

# **Policy for the Prevention Of Substance Abuse**

**Coláiste Bríde  
Enniscorthy  
Co. Wexford**

**Ratified by the Board of Management on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2004**

**Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary,  
Board of Management**

# Formulating School Policy

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## 1. Title/Area/Aspect

Policy for the Prevention of Substance Abuse

Coláiste Bríde  
Enniscorthy  
Co. Wexford

Note: "substance" to be defined as illegal drugs in general and substances injurious to health.

## 2. Whole School /Departmental/Subject Area

Student Population

## 3. Relationship to School/Ethos/Mission Statement

Aims of the school:

Looking at the sentiments in our Mission Statement, it can be seen that the same sentiments are reflected in our policy.

Our policy seeks to insure

- A safe and healthy environment for all our students
- That each individual's right to a safe and healthy environment is respected
- That the students develop a sense of responsibility for their own health and the health of others
- That the positive potential of each student will be drawn forth

## 4. Rationale for this policy

As teachers we recognise that we have a duty of care to the students in our school

## 5. Goals of this policy (i.e. objectives)

Long Term Goals:

- To foster skills and attitudes to enable students to cope with a drug orientated society
- To provide a safe and healthy school environment
- To provide outlets for creativity and sport through in-school and co-circular activities
- To ensure that vulnerable children have support
- To provide information on;
  - (a) Support groups such as A.A., Al-anon, Al-ateen etc
  - (b) Drugs and their dangers

### Short Term Goals:

- Set up Support Groups e.g. to stop smoking
- Survey students to determine their needs in relation to substance abuse prevention
- Education parents and students about the dangers of substance abuse, smoking and alcohol

## **6. Roles and responsibilities in developing and implementing this policy**

### B.o.M.

- Recommends suitable sanctions when necessary
- Is the first step in the appeals procedure

### Principal

- Has overall responsibility for ensuring policy is followed
- Keeps records of incidents
- Applies sanctions and deals with incidents
- Informs relevant persons and agencies

### Vice-Principal

- As delegated to by the Principal

### Year Head

- Pastoral and advisory role

### P.C. Teacher

- Pastoral role

### Guidance Counsellor

- Counsels students if referred
- Liase with social workers

### General Teachers

- Reports incidents of substance abuse if they become aware of it
- Pastoral

### Ancillary Staff

- Reports incidents

### H.S.C.L. - if referred to outside agencies

- Follow up to see outcome
- Keep in touch with parents

### Parents

- Inform themselves of dangers and signs of substance abuse
- Support discipline system
- Co-operate with agencies
- Ensure child gets relevant help
- Support child

### Students

- Help develop policy

## **7. Content**

Content is addressed on two levels; a) Education  
b) Management of an incident

a) Education for students, teachers and parents

To raise awareness about the dangers of drugs through

- S.P.H.E. programme
- Talks
- Information leaflets
- Posters
- "No smoking" signs
- Projects
- Training for teachers

All interested teachers should be encouraged to do the S.P.H.E. training provided by the Dept of Education and Science. If possible, only teachers with this training should have S.P.H.E. classes. Staff development on the area of health promotion. Encourage local teachers' centre to run courses for teachers.

- Talks for parents

b) Management of an incident

*Incident to be read as reasonable grounds for suspicion of the use or actual use of substances mentioned in policy.*

The following should be informed

- Principal, Year Head, Parents, relevant agencies

Details of Incidents should be recorded and kept by Principal. The sanction is to be suspension. Suspension should be recorded in "suspension file" and made available to staff. Help should be offered where appropriate e.g. counselling by school counsellor. Parents should be told of sanctions and asked to support them also told of relevant support agencies. If outside agencies have been contacted, school follows up, out of concern, to ascertain outcome.

If media seek information they are to be given a general statement such as "We at all times respect the confidentiality and privacy of our students so we cannot comment except to say we are dealing with the situation according to our policy"

Outside agencies to be informed on a "need to know" basis only. If parent/student refuses to accept sanctions the student will be suspended until such time as they do accept. They may appeal to B.O.M. or D.E.S.

**8. Performance criteria (i.e.) criteria by which the policy will be judged to be effective**

- Evaluation sheet to be filled out by S.P.H.E. co-ordinator
- Judge if smoking has lessened the school

**9. Person(s)/Groups responsible for monitoring the implementation of this policy.**

Principal - overall responsibility for implementing the policy as is. Also checks that the policy is updated and its effectiveness monitored as often as stated.

S.P.H.E. Co-ordinator - fills out evaluation sheet on effectiveness of policy

H.S.C.L. - Checks that adult education as outlined has taken place.

**10. Person(s)/groups responsible for reviewing this policy (if different from monitoring groups)**

S.P.H.E. Co-ordinator calls for review and picks sub-group to work on review.

**11. Time frame (to include review of policy)**

Policy to be finalised by June 2002

Evaluation - every year

Review - every 3 years

### Evaluation of Prevention of Substance Abuse Policy

|     |   | YES | NO |
|-----|---|-----|----|
| 1.  | Does the Policy define the substances that are addressed in the policy?   |     |    |
| 2.  | Does the Policy expressly state that the abuse of these substances will not be tolerated?                         |     |    |
| 3.  | Does everyone that the policy affects know of its contents?   |     |    |
| 4.  | Are all people who have responsibilities outlined in the policy aware of their responsibilities?                  |     |    |
| 5.  | Are there outlets for creativity and sports?  |     |    |
| 6.  | Have vulnerable children support in the school?   |     |    |
| 7.  | Is there a support group for students who give up smoking in the school?  |     |    |
| 8.  | Was there a survey conducted to determine needs students in relation to substance abuse?                          |     |    |
| 9.  | Have there been talks delivered to the students on the dangers of substance abuse?                                |     |    |
| 10. | Are there signs, posters etc. reflecting the policy's aims e.g. "No Smoking"                                      |     |    |
| 11. | Have teachers been encouraged to take SPHE training?  |     |    |
| 12. | Are there teachers who have not received training involved in the SPHE?   |     |    |
| 13. | Have parents been offered talks around prevention of substance abuse?   |     |    |
| 14. | Have incidences referred to by this policy been managed in accordance with the procedures outlined in the policy; |     |    |
|     | • Did the incident fall within the remit of the policy?   |     |    |
|     | • Was the student suspended?  |     |    |
|     | • Were the relevant people informed?  |     |    |
|     | • Was a record kept?  |     |    |
|     | • Was any help offered?   |     |    |
|     | • Was the right to appeal offered?  |     |    |

### **Recommendations**

- Alcohol and smoking to be given particular attention as these are most prevalent
- Information to be available to students re support groups such as alateen
- Signs to be in toilet area
- Theme for each year in SPHE to raise awareness of Health related issues
- Notify parents if substance abuse suspected
- Support 3-way communication - parent, school, student
- If child needs to bring medication to school, parents should be advised to give child minimum amount to bring to school
- School should be notified if has medication with them, even over the counter preparations - note in journal
- School should not give out drugs
- In the case of child needing medication immediately e.g. school calls doctor
- Solvents necessary for school use to be used under supervision if possible
- Cleaning agents to be locked away if feasible
- Zero tolerance to smoking, alcohol and substance abuse in general is recommended.
- Feed-back from students by survey to ascertain what they know and if levels of smoking have reduced - to be done by SPHE classes

### **Notes**

- There may be particular cases e.g. severe allergic reactions that school might be asked to keep supply of emergency medication in school. This would be acceptable
- Noted that school could be found negligent if student died in asthma attack due to passive smoking
- CDBI (Susan Barnes) and Drugs Prevention Officer (Marie Plunket) good contacts
- Clergy, youth-clubs, media etc. should speak out against substance abuse