

Bunscoil an Iúir

Ní neart go cur le chéile.



Polasaí Úsáid Dhrugaí agus Oideachais

Drug Abuse and Education Policy

Reviewed: November/December 2016

Ratified: 22/02/17

Rationale

For the purpose of this document the term 'drugs' includes tobacco, alcohol, over-the-counter and prescribed medication, volatile substances and controlled drugs. Bunscoil an Iúir does not condone the misuse of drugs but recognises that there has been a considerable increase in the abuse of drugs in recent years in Northern Ireland. Drug misuse appears to be affecting an ever-younger population and the so-called "recreational" use of drugs can lead to a dangerous acceptance of illegal and harmful drug misuse as part of everyday life.

We believe that Bunscoil an Iúir has a vital preventative role to play in combating the misuse of drugs by young people and we therefore include a Drug Education programme in our Health Education programme.

Bunscoil an Iúir sees its role as that of a caring community committed to the physical, mental, social, emotional, moral and spiritual health, safety and well being of our pupils and staff.

We want our pupils to make informed and responsible decisions about drugs by increasing their knowledge and by developing in them appropriate values, attitudes and skills. However, we recognise that drug misuse is a whole-community issue and that schools alone cannot solve the drugs problem; the school is only one of a number of groups and agencies which must play a part in the education of young people and we make use of their expertise where possible in the delivery of the programme.

"There is a public perception that drug misuse is mainly an issue in disadvantaged inner city areas Drug misuse is just as much an issue in rural areas and affluent communities: it extends across socioeconomic, geographical and cultural boundaries. Educationally successful young people are just as likely to put themselves at risk as low attainers." (DENI 1996/16)

All staff (teaching and non-teaching), should familiarise themselves with the information included in this policy and further copies may be obtained from the **Designated Teacher for Drugs** Siobhán Mhic Shiacaís

Copies of the guidance on which this policy is based **Drugs: Guidance for Schools in Northern Ireland** are available from the Department of Education website www.deni.gov.uk

Definitions

For the purpose of this document and in line with the guidance issued to all schools by the Department of Education **Drugs: Guidance for Schools in Northern Ireland (2004/9) drugs will include any substance which, when taken, has the effect of altering the way the body works or the way a person behaves, feels, sees or thinks.**

Aims and Objectives

- To have a clear and agreed understanding among everyone in the school community about the implications and possible consequences of drug use/misuse.
- To provide all staff (teaching and non-teaching) with adequate training and support to enable them to deal effectively and confidently with incidents of suspected drug misuse, and to ensure that the procedures are sensitively and consistently applied in all situations.
- To empower teaching staff through appropriate training and support to develop and deliver an effective drug education programme.
- To provide a drug education programme which
 - develops pupils' self esteem and promotes positive attitudes in their relationships with others
 - gives pupils' opportunities to develop the values, skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to make informed and responsible decisions about the use/misuse of drugs including tobacco, alcohol and volatile substances, within the context of a healthy lifestyle; and
 - helps pupils' develop the skills necessary to assert themselves confidently and resist negative pressures and influences.
- To provide appropriate support and assistance for those pupils affected by drug-related issues.
- To inform parents of the content of this policy and the procedures to be implemented in the management of incidents of suspected drug misuse.
- To establish an environment in which the school is free from the misuse of all drugs.

Roles and Responsibilities

Pupils

- Be aware of and adhere to school rules in relation to drug use/misuse, including tobacco, alcohol, over-the-counter and prescribed medication, volatile substances and controlled drugs.

All staff (teaching and non-teaching)

- Be alert to the possibility of drug use/misuse.
- Be familiar with the school's procedures in the handling of suspected drug-related incidents.
- It is not the responsibility of the individual staff member to investigate the circumstances surrounding an incident, however he/she should deal with any emergency procedures if necessary.
- Any information, substance or paraphernalia received should be forwarded to the designated teacher for drugs who may have to take immediate action.

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The Designated Teacher for Drugs (*Siobhán Mhic Shiacaís*)

- Ensure that all staff and parents are aware of and have access to a copy of the policy.
- Have oversight and co-ordination of the planning of curricular provision in compliance with the statutory requirements including periodic update and review of the policy.
- Liaise with other staff responsible for pastoral care in co-ordinating the delivery of the drug education programme.
- Co-ordinate training and induction of all staff in the procedures for dealing with incidents of suspected drug misuse.
- Be responsible for co-ordinating the school's procedures for dealing with incidents of suspected drug misuse.
- Determine the circumstances surrounding the incident
- Complete a suspected incident report form and forward to principal.
- Ensuring the engagement and active participation of parents in all aspects of drug education.
- Act as the point of contact for outside agencies working with the school.

The Principal

- Ensure that members of the Board of Governors have been consulted on and ratified the policy.

In the case of incidents of suspected drug misuse:

- Ensure the welfare and well being of the pupil(s) involved in the incident and the rest of the school community.

- Ensure that the following people are informed (**where relevant**):
 - * Parents/Guardians
 - * PSNI - preferably the Community and Schools Involvement Officer (CSIO)
 - * Board of Governors
 - * Designated Officer in ELB
 - * Members of staff
 - * Other pupils and parents informed within the confines of confidentiality
- Agree, in consultation with the Board of Governors, appropriate pastoral and disciplinary responses in relation to the incident, including counselling services/support.
- Retain written records of the incident and ensuring a copy of the reports are submitted to Board of Governors, ELB/CCMS as appropriate.
- Review procedures and amend.

The Board of Governors

- Examine and approve the completed policy and education programme, prior to their implementation in the school.
- Ensure the policy is published in the school prospectus and that it is reviewed at regular intervals.
- Be fully aware of and adequately trained to deal with suspected incidents of drug misuse, including tobacco and alcohol, and their appropriate disciplinary response.
- Agree in consultation with the principal appropriate pastoral and disciplinary responses in relation to suspected drug related incidents.

It is recommended that there should be a designated Governor to work with the principal and designated teacher for drugs in relation to drug related issues.

Parents/Guardians

- Support your son/daughter if they have become involved with drugs.
- Support the school in the development and implementation of this policy, including the school's procedures for handling incidents of suspected drug misuse and the drug education programme.

The Caretaker

- Be vigilant around and conduct regular checks of school grounds for drug-related paraphernalia. Inform the designated teacher for drugs should any be found.
- Ensure the safe storage, handling and disposal of potentially harmful substances such as solvents and cleaning fluids.

Procedures for dealing with suspected drug related incidents

Bunscoil an Iúir will always take the steps that would reasonably be expected of any parent to safeguard the well being and safety of all the pupils in their charge.

Bunscoil an Iúir believes that every child has the right to a positive, healthy education. It therefore takes a very serious view with regards to any form of drugs use/ misuse. This refers to all drugs – tobacco, alcohol, over the counter and prescribed medication, volatile substances and controlled drugs. They shall not be tolerated in any way on the premises – with the exception of medication required for a child which shall be kept locked in the office at all times. A breach in these rules will result in action being taken in accordance with the school's Discipline Policy. All staff has a legal responsibility and must follow procedures set down, for the safety of all.

A suspected drugs-related incident includes-

Inappropriate behaviour

An allegation

Possession, possession with intent to supply and/or supply of controlled drugs; and

Finding drugs- related paraphernalia

Dealing with suspected drugs- related incidents require extreme sensitivity on the part of all those involved and can be traumatic.

Role of all staff (teaching and non-teaching/ancillary)

- **All staff (teaching and non-teaching/ancillary)** must be aware of procedures to be followed in the case of a suspected drugs- related incident;
- It is not their role to investigate but they should deal with any emergency procedures necessary-Assess situation and decide action;
- Secure First Aid – place child in recovery position if unconscious and send for additional staff support if necessary;
- Make situation safe for all pupils and other members of staff;
- Carefully gather up any drugs and/or associated paraphernalia/evidence. Pass all information/evidence on to the designated teacher-Siobhán Mhic Shiacaís;
- Write a brief factual report of the incident and forward it to designated teacher for drugs.

Role of Designated Teacher For Drugs

- Respond to first aiders advice/recommendations regarding incident;
- In the case of emergency inform parents/guardians immediately;
- Take possession of any substance and associated paraphernalia found;

- Inform principal;
- Take initial responsibility for pupils involved in incident; and
- Complete an incident report form and forward it to principal.

Role of Principal

- Determine the circumstances surrounding the incident;
- Ensure that the following people are informed where relevant;
 - Parents/guardians;
 - all incidents involving controlled drugs reported to PSNI-Community and Schools Involvement Officer (CSIO)
 - Board of Governors;
 An initial phone call followed by a full written factual account of incident to Designated Officer in ELB/CCMS.
- Agree pastoral and disciplinary responses including services/support;
- Forward a copy of the incident report form to the chairperson of the Board of Governors and the designated officer within the ELB and CCMS; and
- Review procedures and amend if necessary.

RECORDING AN INCIDENT

- An initial phone call followed by a full written factual account of incident to Designated Officer in ELB/CCMS. Re APPENDIX.
- Any sensitive information about pupils will be treated in a confidential and secure manner. Care shall be taken to carefully record any statements provided by those pupils suspected of being involved in or witness to an incident.
- Records of all statements provided by pupil(s) and staff involved in / or witness to the suspected drugs-related incident will be carefully stored as they may be required by the police if the incident becomes a criminal investigation.

Pastoral response:

It is imperative that the individual needs of any pupil(s) involved are addressed.

This shall involve pupil(s), principal, parents/guardians, designated teacher for drugs and if required the CSIO and Education Welfare Officer.

Communication and early involvement of parents will hopefully set the scene for early supportive pastoral intervention.

This may involve counselling either on the school premises or elsewhere.

The school may wish to call in an outside agency for support and counselling services.

The school will at all times give careful consideration as to how any information relating to an incident of suspected/confirmed drug use/misuse is communicated to staff, pupils and parents/guardians.

The parents/guardians of the pupil(s) directly involved in an incident of suspected drug use/misuse will be informed of the incident recognising that the future of a child or adult can be adversely affected. Confidentiality is of paramount importance in drug related incidents and subsequent outcomes.

Monitoring and evaluation

Bunscoil an Iúir will ensure that procedures are put in place to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of all aspects of this policy. Information will be regularly collected from pupils and staff as part of the monitoring process, and this will then be evaluated against the aims and objectives of the policy at appropriate intervals.

Communication and Dissemination of Policy

(It is a statutory requirement for schools to include a description of their drug policy in their prospectus)

CHECKLIST FOR HANDLING SUSPECTED DRUG RELATED INCIDENTS IN SCHOOLS

This is a guide on the key procedures to undertake when a drug incident occurs in schools.

1. Ensure the safety of the individual pupil involved, of other pupils, yourself and other staff. On finding a situation with a suspected substance:-

- Get help immediately from another adult.
- Assess situation, to see if this is a life-threatening situation or not.

If an emergency:-

- If necessary contact an ambulance.
- Put person under the influence of the drugs in the recovery position.
- Ensure airways are cleared.
- Remove any other bystanders from the immediate vicinity.

Then in all cases:-

- Carefully gather up any drugs / paraphernalia / evidence lying around and keep safely.
- Ascertain which substances / drugs have been taken and how much.
- Secure all drugs and paraphernalia and give to the Principal / Designated teacher immediately, and lock them away.
- Contact the parents as soon as possible.

2. Ensure all incidents are properly investigated and recorded:-

- Never accuse pupils of drug dealing/possession, these are alleged illicit substances until substantiated by the PSNI.
- Conduct search procedures according to school policy. (Never search personal belongings without permission. It is okay to search school property such as lockers, cupboards or desks)
- Ensure all drugs are safely and securely stored or destroyed, making sure that this is witnessed by another adult and recorded.
- Gather details and data from all the eye-witnesses at the scene.
- All statements and phone calls should be recorded, signed and dated.
- Record all information on official incident form and sign and date, or ensure accurate details are given to whoever is writing the form and co-sign.
- Ensure the ELB incident form is filled in and returned to the Advisor for Pastoral Care (and CCMS documentation if appropriate).
- Ensure that you follow all the procedures in your Schools Drugs Policy.

3. Ensure appropriate individuals and agencies are informed and contacted as needed:-

- Principal and Designated drug teacher.
- Parents / Guardians
- PSNI (CSIO or Uniform Branch)
- ELB Pastoral Care Advisor (and CCMS if appropriate).

- Chairperson initially and subsequently the Board of Governors.
- The Education Welfare Officer.
- No media statements, only the Principal should do this.
- Other pupils, parents and staff are only told on a need-to-know basis.

A pastoral / disciplinary response needs to be made by the school, balancing the need for compassion and the pupil's welfare with the need to send a clear message about illegal actions and behaviour and the impact on the school community.