

# **COLÁISTE CLAVIN**

## **REVISED SUBSTANCE USE POLICY**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The National Drugs Strategy highlights the significant contribution that schools can make in the prevention of substance misuse. The school is well aware that the exposure to tobacco, alcohol, behaviour altering substances and drugs is a reality for many young people today. The welfare and protection of our students have been central in prompting the school to address and respond to what are frequently sensitive issues.

### **SCOPE**

This policy applies to the entire school community, visitors to the school and workers employed at the school. For the purposes of this policy substance use refers to: a) use of alcohol, tobacco, e-cigarettes and vaping devices, b) use of illegal drugs, c) illicit use of other substances e.g. sprays, aerosols, chemicals, medicines and many other substances in daily use, d) Use of any substances such as psychotropic drugs that could adversely affect the health and well-being of students. The school at its discretion will determine what substances are deemed to be unacceptable for use or possession by students.

### **RELATION TO MISSION STATEMENT**

Coláiste Clavin's Mission Statement is student orientated and to meet student needs in relation to drugs education we present this substance use policy to protect the school community

### **RATIONALE**

- The National Drugs Strategy, "Building on Experience" requires schools to have a substance use policy in place.
- The Education Act 1998 places the onus on schools to promote social, personal and health education.
- To have fair and transparent procedures in place for dealing with any form of drug related incident.

### **POLICY**

1. Coláiste Clavin does not tolerate or condone, under any circumstances, the use, possession or supply of prohibited drugs, drug paraphernalia, behaviour altering substances or alcohol by anyone in the school, on school trips or during any school related activities.
2. Any student using, supplying or possessing illegal drugs on his/her way to and from school, during the school day or on school trips will be suspended from school immediately and may possibly be permanently excluded.
3. Smoking/Vaping on school grounds is forbidden by law. Any student who does so will be liable to suspension. Students are expected not to smoke/vape on their way to and from school, on school trips or on any other school-related

activity. Breaches of this will be subject to the normal school disciplinary system.

4. The parents of students taking prescribed medication are required to inform the school in writing of this.

#### **THIS POLICY AIMS TO:**

1. Provide information and education, within the resources available to the school, to the entire school community including all staff, students, their parents/guardians about the effects of substance misuse and its prevention
2. Provide students with the knowledge and skills which would enable them to make informed decisions
3. Increase the self-confidence, self-esteem and well-being of pupils
4. Help pupils to identify sources of support and intervention
5. Help adult members of the school community to recognise the symptoms of substance misuse.
6. Guarantee the safety of the whole school population in accordance with the Code of Behaviour
7. Provide a planned and considered response to incidents involving substance misuse with a view to the protection of the person involved and the maintenance of a safe environment for the wider school community

#### **MANAGEMENT OF ALCOHOL, TOBACCO BEHAVIOUR ALTERING SUBSTANCES AND DRUG RELATED-INSTANCES**

1. If it should become apparent that a student is under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs, the student will be immediately removed from class and put into the care of the principal, deputy principal, or class tutor. The student's parents will be contacted and as a matter of urgency will be required to collect the student from school. If necessary, medical attention will be sought for the student.
2. Where it is apparent that there is immediate danger to any member of the school community, the school reserves the right to suspend or remove temporarily from the school any student involved in a suspected abuse incident pending a further and complete investigation of the incident.
3. Any incidents and investigations of incidents will be submitted to Health and Safety on a health and safety incident report and on e-portal.
4. The school will take all steps necessary to fully investigate and assess any abuse incident. Parents will be informed of such investigations and will be invited to come to the school.

5. The Gardai will be informed of all incidents involving alcohol, behaviour altering substances or illegal drugs.
6. The school will take possession of any banned or prohibited substances and drug paraphernalia associated with a drug incident, carefully recording such items and retaining them pending completion of the investigation, unless otherwise instructed by the Gardai.
7. The school, at its own discretion, will liaise with any appropriate outside authority such as the HSE or other professional agencies.
8. In all cases every effort will be made to help the affected student and to seek pastoral and counselling support.
9. Students who are involved in alcohol or drug related incidents will be subject to the school's Code of Behaviour. Disciplinary measures will involve suspension and possible reference to the Board of Management for expulsion.
10. Any student found supplying illegal drugs or behaviour altering substances in the school or on school related activities will be suspended immediately and will be referred to the Board of Management for possible expulsion from the school.
11. In the case of a student being allowed to return to the school following a drug or alcohol related incident, the school reserves the right to stipulate whatever conditions, it deems necessary, to assist in his/her successful reinstatement in the school. These conditions may include external counselling, ongoing testing for drug abuse and ongoing consultations with external agencies such as Juvenile Liaison Officer, social worker etc.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

The school recognises the importance of limiting, as far as is practicable, the number of people involved in investigating a substance misuse incident. However, the school can give no absolute guarantee of confidentiality. In the event of any substance misuse incident or suspected substance misuse incident, the school will seek to strike a balance between the welfare of the pupil involved and the welfare of the school community as a whole and the reputation of the school.

## **MEDIA ENQUIRIES**

It is inappropriate for the school to comment on any individual matter when an investigation is in progress other than to outline its policy and procedures for dealing with incidents. However, in the interests of the school's reputation, the Board of Management may clarify the school's position regarding an incident after the investigation has been concluded. In dealing with media enquiries, the Principal or

Chairperson of the Board of Management will act as Spokesperson on behalf of the school.

### **PROGRAMME FOR ALCOHOL, DRUG, TOBACCO AND BEHAVIOUR ALTERING SUBSTANCES EDUCATION**

1. Coláiste Clavin will endeavour to provide appropriate education programmes for all its students
2. These programmes will be tailored for each age group and will be part of existing programmes being delivered in the school.
3. These are Social, Personal and Health Education, religion and Civic, Social and Political Education.
4. The school has in the past and will continue to invite outside agencies such as Crew Network, gardai, addiction counsellors etc to present their programme to students and parents alike.
5. Teachers will be offered appropriate in-service training as organised through the SPHE Network.
6. The school expects parents to support this policy by informing and educating their children regarding substance use and by assisting and co-operating fully with the school as it seeks to deal with any incidents.
7. To help and enable parents to fulfil this particular role, the school will provide them with information on what is happening in the school regarding these programmes and in conjunction with the Parents Association will continue to provide Drug Awareness Evenings.
8. The school accepts that the availability of drugs and alcohol is a fact of life for all young people today. The school agrees with the advice of the ISPCC which encourages parents to build the child's self esteem from an early age and, rather than a simplistic ban only, that parents should enter into dialogue, present information and have an open discussion. The overall approach should be to empower the child to make good and informed choices. Drugs education is an ongoing process.
9. The school will always seek to strike a reasonable balance between the welfare of the student/students involved, the welfare of the other members of the school community as a whole and the reputation of the school.

### **The ROLE OF PARENTS/GUARDIANS**

1. The school views parents/ guardians as essential partners in relation to informing and educating their children regarding substance use.

2. Parents/Guardians are expected to acknowledge the potential importance of this issue in the lives of their children and the importance of the school's substance use policy in supporting their children.
3. The school expects the active support of parents/ guardians as it seeks to deal fairly and effectively with any incidents of substance misuse that might arise.

### **MONITORING/REVIEWING/EVALUATION**

The school will monitor, review and evaluate this policy on an ongoing basis. The first review will occur one year after its introduction.

### **IMPLEMENTATION**

This policy will be disseminated to all members of the school community on the school website. It will be freely available, on request, from the school office. Students will be made aware of it as part of their SPHE Programme and it will also be referred to by class tutors during tutor periods.

Ratified by the Board of Management on **30<sup>th</sup> May 2006.**

**Revised: 14<sup>th</sup> April 2021**

DRUG RELATED INCIDENT  
REPORT FORM

STUDENT NAME \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

TIME \_\_\_\_\_

INCIDENT

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ACTION TAKEN

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