

Coláiste de hÍde



Meas - Bród - Comhar

Bóthar Chaisleán Thigh Motháin, Tamhlacht, Baile Átha Cliath 24.

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Substance Abuse Policy

Statement of Policy on Substance Abuse

This Policy encompasses students and staff of Coláiste de hÍde and as far as is possible, parents and visitors to the school.

- Coláiste de hÍde will not tolerate the misuse of drugs¹ or solvents by students of the school, nor the illegal supply or possession of these substances. Students who fail to comply with this policy will jeopardise their right to remain in Coláiste de hÍde. The disciplinary procedures against students involved in drug related incidents are available to parents/guardians and students from the Secretary's Office.
- It is illegal to smoke within the school buildings. Smoking within the school grounds is strictly prohibited.
- Coláiste de hÍde is committed to the health and safety of its members and will take action to safeguard their wellbeing.
- Coláiste de hÍde acknowledges the importance of its pastoral role in the welfare of young people, and through the general ethos of the school, will seek to persuade pupils in need of support to come forward.

In response to our shared concerns at a local and national level, we wish to state that as part of its care for the welfare of its pupils, the school believes it has a duty to inform and educate young people on the consequences of substance abuse. The school takes a pro-active stance on this matter, believing that health education is a vital part of the Personal and Social education of every pupil.

Fundamental to our school's values and practice is the principle of sharing the responsibility for education of young people with parents, by keeping them informed and involved at all times. Effective communication and co-operation is essential to the successful implementation of this policy.

1 A DRUG is defined as any chemical which causes change in the functioning of the human body either physically, mentally or emotionally.

DRUG ABUSE is defined as the use of any drug, legal or illegal, which damages some aspect of the user's life i.e. their mental, physical and emotional health, their relationships and their ability to perform effectively. This definition includes not only illegal drugs but also solvent abuse.

We believe and support the following educational aims with respect to substance abuse

- To enable pupils to make healthy, informed choices by increasing knowledge, challenging attitudes and developing and practising skills particularly in relation to self-esteem.
- To provide accurate information about substance abuse.

- To increase understanding about the implications and possible consequences of substance abuse.
- To encourage an understanding for those experiencing or likely to experience substance abuse.
- To enable young people to identify sources of appropriate personal support.

Self-esteem is the kernel of the school's Mission Statement. We understand that it is essential that all school personnel have adequate self-esteem as a first step towards non- reliance on drugs.

We will seek to implement this policy through the following methods:

- The Social, Personal and Health Education Programme to be taught in the school to all junior classes and a Pastoral Care Programme to be operative in every class.
- Speakers to be brought into the school regularly to speak to students, staff and parents.
- To ensure that all parents are informed about the school policy as regards drugs.
- To co-operate with the services in the region which are seeking to prohibit the abuse of drugs.
- Through emphasising physical and mental health.

1. Suspected Possession of drugs on School Premises

1. Student is brought to Principal and/or Deputy Principal
2. Principal and/or Deputy Principal outline the allegation to the student
3. If student does not comply parents are contacted
 - (a) Student may be put in contact with parents by phone in presence of Principal and/or Deputy Principal
 - (b) Parent(s) are asked to come to the school
4. Student is kept under supervision until parent(s) arrive.
5. If parent is unavailable contact a relative (School records should be kept up to date i.e. if both parents are working work numbers should be available)
6. If possession is confirmed please go to step 4 Procedure 2 page 5

2. A Student is found in Possession of drugs on School Premises

1. Confiscate substance where possible in presence of another teacher.
2. Student is accompanied to Principal and/or Deputy Principal's office.
3. Principal and/or Deputy Principal
 - (a) take possession of substance and record details
 - (b) will need to verify exact nature of substance e.g. via Gardaí
 - (a) take necessary steps to dispose of substance
 - (b) may also need to contact Social Services / Gardaí as appropriate
1. Parents are contacted, informed of circumstances and all procedures regarding possession of drugs by their student will be fully outlined and explained.
2. Student is questioned in presence of parents.
3. Student is given a minimum 3 day, out of school, suspension pending a report by the schools drug committee⁴. Student will be given specific tasks to undertake during this suspension e.g. visit to schools Guidance Counsellor and/or outside drug addiction counsellor, doctor, Gardaí, with project as necessary to fit circumstances.
4. Parents and student are also advised on local services available to student and family.
5. Incident recorded on school records.
6. Drug Committee will pass on their findings and recommendations to the Schools Board of Management.
7. The Board of Management will then make a decision and will inform parents on the outcome of that decision.
8. Parents will have the right of appeal through the Board of Management.

⁴ (a) Schools Drug Committee to include:
Principal and/or Deputy Principal, Appropriate Year Head, Class Teacher, Guidance Counsellor and another teacher elected by school staff.
The Committee will investigate the circumstances surrounding each particular case. Contact should be made with JLO and/or Community Officer (appropriate area) and Gardaí where necessary.

(a) Each case investigated will take into account the following;

- (i) Number of drug related offences
- (ii) Circumstances of drug misuse
- (iii) Students home and school background

3. A Student is Suspected of Dealing Drugs (distribution of drugs to other students be it profit or non-profit making) on School Premises - where a teacher suspects or where a student discloses that friend(s) or other students are dealing drugs⁵.

1. Contact Principal and/or Deputy Principal - all suspicions should be related to Principal and/or Deputy Principal.
2. Suspicion is investigated by School's Drug Committee. Principal and/or Deputy Principal should use all means at their disposal. May require:
 - Contact with Gardaí, JLO, Community Officer
 - Questioning of other students and their parents
 - Social Services
1. Student(s) activities are monitored.
2. If suspicions are proven parents are contacted, informed of circumstances and all procedures will be fully outlined and explained.
3. Student is questioned in presence of parents.
4. Student is given a minimum 3 day, out of school, suspension pending a report by the schools drug committee. Student will be given specific tasks to undertake during this suspension e.g. visit to schools Guidance Counsellor and/or outside drug addiction counsellor, doctor, Gardaí, with project as necessary to fit circumstances.
5. Parents and student are also advised on local services available to student and family.
6. Incident recorded on school records.
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8. The Board of Management will then make a decision and will inform parents on the outcome of that decision.
11. Parents will have right of appeal through the Board of Management.

4. A teacher suspects a student of being under the influence of drugs / solvents on school premises or any school functions⁶

1. If there is the slightest suspicion that a pupil is displaying the symptoms of having misused drugs, alcohol or solvents, seek medical advice or assistance. There is no general rule on the

⁵ Where a suspicion is based on disclosure by a student(s) the rights and anonymity of that/those student(s) will be upheld by the drug committee.

effects that substance misuse can have on people. Behaviour or moods may change, the student may become drowsy or sick. The effects of what they have misused may only be beginning, with the possibility that the pupil's condition may deteriorate. In which case, consider the following:

The pupil's safety: If the pupil has been experimenting with drugs, it is important to try and ascertain what he or she has been taking. This is purely from a medical/safety point of view. The risk of overdose is high with a young person experimenting, and the correct response could well save the pupil's life.

If the pupil is unconscious or there is concern about their state, call an ambulance; even if the pupil's friends say he or she is "only drunk", it is important that no risks are taken. It is also possible that the pupil may have taken something that their friends don't know about. While waiting for professional help, check the first aid procedure and act accordingly. Once medical danger has passed, the "in loco parentis" duty takes over. In all cases:

1. Inform Principal and/or Deputy Principal.
2. Call parents to assume physical responsibility.
3. If parents cannot be reached call Gardaí.
4. If student must be transported home
 - (a) Have another adult accompany you.
 - (b) Student should not be left unsupervised
 - (c) If a parent/guardian is not available the student may be left with a responsible adult, providing that adult agrees to assume the responsibility.
5. As soon as possible student should be questioned in presence of parents
6. Refer to Procedure 2 step 6 page 5

1. Voluntary Referral

Type One

Concerned Person (Parent, Teacher, Student etc.)

1. Notify Principal and/or Deputy Principal.
2. Student should be encouraged to meet with school guidance counsellor and/or teacher may seek advice of guidance counsellor.
3. Recommendations may include:

- (a) Internal referral: Parental support in conjunction with support of school pastoral care system and/or Psychological Support Service, CUMAS.
- (b) External Referral: Teen Counselling, Psychological Support Service and local statutory based drug services Tallaght Community Drugs Team

Type Two

Self-referral

1. Listen to the concerns of the student.
2. Notify Principal and/or Deputy Principal.
3. Student should be encouraged to meet with school guidance counsellor and/or teacher may seek advice of guidance counsellor.
4. Recommendations may include:
 - (a) Internal referral: Parental support in conjunction with support of school pastoral care system and/or Psychological Support Service.
 - (b) External Referral: Teen Counselling, Psychological Support Service.

Referral Services in Tallaght

1. Teen Counselling, Tallaght (in conjunction with Mater Dei Counselling Centre)

Address: Shalom
Raheen Park
Springfield
Baile Átha Cliath 24
Phone 462 3083 Mon - Fri (9.30 – 5.00) - no charge.
(Discipline problems also)

2. Tallaght Community Drugs Team

Address: 515 Main Road
Tallaght
Baile Átha Cliath 24
Phone 451 3894 – no charge (Alcohol and Drugs)

3. Tallaght Youth Service

Address: Main Road
Tallaght

Baile Átha Cliath 24
Phone: 451 6322
Youth Officer: Orla Ní Shúilleabháin
(Welcome Centre for 12 – 25 year olds)

4. St. Dominic's Community Resource

Marie Whelan or Eamonn Sower
Phone: 462 0624/414 8632

Tuesday afternoons – Streetwise Club – Group for 13-18 year olds. Young people on the edge.

5. The Local Doctor

6. National Drugs Help-Line 1800 459 459.

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