

**“No Parent, Student or member of the School Community
can afford to be complacent”**

Substance Use & Smoke Free Policy



**St. Joseph's Secondary School
Spanish Point
Co. Clare.**

Policy Ratified: 5th March 2018

Review Date: 2020

Signed: John Smith

U

Mission Statement

- St. Joseph's is a Catholic school in the trusteeship of CEIST, and thus its ethos is shaped on the vision of CEIST.
- It is committed to providing a holistic education, which recognises respects and develops the potential of each student, and does this in the context of the whole school community.
- Opportunities for developing partnership links with the parent body are welcome and encouraged.
- The personal and professional development of staff is an important element of school policy.
- Access to school facilities is available to the local community.

School Aims

- To provide for religious formation in the context of the Catholic ethos of the school
- To endeavour to develop a sense of moral responsibility in students
- To assist students in developing appropriate life skills and social awareness
- To strive to ensure that each student will achieve her/his full educational potential
- To facilitate each student to achieve exam success in accordance with her/his ability
- To respect individual rights subject to the rights of the whole school community
- To respect the rights of staff in the performance of their professional duties
- To facilitate the holistic development of staff as educators
- To maximise links with the education partners for the benefit of the whole school community
- To offer direction and leadership in the educational field to the local community

Introduction

St Joseph's Secondary School is committed to addressing the needs of the whole school in relation to substance. The policy has been drawn up and accepted by the Principal, Teachers, Parents/Guardians, Board of Management and Students. It is necessary that all involved work together to implement this policy. It is vital that parents/guardians actively work with the school to implement this policy to ensure their children's health and safety. In this policy "Substance" means any substance which changes the way the body functions, mentally, physically or emotionally. The School recognises that substance both legal and illegal are available in the local community and that the School, as part of that community, has an important role in terms of education, prevention, support and the handling of substance related incidents.

This document, although drawn up by and for the school, is not strictly for the school alone. It has been drafted for the whole community as substance can affect everybody. Its' purpose is to raise the level of awareness of the students, their parents and the community as a whole to the presence, dangers and control of substance. This subject matter is not only relevant to the school environment but is a national as well as a local issue. The purpose of our substance policy is to promote healthy living amongst our students.

This school will handle any alcohol or illicit substance related incident in a firm but fair manner, with due regard for the safety and welfare of the staff and students of the school. The procedures included in the Code of Discipline will be followed bearing in mind that St Joseph's Secondary school must fulfil any legal obligations that apply in this area.

The school will adhere to any legal obligations imposed by the State at all times. Equally, it must be stated that expulsion from the school is a real option in certain breaches of the school's Substance Policy.

As stated in the School's mission statement, St Joseph's is committed to enabling students to fulfil their academic, intellectual, moral, spiritual, social, cultural and physical potential. It also is committed to fostering the development of personal responsibility.

Definition of substance:

A substance is a potentially addictive substance that can cause mental, physical, emotional and social problems. This includes illicit and legal substance. Legal substance includes alcohol and tobacco. Illicit substances include such things as the misuse of medication, inhalants as well as illegal substance such as hash, cocaine, and heroin.

- The School does not accept the possession, use or supply of illegal substance in the school, or on outside activities or in non-school time by any member of the school community.
- The School does not accept the possession, use or supply of alcohol or tobacco in the school or on school activities by any student.
- The School does not accept the misuse of solvent based substances. Students may have prescribed or "over the counter" medicines for legitimate personal use only. Such medicines will be stored in the secretary's office.
- Students who take medical substance in school long term must inform the school. Such medicines will be stored in the secretary's office.
- The School must be informed if a student has a medical condition and relevant teachers, e.g. P.E. teacher must be informed also.
- A student or teacher may not give another student any prescribed or "over the counter" medicine.
- Chemicals in school laboratories will be held under lock and key. Students will handle and use such substances only under their teacher's supervision.

The policy is focused in four key areas:

1. Alcohol, Tobacco and Substance Education Programmes.
2. Managing Substance Related Incidents.
3. Training and Staff Development.
4. Monitoring, Review and Evaluation.

Alcohol, Tobacco and Substance Education Programmes.

The School is committed to providing an Alcohol, Tobacco and Substance Education Programme for all students. Our educational aims are:

- To increase the self-esteem and confidence of our students.
- To equip our students with personal and social skills.
- To enable our students to make informed, healthy and responsible decisions.
- To provide clear and age appropriate information on substance.
- To minimise the harm caused by substance abuse by offering supportive interventions.

These aims will be achieved by:

1. The Health/Substance Policy Co-ordinator. Mr O'Brien
2. Teachers are offered Substance Awareness training, SPHE training or any relevant training through regular in-service training.
3. Outside speakers (Garda Vetted) are used where appropriate to reinforce the work done in class.
4. Parents/Guardians will be consulted on the need for substance education and will be informed of what is happening in the School. Substance information and substance awareness will be organised for and by parents.
5. Student Substance Education will be achieved through:
 - o Wellbeing/SPHE Programme

- o Science, Home Economics, Social education, Religion???
- o First Aid Course in Transition Year
- o Outside speakers where appropriate

Guidelines for visiting speakers in relation to Substance Use:

- Guest Speakers must be Garda Vetted.
- Must be suitable for the level of the class being taught;
- Must support staff in what is being taught by them;
- The tone and substance of the topic must be suitable for the students;
- The teacher is to remain in the class;
- Evaluation of visiting speakers should be carried out and made available to other teachers;
- The speaker should be subject to the confidentiality of the substance policy;

Parents and Substance Use Education:

Substance Use awareness sessions will be provided for parents. The Parent's Council may like to invite their own guest speakers to address these sessions. The aim of the parent's substance awareness sessions is to inform parents on substance and to complement the sessions conducted for the students and thereby making parents an integral part of their child's substance education.

Management of substance Use related incidents:

This policy applies to students and staff.

This policy applies on school premises and on school related trips.

Outline of restrictions:

The possession, use, supply, or presenting under the influence of, alcohol, tobacco or illicit substance (illegal substance, improper or illegal use of solvents, magic mushrooms, medications, etc.) is contrary to schools Code of Behaviour.

Managing Alcohol, Tobacco, (including e-cigarettes) Substance Related Incidents

We acknowledge that in all situations involving substances, there needs to be a balance between the needs of the student, the needs of the school community, the reputation of the school and legal considerations. Assessing a substance incident: If there is no damage to the student/s, it is important to:

- Take time to listen and assess before responding.
- Separate fact from rumour.
- In situations of confirmed use or possession or supply all details must be recorded and acted upon.
- Then complete the substance incident report.

Exceptions:

- The correct and supervised use of cleaning agents and curriculum-related materials/ingredients as specified by the staff member involved.
- The students use of prescribed substance e.g. Asthma Inhalers
- The use of medication by students is subject to parental /doctors advice.

- Exceptions may be made by the Principal re alcohol on staff social occasions or functions involving staff and adult guests.

It is the wish of the policy makers that this policy is upheld by all visitors and users of the school.

Internal lines of reporting:

Reporting procedures will be as per code of discipline i.e. complaint forms to Year Head to Deputy Principal to Principal to investigation to report.

Students are themselves encouraged to inform a member of the teaching staff as appropriate if an incident occurs.

Away policy: Teacher in charge manages an incident in situ at his/her discretion and will follow the usual procedure upon his/her return to school.

Confidentiality:

While every effort will be made to respect confidentiality, it is not possible to guarantee confidentiality to students in relation to alcohol or illicit substance incidents, including disclosure of their own use. Information may need to be shared, for example, with certain staff members, with the parents of those involved, or with an appropriate external agency. However, discretion within these limits will be observed.

The limits of confidentiality will be explained to the student prior to disclosure where possible. Students who wish to speak to someone in confidence may ask the school counsellor to put them in contact with an appropriate external agency.

With regard to school staff, confidentiality can similarly not be guaranteed as the Principal and/or board of Management may have to be informed of the incident/disclosure. If public comment is required only the Principal in conjunction with the school solicitor will respond.

Informing/Involving Parents:

Parents will be informed if their son/daughter is involved in an alcohol/illicit substance incident. They will be invited to the school to discuss what has happened and will be informed of the course of action to be taken.

Parents will be supplied with information to put them in contact with an appropriate external agency if they wish to seek further support for themselves.

We would encourage parents with concerns about the actual or possible misuse of alcohol or illicit substance by their son/daughter to discuss these concerns with the Principal who will offer support, and information about external services.

Informing/Involving Gardaí:

St Joseph's Secondary School has a positive working relationship with local Gardaí, and together they have the welfare of the individual student, other students and the wider school community to consider.

With incidents involving illegal substance and other unlawful acts involving tobacco or alcohol, it is the moral duty and policy of the School to inform the Garda Juvenile Liaison Officer or in his/her absence any member of the Garda Síochána if the person is under 18 years of age. As per legal advice, the Board of Management will be notified.

Sanctions:

As per the code of discipline of the School a graded system of firm and consistent sanctions will apply to students involved in alcohol, smoking or illicit substance incidents. Sanctions including suspension or expulsion may be imposed depending on the seriousness of the incident.

Staff breaches will be dealt with according to the professional Code of Practice/Conditions of Employment and the Agreed Grievance procedure..

Counselling/Support of those involved:

Students directly involved in illicit substance incidents will be monitored by a member of available teaching staff (of their choice) for ongoing support.

Students or other members of the school who wish to speak to someone about their own misuse of alcohol or illicit substance, or that of a person about whom they are concerned, are invited to approach any member of the teaching staff.

Staff dealing with illicit substance /alcohol incidents will be offered support through internal support systems and contact with external agencies if requested.

Disposing of Illegal Substance:

If an illegal substance (or suspected illegal substance) is found on school property, or during school activity, it should be brought to the attention of the Principal or Person in Charge. It should be stored securely by staff member(s) while Gardaí are called to come and collect it. The substance should be handled as little as possible in the interim, and no attempt should be made to taste or analyse it. Two staff members should be present during any procedures involving handling of illegal substance.

There is a legal obligation to render illegal substance beyond use.. The school can ask Gardaí to analyse the substance found.

Searches:

Where there is reasonable cause to believe a student or other person in the school has on their person or in their possession e.g. in their coat or bag, a substance in breach of this policy, they will be asked to volunteer the substance. In the case of unlawful substances/incidents if they refuse, the school code of discipline will be invoked and contact made with parents/Guardians. The Gardaí can be called to conduct the search. Two staff members must be present during any form of search. No other student should be present during a search.

The school has the right to search any part of school property if there is reasonable cause to believe a substance in breach of this policy may be contained therein. This includes school rooms, lockers and desks.

Health & Safety:

- A core group of staff have received Basic First Aid Certificates.
- In the event of an emergency during school hours a student will be sent to report to the nearest teacher with First Aid.
- Away from the school if no First Aider is available the teacher in charge of the group will seek medical assistance as soon as possible.
- Where First Aid training is requested the school will make every effort to accommodate.

- As per the school safety statement cleaning agents, solvents and dangerous substances will be used under staff supervision and stored securely when not in use.
- The Green Programme in operation in the school will be used to discourage the use of aerosols and promote a healthy school environment.

Staff Training & Support:

Staff will be encouraged to engage with relevant training. Wellbeing/SPHE teachers will be provided with relevant training.

Monitoring the Policy, Review and Evaluation

The Health/Substance Policy Co-Ordinator will monitor the policy annually to ensure that it is of practical benefit to the School. The result will be recorded and made available to the Principal.

The areas of:

- Substance Education Programmes
- Managing Substance Related Incidents
- Parent, Staff and Management Training will be reviewed.

Evaluation

Teachers, Parents/Guardians, Students and the Board of Management will be involved in the evaluation of this policy when it has been in place for one year. Again the three specified areas above will be evaluated.

Dissemination of Policy

The Policy will be posted on the school's website and will be brought to the attention of students, parents and staff. Parents of incoming students and the student will sign an agreement to adhere to the terms of its policy. This agreement is on the school's enrolment form.

Appendices

- A. Substance Facts:
- B. Signs & Symptoms:
- C. Legislation covering Substance:
- D. Educational Resources:
- E. List of External Agencies:

School Substance Policy

Appendices

USEFUL NAMES AND NUMBERS

- School substance policy co-ordinator Sean O'Brien 0657084311
- Designated first aider(s) Karen Healy, Lourdes Conway, Tracy Clancy, Kenneth O'Boyle
- Garda Station Miltown Malbay Contact 065 7084222
- Garda Juvenile Liaison Officer (system of cautioning young people under 18 years as a court diversionary measure):

Ennis Garda Station *0656848100*

➤ Hospitals

- Mid-West Regional Hospital Ennis (065) 682 4464
- University Hospital Limerick (061) 301 111

➤ G.P

- Dr Billy O'Connell (065) 7084494

SUPPORT, COUNSELLING, TREATMENT SERVICES

- Slainte Drug & Alcohol Counselling Services, Corporate House, Mungret Street Limerick. Tel: 061 469140
- Primary Care Substance Assessment Unit, 57 O'Connell St., Limerick. Tel. 061 318633
- Regional Drug Co_Ordination Unit (R.D.C.U.), Corporate House, Mungret Street, Limerick. Tel: 061 469140
- Limerick County Drug and Alcohol Services, Newcastlewest. Tel: 069 61430
- Clare Community Drug & Alcohol Service, Ennis Tel: 065 6865852
- HSE National Drug & Alcohol Helpline, Tel: 1800 459 459

Residential Treatment Centres

- Cuan Mhuire Addiction Treatment Centre, Bruree, Co. Limerick. Tel 063 90555. Ages 17+
- Aislinn Adolescent Treatment Centre, Ballyraggit, Co. Kilkenny. Tel. 056 8833777. Ages 15 - 21

- Bushypark Treatment Centre, Kilmaley, Ennis, Co. Clare.
Tel. 065 40944. Ages 18+
- Aiseiri Treatment Centre, Townpark, Cahir, Co. Tipperary.
Tel. 052 41166. Ages 17+

Other services

- Alcoholics Anonymous. Tel. 01 4538998 for details of local meetings.
- Al-Alateen (for teenage relatives of alcoholics). Tel. 01 8732699 for details of local meetings.
- Al-Anon (for families of alcoholics). Tel. 01 8732699.
- Narcotics Anonymous. Tel. 01 8300944 for details of local meetings.
- Nar-Anon (for families of users). Tel. 01 8748431.
- Samaritans, tel. 1850 609 090.
- Childline, tel. 1800 666 666.
- Sláinte Substance and Alcohol Helpline (Mid-Western region). 2 - 5 pm, weekdays.
Tel. 1850 700 850.
- Nenagh Substance Information Point, Loretta House, Kenyon St., Nenagh, Co. Tipperary. Tel. 067 31800.
- Garda Substance Squad, Henry St, Limerick. Tel: 061 414222

SUBSTANCE FACTS

There are four main types or categories of substance:

1 Depressants

Depress / slow down the central nervous system, slowing actions, affecting co-ordination, concentration, coherence. Small doses relieve anxiety, relax. May become depressed, irritable, and sleepy with larger amounts.

Examples: Alcohol, tranquillisers, sleeping tablets. Cannabis (also called hash, grass dope, marijuana) and solvents (glue, petrol, thinners, etc.) are depressant substance with hallucinogenic properties (i.e., produce some distortion of the senses. See ‘Hallucinogens’ below).

2 Stimulants

Stimulate / energise the central nervous system, speeding up thoughts and actions, making users alert, energetic, confident in small amounts. Also increased risk taking / accidents due to over-confidence.

Examples: Caffeine, nicotine, amphetamine (‘speed’), cocaine. Ecstasy is a stimulant substance with hallucinogenic properties.

3 Hallucinogens

Distort the senses – sight, sound, smell, touch, also time and space. Users see and hear things that are not really there. ‘Psychedelic’ effect. Can cause hallucinations, delusions, ‘flashbacks’ of previous trips.

Examples: L.S.D. (‘acid’), magic mushrooms.

4 Opiates

Derived from opium poppy, these relieve pain, anxiety, feelings of hunger and cold. Cause euphoria and drowsiness.

Examples: Heroin, opium, morphine. Methadone is a synthetic medical substitute substance for heroin.

Possible Warning Signs of Illicit Substance Use

N.B. These characteristics are not always indicative of illicit substance use, and are often part of general teenage behaviour.

- Unusual powders, capsules or tablets;
- Paper or plastic wraps, cigarette papers, torn cigarettes;
- Unusual outbreaks of temper, marked mood swings, irritability or restlessness;
- Memory loss, unusually poor concentration;
- Poor school/work performance; loss of job;
- Patterns of absenteeism;
- New and/or older friends, loss of interest in old friends, hobbies, sports, etc.;
- Staying out late/all night;
- Deteriorating physical appearance, loss of interest in appearance;
- Excessive tiredness and/or sudden unexplained bursts of energy;
- Loss of appetite;
- Using substance language;
- Secrecy, vagueness, telling lies to cover suspicious behaviour;
- Borrowing, stealing, excessive spending, selling valued possessions;
- Smells, stains, marks on body or clothing, e.g., sores or rashes on mouth or nose;
- Wearing sunglasses at inappropriate times to conceal dilated or constricted pupils.

ST JOSEPH'S POLICY STATEMENT SMOKE FREE



St Joseph's is a smoke-free zone. The exposure to Environmental Tobacco smoke can cause cancer and other serious and fatal illnesses, including heart disease and respiratory problems in adults and children. Consistent with this school's responsibility to promote the health of students, teachers, staff and all members of the school community, smoking is prohibited everywhere in school buildings, on school property and at school events.

Under the Public Health (Tobacco) Acts 2002 and 2004 the school is required to operate a smoke-free policy and to ensure a smoke-free environment for staff, pupils, parents and visitors to the school.

Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of the smoke-free policy is to prohibit the use of distribution of tobacco products in school buildings, on school grounds, in school leased or owned vehicles and at all school affiliated functions.

Scope of the Policy

- ❑ The smoke-free policy applies to all staff, whether employed on a permanent, locum or temporary contract, or from an agency or representatives of another organisation visiting the school.
- ❑ The smoke-free policy applies to all students whether enrolled with the school or visiting from another school.
- ❑ The smoke-free policy applies to all visitors, including parents or other persons accompanying students to the school.

Application of the Policy

- ❑ No person shall distribute or use any tobacco product in any areas of the school or the school grounds.
- ❑ Individual supervising students off school grounds are prohibited from distributing or using any tobacco product.
- ❑ No school property may be used for advertising of any tobacco product.
- ❑ Groups using the school or school grounds must agree to comply with the policy and inform all persons that the policy remains in force on evenings, weekends and other times the school is not in session.

Communication of the Smoke-Free Policy

- ❑ The Board of Management, Principal and Deputy Principal will ensure that the smoke-free policy is communicated to all staff, students and groups using the school through staff meetings, student assembly and general notification.
- ❑ Signs will be positioned at the entrances to the school and at other prominent locations stating that smoking is prohibited in all areas.
- ❑ Principal, teachers and non teaching staff will be responsible for ensuring that visitors to the premises are made aware of the smoke-free policy.

Enforcement of the Smoke-Free Policy

- ❑ Enforcement of the smoke-free policy is the responsibility of the Board of Management, Principal and each member of staff.
- ❑ Failure to comply with the smoke-free policy by members of staff or students is a disciplinary matter and will be dealt with through the established disciplinary procedures.
- ❑ In the case of staff, the Principal will meet with the offending party and remind him/her of the statutory legislation. Should there be a reoccurrence the matter will be referred to the appropriate authorities. Students will receive a very serious complaint as a warning.
- ❑ Visitors to the school in breach of the smoke free policy should be informed of the policy and requested to leave the premises.

Support for Smoking Cessation

Help and support on stopping smoking can be obtained by ringing the National Quit Line on 1850 201 203. This is available from 8am to 10pm.