

Coláiste de hÍde



Meas - Bród - Comhar

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

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Substance Misuse Policy

1. Mission Statement and Scope of Policy

Tá sé mar aidhm againn i gColáiste de hÍde an bóthar a réiteach do gach aon dalta a lánacmhainn a bhaint amach le héascaíocht, go hintleachtúil, go fisiciúil, go spioradálta, go cultúrtha, go sóisialta agus go mothálach tré mheán na Gaeilge. Déantar iarracht ar leith ins an scoil féiniomhá dearfach a chothú i ngach aon duine, maille le meas a chothú iontu do gach duine, dá dtimpeallacht agus dá bpobal.

This policy applies to students and staff of Coláiste de hÍde, and, where practicable, to parents/guardians and visitors.

- Coláiste de hÍde strictly prohibits the illegal possession, use, supply or distribution of drugs and solvents by students and staff. Students found in breach of this policy may face disciplinary action up to and including exclusion.
- It is illegal to smoke or vape within school buildings. Smoking or vaping anywhere on school grounds is also strictly forbidden.
- The school is committed to the health, safety and wellbeing of all members of the school community and will take reasonable action to safeguard that wellbeing.
- We acknowledge our pastoral role in supporting young people and will encourage students in need of support to come forward. Substance education is an essential part of the Social, Personal & Health Education (SPHE) of every student.

Parents/guardians play a key role in education about substance use. The school is committed to keeping them informed and involved. Collaborative communication is essential to the successful implementation of this policy.

2. Definitions

Drug: any chemical that can alter physical, mental or emotional functioning. This includes illegal substances, legal pharmaceuticals used improperly, alcohol, nicotine, and solvents.

Substance Misuse: use of any drug (legal or illegal) in a way that harms the user's health, emotional wellbeing, relationships, education or functioning.

3. Educational Aims

Self-esteem and wellbeing underpin our Mission Statement in Coláiste de hÍde. Young people with strong support inside and outside of school are less likely to rely on substances. Staff aim to support students with respect to substance misuse with the following educational aims:

- Equip students with knowledge and skills to make healthy, informed choices and resist peer pressure.
- Provide accurate, age-appropriate information about substances and their effects.
- Increase understanding of the consequences and risks associated with misuse.
- Encourage empathy for people affected by substance issues and encourage help-seeking behaviour.
- Enable young people to identify sources of support within school and community.

4. Implementation

We seek to implement this policy through:

- SPHE curriculum in all year groups with age-appropriate substance education.
- An active pastoral care programme in the Wellbeing class across all year groups.
- Information sessions by external agencies for students, staff and parents when appropriate.
- Partnership with local and statutory services to deliver up-to-date supports.
- Emphasis on physical, emotional and mental health within the curriculum and the hidden curriculum.

5. Procedures for Incidents

5.1 Suspected Possession

The student is brought to Principal and/or Deputy Principal. The allegation is outlined to the student, and the parents are contacted. The student is supervised until the parent arrives. If a parent is unavailable, a relative is contacted. If possession is confirmed, proceed to 'Confirmed Possession' procedure at 5.2.

5.2 Confirmed Possession

The substance is confiscated safely and stored/ disposed of - the Gardaí may be contacted at this point. The parents are informed of the circumstances and the procedures regarding possession. The student may be questioned with parents present. The student is given a minimum 3-day suspension, pending the review of a disciplinary committee. This committee may be made up of the Principal, Deputy Principal, the appropriate Year Head, Class Teacher, Guidance Counsellor and another member of staff as appropriate. The student will be assigned support tasks during this suspension, for example referral to external support services, GP, Gardaí or to attend the school guidance counsellor as appropriate. The incident is recorded and reported to the Board of Management via the disciplinary committee. The Board of Management will then decide and inform parents of that decision. Parents retain the right of appeal through the Board of Management.

5.3 Suspected Distribution

All suspicions should be reported to the Principal and/or Deputy Principal immediately. The suspicion is investigated by the disciplinary committee. This investigation may involve contact with the Gardaí/ Juvenile Liaison Officer (JLO)/ external services/ other students and their parents. The students' activities are monitored. The student may be given a minimum 3-day suspension pending the report of the disciplinary committee. The follow-up steps are then the same as confirmed possession, see 5.2 above.

5.4 Student Under the Influence

If a student is displaying signs or symptoms of misuse, prioritise their medical safety and seek urgent medical assistance. From a medical and safety point of view, it is important to ascertain what the student has taken so the correct response can be initiated and no risks are taken. Once the medical danger has passed, staff is no longer *in loco parentis* and parents/ guardians must be contacted to assume physical responsibility. The student is supervised until the parent arrives. If parents are unavailable, contact the Gardaí. Follow possession procedure once immediate risk has passed, see 5.2 above.

6. Voluntary Referral Routes

Students and/or their parents may seek help voluntarily. All referrals are supportive, non-punitive, and handled with appropriate confidentiality.

Type A: Referral by a concerned person e.g. Parent, relative, teacher, another student – The concern should be reported to the Student Support Team via school management or the Guidance Counsellor. The student should be encouraged and supported to meet the Guidance Counsellor; internal or external support may be recommended.

Type B: Self-referral – The students' concerns will be listened to by the teacher they approached for help. The teacher should not promise confidentiality as they will then refer the student to the Student Support Team without delay. The Guidance Counsellor will meet with the student; internal or external supports may be recommended depending on the circumstances.

7. Referral and Support Services in Tallaght / Dublin South West

HSE Drugs & Alcohol Helpline – 1800 459 459

YoDA Youth Drug & Alcohol Service (HSE) – 01 921 4978

HSE Tallaght Addiction Services – 01 921 4950

Tallaght Community Drugs Team – 01 451 3894

Tallaght Drug & Alcohol Task Force – 01 464 9303

St. Dominic's Community Response Project – Local counselling & recovery support

Jobstown Assisting Drug Dependency (JADD) – Family & addiction support

Tallaght Addiction Support Project (TASP) – Community addiction support

Community Addiction Response Programme (CARP) – Counselling & family support

Alcoholics Anonymous – 01 842 0700

Narcotics Anonymous – 01 672 8000

Al-Anon Family Support – 01 873 2699

Samaritans – 116 123

Pieta – 1800 247 247 or text HELP to 51444

8. Review

This policy will be reviewed and updated in line with best practice, legislation, HSE guidance and community supports.