St. Anne's National School

Chapel Road, Tangeragee,
Bailieborough,
Co. Cavan.
A82 DR53

School Roll Number: 18059J

Substance Use Policy

Version	Review	Consultation	Ratified by BoM	Next Review Date
1	New Policy Formulation	ISLT, Whole Staff, Board of Management	6th October 2026	October 2029

This policy was formulated by St. Anne's National School following a consultation process and in accordance with the relevant acts, policy and legislation as set out by the Department of Education and Youth. It was ratified by the Board of Management.

St. Anne's N.S.
Scoil Naomh Áine

Substance Abuse Policy

1. Introduction

This policy addresses the education of children in relation to alcohol, tobacco, solvents and drugs and the procedures for managing incidents relating to these substances.

This policy applies to all users of the school building, students, teachers, ancillary staff, users of the school and visitors. It is applicable during school time and all school activities.

It applies to the school building, the school grounds and any location where school related activity takes place.

In this policy, our understanding of 'drugs'

> "A drug is any substance which changes the way the body functions, mentally, physically or emotionally. This description includes many 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"
>
> (Corrigan, 2003)
>
> *Cited in Best Practice Guidelines in Substance Misuse Prevention Education, 2010.*

2. Goals & Objectives

Our goals and objectives in relation to substance use are:

- That the School Community will be better informed with regard to Substance Use in all its guises, by providing honest and age appropriate information on substances.
- To give children the confidence, skills and knowledge to make healthy choices.
- We seek to avert, or at least, delay the experimentation with substance and reduce the demand for legal and illegal drugs.
- We intend to highlight the clear procedures the staff of the school will follow in the event of a drug related incident.
- To minimise the harm caused by substances, by offering or facilitating supportive interventions.

3. Education Concerning Substance Use

Education concerning substance use in St. Anne's will be provided, within the broad context of the area of Wellbeing - Social Personal and Health Education (SPHE), which is developmental and delivered in the context of a supportive whole school environment. All classes will follow the Walk Tall SPHE Programme. This programme has tailored classroom materials to cater for a diverse pupil population and makes an explicit link between Walk Tall and the objectives of the SPHE curriculum. Formal SPHE lessons will take place as per allocation in Primary Curriculum Framework (2023).

Our work will be reinforced by project work and the possibility of talks from local Gardaí and Public Health Nurses as long as the content of their talk is in keeping with the school curriculum on the topic.

4. Management of Alcohol, Tobacco & Drug Related Incidents

In St. Anne's, we acknowledge that in all situations involving drugs, there needs to be a balance between the needs of the young person and the needs of the school community. Due care is important when deciding on a pastoral and or disciplinary response. Disciplinary procedures will be followed if school rules are broken and expulsion will only be an option when all else is failed.

Where a member of staff requires support, they will be referred to Employee Assistance Service provided by Spectrum.Life namely,

Wellbeing Together: Folláine le Chéile
1800 411 057

The school's shared understanding of a 'drug related incident' is:

- Any unusual or unbecoming behaviour resulting from intake or use of alcohol, tobacco or illegal drugs.
- Disclosures about drug abuse
- The sale or passing on of any illegal substance.
- The possession of alcohol, tobacco or illegal drugs on school grounds or at school related activities.
- Finding alcohol, tobacco, other drugs or related items (e.g. syringes) found on school property or during a school related activity.

5. Procedure

Where there is no immediate danger to the pupil, it is important to take time to assess the situation before responding.

The reporting procedure for a "drug related incident" is:

- Any Staff member who encounters a drug incident must inform the Designated Liaison Person (DLP).
- Where a pupil confides in a member of Staff regarding drug use with a view to seeking help, the Staff member will report the case to the DLP and Child Safeguarding statement will be followed.
- It is important that, in all suspected or confirmed drug incidents, a limited number of people are involved in managing the incident. Staff will be informed on a 'need to know' basis.
- Parents will be informed and the "Code of Behaviour" invoked. Parents will be involved by accepting the school's Code of Behaviour and Enrolment Policies. They will be informed of an incident involving their own child and will be asked to accept responsibility, co-operate with the school authorities and with the Gardaí if necessary.
- Parents will be involved in incidents involving another child only if deemed necessary by the school authorities; if parents are aware that another child is involved in drug-related incidents under the scope of this policy they should inform the teacher, Principal
- In response to all incidents, parents will be advised to seek support from the relevant Community Care Agency.
- If a pupil has a drug problem, parents will be advised to make a referral to a G.P. and /or Drug Treatment Centre.
- The Principal will liaise with the Garda Juvenile Liaison Officer (JLO) in the event of any drugs found on the premises. Gardaí will be informed regarding all incidences involving illegal drugs.
- In situations of confirmed use/possession or supply, then all the details will be recorded. The record will be retained by the School.

6. Management of Substance Related Incidents

6.1. Smoking & Vaping - School Policy

- The school is a restricted smoking and vaping area. Smoking and vaping is forbidden within the school boundaries.
- Pupils found smoking, vaping or in possession of cigarettes or e-cigarettes on school premises or during school activities will be reported to the Principal and his / her parents/ guardians will be informed.
- Visitors will comply with the restricted smoking and vaping policy.
- Tobacco will not be permitted as a prize for school raffles.
- 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.
- This document will be read with the Child Protection Policy and the Code of Behaviour Policy of the school.

6.2. Alcohol - School Policy

- The school is an alcohol free area.
- Pupils will not be allowed to bring alcohol into the school or to consume alcohol in school or during any school activities.
- If a teacher is of the opinion that a student is under the influence of alcohol, s/he will immediately inform the Principal and consult on what action should be taken. Parents will be notified.
- Where a student comes to school under the influence of alcohol, their parents will be contacted and requested to remove them from the school until they are deemed fit to return.
- Students breaking these rules will be dealt with according to the school's Code of Behaviour.
- If alcohol is required for an adult-only, school function, permission shall be sought from the BoM.
- Alcohol will not be used as prizes in school raffles.
- If a parent who is under the influence of alcohol arrives to transport a child home, it must be reported to the Principal immediately. The child's safety is paramount.
- 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 the Health and Safety Policy.
- A record should be kept of any incident which occurs.
- This document will be read with the Child Protection Policy and the Code of Behaviour Policy of the school.

6.3. Drugs & Solvents - School Policy

- Students are forbidden from being in possession of or using illicit drugs or solvents on the school premises.
- Illicit drugs found on school premises should be locked away and the Gardaí contacted to dispose of them.
- If a teacher is of the opinion that a student is under the influence of illicit drugs or solvents, s/he will immediately inform the Principal and consult on what action should be taken. Parents / guardians will be contacted and requested to remove them from the school until they are deemed fit to return.
- Where the school suspects trafficking of illicit drugs, an investigation will be carried out by the principal with the assistance of the Garda Juvenile Liaison Officer. Parents of any student involved will be informed.
- The school BoM. will expect parents to inform the Principal or teacher if they suspect their child of drug taking.
- All solvents used in the school are securely stored under lock and key.

- 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 the Health and Safety Policy.
- 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. The child's safety is paramount.
- A record should be kept of any incident which occurs.
- This document will be read with the Child Protection Policy and the Code of Behaviour Policy of the school.

6.4. Administration of Medicine and First Aid

Storage and administration of medicines in school is dealt with in the Administration of Medicines and First Aid Policy

6.5. Management of Persons in the Workplace Under the Influence of Drugs and/or Alcohol

6.5.1. The Board of Management shall ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that pupils and other persons in the workplace are not exposed to risks to their safety, health or welfare from persons under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol. The term "in the workplace", in the preceding sentences includes all school related activities taking place under the supervision of a teacher, with the Board's approval, and both within and away from the school premises.

6.5.2. Every school employee shall ensure, while at work, that he or she is not under the influence of an intoxicant as required by Section 13 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005.

6.5.3. Should the Principal and/or Deputy Principal* have reasonable grounds to believe that a staff member is unfit for work, due to being under the influence of an intoxicant, the Principal and/or Deputy Principal* shall ask that person to remove him/herself from the \ workplace, in the interests of the safety, health and welfare of the employee and others. In the case of employees who are at work under the influence of an intoxicant, disciplinary procedures may be implemented.

6.5.4. Should the Principal and/or Deputy Principal* have reasonable grounds to believe that an employee of any contractor is unfit for work, due to being under the influence of an intoxicant, the Principal and/or Deputy Principal* shall ask the contractor to remove his/her employee from the workplace.

6.5.6. If a member of staff has reasonable grounds to believe any person, other than a staff member or employee of a contractor, is unfit to be on the premises, due to being under the influence of an intoxicant, the staff member shall report his/her belief promptly to the Principal and/or Deputy Principal, who shall ask that person to remove him/herself from the workplace.

6.5.7. If a member of staff has reasonable grounds to believe that a parent or adult collecting a pupil from school or presenting themselves on the premises for another reason is unfit to be on the premises or to take care of the said pupil, the Principal and/or Deputy Principal will be informed and the duty of care will apply to the pupil. All necessary steps will be taken to protect the pupil and safeguard their best interests.

6.5.8. In the event that a staff member or any other person, referred to above, refuses a reasonable request to remove him/herself from the premises, the Principal and/or Deputy Principal may call the Gardaí to forcibly remove the person in question.

6.5.9. The BoM acknowledges its responsibility in promoting the welfare at work of teachers. An Employee Assistance Service (telephone: 1800 411 057 or e-mail: eas@vhics.ie) is available to teaching staff. In the event that substance abuse appears to be adversely affecting the performance and/or attendance pattern of any member of the teaching staff,

the BoM may request such staff member to contact the Employee Assistance Service.

6.5.10. The BoM also acknowledges its responsibility in promoting the welfare at work of all other staff members. In the event that substance abuse appears to be adversely affecting the performance and/or attendance pattern of any member of the non teaching staff, the BoM may request such staff member to seek counseling or other professional intervention.

6.5.11. All incidents, relating to the presence of persons at school, under the influence of an intoxicant, shall be recorded and reported as soon as possible to the BoM.

6.5.12. The BoM shall consider all such reports and decide on the appropriate action to be taken in the circumstances of each particular case.

**In the case that the Principal / Deputy Principal is/are absent or is/are the offending person(s) the Acting Principal/ Acting Deputy / Most Senior Post Holder shall carry out the duties and responsibilities of the Principal / Deputy Principal.*

7. Provision For Teacher Professional Learning (TPL)

The SPHE programme is delivered throughout the school and all staff are aware of the contribution that this makes to substance use education. Staff members are also aware of the contribution they can make to the prevention of substance misuse within their own class by developing a supportive class environment and informing the pupils while taking the age of the pupils into consideration and local circumstances.

All Staff members will have access to a copy of this policy.

8. Confidentiality

It is important that the limits of confidentiality be discussed with students before any disclosure is made. The wellbeing of the child and teacher must be a primary focus. It is important that in all suspected or confirmed drug and/or alcohol related incidents that a limited number of people are involved in managing the incident. People will be informed only on a 'need to know' basis as determined by the Principal and/or Deputy Principal.

9. Roles & Responsibilities

All members of the school community have a role in the development, implementation and evaluation of the policy to ensure that the safety and welfare of all pupils is maintained and that we have a safe and secure environment for learning.

10. Success Criteria

Feedback from the relevant parties on the effectiveness of the policy in dealing with an incident should it occur.

11. Review

This policy will be reviewed and evaluated regularly in line with new legislation and revised when necessary.

12. Ratification & Communication

This policy was adopted and ratified by the BoM on the 6th October 2026.
A copy of the amended Substance Use Policy will be given to all Staff Members and it will be available to the school community on the Website.

Debbie Clarke
Chairperson of BoM

George McAdam
Principal

Appendix A
Substance Use Report Form

Name of Student: _____ Date of Incident _____

Reporting Teacher: _____

Factual Account of Events

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Who has been informed?

_____

_____

_____

_____

What action(s) has been taken?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Signed Date

_____ _____