

Belgrove School

Senior Boys

Clontarf

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Principal

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SCHOOL SUBSTANCE USE POLICY

INTRODUCTION:

Belgrove Senior Boys' School is committed to addressing the needs of the whole school community in relation to drugs. This policy applies to teachers and all other school staff, to parents, pupils, the Board of Management and all users of the school premises. The policy applies at all times on the school premises and also on school related tours or outings.

This document should be read in conjunction with the school's Code of Behaviour/Discipline policy. It will be available from the Principal to the B.O.M., teachers and other staff members.

Parents and guardians will be given a copy of the policy on the enrolment of their child in the school. Enrolment to the school will be conditional on acceptance of this and other school policy documents by the child's parents.

- The school wishes to make clear that the primary role of substance misuse prevention rests with the parents/guardians.

DEFINITION OF DRUGS:

For the purpose of this policy, a drug is defined as any substance legal or illegal which changes the way the body functions mentally, physically or emotionally.

RATIONALE:

- The world in which we live presents young people with many challenges, which affect their health and well-being. Exposure to alcohol, tobacco and drugs is part of this reality. Schools need to reflect upon how they might provide for the needs of their student cohort and respond appropriately to what are sometimes sensitive and emotive issues. The Education Act 1998 provides that schools should promote the social and personal development of students and provide health education for them.
- The National Drugs Strategy, 'Building on Experience' is now Government policy and it requires schools to have a substance use policy in place. (Guidelines October 2002).

- The recent report from the National Advisory Committee on Drugs entitled 'Drug use prevention' (November 2001) underlines the importance of schools developing substance use policies.
- The 1999 European School Survey Project on Alcohol and other Drugs (ESPAD) Report highlighted the seriousness of the problem among sixteen years olds in Ireland, as compared to the other 29 ESPAD countries surveyed. Alcohol was identified as being the dominant drug of misuse in Ireland whilst the use of tobacco and other drugs was above the ESPAD average.
- The policy will enable the school to provide suitable age-appropriate education for our pupils on the subject of drugs.
- The policy will enable the school to respond appropriately to an issue involving alcohol, tobacco and other legal and illegal drugs.

RELATIONSHIP TO SCHOOL ETHOS:

This policy is informed by and in harmony with the school's ethos of developing each child personally, academically, socially and spiritually. The building of each child's self-esteem is of prime importance. We aim to provide a safe and secure environment for our pupils and also for all in the school community.

AIMS:

The aims of our Substance Use Policy are as follows:

- The development of a framework for education concerning substance use.
- The development of a framework for the management of alcohol, tobacco and drugs related incidents.
- The provision for training and staff development.

OBJECTIVES:

The objectives of this policy are as follows:

- To develop positive self-esteem in our pupils and to give them the confidence, skills and knowledge necessary to make healthy life choices.
- To help the children to appreciate their worth and the worth of others.
- To inculcate in the children a sense of responsibility for themselves and others.
- To help the children to develop strategies to assist in the prevention of substance misuse.
- To ensure teacher training in the various education programmes which relate to substance use.

- To provide guidelines and information for teachers to give their children in relation to substance use.
- To ensure that the school has correct procedures in place for dealing with any substance misuse incident which may arise in the school.

POLICY CONTENT

This policy focuses on four areas

- Education regarding Substance Use
- Management of substance-related issues in the school
- Training and Staff development
- Review and Evaluation

EDUCATION REGARDING SUBSTANCE USE

We believe that education in school about alcohol, tobacco and drugs is most effective if provided in the broader context of Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE). A substance misuse prevention programme will be implemented at all class levels in accordance with our Social Personal and Health Education Primary Curriculum Statement. Through SPHE, which is spiral in nature, our pupils will practise and develop specific skills and experience a value system, which supports primary prevention in a holistic, caring, nurturing environment.

The content objectives relating to substance use will be addressed in an age appropriate manner using discrete SPHE time.

Our programmes will draw on a wide range of resources – Walk Tall Programme, Bí Folláin Programme, Stay Safe Programme, RSE Programme, Alive O Programme – to teach the content. In addition, the school will draw on the expertise available within the community, parents, gardaí, Juvenile Liaison Officers, Health Board, the Education Staff of the Dublin North East Drugs Task Force and the Support Staff of the Walk Tall Programme.

When inviting speakers to talk to the pupils, the school will take care to ensure that all speakers are suitable qualified, have experience working with primary school children and work within the parameters of the school's SPHE programme and the school's ethos.

(See guidelines on using outside sources for Drug Education: Walk Tall Handbook P.79,80).

The Class Teacher is always present during visits of outside speakers.

MANAGEMENT OF SUBSTANCE-RELATED ISSUES IN THE SCHOOL

- **Smoking**

- The school building is a non-smoking area.
- Students are not permitted to smoke or be in possession of cigarettes on the school premises or on any other school related activity.
- Visitors to the school will comply with the non-smoking policy.
- Pupils found smoking or in the possession of cigarettes, will be reported to the Principal and parents/guardians will be informed.
- Tobacco will not be permitted as a prize for a school raffle.

- **Alcohol**

- The school premises is an alcohol free area.
- Nobody will 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.
- Where a student comes to school under the influence of alcohol, their parents will be called in to take them home.
- Students breaking these rules will be dealt with according to the school's disciplinary procedure.
- If alcohol is required for an adult only school function, permission shall be sought from the B.O.M.
- Alcohol will not be used as prizes in school raffles.
- Were a teacher or other adult to come to the school under the influence of alcohol, the Principal will take appropriate action.

- **Illicit Drugs and Solvents**

- Students, staff and all visitors are forbidden to be 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. Teachers are advised not to transport illicit substances at any time.
- If a member of staff is of the opinion that a student or adult is under the influence of illicit drugs or solvents, s/he will immediately inform the Principal and consult on what action should be taken.

- Where the school suspects trafficking of illicit drugs, an investigation will be carried out where warranted. Parents of any students involved will be informed. The advice and assistance of the Garda Juvenile Liaison Officer will be sought.
- The school B.O.M. will expect parents to inform the Principal or teacher if they suspect their child of drug taking.
- It is felt that in this school, the response to incidents involving substance misuse would be largely of a pastoral, rather than a disciplinary nature.
- It may be considered necessary in certain circumstances to seek legal advice.
- A written account of all incidents will be kept by the school

TRAINING AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT

The Board of Management has an ongoing commitment to training and staff development. At present the school is assisted in this by the Primary Curriculum Support Programme and the Walk Tall Support Office. The Health Board also provides a wide range of supports for schools including Health Education and Health Promotion, Smoking Cessation Support and Adolescent Counselling Services. The school is also able to draw on the expertise of INTO Life Skills courses and contributions from local Gardaí and J.L.O's.

At all times teachers are encouraged to:

- Appreciate the contribution that the SPHE programme can make to the prevention of substance abuse
- Develop a supportive classroom environment
- Be aware of and sensitive to the signs and symptoms of substance misuse
- Become aware of the laws relating to alcohol, tobacco and drug use and how they relate to themselves and their students

If parents require further information, advice, or training, the school can be the conduit between the Parents' Association (or individual parent) and an appropriate agency who will provide the service.

REVIEW AND EVALUATION

- This Policy was ratified on September 2010 and will be reviewed on a regular basis.
- Policy review will be co-ordinated by the policy's core committee in consultation with the school's wider community, the local community, Gardaí and the Education Officer at Dublin North-East Drugs Task Force.
- Review and evaluation will take cognisance of changing information, legislation, development in the school based programme and feedback from parents/guardians, teachers and students.

APPENDIX

Support Agencies:

Health Board Services in the Eastern Region

Freephone Drugs/HIV Helpline **1800 459 459**

Walk Tall Support Office **01 452 8001**

Community Services

Dublin North Central **01 857 5400**

193 Richmond Road, Dublin 3

Dublin North **01 847 6122 01 847 6033**

Cromcastle Road, Coolock, Dublin 5

Drug Treatment Service

Drug Advisory and Treatment Centre **01 677 1122**

Trinity Court, 30-31, Pearse Street, Dublin 2

Drugs/AIDS Services **01 882 0300**

North Area Health Board

Phibsboro Tower, Dublin 7.

Alcohol Services **01 660 7838**

Baggot Street Community Alcohol Treatment Unit

Medical Support Information

Beaumont Hospital

01 809 2714

Mater Misericordiae Hospital

01 803 2200

Garda Siochána

01 666 4800

Clontarf Garda Station

Local Drug Task Forces

Dublin North East (Coolock,

Darndale, Donnycarney, Kilbarrack).

01 847 9788

(Contact: Davina Greene 087 9086561/8465070)