and other such products should be kept under strict teacher supervision.
- aerosols are not allowed; roll-on anti-perspirants are permitted. (Swimming etc)

Smoking and Tobacco:

- Visitors, staff and parents will comply with the national non-smoking policy
- Pupils found in possession of tobacco products on school premises or at any school related activity will be reported to the Principal (or Deputy Principal if the Principal is unavailable) and his/her 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.

- A record should be kept of any incident which occurs. The DLP (or the DDLP) will keep the record in an Incident Book.

Alcohol:

- The school is an alcohol-free zone, excluding social and fund-raising events as stated under scope of policy above.
- Pupils are not allowed to bring alcohol into the school or to consume alcohol on the school premises or during any school activities.
- If a staff member is of the opinion that a student is under the influence of alcohol, he/she will immediately inform the Principal (or Deputy Principal if the Principal is unavailable) and consult on what action should be taken. Parents will be notified. In such an instance, our Child Protection Procedures will be instigated.
- 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 disciplinary procedures.
- If an adult appears to be under the influence of alcohol when coming to collect a child, it must be reported to the Principal (or Deputy Principal if the Principal is unavailable). The child's safety is paramount. Child Protection procedures will be instigated.
- 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.)*

Illegal Drugs:

- Students and adults are prohibited from possession, use or supply of illicit drugs or solvents on school premises, on school activities or on school trips
- Suspicion/rumour of drug use or possession on the school premises or during a school-related activity will be investigated by the principal or deputy principal
- Drug paraphernalia/substances found on school property will be reported to Gardaí
- Disclosure about use will be dealt with as outlined in this policy
- T-shirts, pencil cases, schoolbags etc. that have an open or underlying drugs message are banned.
- 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 (or Deputy Principal if the Principal is unavailable) and consult on what action should be taken. Parents will be notified. The school's Child Protection Procedures will come into force.
- If a staff member appears to be under the influence of a substance, it will be reported to the Principal who will act in accordance with disciplinary procedures

- 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 (or Deputy Principal if the Principal is unavailable). The child's safety is paramount. The Child Protection policy will be consulted accordingly.
- A record should be kept of any incident which occurs. The DLP or the DDLP will keep the record in an Incident Book.

Medication:

- Procedures are in place for dealing with incidents requiring medical intervention as laid out in our school's policy on administration of medication/ Health & Safety statement.
- All use of medication on school premises, on school activities or on school trips complies with this policy.
- Incidents requiring medical intervention will be dealt with by the Principal and/or the Deputy Principal.

Procedures:

To be followed in the case of a substance misuse incident suspected, witnessed or reported may include some or all of the following:

1. Assess the situation
2. Seek medical help if necessary (Millbrook Clinic 023 8841132 and South Doc 1850335999 after hours)
3. Contact principal.
4. Contact parents.
5. All incidents will be recorded in the Special Incident Book by the DLP or DDLP
6. Referral to outside Tusla (duty social worker) and/or Gardaí. It is mandatory to contact Gardai if an illegal substance is found on the premises (Bandon Garda Station 023 8852200)
7. Sanctions (See Code of Behaviour)
8. Report (Refer to Child Protection Procedures)

N.B. Any adult displaying signs of substance abuse may be asked to leave the premises, unless they might be a danger to themselves, in which case, the Principal and members of staff may opt to isolate the adult (having assess whether to do so would put the staff in danger). The Gardaí and ambulance services will be contacted immediately.

Relevant contact details: Drugs Advisory and Treatment Centre: 01 677 1122

National Helpline for alcohol or drug abuse: 1850 459459

HSE Information: 1850 241850

Substance Misuse Prevention Programme: 01 4528017

Confidentiality:

People will be informed on a 'need to know' basis. Parents/guardians will be involved unless reporting would pose a threat to the child.

In the case of illegal drugs, the Gardai will be informed by the principal.

In the case of misuse of illegally held substances by a pupil, follow first 5 steps above PLUS:

- Illicit drugs must be confiscated and locked away
- Principal. teacher will consult with the relevant support agencies and authorities e.g. Tusla, Community Garda.

In the case of suspected drug taking by a pupil outside school hours, the DLP/DDLP will be informed immediately. Those who report incidents to the school will be encouraged to contact the Gardaí to pass on this information. Parents/guardians will be informed.

Disciplinary procedures

- Incidents will be handled sensitively. We will endeavour at all times to have a balance between a pastoral and a disciplinary response.
- We will address the needs of the pupil/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 our Code of Behaviour.

If responding to the media, 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.

The Chairperson of the Board of Management is designated to respond to the media in relation to 'drug-related incidents' (see also Critical Incident Policy)

3. Provision for training and staff development.

This policy will be effective only if there is a strong commitment made to the on-going training of the whole school community. This school, Bandonbridge N.S., 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 – Walk Tall etc.
- First Aid training
- Drug awareness training and skills development (Substance Misuse Prevention Programme/Health promotion Unit/ Gardaí).
- Information on the legislation relating to schools and drugs
- New staff will be required to read the Substance Use Policy of the school

Parents/guardians

The school, in conjunction with the Parent Association, will provide opportunities to avail of drug awareness and information sessions.

Parents will be referred to community courses/information sessions. The school will display literature on courses and/or co-operate with parents who wish to organise them.

Roles and Responsibilities:

- The entire school staff is responsible for the implementation of this policy
- Parents/guardians are responsible for supporting the school's goals to educate pupils in substance misuse prevention
- The Board of Management is responsible for supporting implementation of the policy through staff training and resource provision.

Success Criteria

- Prevention of substance misuse
- Feedback from all parties
- Effectiveness of policy in dealing with incidents

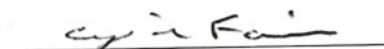
Review Procedures

This policy will be evaluated and updated where necessary, and when legislation dictates.

Timeframe for review

- This amended policy will come into force during term 1 of the school year 2018/2019.
- It will be subject to review one year after its implementation and subsequently as necessary.

Ratification:

Signed: 

Chairperson Board of Management