

# Intermediate School Killorglin



## Substance Use

Reviewed 27-08-2020

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### Introduction:

In conjunction with the Education Act 1998 and Education (Welfare) Act, 2000, the Intermediate School is committed to ensuring the welfare, health, care and protection of every young person. The Substance Use policy focuses specifically on the use of alcohol, tobacco, tobacco substitutes and drug (legal, prescription and illegal).

A drug is defined as:

*'any substance which alters how the body works, or how the person behaves, thinks or feels'*

The Intermediate School is committed to addressing the needs of the whole school community in relation to Substance Use. This policy applies to Teachers, Pupils, Parents, users of the school facilities and all other staff.

### Policy Aims:

The aims of the Substance Use Policy are:

- To provide a **safe and secure environment** within which each person in the school community can develop and achieve their full potential.
- To **protect each student and staff member** from the potentially harmful effects of substance use.
- To provide **clear guidelines on the respective roles and responsibilities** of students, staff, management and parents in relation to substance use.

Our educational aims in relation to Drug Education are:

- To place Substance Use education and the schools opposition to the misuse of substances within the context of the school as a caring and Christian community.
- To increase the self-esteem and confidence of young people.
- To equip young people with personal and social skills.
- To develop in students the ability and confidence to make good choices,
- To provide honest and age appropriate information on alcohol, tobacco, tobacco substitutes and drugs.

- To enable young people to make informed, healthy, responsible and moral choices and decisions to prevent or reduce the harmful consequences of substance use.
- To encourage abstinence as the preferred harm reduction option.

These aims will be met through the following actions:

- The provision of a Social, Personal and Health Education (S.P.H.E.) programme.
- The inclusion of 'Know the Score' programme with senior cycle students,
- Providing teachers with Substance Information and Substance Awareness training as required.
- Encouraging a common, cross-disciplinary approach to Substance education.
- Liaising with the local Gardaí, Health Authority and other local agencies.
- The use of outside speakers to address pupils as a method of reinforcing Substance awareness.

The Substance Use Policy of the Intermediate School has been developed in accordance with:

- The Education Act 1998
- The Education Welfare Act 2000
- Equal Status Act 2000 and 2003
- Children First Act 2015
- National Drugs and Alcohol Strategy 2017 – 2025

## **Parents**

The Intermediate School recognises the importance of parents as the primary educators of young people. This role as primary educator will be assisted by keeping parents informed of the Substance education programme within the school. Parents will also be consulted with in the development of the Substance Use Policy.

## **Managing Alcohol, Tobacco and Drug Related Incidents**

### The School Approach

The Intermediate School acknowledges that in all situations involving Substance Use, there must be a balance between the needs of the young person, the needs of the school community and the reputation of the school.

In conjunction with the Code of Behaviour:

*'The possession or use of alcohol and illegal drugs is strictly forbidden and will lead to the most serious sanctions being taken. It is emphasised that this regulation also applies to out of school activities'*

The Principal will be notified of all Substance Use related incidents. The Principal is responsible for making a decision regarding the action to be taken. This decision may be made in consultation with the Deputy Principal or other teachers as appropriate.

### Substance Use Incidents

The following may be examples of a Substance Use incident:

- A pupil possessing tobacco / cigarettes / tobacco substitute or caught smoking during school hours or school-related events.<sup>1</sup>
- Possession or consumption of alcohol during school hours or at school-related events
- Possession or use of drugs (in any form) during school hours or school-related events.
- Selling or supplying drugs, alcohol, tobacco or tobacco substitutes.
- Obvious intoxication by alcohol or drugs.
- Disclosure of Substance Use by another person.
- Suspicion/rumour of Substance Use.
- Persons seeking help from a member of staff with reference to a drug issue
- School grounds being used for alcohol, tobacco, e-cigarettes or drug activity
- Drug paraphernalia found on the school property.

### Managing a Substance Related Incident

- Incidents involving the use or supply of Substances will be reported to the Principal or Deputy Principal.
- Suspicions or rumours of use and/or supply will also be reported to the Principal or Deputy Principal.
- In cases of confirmed use or supply, parents will be informed at the earliest opportunity.
- Each incident of Substance use will be dealt with individually and the Intermediate School recognises that a variety of responses may be necessary to deal with such incidents. In responding to these incidents, the interests of the pupil(s) involved must be balanced with the safety and welfare of other pupils and members of the school community.
- Pupils informing staff of substance use issues cannot be guaranteed confidentiality.
- In some instances, the school may deem it necessary to inform the Gardaí, Health Authority or other relevant external agency.
- The reporting, investigation, recording and disciplinary action in all cases will be dealt with sensitively.

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<sup>1</sup> School related events include any event organised by the school or involving pupils representing or being associated with the school.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### The Principal

- ~ Has overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy.
- ~ Contribute to the development and review of the Substance Use policy.

### The Deputy Principal

- ~ Where deemed necessary or appropriate, the Deputy Principal will take on the responsibility for the implementation for the policy.
- ~ Inform staff of relevant Substance Use awareness programme and in-service training.
- ~ Contribute to the development and review of the Substance Use policy.

### School Staff

- ~ Support and implement the Substance Use programme as part of the school's S.P.H.E. programme and other relevant programmes and syllabi.
- ~ Be vigilant for warning signs of Substance Use within the work, behaviour or appearance of pupils.

#### *Appendix A.*

- ~ Report any suspected or actual incidents involving Substance Use to the Principal / Deputy Principal.
- ~ Contribute to the development and review of the Substance Use policy.

### Pupils

- ~ Familiarise themselves with this Policy and co-operate in its implementation.
- ~ Report suspected and/or actual incidents of Substance to a member of staff.
- ~ Contribute to the development and review of the Substance Use policy.

### Parents

- ~ Familiarise themselves with this Policy and co-operate in its implementation.
- ~ Contribute to the development and review of the Substance Use policy.

## **Principles Agreed**

### Tobacco / Tobacco Substitutes

This school operates at a no smoking policy at all times throughout the buildings and grounds. Pupils must not smoke or use tobacco substitutes whilst in the Schools care e.g. on trips, or in circumstances where they are identified as part of the school community, e.g. on the way to and from

school. Smoking includes the use of e-cigarettes or tobacco substitutes as well as tobacco based products.

### Alcohol

The possession, use and/or supply of alcohol on during school hours or school events is prohibited for all members of the school community. Permission from the Manager or Principal must be sought before the organisation of any event involving the consumption of alcohol.

### Illegal Drugs

Should any substances be found in a pupils possession whilst in school, irrespective of whether for own use, passing, receiving, buying or selling, the pupil will be immediately isolated from other pupils and excluded from school pending further investigation. This will be a neutral action of removal until evidence or proof of wrong doing is available. Should investigation prove positive, permanent exclusion may result and the Gardai may be informed as a matter of course. Should any pupil voluntarily disclose possession of illegal substances, concern for the pupil's welfare and the welfare and safety of all members of the school community will be paramount. Appropriate support action will be instigated and the pupil may still be excluded from school pending further investigation.

### Solvents, 'Legal' Substances and Prescription Drugs

Intermediate School, Killorglin recognises that many ordinary substances lend themselves to misuse and therefore need to be carefully stored and managed. These solvents may include: glues, tippex, non-prescription medication and prescription medication among many others.

Misuse of these substances will be dealt with in a similar manner as illegal drugs.

### **Monitoring of the Policy**

The policy will be monitored on an on-going basis to ensure that it is of practical benefit to the school. The three areas are:

- Drug Education Programmes
- Managing Drug Related Incidents
- Parent, Staff and Management Training.

The results of the monitoring will be recorded and made available to the Principal.

The policy will be reviewed regularly. Teachers, Parents, Students and Management will be involved in the evaluation and review of this policy and any changes incorporated into the amended policy.

Dissemination of the Policy

Copies of the policy will be disseminated to all the school community. Students will be made aware of the policy as part of their drug education within the context of S.P.H.E.. The ratified policy will be made available to all members of the school community on request.

Ratified by: J. O'J. Wiper

Date: 30/11/20

## Appendix A

### Signs and Symptoms of Substance Abuse

#### Warning Signs in an Individual

- Changes in attendance
- Being unwilling to take part in school activities
- Unusual outbreaks of temper
- Marked mood swings
- Restlessness, irritability
- Reports from parents - more time spent away from home
- Excessive tiredness
- Unexplained sores, bruises or rashes around the mouth or other areas
- Excessive tiredness
- Loss of appetite
- Heavy use of scents such as perfume, sprays or deoderants

- Use of sunglasses at inappropriate times.

#### Warning Signs in Groups

- Regular absences
- Isolation from other pupils
- Rumours of Substance Use
- Talking to strangers near the school
- Use of drug related slang
- Exchanging goods or money in unusual circumstances
- Associating with much older people.

#### Objects associated with Substance Use

- Foil containers or cup shapes from foil - possibly discoloured from heating
- Spoons discoloured from heating
- Plastic, cellophane or metal foil wrappers
- Small plastic or glass bottles
- Straws
- Syringes
- Plastic bags or butane gas containers (solvent abuse)

- Cardboard or other tubes
- Stamps, stickers or other similar items
- Paper, approx 5cm square, folded to form an envelope
- Pill boxes
- Spent matches
- Twists of paper
- Sugar lumps
- Cigarette papers and lighters

