



Knocknacarra Educate Together
National School

Substance Use Policy

This policy has been formulated by Knocknacarra ETNS to support all members of the school community to make healthy choices regarding substance use and misuse to support the positive health and well-being of all. The policy also explains procedures related to medicine administration.

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Introductory Statement and Rationale:

Our school community, Knocknacarra Educate Together NS, endeavours to support the well-being of our pupils, parents and staff. This policy outlines prevention measures to address substance misuse as well as lays out policies regarding substance use. This policy applies to students, staff, parents/carers, visitors and all users of the school's facilities. It applies within the school building, school grounds and anywhere the children are taken under the care of the school.

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 (SPHE) 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 requires every school to have a substance use policy in place. This policy fulfils these requirements.

Definition of a Drug

A drug is any substance which changes the way the body functions, mentally, physically or emotionally. This description includes 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.

Aims:

- To develop self-confidence and a positive sense of self-esteem among pupils.
- To empower a sense of personal responsibility in dealing with alcohol, tobacco and drugs.
- To practice making healthy decisions.
- To ensure pupils' safety the pupils and the ability to protect themselves from danger and abuse.
- To develop the ability to make healthy decisions.
- To create a safe school and community environment.
- To help students develop the self-respect and confidence to prevent substance misuse.
- To develop the listening, decision-making and communication skills of pupils to empower them to deal with situations that may arise.
- To highlight the harmful effects of the misuse of drugs and other substances.

Prevention Programme:

As explained in the Social, Personal and Health Education Curriculum Plan, the main programmes used to address the prevention of substance misuse are Stay Safe and Walk Tall. The Stay Safe programme is taught in alternate years in the spring and reviewed annually. This is supplemented by the Walk Tall programme as well as the Young Persons' Support Programme (<http://www.fsn.ie/resources/young-persons-support-programme/>). This programme is also supported by the Learn Together Curriculum. All lessons related to substance use will be done in an age-appropriate manner. Each class teacher will be responsible for delivering the programme. From time to time, additional supplementary programmes or speakers will be used, in consultation with the principal. Parents will be informed prior to the teaching of any sensitive issues. The SPHE programme will be outlined to parents/carers via the school website as well as in the parent handbook.

Management of Substances:

Legal Drugs

The use of legal drugs in the school is examined under the section of this policy entitled “Administration of Medication”.

Solvents

Tip-X and solvent markers are not permitted by any pupil in the school. The pupil may ask their teacher to correct an error on their behalf using Tip-X. Each teacher is obliged to keep his or her Tip-X and solvent markers in a safe place at all times.

The use of aerosol sprays is generally not permitted by pupils in the school. However, aerosol sprays will on occasion be used for arts and crafts. An adult must supervise such activities.

Cleaning solvents held in the school should be stored in a locked cupboard at all times.

Tobacco Smoking

In correspondence with the Tobacco Act 2002, smoking, including vaping, is not permitted anywhere within the school building or on the school grounds. Our policy extends to any activity the school engages in with the children on behalf of the school, even when this activity occurs off site.

Alcohol

The consumption and possession of alcohol is not allowed at any time on the school premises except if prior permission has been sought and granted by the Board of Management.

Illegal Drugs

Illegal drugs, as itemised under the current legislation, are not permitted on the school premises.

Management of Medicines:

Storage of medicines

- Unprescribed medicines will neither be stored nor administered to pupils in the school.
- Prescribed medicines will not be administered in the school without the written consent of parents/carers and the specific authorisation and agreement of the Board of Management, principal and class teacher (see Appendix 1-2). Specific medical procedures must also be outlined using Appendix 3. Staff members who administer medication will complete Appendix 4, as required.
- Medicines should not be kept by the pupils at any stage. They will be kept in a locked cabinet in the relevant classroom/office. Teachers and other visitors working in the school are expected to ensure any medication for personal use is stored securely.
- All other medicines used directly by children, such as inhalers, will be stored in a designated area for safe keeping. They will be accessible to the children themselves and brought on any outings.

Administration of medication

- Administration of medication will take place where necessary for pupils with diagnosed illnesses.
- Clearly understood and agreed upon arrangements will be made with the board of management, principal and class teacher before any medicines will be administered to a child. A copy of an indemnity form must be kept on file.

- Medicine prescribed for one child may never be given to another child, even in a case of emergency. Instead, it is the responsibility of parents to ensure that any required medications are provided to the school, including epipens and inhalers, and such medications are not beyond their expiration date.
- Parents will be asked to provide maximum support in helping the school accommodate the child.
- Parents will be asked to outline in writing, what can and cannot be done in particular emergency situations involving administration of medicine as well as other personal care for their child.

Managing Incidents

The school will take a pastoral and supportive approach to the management of all substance misuse incidents in the school.

In the case of an emergency

- The teacher will stay calm. The teacher will stay with the child.
- The principal will be informed.
- A qualified First Aider will assess the situation. If necessary, an ambulance will be called.
- A parent/carer will be contacted as soon as possible.
- A teacher will accompany the child to the hospital if a parent is unavailable to do so, either by taxi or ambulance.

In the case of an incident

- Any person who sees or suspects the misuse of a substance by a child or any member of the school community, including teachers or parents/carers, should report this to the principal.
- The principal will then deal with the incident.
- The incident will be recorded and reported to the board.
- The principal will hold all written documentation about the incident.
- Parents/carers will be informed by the principal, where relevant. An agreed course of action and disciplinary sanctions will be agreed upon, as required. Parents will be referred to appropriate services where necessary.
- In the case of an illegal substance, the Gardaí will be contacted.
- In cases where children/parents/carers/teachers fail to comply with school policy, the Board of Management will be informed. Further action will be taken at the discretion of the Board of Management, in accordance with the school's Code of Behaviour. The Board of Management will at all times comply with the Children First guidelines.

Disposal of medicines/substances

- Where deemed necessary the principal will contact the Gardaí if any illegal substance/item is found on the school premises.
- If necessary, an instrument will be used to pick up the item and it will be placed in an appropriate container, e.g. glass jar/plastic bag.
- This will then be stored securely until the Gardaí arrive to collect and dispose of it.

Confidentiality

All matters discussed or recorded will be confidential in accordance with the Children First guidelines.

Disclosure

If a disclosure is made, it should be reported to the Designated Liaison Person in the school in accordance with the Children First guidelines.

Media Queries

All media queries will be directed towards the principal and/or the chairperson of the board. No teacher, parent/carer or child will answer questions in relation to school matters.

Links to other policies

Relevant school policies already in place or being developed or reviewed shall be examined with reference to this policy and any implications which it has for them shall be addressed. The following policies may be among those considered: Child Safeguarding Statement, Code of Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy, Health and Safety Policy and the SPHE Curriculum Plan.

Roles and Responsibilities:

- The Board of Management will ensure the policy is reviewed regularly.
- The principal, acting as Designated Liaison Person, will respond to all incidents. The principal will also ensure staff are informed of the policy provisions.
- All teachers will be familiar with the policy and ensure that the prevention programme is in place as well as be aware of any potential breaches of the policy.
- Parents will ensure the guidelines regarding medicine administration are followed to ensure the health and well-being of their children.
- The pupils of the school will take part in prevention lessons and make healthy choices.
- All visitors to the school will be asked to follow the guidelines of the policy.

Monitoring the Implementation of Policy:

The implementation of the policy shall be monitored by the principal and the Board of Management. Teachers will record the lessons of the prevention programme under the SPHE heading in their monthly reports (Cuntais Míósúla). Any incidents will be included in the principal's report at each Board meeting. A review of the policy by the Board of Management to confirm that the actions/measures set down under the policy are being implemented will take place.

Reviewing and Evaluating the Policy:

The policy should be reviewed and evaluated at least every three years and as necessary, not later than 2025. The policy should be revised as necessary in the light of such review and evaluation and within the framework of school planning.

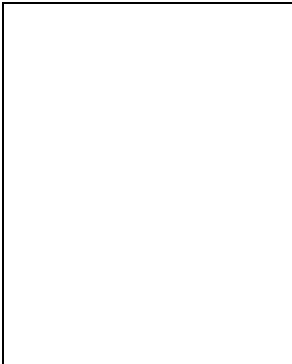
Ratification:

The original policy was ratified in 2016. A review process of the policy took place in 2019 and again in 2022, and a revised policy was ratified by the Board of Management on the date below.

Paul Adams, chairperson

Date of ratification: 14th December 2022

Appendix 1: Medical Condition and Administration of Medicines



Child's Name: _____

Address: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Emergency Contacts

1) Name: _____ Phone: _____

2) Name: _____ Phone: _____

3) Name: _____ Phone: _____

4) Name: _____ Phone: _____

Child's Doctor: _____ Phone: _____

Medical Condition: _____

Prescription Details: _____

Storage details: _____

Dosage required: _____

Is the child to be responsible for taking the prescription him/herself? _____

What action is required? _____

I/We request that the Board of Management authorise the taking of Prescription Medicine during the school day as it is absolutely necessary for the continued well-being of my/our child. I/We understand that the school has no facilities for the safe storage of prescription medicines and that the prescribed amounts be brought in daily. I/We understand that we must inform the school/Teacher of any changes of medicine/dose in writing and that we must inform the Teacher each year of the prescription/medical condition. I/We understand that no school personnel have any medical training, and we indemnify the Board from any liability that may arise from the administration of the medication.

Signed _____ Parent/Guardian

_____ Parent/Guardian

Date _____

Appendix 2: Allergy Details

Type of Allergy: _____

Reaction Level: _____

Medication: _____

Storage details: _____

Dosage required: _____

Administration Procedure (When, Why, How):

Signed: _____ Parent/Guardian

_____ Parent/Guardian

Date: _____

Appendix 3: Emergency Procedures

In the event of _____ displaying any of the following symptoms associated with a known medical condition, the following procedures should be followed:

Symptoms: _____

Procedure:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

To include: Dial 999 and call emergency services. Contact parents.

