

DRUGS POLICY 2020-21



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RATIONALE

St. Ciaran's College does not condone the misuse of drugs/alcohol but recognises that there has been a considerable increase in the abuse of drugs/alcohol in recent years in Northern Ireland. Drug/alcohol misuse appears to be affecting an ever-younger population and the so-called "recreational" use of drugs and alcohol can lead to a dangerous acceptance of illegal and harmful drug misuse as part of everyday life.

Research continues to show that by post-primary school age a significant number of young people are engaging with substances such as alcohol, cigarettes, including e-cigarettes, or solvents and/or have misused prescribed medicines or other substances.

We believe that St. Ciaran's has a vital preventative role to play in combating the misuse of drugs by young people and we therefore include a Drug/Alcohol Education programme in our curriculum.

St. Ciaran's sees its role as that of a caring community committed to the physical, mental, social, emotional, moral and spiritual health, safety and well-being of our pupils and staff.

The school has a key role to play in ensuring that pupils are given accurate information and opportunities to develop personal skills that will enable them to make informed decisions in relation to drugs.

"There is public perception that drug misuse is mainly an issue in disadvantaged inner city areas. Drug misuse is just as much an issue in rural areas and affluent communities: it extends across socioeconomic, geographical and cultural boundaries. Educationally successful young people are just as likely to put themselves at risk as low attainers." (DENI 1996/16)

The policy takes account of the guidance in DE circular 2015/23 on Drugs Guidance, DE Circular 2014/25 on Encouraging a Smoke-Free and E-Cigarette Free Environment

ETHOS

In St. Ciaran's we are concerned with providing a suitable environment for our students in which to develop and grow, protected as far as possible from physical and psychological harm. Our students have the right to receive from us all the help we can give them physically, intellectually, spiritually and emotionally.

We will respect the rights of the young people in our care and provide a suitable environment in which they can grow and have their individual needs catered for. We will work closely with all the relevant agencies in developing and implementing any procedures necessary for the protection of our students against substance misuse.

DEFINITIONS

For this purpose of this document and in line with the guidance issued to all schools by the Department of Education (1996/16) **drugs will include any substance which, when taken, has the effect of altering the way the body works or the way the person behaves, feels, sees or thinks.**

Drug Use: refers to taking a drug; there is no value judgement, although all drug use has an element of risk.

Drug Misuse: refers to legal, illegal or illicit drug taking or alcohol consumption, which leads a person to experience social, psychological, physical or legal problems related to intoxication or regular excessive consumption and/or dependence. Drug misuse is therefore taking drugs, including prescribed drugs and NPS, that cause harm to the individual, their significant others or the wider community.

As well as everyday substances such as tea and coffee, drugs include:

- Alcohol, tobacco and tobacco related products, including electronic cigarettes and nicotine replacement therapy (NRT);
- "over the counter" medicines such as paracetamol and cough medicine;
- prescribed drugs such as antibiotics, tranquillisers, inhalers, painkillers, antidepressants, antipsychotics, inhalers and stimulants such as Ritalin;
- Volatile substances such as correcting fluids, thinners, gas lighter fuel, aerosols, glues and petrol;
- controlled drugs such as cannabis, LSD, Ecstasy, amphetamine Sulphate (speed), magic mushrooms (processed), heroin and cocaine;
- new psychoactive substances (NPS), formerly known as legal highs*, which contain one or more chemical substances that produce similar effects to illegal drugs and are sold as incense, salts or plant food and marked 'not for human consumption' to avoid prosecution;

- Other substances such as amyl/butyl nitrite ('poppers') and unprocessed magic mushrooms.

GENERAL AIMS

This policy aims to:

- ensure that all members of the school community adopt a consistent approach to drug-related issues;
- define the roles, responsibilities and legal duties of different people, including the principal, the designated teacher for drugs, all staff (teaching and non-teaching), governors, pupils and parents or carers;
- identify how they will implement and deliver drugs education as part of the overall provision for PD in the curriculum;
- develop procedures and protocols that address drug-related issues across all areas of school life and deal with specific incidents of suspected drug misuse; and
- consider the wider issues of drug use or misuse as part of a whole-school approach and show how it relates to other policies; Positive Behaviour Policy, Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, Managing Critical Incidents Policy.

Also, throughout the school community, St Ciaran's aims to;

- To promote and develop the ideals, values and beliefs of the school as set out in the school mission statement;
- To ensure the welfare of the pupils is of paramount importance at all times;
- To develop the idea of the school as a health promoting environment;
- The school's policy on substance use and misuse will revolve around prevention and intervention;
- The school will work towards these aims in partnership with parents and outside agencies;
- All curricular areas will contribute to the raising of pupil awareness of the health risks associated with substance abuse and to the development of the pupil's ability to reject the drug culture to which they are currently exposed.
- To provide appropriate support and assistance for those affected by drug-related issues.
- To inform parents of the content of this Policy and the procedures to be implemented in the management of incidents of suspected drug misuse.
- To establish an environment in which the school is free from the misuse of all drugs.

EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES

- To enable pupils to make healthy, informed choices by increasing knowledge, challenging attitudes and developing and practising skills;
- To provide them with accurate information about substances;

- To increase their understanding about the implications and possible consequences of use and misuse of substances;
- To encourage an understanding for those experiencing or likely to experience substance use;
- To widen their understanding about related health and social issues, e.g. crime and HIV;
- To seek to minimise the risks that users and potential users face;
- To enable them to identify sources of appropriate personal support if the need arises.

The effective delivery of the Drug Education Programme and efficient handling of drug related incidents requires input from many sources, for example;

- Students
- Teaching and non-teaching staff
- Teachers delivering the Drug Education Programme and the School PD Programme
- The designated teacher for drugs
- The Principal
- The Board of Governors
- Parents and carers
- Caretakers
- Outside agencies

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

PUPILS

- Be aware of and adhere to school rules in relation to drug use/misuse, including tobacco, alcohol, over-the-counter and prescribed medication, volatile substances and controlled drugs.

ALL STAFF (teaching and non-teaching)

- Be alert to the possibility of drug use/misuse.
- Be familiar with the school's procedures in the handling of suspected drug-related incidents.
- It is not the responsibility of the individual staff member to investigate the circumstances surrounding an incident; however, he/she should deal with any emergency procedures if necessary.
- Any information, substance or paraphernalia received should be forwarded to the designated teacher for drugs who may have to take immediate action.

TEACHERS DELIVERING THE DRUG EDUCATION PROGRAMME

In addition to the above:

- Deliver the school's Drug Education Programme
- Try to create an atmosphere in the classroom where students freely contribute to discussion, in the knowledge that the comments, ideas and feelings of the students are valued.
- Support pupils in the class if necessary.
- Liaise with the designated teacher for drugs regarding any aspect of the programme as necessary.

The Designated Teacher for Drugs is Mr Brendan Rodgers

- Ensure that all staff and parents are aware of and have access to a copy of the policy.
- Have oversight and co-ordination of the planning of curricular provision in compliance with the statutory requirements including periodic update and review of the policy.
- Liaise with other staff responsible for pastoral care in co-ordinating the delivery of the Drug Education Programme.
- Co-ordinate training and induction of all staff in the procedures for dealing with incidents of suspected drug misuse.
- Be responsible for co-ordinating the school's procedures for dealing with incidents of suspected drug misuse.
- Determine the circumstances surrounding the incident.
- Complete a suspected incident report form and forward to Principal.
- Ensuring the engagement and active participation of parents in all aspects of drug education.
- Act as the point of contact for outside agencies working with the school.

THE PRINCIPAL

- Ensure that members of the Board of Governors have been consulted on and ratified the policy.

In the case of incidents of suspected drug misuse:

- Ensure the welfare and well being of the students involved in the incident and the rest of the school community.
- Ensure that the following people are informed (where relevant):
 - Parents/Guardians
 - PSNI – preferably the Community and Schools Liaison (CSIO)
 - Board of Governors
 - Designated Officer in EA and CCMS
 - Members of staff
 - Other persons and carers named within the confines of confidentiality
- Agree in liaison with the Board of Governors, appropriate pastoral and disciplinary responses in relation to the incident, including counselling services/support
- Prepare written records of the incident and ensure a copy of the reports are submitted to Board of Governors, ELB/CCMS as appropriate
- Review procedures and amend.

THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS

- Examine and approve the completed policy and education programme, prior to their implementation in the school.
- Ensure the policy is published in the school prospectus and that it is reviewed at regular intervals.
- Be fully aware of and adequately trained to deal with suspected incidents of drug misuse, including tobacco and alcohol, and their appropriate disciplinary response.
- Agree in consultation with the Principal appropriate pastoral and disciplinary responses in relation to suspected drug related incidents.

Designated representative of the Board of Governors is Mrs D McSorley.

PARENTS/GUARDIANS

- Support your son/daughter if they have become involved with drugs.
- Support the school in the development and implementation of this policy, including the school's procedures for handling incidents of suspected drug misuse and the drug education programme.

THE CARETAKER

- Be vigilant around and conduct regular checks of school grounds for drug related paraphernalia. Inform the designated teacher for drugs should any be found.
- Ensure the safe storage, handling and disposal of potentially harmful substances such as solvents and cleaning fluids.

THE DRUGS EDUCATION PROGRAMME

The Drug Education Programme in St. Ciaran's College is just one part of the whole school response to drug use/misuse. This is part of the PD programme. The programme provides opportunities for pupils to:

- Acquire knowledge and understanding in relation to drug use/misuse;
- Identify values and attitudes in relation to drug use/misuse;
- Develop skills to enable them to consider the effects of drugs on themselves and others; and
- Make informed and responsible choices within the context of a healthy lifestyle.

External agencies will also be used to educate pupils such as "The Smashed Programme".

PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH SUSPECTED DRUG RELATED INCIDENTS

Fundamental to dealing with incidents of suspected drug abuse is the principle of 'in loco parentis', and St. Ciaran's will immediately take the steps that would reasonably be expected of any parents to safeguard the well being and safety of all the pupils in their charge.

While confidentiality is of paramount importance in drug related incidents and subsequent outcomes if a pupil discloses to a teacher or other member of staff that he/she is taking drugs, the staff member should make it clear to the pupil that he/she can offer no guarantee of confidentiality.

For the purposes of this guidance, a drug-related incident may include:

- a pupil displaying unusual or uncharacteristic behaviour;
- an allegation;
- suspicion of possession, possession with intent to supply and/or supply of any substance as defined on page 3; and
- finding substance-related paraphernalia.

The role of the individual staff member (teaching and non-teaching) including all ancillary staff

All staff should be familiar with the content of the school's drug policy. They should also be fully aware of their responsibilities, should a suspected drug-related incident occur. It is not the staff's responsibility to determine the circumstances surrounding the incident, but they should:

- assess the situation and decide on the appropriate actions to take;
- notify the principal and the designated teacher for drugs at the earliest opportunity;
- deal with any emergency procedures to ensure the safety of pupils and staff, if necessary (see Appendix 9);
- forward any information, substance or paraphernalia received to the designated teacher for drugs, who will respond accordingly (see Appendix 4.1);
- use the school's Drugs Incident Report Form to complete a brief factual report on the suspected incident and forward this to the designated teacher for drugs (see Appendix 5);
- consider the needs and safety of a pupil when discharging him or her into the care of a parent or carer who appears to be under the influence of alcohol or another substance (staff, who are in loco parentis, should maintain a calm atmosphere when dealing with the parent and, if concerned, should discuss with the parent alternative arrangements for caring for the pupil); and
- invoke safeguarding procedures, if a parent or carer's behaviour may place a pupil at risk (see Appendix 4.5).

Teachers cannot and should not promise total confidentiality. They should make the boundaries of confidentiality clear to pupils. Members of staff should carefully consider their response, if a pupil approaches them for individual advice on drug use or misuse. In the case of controlled substances, the staff member should explain to the pupil that they cannot offer a guarantee of confidentiality. If the pupil discloses information concerning controlled substances, the staff member must pass this on to the designated teacher for drugs.

The role of the designated teacher for drugs

The designated teacher is responsible for:

- co-ordinating the school's procedures for handling suspected drug-related incidents and training and inducting new and existing staff in these procedures;
- ensuring that the school's disciplinary policy has an appropriate statement about any disciplinary response resulting from suspected drug-related incidents;
- ensuring that the school's pastoral care policy has an appropriate statement about any pastoral response resulting from suspected drug-related incidents;
- liaising with other staff responsible for pastoral care;
- being the contact point for outside agencies that may have to work with the school or with a pupil or pupils concerned;
- responding to advice from first aiders, in the event of an incident, and informing the principal, who should contact the pupil's parents or carers immediately;
- taking possession of any substance(s) and associated paraphernalia found in a suspected incident;
- pupil(s) involved in a suspected incident;

- completing a factual report using the schools Drug-Related Incident Form, which they forward to the principal; and
- reviewing and if required updating the policy at least annually and after a drug-related incident, where learning from the experience could improve practice.

The role of the principal

It is the principal's responsibility to determine the circumstances of all incidents, but it is the responsibility of the PSNI to investigate any criminal or suspected criminal offence. In any suspected drug-related incident, the principal should contact the parents or carers of those pupils involved. The principal must ensure that in any incident involving a controlled substance there is close liaison with the PSNI. They will make every effort to contact the parents or carers before involving the police.

Failure to inform the PSNI of a suspected incident involving controlled drugs is a criminal offence. Confidentiality can never be guaranteed. Suspected criminal activity related to drugs will be reported to the designated teacher, PSNI and EA/CCMS.

After contacting the PSNI, principals should confine their responsibilities to:

- the welfare of the pupil(s) involved in the incident and the other pupils in the school;
- health and safety during the handling, storage and safe disposal of any drug or drug related paraphernalia, using protective gloves at all times;
- informing the Board of Governors;
- agreeing any appropriate pastoral or disciplinary response;
- reporting the incident to the Education Authority or CCMS if appropriate, for example if an incident:
 - is serious enough to require PSNI involvement;
 - requires that a child protection procedure is invoked; or
 - leads to the suspension or exclusion of a pupil; and
- completing a written report and forwarding a copy to the Board of Governors and the designated officer in the Education Authority or CCMS.

The role of the Board of Governors

School governors are responsible for their individual school. They should collaborate with appropriate staff, pupils and parents or carers to foster and support developing and reviewing its drugs policy. They should also:

- facilitate the consultative process where the school community can respond and contribute to the policy's effectiveness and quality, which the governors should examine and approve before implementing in the school;
 - ensure details of the policy are published in the school prospectus and that these are reviewed at least annually and after a drug-related incident; and
- be fully aware of and adequately trained to deal with suspected drug-related incidents, including alcohol and tobacco, tobacco-related products, electronic cigarettes, and their appropriate disciplinary response.

As a matter of good practice, every Board of Governors should have a designated governor for drugs who has received specific training in drug-related issues.

Responses in the event of a suspected drug-related incident

Staff should bring any indications of illness, unusual or uncharacteristic behaviour because of suspected substance misuse to the attention of the designated teacher for drugs. They should not make any judgement until they have determined the circumstances surrounding the incident. Where staff believe a pupil may have taken a substance they suspect is a drug, they should seek medical assistance immediately after following the recommended emergency procedures. The school must inform parents and the PSNI. The PSNI may interview a pupil on school premises with the principal's agreement. The school needs to make all possible efforts to inform the pupil's parents or carers before a PSNI interview takes place. The PSNI will not conduct an interview without the correct persons being present.

Taking possession of a suspected controlled substance and/or associated paraphernalia

- The law permits school staff to take temporary possession of a substance suspected of being a controlled drug to protect a pupil from harm and prevent the pupil committing the offence of possession.
- The teacher should, using appropriate safety precautions, take the suspected substance and any associated equipment and/or paraphernalia to the designated teacher for drugs as soon as possible.
- They should arrange for its safe storage until the school can hand it over to the local PSNI officer to identify whether it is a controlled substance.
- School staff should not attempt to analyse or taste an unidentified substance. An adult witness should be present when staff confiscate the substance and the school should keep a record of the details, using the school's Drug Incident Report Form.

An allegation of a suspected controlled drug-related incident

Carrying out a search

If the designated teacher for drugs receives an allegation of possession, he or she may need to search a pupil's desk or locker, if he or she has cause to believe it contains unlawful items, including controlled drugs. However, teachers cannot search personal belongings in the desk or locker without consent. Staff should only search the pupil's personal belongings, including schoolbag, coat or other items with the pupil's consent. Staff should carry out this search in the presence of the pupil and another adult witness.

Staff should ask pupils to turn out their pockets or schoolbags. If the pupils refuse, staff should contact their parents or carers and the PSNI to deal with the situation. **A member of staff should never carry out a physical search of a pupil, unless there is compelling evidence that the pupil has committed an offence.**

If a member of staff comes across a pupil in possession of what they believe or suspect to be a controlled drug, they should immediately attempt to take possession of the substance and detain the pupil. They should then send for assistance from the designated teacher for drugs, who will deal with the incident as outlined in the school policy.

Detaining a pupil

When managing a suspected drug-related incident the school should invite the pupils concerned to remain in school under the supervision of appropriate members of staff until their parents or carers and the PSNI arrive.

If the pupil refuses to remain, the school cannot detain a pupil against their will.

However, if a member of staff has reasonable grounds to suspect that the pupil has in their possession or has taken a controlled substance, they can make a citizen's arrest under Article 26A of the Police and Criminal Evidence (Northern Ireland) Order (PACE) 1989.

Finding drug-related paraphernalia

Paraphernalia in the school grounds is an indication of drug use or misuse. Any member of the school community who encounters any paraphernalia should use extreme care, as these items may be hazardous. Anyone who finds paraphernalia associated with drug use or misuse should report it to the designated teacher for drugs, who will assess the situation and respond accordingly. This response may include contacting the PSNI.

The following list is not exhaustive. It gives teachers an idea of what may indicate the presence of controlled substances:

- small bottles or pill boxes;
- hypodermic needles;
- twists of paper;
- cigarette papers, lighters and spent matches;
- electronic cigarette liquid refill bottles (there is a potential risk that refillable cartridges used in some electronic cigarettes could be filled with substances other than nicotine, serving as a new and potentially dangerous way to deliver drugs);
- roaches (ends of rolled-up cigarettes);
- punctured cans, plastic bottles or containers;
- aerosols or butane gas refills; and
- drugs themselves.

Recording an incident

If the principal considers an incident to be serious, the school should call the Education Authority or CCMS designated officer to alert them to the incident and then make a full written factual record of the incident.

Schools should carefully record any statements that pupils suspected of being involved in or witness to an incident provide.

For an incident that requires a PSNI investigation, the principal is responsible for determining the circumstances of all incidents. The PSNI is responsible for investigating any criminal or suspected criminal offence. Under these circumstances, schools should not take any written statements from individuals involved in the incident. The investigating officer is responsible for dealing with the incident to co-ordinate recording all statements that could be required for a potential court case.

School response to drug-related incidents

Deciding on appropriate sanctions

St Ciaran's will consider what sanctions or actions would be in the best interests of the pupil in the longer term, while ensuring the safety and well-being of other pupils. We will explore the relevant factors to determine the seriousness of the incident and the needs of those involved and then respond appropriately.

Sanctions may include;

- Suspension or expulsion
- Behavioural contracts
- Withdraw pupil from normal contact with peers during school day
- Other actions in line with the Positive Behaviour Policy

Provision of counselling services in the school

Schools should identify:

- the counselling services available for pupils;
- how to access, monitor and evaluate counselling services;
- the support services available for parents or carers (Appendix 10); and
- the referral pathways for a range of scenarios (Appendix 8).

Communication following a suspected or confirmed drug-related incident

Staff, pupils and parents or carers

The school will only disclose information to members of staff concerned with the pastoral needs of the individual pupil. The school will inform only the parents or carers of the pupil or pupils directly involved of the incident and subsequent outcomes.

Teachers should not discuss individual cases with other pupils. The school may, however, need to make a general statement informing the school community after an incident where rumours may create a negative atmosphere.

Dealing with the media

If the school receives an enquiry from the media, only the principal or a designated nominee should respond to the call.

When responding to the media, it is essential that the school respect the privacy of pupils and their families.

THE USE OF PRESCRIPTIVE DRUGS IN ST. CIARAN'S

Young people vary in their ability to cope with poor health or a particular medical condition and this involves St. Ciaran's responding to individual health care needs.

The school medication plan must be applied uniformly but not inflexibly or sensitively and in line with the DE publication Supporting Pupils with Medication Needs.

Each plan will identify the students medical condition, its impact in relation to the school and the assistance the student will require during the school day. This includes the use of NRT by pupils who are accessing smoking cessation programmes. This can only be approved by the Principal, the teacher responsible for Health and Well-being and the designated teacher for drugs. A medical letter/certificate will be required to access this support.

Refer to;

- *St. Ciaran's Drugs Administration Form – MP2*
- *St. Ciaran's Student Request Form to carry medication – MP3*
- *St. Ciaran's Medication Details record – MP4*

Staff use of alcohol and smoking on school premises, on school trips and other social events

The following policies are followed by the school in regards to drugs and alcohol:

- the work place policy on smoking, drugs and alcohol at www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk;
- *Don't Mix It: A Guide for Employers on Alcohol at Work* from www.hse.gov.uk;
- *Drugs Misuse at Work: A Guide for Employers* from www.hse.gov.uk;

The school smoking policy includes the use of electronic cigarettes in school; and the code of conduct applies for the use of alcohol during school events.

Monitoring and Evaluating the policy

The policy will be reviewed annually using data from SIMS, records of incidents involving drugs, alcohol, cigarettes or e-cigarettes.

Evaluations from PD lessons on this topic will be used to evaluate the impact of the drug education programme. Teachers will also be asked for feedback on the programme.

Serious incidents will be followed by a review meeting involving the Principal, designated teacher for drugs, relevant outside agencies, pupils and parents involved.

Training

Staff training on the implementation of the policy, responding to a drug related incident and the delivery of drugs education as part of the PD programme was delivered to all staff in August 2019 by the designated teacher for drugs, Mr B Rodgers.

The policy will be presented to the Board of Governors for their approval.

Parents and carers will be signposted to the relevant local and national support agencies. Page 23 in the pupil planner also contains information on support for those affected by substance misuse.

School Prospectus

The school prospectus will contain a summary of the school's drugs education policy including rationale, aims, objectives, key roles, curricular provision and support available.

Drugs Incident Report Form

1. Name of Pupil

_____ DOB _____

Address _____

2. Date of Incident _____ Reported by _____

Time of Incident _____ Location of Incident _____

3. First Aid given YES/NO Administered

by _____

Ambulance/Doctor Called YES/NO Time of Call _____

4. Parent or carer informed YES/NO

Date _____ Time _____

5. Where substance is retained _____ or

Date substance destroyed or passed to PSNI _____ Time _____

6. PSNI informed YES/NO

Date _____ Time _____

7. Education Authority or CCMS Designated Officer informed, as appropriate YES/NO

Date _____ Time _____

8. Form completed by _____ Date _____

Position _____

Description of the Incident

-

Actions taken

Incident form completed by

Date
