

SUBSTANCE USE POLICY

This document should be read with the Code of Behaviour/Discipline Policy and the Protection and Welfare of Children Policy of the school.

This policy applies to pupils, teachers, ancillary staff, users of the school premises and visitors. It is applicable during school times, including all breaks and all school related activities. It applies to the school building and grounds and during school related activities e.g. Tours.

Scoil Choca Naofa is committed to providing a safe, healthy and productive workplace for students and staff. To accomplish this, a whole-school approach is needed and the entire school community must contribute to the preservation of a drug-free school.

To this end, in response to the encroaching drug culture in our society we feel the need to implement a comprehensive policy to address the problem of substance misuse.

AIMS

The school sees itself as having a role in the process of enabling students to increase control over and improve their health. We endeavour to promote the well-being of students by

1. Providing a safe and healthy environment.
2. Promoting positive health behaviours.
3. Increasing knowledge about health.
4. Promoting the self-esteem and self-awareness of students.
5. Working in partnership with the parents and pupils.

The policy will focus on:

- Strategies for prevention of substance misuse problems – ***it is accepted amongst educationalists that education about alcohol, tobacco and drugs is best carried out by teachers through the inclusion of S.P.H.E. in the curriculum. This S.P.H.E. Programme draws on the expertise available in the community i.e. Parents, Gardai and Health Board.*** Our S.P.H.E. also involves the following programmes: RSE Programme, Crew Network, Alive-O.
- Procedures for dealing with drug incidences in the school.
- Guidelines and information for teachers to improve their response to the problem of substance misuse.

SMOKING POLICY

The school is a restricted smoking area.

Students are not permitted to smoke or possess cigarettes on the school premises.

Staff may only smoke in designated "Smoking Area".

Visitors will comply with the restricted smoking policy.

Students found smoking on school premises will be reported to the principal and parents will be informed.

Tobacco will not be permitted as a prize for school raffles.

ALCOHOL POLICY

The school is an alcohol-free area.

Pupils will not be allowed to bring alcohol into the school or to consume alcohol in school or during any school activities.

If a teacher is of the opinion that a student is under the influence of alcohol, she will immediately inform the Principal and consult on what action should be taken.

Where a student comes into school under the influence of alcohol, their parents will be called in to take them home.

Students breaking these rules will be dealt with according to the school's disciplinary procedure. If alcohol is required for an "Adult Only" school function, permission shall be sought from the BOM.

Alcohol will not be used as prizes for school raffles.

DRUG POLICY

A drug can be defined as a chemical, which causes changes in the way the human body functions mentally, physically or emotionally. For the purpose of this policy we are concerned with drugs which have the power to change a previous mood and the way a person thinks about things or drugs or to which the taker may become physically or psychologically dependent. Students are forbidden from being in possession of or using illicit drugs or solvents on the school premises.

Illicit drugs found on the school premises will be locked away and the Gardai contacted to dispose of them. Teachers are advised not to transport illicit substances at any time.

If the teacher is of the opinion that a student is under the influence of an illicit drug or solvents, she will immediately inform the Principal and consult on what action should be taken.

An investigation will be carried out, where the school suspects trafficking of illicit drugs. Parents of any student involved will be informed. The advice and assistance of the Garda Juvenile Liaison Officer will be sought.

The school BOM will expect parents to inform the Principal or teacher if they suspect their child of drug taking.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POLICY

- The policy will be available from the Principal to the BOM, Teachers and other staff members.
- A copy of the policy will be available on the school web page for Parents and Guardians.
- The policy will be regularly evaluated and updated where necessary.

THE SCHOOL WISHES TO MAKE IT CLEAR THAT THE PRIMARY ROLE OF SUBSTANCE ABUSE PREVENTION RESTS WITH THE PARENTS.

This policy was reviewed in JANUARY 2014 and will be reviewed annually.