



SUBSTANCE MISUSE POLICY

MISSION STATEMENT

WE NURTURE AND DEVELOP THE BEST QUALITIES IN EACH OF OUR STUDENTS+

- We are committed to fostering a sense of identity and self . worth in each of our students.
- We are committed to developing a well . rounded individual with skills, attitudes, sensibilities and personal initiative that will allow each to grow into mature, confident adults.
- We are committed to developing the whole person . morally, intellectually, aesthetically, spiritually and physically . in a caring, innovative, multi . denominational environment.
- We are committed to striving for high academic standards and in so doing we seek to challenge each of our students to achieve the best that they can.
- We are committed to ensuring that each of our students embraces the whole world, community and culture, while at the same time fostering an appreciation of Irish culture in which the school is rooted.
- We recognize that serving both the school (students, staff and parents) and the wider community is a cornerstone of our philosophy, and we are committed to developing in each student innovative capabilities to participate in a dynamic world environment.

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

Sutton Park School has an obligation to educate, protect and where necessary, discipline our students in its care with regard to substances and illegal drug use. In accordance with the education (Welfare) act, 2000, the substance abuse policy forms part of the schools code of behaviour. The school is mindful of the law in all situations surrounding all substances, smoking, alcohol and illegal drugs. It is illegal to smoke under the age of 16 and it is illegal to drink alcohol under the age of 18. The school retain the right to involve the Gardai in any situation involving illegal activities.



‘Sutton Park School promotes a drug-free and alcohol-free environment for all students’

It is our belief that values are formed primarily in the home and that parents have the main responsibility for the behaviour and attitudes of their children with regard to substances.

The aim of the school is that each pupil should develop to his or her full potential and become a constructive and caring member of society. Given this, we feel it is essential to do all that we can to ensure that pupils are in a safe environment while in the school.

** The school includes the boarding house throughout this policy.

SCOPE

This policy addresses all substance misuse issues, including, but not limited to smoking, alcohol use, illegal drug use and misuse of prescribed drugs.

Substance abuse incidents dealt with by the school include those incidents;

- Within school
- To and from school
- School trips
- Extra curricular activities
- Incidents of substance abuse outside of these times will be dealt with by the school only in certain circumstances.
- Incidents of a more serious nature, e.g. supply of substances on school grounds will be dealt with by the official authorities, e.g. Gardai / Juvenile Liaison Officers

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

- To create a school ethos which encourages students to disclose and discuss concerns surrounding alcohol and substance abuse
- To raise awareness of alcohol and substance abuse with school management, teachers, students, parents and guardians
- To take practical actions to prevent incidents of misuse e.g. to educate and inform
- To develop procedures for reporting, discipline and supporting students involved in substance abuse.



MANAGING ISSUES RELATING TO SUBSTANCES

Smoking

Smoking is prohibited during school hours, on school grounds, while in school uniform, on school trips or activities, outings or duties, including but not limited to sports trips, school trips, school social events and to and from school.

Students caught breaking this school rule will engage in school sanctions, as per discipline procedure, such as detention. Parents will be informed by notification of detention. If cigarettes are found on a student, staff retain the right to confiscate. Parents of students under 16 who are found with cigarettes will be notified immediately.

Students caught off school grounds during the day will be sanctioned for leaving the school grounds during the school day without permission.

Alcohol

Being in possession of, or in the presence of, alcohol is prohibited during school hours, on school grounds (this includes school lockers), while in school uniform, on school trips or activities, outings or duties, including but not limited to sports trips, school trips, school social events and to and from school.

All breaches of the alcohol rule will be notified immediately to parents. Students will have an opportunity to discuss the incident in a supportive manner, but sanctions will also include detentions, suspension, etc.

Support in the form of counseling (either in school or externally) will be recommended and may be mandatory.

School functions such as the debutante drinks reception and the school graduation, as mentioned in the introduction, will reinforce the parental role and invitations state that alcohol will not be served to students and that the onus is on parents to decide. The school endeavors to educate and promote responsible drinking.

Staff attending student events off school grounds, e.g. debs, are invited guests and are not in a supervisory capacity. It is therefore best practice and strongly advised that 6th year students organize a chaperone service for the evening, (older brothers / sisters, parents, relatives etc.).



Illegal Substances

Being in possession of, or in the presence of, illegal substances is prohibited during school hours, on school grounds (this includes school lockers), while in school uniform, on school trips or activities, outings or duties, including but not limited to sports trips, school trips, school social events and to and from school.

All breaches of the illegal substances rule will be notified immediately to parents. Three day suspension can and will be issued for a first offence. Support in the form of internal counseling or preferably external counseling will be mandatory.

If staff have concerns regarding a student, these concerns should be addressed to the Deputy Principal or Guidance Counselor.

For further offences or if first offence is deemed suitable serious (at school discretion) a four day suspension can be issued. This involves the Board of Management and will result in a permanent school record. Support in the form of internal counseling or preferably external counseling will be mandatory. The school retain the right to involve the Gardai at any stage of an illegal substance query.

Further sanctions will include permanent exclusion from the school.

It will always be imperative to establish who is influencing and who is supplying the substances within the school. If this information is established or if a student is caught with substances and intent to supply, the situation and the student will be immediately referred to the Gardai.

Students who have been sanctioned for illegal substance misuse will be placed on a contract of behaviour drawn up between the Head of School, Guidance Counselor and signed by Head of school, parent and student. Drug testing is seen as an important part of this contract to ensure the student is abiding by the school rules and that they are keeping a good health record. Parents will be notified if the school feels a student on contract would benefit from testing.

Sutton Park School retains the right to drug test a student on contract with parental consent.

Sutton Park School retains to right to search school property (including lockers, toilets etc.)



Education

Education and Prevention is at the heart of this policy and Sutton Park School is committed to providing a comprehensive drug education programme for all students which will form part of the Social, Personal and Health Education programme. This is best practice as recommended by the Department of Education and Science.

Our aims in relation to drug education are:

1. To increase the self esteem and confidence of students
2. To equip students with personal and social skills
3. To enable students to make informed, healthy and responsible choices
4. To provide honest and age appropriate information on substances
5. To seek to prevent experimentation with and/or the use of illegal substances.

These aims will be supported through the following actions:

1. All staff Teachers will be offered drug information and drug awareness training.
2. Teachers involved in SPHE will be required to attend the specific in-service on substance misuse
3. While trained teachers are in the best position to carry out drug education, it may sometimes be appropriate to use an outside speaker to supplement or reinforce the work done in the class.
4. Parent evenings on Drug and alcohol information will be available

The school will administer questionnaires biannually to 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th years to encourage the active reporting and communication of concerns about fellow students. (see addendum 1)

In the matter of external speakers, it is accepted that all students will respond to different approaches. Sutton Park School will endeavor to provide speakers who will deal with the issues surrounding alcohol and substance misuse from a medical, text book approach while acknowledging the personal impact.

Prescription medicines

Sutton Park School acknowledges and respects the need for prescription medicines. At admissions, students ongoing medical needs must be disclosed to the school and this information is kept on medical records in the Nurses Office and in the main school office. For the health and safety of the students this information may need to be shared with relevant staff members.

For more transient medical requirements, prescription medicines brought into school by students must be disclosed to the school Nurse and Form teachers or for senior students to the Deputy Principal.



For students in the Boarding House all Prescription Drug use must be informed to the school Nurse and boarding staff by parents and / or students. This is in keeping with Health and Safety Guidelines.

Non prescription medicines

Students should attend the school nurse for all non prescription medical needs during the school day. Non prescription medicines should not be brought into school.

Confidentiality

1. Staff members cannot offer total confidentiality to a student involved in a drug or alcohol related incident and must comply with duty of care
2. In the case of a student reporting an incident or disclosing information, confidentiality will be maintained insofar as is practicable.
3. Adults in receipt of information must be careful not to break trust.
4. Information must remain private and only be disclosed on a strict need to know basis.
5. The student(s) involved must be informed about what is happening and why.
6. The well being and welfare of the student and the staff member must remain the priority.
7. Sutton Park School recognises that the issue of confidentiality is complex. It is important that confidentiality and its limits are discussed with students during the drugs education programmes and the duty of care is discussed.

IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS, ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- The Board of Management will oversee the ratification of the policy.
- Jennifer Ryan, Guidance Counselor will oversee the implementation of this policy through communication with staff and management.
- Class teachers will be responsible for delivering education and preventative modules especially through the SPHE programme
- All staff members will have a responsibility for identifying and reporting any behaviours which warrant concern.

RATIFICATION AND COMMUNICATION

The policy will be ratified by the board of management and communicated to the entire school community (staff, students and parents) in May 2009.

IMPLEMENTATION DATE

October 2009; The policy will be launched with a staff training seminar, parent evening, and a focused week of lessons and seminars.



MONITORING OF POLICY

The policy will be monitored by the committee members throughout the school through staff meetings and feedback from teaching staff and management. Following a substance abuse incident the policy will be considered in terms of successful outcomes and amended as necessary.

REVIEWING POLICY

This policy will be reviewed yearly to meet the needs of the students and the whole school community, school staff will be kept up to date at staff meetings. At the end of each quarter of the school year, the procedures for dealing with incidents will be raised at staff meetings, to both alert staff and offer them a chance to make suggestions or provide feedback on the policy.

Parent information

For more information on substance abuse in adolescence, please see:-

www.crosscare.ie

www.drugs.ie

This policy was developed with input from the following parties;

Mr Michael Moretta (Head of school)
Ms Anne Dowling (Deputy Head of school)

Staff members

Patrick McLoughlin
Eimear Fitzgerald
Jennifer Ryan

Students

Eoin O'Reilly (Head Boy)
Alex Horgan (Deputy Head Girl)

PTA

Nicola Gorman

Board of Management

Michele Ridgeway
Jane Economos

Education Officer, HSE

Ms Bernie Maguire



Boarding house representatives

Mr Tomas Porczynski
Ms Frances Buchanen

All staff, including the school nurse has had opportunity to read and contribute.



Addendum 1

Name _____
(all information will be kept anonymous as far as possible)

Have you concerns regarding yourself or another student misusing alcohol or illegal substances?

Yes No

Have you concerns about drug use / supply on school grounds?

Yes No

Please add in any information you feel is important

Name _____
(all information will be kept anonymous as far as possible)

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Yes No

Please add in any information you feel is important
