

# **Substance Use Policy of St. Michael's N.S., Cloonacool**

## **Mission Statement:**

This policy is in keeping with our school vision, which states that St. Michael's National School aspires to provide a safe, caring environment which enables and encourages children to develop educationally and grow emotionally. As individuals they should experience and learn tolerance, respect, appreciation and awareness of other human beings and the world around them.

## **Policy Committee:**

**Teachers:** Sarah Reeve, Anne McIntyre  
**Parents:** Brian Ambrey, John Brennan  
**B.O.M. Reps:** Martin McIntyre, Raymond Wims

## **Definition of a drug:**

' A drug is any chemical which alters how the body works, or how the person behaves or feels'

For the purpose of this policy these substances are included:

- Medication
- Solvents (Correction fluid, thinners, nail varnish and remover, solvent-based markers, aerosol deodorants)
- Alcohol
- Nicotine
- Illegal drugs

## **Rationale:**

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.

**Scope:**

The policy applies to:

- The school premises at all times
- Students: During school hours and school related activities.
- Staff: During school hours and school related activities.
- Parents: Visiting school premises on any occasion and when asked to help out at school related activities.
- Visiting personnel

**Aims/Objectives:**

- To raise awareness among the school community re dangers involved in substance misuse.
- To promote a healthy, safe environment for all users of the school premises.
- To provide strategies/procedures for incidences related to substance abuse
- To help children develop positive self-esteem and healthy values, attitudes and skills re substances.

**Content:**

**Education:**

**S.P.H.E.**

Strand Units:        Safety and Protection  
                              Taking care of my body

**Junior/Senior Infants**

Safe use of medicine  
Dangerous substances in the home and school

**First/Second Class**

Safe use of medicine  
Dangerous substances in the home and school

**Third/Fourth Class**

Safe use of medicine  
Dangerous substances in the home and school

## Substance Use Policy

Use of nicotine

Use of alcohol

### **Fifth/Sixth Class**

Safe use of medicine

Dangerous substances in the home and school

Use of nicotine

Use of alcohol

Use of illegal drugs

### **Resources:**

- Primary School Curriculum Handbooks (S.P.H.E.)
- North Western Health Board Programme (Junior infants to sixth class)
- Walk Tall Programme (Junior infants to sixth class)
- Joe Griffen HYLO

It will be left to the discretion of the class teacher to modify content to meet the needs of children in multi-class situations, children with special educational requirements and non-nationals. The school may invite an outside speaker to enhance the work already done in class.

### **Rules relating to substance use:**

#### **Medicine:**

#### **Administration of medicine**

#### **Pupils**

No medicine will be administered to a pupil by a teacher

- Without the consent of the teacher
- Without a written request from the parents that the medication should be administered to the pupil.
- Without the approval of the B.O.M.
- Without a letter of indemnity from the parents and Board, in respect of any liability that may arise regarding the administration of medication.

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Children do not have or use any medication that a teacher is not made aware of in writing.

Any medication on school premises will be stored safely to ensure the well being of the children.

### **Staff:**

Staff are asked to avoid taking medicine during school hours if possible. If a staff member must take medicine on the school premises, he/she is asked to do so out of view of the children and to keep such medication locked away and out of reach of children.

### **Solvents:**

Pupils are prohibited from having or using solvent-based products ( correction fluid, thinner, markers, aerosol deodorants ) during school hours or school related activities.

Parents are asked to ensure that any markers used by pupils in school or for school related activities are water-based.

Staff using solvent-based products will take precautions to ensure the well being of the children.

Solvent-based products will be stored safely.

### **Smoking:**

The school premises is a no-smoking environment.

Pupils are prohibited from having or using nicotine products or cigarette lighters on the school premises and during school related activities.

Staff members and parents are prohibited from having or using nicotine products on the school premises and during school related activities involving children.

Visiting personnel are prohibited from having or using nicotine products on the school premises.

### **Alcohol:**

The school premises is an alcohol free environment.

Use of alcohol based products on the school premises is prohibited at all times.

Pupils are prohibited from having or using alcohol on the school premises and during school related activities.

## Substance Use Policy

Staff and parents are prohibited from having or using alcohol on the school premises and during school related activities involving children.

Visiting personnel are prohibited from having or using alcohol on the school premises.

### **Illegal Drugs:**

Use of illegal drugs on the school premises is prohibited at all times.

Pupils, staff and parents are prohibited from having or using illegal drugs on the school premises and during school related activities.

Visiting personnel are prohibited from having or using illegal drugs on the school premises.

### **Management of alcohol, tobacco and drug related incidents:**

#### **Pupils:**

If a pupil is found using or suspected of using nicotine, alcohol, solvents or illegal drugs on the school premises then

The substance is confiscated

The principal is informed

A verbal warning is given

Parents are informed

If the offence is repeated without regard for the school rules, any further disciplinary action required will be taken. ( School code of behaviour).

If a pupil displays unusual behaviour, which may be the result of substance use, eg. Cannot focus properly, incoherent, falling asleep etc. then

Parents are contacted

Medical advice may be sought

Any further disciplinary action required may be taken.

#### **Disclosure about a pupil and substance use:**

If the incident took place within school hours or during a school related incident, then the principal, B.O.M., and teaching staff of the school will be responsible for imposing disciplinary action on the pupil involved.

Any disclosure of illegal activity will be reported to the Gardai immediately

Any disclosure of illegal activity may also be a cause of concern for the Health Board, under the “Children First” Protection Guidelines.

**Staff:**

Any staff found to be in breach of the policy will be reminded of the policy and any further disciplinary action may be taken as required.

**Parents/Visiting Personnel:**

Any parent found to be in breach of the policy will be reminded of the policy. If any staff member becomes aware of a parent or guardian coming to collect a child who, under the influence of a substance, has been rendered incapable of caring for the child, then all reasonable steps will be taken to ensure the safety of the child.

If necessary, Gardai will be contacted. If it is a repeated occurrence, then it may also be a cause of concern for the Health board under the “Children First” Protection Guidelines.

Any person appearing on the school premises under the influence of a substance will be asked to leave the premises immediately, to ensure the safety of the children.

**Substance use on the school premises:**

Any bottles, beer cans etc. will be disposed of safely.

Gardai will be informed that substance use took place on the school grounds. If suspicious substances found, Gardai are informed immediately and asked to remove them.

**Provision for training and staff development:**

Staff will be given any training or resources required for the implementation of the substance use policy in the school. Niamh Murtagh attended a refresher course in Walk Tall on April 25<sup>th</sup> 2008 and reviewed it with teachers at a staff meeting.

**Roles and Responsibilities:**

- Teachers: Will implement the policy as outlined
- Parents: Are expected to abide by the policy and support the staff and pupils in it’s implementation.
- B.O.M. Will support the staff and provide the resources necessary for the implementation of the policy.

**Success Criteria:**

- Level of awareness within school community is raised
- An incident is dealt with in a satisfactory manner
- No incidences

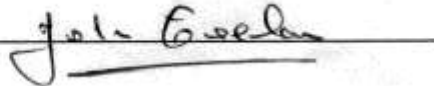
**Monitoring Procedures:**

Staff, parents and B.O.M. members will be responsible for the working of this policy

**Review Procedure:**

This policy was reviewed in February 2009 and will be subject to review in February 2015 or sooner if need arises.

This policy was ratified on 17 June 2004

Signed :   
Fr Geelan