



POLICY NO	POLICY TITLE
18	Substance Abuse policy

DOCUMENT CONTROL

This Policy Document has been prepared by the Board of Management (BOM) in consultation with the Parents' Association and Staff of St Paul's Primary School and taking into account all relevant legislation/circulars.

REVISION HISTORY

REVISION NO	DESCRIPTION	APPROVED BY	DATE
REV 1	FIRST ISSUE	BOM	January 30th 2007

NEXT REVIEW NO LATER THAN	2020-21
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Aims and Objectives of our Substance Use Policy

The aim of this policy is the welfare, care and protection of every member of the school community in line with the Education Act 1998.

Our objectives are to enable each child to:

- Develop a sense of personal responsibility
- Develop an understanding of healthy living, an ability to implement healthy behaviour and a willingness to participate in activities that promote and sustain health.
- Make decisions, solve problems and take appropriate actions in various personal, social and health contexts.
- Become aware of and discerning about the various influences on choices and decisions.
- Begin to identify, review and evaluate the values and attitudes that are held by individuals and by society and to recognise that these affect thoughts and actions.
- Become aware of some of the individual and community rights and responsibilities that come from living in a democracy.

(SPHE Curriculum Statement Pg. 10)

Education concerning Substance Use

(Policy Content (i))

Education concerning Substance Use will be provided within the broad context of Social Personal Health Education which is timetabled on our curriculum since September '03. We will endeavour to ensure that by the time each child leaves sixth class, all content objectives of the SPHE curriculum which deal with Substance Use, will have been covered in an age-appropriate manner, as determined by the staff taking cognisance of diverse needs as they present. All education concerning Substance Use will be provided in the context of the positive climate and atmosphere of our school which seeks to nurture, care and support.

We intend to use the Walk Tall Programme as our primary resource in providing education concerning Substance Use. The main themes in this programme are Self Esteem, Feelings, Influences, Decision Making and Drug Awareness. These themes are developed in a systematic way at each class level. In accordance with the curriculum, we will endeavour to use Active Learning strategies where possible. We will also consider inviting outside speakers to work with the pupils, in the presence of the teacher, to enhance the work done in the context of the full SPHE programme. Such speakers may include:

- The Garda Schools Programme
- The Drug and Alcohol Education Officer
- Health Board.

See attached: - "Content Objectives of SPHE curriculum which deal with Substance Use" - "List of useful resources"

Management of Incidents

(Policy Content (ii))

Definition of a drug: *It is our understanding that a drug is any chemical which alters how the body works, or how a person behaves or feels.*

This includes the following:

- Tobacco
 - Alcohol
 - Over the counter drugs; Solvents
 - Prescription drugs
 - Illegal drugs
- A policy must be developed on each of the above substances in respect of rules for:

- pupils
 - staff
 - visitors
- Rules for Storage of certain substances must also be considered.

Useful statements:

- Disciplinary procedures will be considered if school rules are broken.
- The welfare, care and protection of the young person will at all times inform our actions.
- Confidentiality will be considered of paramount importance. Information concerning drug incidents will only be disclosed on a need to know basis.
- Parents will be notified in respect of any drug related incident, any incident involving tobacco, alcohol, over the counter drugs or illegal drugs
- The Gardaí will be informed in respect of an incident involving illegal drugs.
- The Chairperson of the Board of Management will be informed in respect of an incident which requires that the Gardaí are contacted.
- All incidents, actions and decisions taken in respect of drug incidents will be recorded.

Training and Staff Development
(Policy Content (iii))

As a staff, we have a shared understanding of the contribution an SPHE programme can make to the prevention of substance misuse.

We are all aware that by developing and maintaining a positive climate and atmosphere in our school and in our individual classrooms we are playing a vital role in the prevention of substance misuse.

We are all aware of and sensitive to the signs and symptoms of substance misuse.

Signs and Symptoms of Substance Use

- Unusual smells around the child
- Bouts of drowsiness
- Unusual sores or spots around the mouth or nose
- Sudden changes of mood/erratic mood swings
- Uncharacteristic irritability or aggression
- Changes in appearance
- Furtive/secretive behaviour
- Involvement in stealing
- Changes in friendship patterns
- Gradual loss of interest in school, friends, hobbies
- Changes in eating habits

Opportunities will be provided for the staff to avail of training when necessary. This may include:

- In-service training in SPHE (Primary Curriculum Support Programme)
- First Aid training (Order of Malta; Irish Red Cross)
- Drug Awareness training (Substance Misuse Prevention Programme; Gardai)
