

Ar scóth a chéile a mháirimid



Scoil an Linbh Íosa

Substance Use Policy

Scope of Policy

This policy applies to students, teachers, ancillary staff members, users of the school premises, visitors and contractors i.e. every person who enters school property. It is applicable during school-time, including breaks, and to ALL school related activities. It applies to the school building and grounds and to any area where a school related activity takes place, e.g. school tours and sports events.

Aims of Policy

The central objective of the Substance Use Policy of Scoil an Linbh Íosa is the welfare, care and protection of every student in line with the Education Act, 1998 and the Education (Welfare) Act, 2000.

We aim to develop self-esteem and resilience in our pupils, through creating a positive school climate and atmosphere, and through offering our pupils age appropriate information and strategies from educational programmes.

Rationale

The world in which we live presents young people with many challenges, which affect their health and well-being. The Education Act 1998 provides that schools should promote the social and personal development of students and provide health education for them. The Substance Use Policy is in keeping with our school ethos and supports the efforts of the Board of Management and staff of Scoil an Linbh Íosa in providing a safe and secure learning environment for our pupils.

This policy will address both education concerning substances such as alcohol, tobacco and drugs, and the procedures for managing incidents relating to these substances.

Education concerning substance use

Education about substance use will be provided within the Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) programme in age-appropriate ways.

- SPHE programmes such as Walk Tall will seek to be both informative and preventative.
- A climate of trust will be nurtured, where open communication is encouraged.
- Circle Time will be used with all classes groups throughout the school to address the issue of drugs, in age-appropriate ways.
- Children are invited to speak openly and confidentially about the subject. Various activities will help increase the children's awareness and resilience about drugs.
- In senior classes, the effects of drugs will be explored in Science, using age-appropriate resource materials.

Management of alcohol, tobacco and drug-related incidents

Possible Incidents involving substances such as alcohol, tobacco and drug use include:

- Any unusual or unbecoming behaviour resulting from intake or use, or suspected use, of alcohol, tobacco or illegal drugs
- 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
- Disposal of drugs or related items (e.g. syringes) found on school property
- Disclosure of use

While the above incidents are considered serious offences due care will be taken in striking a balance between a pastoral and a disciplinary response, in relation to both pupils and adults. The school will act within Restorative Practices and in keeping with the law.

Procedure

The reporting procedure for such incidents is:

Step 1: Witness to drug related incident informs teacher/staff member/Principal

Step 2: Principal inform parents/guardians

Step 3: Principal informs Chairperson of Board of Management

Step 4: Gardai informed depending on seriousness of incident

Step 5: Area Health Board informed for disposal of items

In enrolling their child in Scoil an Linbh Íosa parents/guardians accept school policies including the Code of Behaviour. They will be informed of any incident involving their own child and will be asked to accept responsibility and to co-operate with the school authorities and with the Gardai if necessary.

Parents/guardians will be involved in incidents involving another child only if deemed necessary by the school authorities. If parents/guardians are aware that another child is involved in drug-related incidents under the scope of this policy they should inform the teacher, Principal or a Board member.

Board of Management

The role of the Board of Management is to:

- Ratify this policy
- Implement this policy
- Monitor and evaluate it
- To sponsor/provide training for staff members
- Make decisions involving critical incidents
- To deal with the media in the event of a critical incident

In the event of media interest in relation to a 'drug related incident', the matter will be referred to the Board of Management and the Chairperson will issue a prepared statement to the media.

Management of Persons in the Workplace Under The Influence of Drugs And/or Alcohol

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 sentence 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.

Every school employee shall, while at work, ensure 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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

The Board of Management acknowledges its responsibility in promoting the welfare at work of teachers and SNAs. An Employee Assistance Programme (telephone: 1800 411 057) is available to Department of Education and Skills employees. In the event that substance abuse appears to be adversely affecting the performance and/or attendance pattern of any teacher or SNA, the Board of Management may request such staff member to contact the Employee Assistance Service.

The Board of Management 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 Board of Management may request such staff member to seek counselling or other professional intervention.

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 Board of Management.

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

Monitoring and Review Procedures

A record will be kept in school of all substance use incidents.

Ratified by the Board of Management of Scoil an Linbh Íosa

Date: _____

Signed : _____

Chairperson of the Board of Management