

INCHICRONAN CENTRAL NATIONAL SCHOOL CRUSHEEN R19551S

Substance Use Policy

Introduction

The central objective of the Inchicronan Central National School Substance Abuse Policy is the welfare, care and protection of every student, in line with the Education Act 1998 and the Education (Welfare) Act 2000. Inchicronan Central National School acknowledges that the school has an important role in terms of the education of children in relation to alcohol, tobacco, solvents and drugs. This policy reflects our school ethos and seeks to promote self-reliance, knowledge and skills to enable individuals within our school community to make healthy and safe choices. The school will endeavour to work closely with parents/guardians in the implementation of this policy to ensure the health and safety of each child.

Inchicronan Central National School recognises the serious danger that drug misuse can have on the individual and on the school community. The main objectives of this policy are to inform the school community on substance misuse and the strategies in place to empower the staff, parents and children.

This policy was developed in consultation with the staff, Board of Management (BOM) and Parents Association of Inchicronan Central National School in accordance with recommendations by the Department of Education and the Health Service Executive. It should be read in conjunction with the school Code of Behaviour and Administration of Medication Policy. This policy is applicable to all students, staff, parents and users of the school building during school time and during all school related activities.

Scope of Policy

This policy applies to students, teachers, auxiliary staff members, users of the school premises, visitors, i.e. every person who enters the building. It is applicable during school-time – including breaks and to ALL school related activities. It applies to the school building and grounds and to any area where a school related activity takes place, e.g. School Tour.

Aims of Policy

The aim of the substance use policy of Inchicronan Central NS is primary prevention. We aim to protect our pupils from the harmful effects of substance misuse and try to prevent them from using tobacco, alcohol, solvents and illegal drugs. We aim to develop in our pupils' better self-esteem, through providing a positive school climate and atmosphere and through giving our pupils age appropriate information from educational programmes.

Relationship to School's Mission, Vision and Aims

The characteristic spirit of this school has been developed and agreed with our partners in education. This substance use policy reflects the school policy by:

- Drawing together teachers, parents, Board of Management members in the committee responsible for formulating the policy

Rationale

Why is this policy necessary?

The world in which we live presents young people with many challenges, which affect their health and well-being. Exposure to alcohol, tobacco and drugs is part of this reality. Schools need to reflect upon how they might provide for the needs of their student cohort and respond appropriately to what are sometimes sensitive and emotive issues.

The Education Act 1998 provides that schools should promote the social and personal development of students and provide health education for them. The National Drugs Strategy '*Building on Experience*' is now government policy and it requires schools to have a substance use policy in place. The report from the National Advisory Committee on Drugs entitled '*Drug Use Prevention*' (November 2001) underlines the importance of schools developing substance use policies. The Social Personal and Health Education curriculum, of which substance misuse prevention education is an integral part, is a mandatory subject on the primary curriculum and must be taught to all primary pupils from junior infants to sixth class (DES Circular 022/2010).

Action 21 of the National Drugs Strategy (interim) 2009-2016 mandates the Department of Education and Skills to monitor the implementation of substance use policies in schools through the whole school evaluation process as operated by the Inspectorate. It is also mandated to ensure that best practice is disseminated to all schools.

The 1999 European School Survey Project on Alcohol and other Drugs (ESPAD) Report highlighted the seriousness of the problem among sixteen year olds in Ireland, as compared to the other 29 ESPAD countries surveyed. Alcohol was identified as being the dominant drug misused in Ireland whilst the use of tobacco and other drugs was above the ESPAD average.

For the population as a whole, alcohol consumption per capita in Ireland has increased by 41% in the period 1989 to 1999, while the other EU Member States showed either a decrease or a modest increase. Ireland now has the second highest per capita consumption of alcohol in the EU.

The school authority in Inchicronan Central NS has a moral and legal obligation to ensure compliance with the criminal law.

Definition

A drug can be defined as a chemical which alters how the body works, or how the person behaves or feels.

'Drugs' mentioned in this policy refer to any one or all of the following:

Over the counter (OTC) medicines

Prescription medicines

Tobacco/Nicotine/Vaping products

Alcohol

Solvents

Illegal Drugs

School Position on Substance Use

Smoking and Vaping

Inchicronan Central NS is a strictly no smoking or vaping. Staff, parents and students are not permitted to smoke cigarettes/vape on school premises, during school activities or on school tours. All persons on school premises must comply with the no smoking/vaping policy.

Alcohol

Inchicronan Central NS is a strictly no alcohol area. Staff, parents and students are not permitted to possess or consume alcohol on the premises during school activities or on school tours.

Solvents

Inchicronan Central NS forbids the misuse of solvents by staff, parents or students on the premises during school activities or on school tours. All solvents must be kept in a safe, secure place. Any use of solvents by students is forbidden unless under the direct supervision of a teacher.

Medication

Any administration or use of medication on school premises during school activities or on school tours must comply with the Inchicronan Central NS policy on Administration of Medication. Students are not permitted to share their medication under any circumstances.

Drugs

Staff, parents and students are prohibited from possession, use or supply of illicit drugs on school premises during school activities or on school tours.

Management of Alcohol, Tobacco, Vape and Drug-Related Incidents

Incidents involving the alcohol, tobacco, vape and drug use might be:

Use or suspected use of alcohol, tobacco, vape and/or drugs on the school premises or during a school-related activity

Intoxication

Disclosure about use

Possession of these substances

Training and Education

The Inchicronan Central National School Board of Management intend to provide a safe and secure learning environment for our students. We believe that education is power and therefore education concerning substance abuse will be taught to pupils through the Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) curriculum.

The school will provide information and organise training for staff and parents in the area of substance use.

Implementation Procedures

Copies of the policy were distributed to Board of Management members for ratification in Dec '22. When ratified and amended, copies were given to:

- All staff members
- Parents' Association
- School Community on request

Monitoring and Review Procedures

A record will be kept in school of all substance use incidents. A copy of this policy will be issued to all staff members and a reminder of its contents will be given at the first staff meeting of each year. A Board of Management member has agreed to take responsibility to monitor procedures annually and ensure they are being adhered to.

Policy Content

Management of Alcohol, Tobacco and Drug Related Incidents

The school Board of Management, staff, parents and stakeholders believe that young people are most at risk in relation to substance use in Inchicronan Central NS in recreational areas, on the way to and from school and at out of school related activities supervised by staff members of Inchicronan Central NS.

The school's shared understanding of a 'drug related incident' is:

- Any unusual or unbecoming behaviour resulting from intake or use of alcohol, tobacco or illegal drugs
- The sale or passing on of any illegal substance,
- The possession of alcohol, tobacco or illegal drugs on school grounds or at school related activities
- Disposal of drugs or related items (e.g. syringes) found on school property.

The reporting procedure for such incidents is:

Step 1: Witness to drug related incident informs teacher/staff member/Principal

Step 2: Principal inform parents/guardians

Step 3: Principal informs Chairperson of Board of Management

Step 4: Gardai informed depending on seriousness of incident

Step 5: Area Health Board informed for disposal of items

Parents will be involved by accepting the school's Code of Behaviour and Enrolment Policies. They will be informed of an incident involving their own child and will be asked to accept responsibility, co-operate with the school authorities and with the Gardaí if necessary.

Parents will be involved in incidents involving another child only if deemed necessary by the school authorities; if parents are aware that another child is involved in drug-related incidents under the scope of this policy they should inform the teacher, Principal or a Board member.

The role of the Board of Management is to:

- Ratify this policy
- Implement this policy
- Monitor and evaluate it
- To sponsor/provide training for staff members
- Make decisions involving critical incidents
- To deal with the media in the event of a critical incident.

This policy puts the following procedures in place to deal with an incident requiring medical intervention:

- 'Universal Precautions' will be applied; e.g. wearing of proper protective gloves etc., washing and making safe an area after an incident; provision of a specific bin to dispose of needles or other unsuitable appliances

- First Aid training has been given to staff members who are now qualified and certified to assist with medical emergencies
- A local doctor from a local practice has agreed to respond to a medical emergency in the school
- The Board of Management has devised a Critical Incident Policy.

The school has established an excellent rapport with the local Garda station and will invite representatives from the local Garda station to speak with senior pupils. Whether or not to inform the Gardai of minor incidents will be at the discretion of the Principal and the Chairperson of the Board of Management, but they will be involved in any serious substance abuse incidents.

At local level the following support agencies are available to which students involved in substance misuse might be referred:

- N.A. (Narcotics Anonymous)
- Child Care & Family Support Services
- Drug Education Officer
- Drug Helpline
- Juvenile Liaison Officer
- Community Garda

In the event of media interest in relation to a 'drug related incident', the matter will be referred to the Board of Management and the Chairperson will issue a prepared statement to the media.

Management of Persons in the Workplace Under The Influence of Drugs And/or Alcohol

The Board of Management shall ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that pupils and other persons in the workplace are not exposed to risks to their safety, health or welfare from persons under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol. The term "in the workplace", in the preceding sentence includes all school related activities taking place under the supervision of a teacher, with the Board's approval, and both within and away from the school premises.

Every school employee shall, while at work, ensure that he or she is not under the influence of an intoxicant as required by Section 13 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005.

Should the Principal and/or Deputy Principal have reasonable grounds to believe that a staff member is unfit for work, due to being under the influence of an intoxicant, the Principal and/or Deputy Principal shall ask that person to remove him/herself from the workplace, in the interests of the safety, health and welfare of the employee and others.

The Principal/ Deputy Principal will record details of the conversation referring to the Teaching Council Code of Professional Conduct for Teachers.

In the case of employees who are at work under the influence of an intoxicant, disciplinary procedures may be implemented.

Should the Principal and/or Deputy Principal have reasonable grounds to believe that an employee of any contractor is unfit for work, due to being under the influence of an intoxicant, the Principal and/or Deputy Principal shall ask the contractor to remove his/her employee from the workplace.

If a member of staff has reasonable grounds to believe any person, other than a staff member or employee of a contractor, is unfit to be on the premises, due to being under the influence of an intoxicant,

the staff member shall report his/her belief promptly to the Principal and/or Deputy Principal, who shall ask that person to remove him/herself from the workplace.

If a member of staff has reasonable grounds to believe that a parent or adult collecting a pupil from school or presenting themselves on the premises for another reason is unfit to be on the premises or to take care of the said pupil, the Principal and/or Deputy Principal will be informed and the duty of care will apply to the pupil. All necessary steps will be taken to protect the pupil and safeguard their best interests.

In the event that a staff member or any other person, referred to above, refuses a reasonable request to remove him/herself from the premises, the Principal and/or Deputy Principal may call the Gardaí to forcibly remove the person in question.

Records of all incidents and conversations relating to personnel above will be kept by the Principal/Deputy Principal.

The Board of Management acknowledges its responsibility in promoting the welfare at work of teachers. An Employee Assistance Service (Spectrum Life 1800 411 057) is available to teaching staff. In the event that substance abuse appears to be adversely affecting the performance and/or attendance pattern of any member of the teaching staff, the Board of Management may request such staff member to contact the Employee Assistance Service.

The Board of Management also acknowledges its responsibility in promoting the welfare at work of all other staff members. In the event that substance abuse appears to be adversely affecting the performance and/or attendance pattern of any member of the non-teaching staff, the Board of Management may request such staff member to seek counselling or other professional intervention.

All incidents, relating to the presence of persons at school, under the influence of an intoxicant, shall be recorded and reported as soon as possible to the Board of Management.

The Board of Management shall consider all such reports and decide on the appropriate action to be taken in the circumstances of each particular case.

Timeframe

The policy was ratified by the Board of Management of Inchicronan Central National School on 05/12/22.

The first annual review will be held on Nov/Dec '23 and procedures will be reviewed annually each Nov/Dec.

Signed: Shane Donnell
Chairperson of Board of Management

Date: 05/12/22