

St John Bosco Community College



St John Bosco Community College

Substance Misuse Policy

BOM Chairperson: _____

BOM Secretary: _____

DATE: _____

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Mission Statement

St. John Bosco Community College is an inclusive school both in our intake and in the curriculum which we provide. We aim to provide the highest standard of education for all our students. We aim to create a caring atmosphere where students are encouraged and helped to develop their unique gifts and talents.

Our core aim is the provision of an educational experience that is life enhancing for all, both student and teacher, a school that together with the home provides a happy environment where the Christian spirit is nurtured, the dignity of the individual is cherished, where diligence, courtesy, participation and respect are fostered and the code of behaviour is implemented for the good of the individual.

This statement is based on core values:

- Our school is a welcoming, secure and stimulating learning environment.
- Education is a partnership between school, parents/guardians and students.
- Our purpose is to develop each student's confidence, potential and moral values.
- The importance and value of all members of the school community should be at the heart of all decisions and actions.
- Every child in our care is entitled to learn in an environment, which is happy, caring and stimulating, where each individual can learn without fear of bullying or physical abuse, and where consideration, courtesy and respect is shown to all people at all times, in the context of a caring ethos.

Introduction

Our policy is shaped by the vision for St John Bosco Community College coupled with our school's ethos which aims to enable students to reach their full potential both academically and socially. The policy reflects the pastoral nature of our school, ensuring the wellbeing and safety of our students. It also helps to embed the ideals of the New Junior Cycle.

RATIONALE

This policy has been formulated to protect all the pupils and staff in this college. Issues outside the school encroach on the college community - one of these is the use of substances. It is likely that members of the school community have encountered substance use outside the college. The management of St John Bosco Community College recognise that the area of substance use is a very sensitive area with the potential to affect pupils and staff. The college in arriving at a policy to deal with the possession of, distribution of, and use of substances is conscious that each situation is unique and thus, a flexible response is required. By substances the college means legal drugs, illegal drugs and misuse of prescribed drugs, solvents etc. The college aspires to create the best environment in which to teach, learn and work. It promotes the growth and development of the whole person. The school has structures, which support the needs and welfare of pupils and staff. This policy applies to pupils and all staff – including teachers, clerical and ancillary- and to all those persons using the premises during the operation of the college including breaks and all involved and participating in school promoted and school related activities including school trips/outings.

Objectives

- Education concerning substance use
- Management of alcohol, tobacco and drug related instances
- Provision for training and staff development
- Provision for informing Parents/Guardians

Education concerning substance use: for students

Education about the use of drugs and the consequences of the misuse of substances will be provided as part of a broad, developmental S.P.H.E. programme. This education will be provided through specific modules as part of existing school subjects S.P.H.E./R.E. and through special seminars/ workshops. The programme will be provided as far as possible, by teachers with appropriate training in Drugs education and using pupil centred methodologies. School personnel will accompany outside speakers.

All students are encouraged to confide in teachers/tutors/year heads if they are concerned that other students may be misusing substances.

Management of Alcohol and Drug Related Incidents

The management of the school will respond to substance related incidents with discretion and consideration of the particular situation in the interest of the welfare of the individual and the general school population. The school will seek to balance its response between the pastoral and the disciplinary.

Duty of Staff

- A. The board of management requires all staff to report immediately, to school management, any incidents where pupils/employees/visitors
 - 1. Encounter the use/suspected use of alcohol/drugs on the school premises or during a school related activity (e.g. outing or tour).
 - 2. Exhibit symptoms/behaviour that may suggest the use of drugs/alcohol
 - 3. Are involved in the distribution, purchase or use of drugs/alcohol
 - 4. Discover suspect substances/ paraphernalia on the campus
- B. The college personnel will seek to establish the facts and to be clear about the nature of the incident before deciding on a course of action. There will be no assumption of guilt. Opinions will be stated as opinions, not facts.
- C. The pupil should not be confronted openly before his/her peers. There should be no assumption of guilt regarding substance misuse, as there is a variety of

conditions, which might mimic the suspected misuse of substances. The possession of tablets may be for medicinal use.

- D. The teacher is entitled to request the surrender of a suspicious substance. This should be done with minimal fuss. The teacher should not seek to search the pupil or his/her possessions. Where there is a refusal to co-operate the pupil should be brought to the Principal/Deputy Principal whose responsibility it is to proceed with the matter.
- E. The Principal/Deputy Principal will recognise that the health/safety and the wellbeing of the student/ students is paramount and will seek medical aid if deemed necessary. The student will be provided with the appropriate guidance and support they need.

Pastoral Care Team

The relevant support systems of the school will be mobilised: chaplain, guidance counsellors, S.P.H.E. Co-ordinators, Year head, Class Teacher etc. Where deemed necessary, legal advice will be sought. If illegal drugs/ paraphernalia is found on school premises the college will/may contact the Gardaí about its safe disposal. It is the responsibility of the Principal/ Deputy Principal to summon such persons as may be helpful to the issue. Teachers in their pastoral role may encounter changes in a student's behaviour and attitude on occasion, or over a period of time. This may be for a variety of reasons and may not necessarily be indicative of substance misuse. The role of the teacher carries a duty of care towards the pupil, which involves a degree of confidentiality. However, this does not preclude reporting a genuine suspicion or fear. The quality of the relationship between teacher and pupil is central to noticing a change in behaviour. Teachers should always discuss with colleagues and Year Head any significant altered behaviour or performance of a pupil. The Principal may decide in particular circumstances to opt for a counselling solution or he may involve the Board of Management in suspension (short term, long term). Return to school may depend on participation in an appropriate counselling/ addiction-counselling programme. Parental involvement and guarantees may also be required. The Principal will deal with any/all queries from the media.

PROVISION FOR TRAINING AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT.

The Board of Management of St John Bosco Community College is committed to training and staff development in the area of substance use.