



St. Multose National School Policy on Substance Misuse

Date ratified by the Board of Management: 5th June 2019

Date of review:

Introductory Statement

This policy involves parents, teachers and the Board of Management. We believe that co-operation is essential to the acceptance and implementation of the policy.

Rationale

St. Multose National School recognises that drugs, both legal and illegal, are available in the local community and that the school, being part of this community, may have drug incidents which would need to be handled in a consistent and sensitive way. This school also acknowledges that it has an important role to play in drug education, both in terms of prevention and offering support to those who use drugs. Tusla and the local Gardaí may be consulted in situations where there are child protection/welfare concerns.

Relationship to Characteristic Spirit of the School

St. Multose N.S. believes that the personal and social development of each member of the school community is important. Education flourishes in an environment where good relationships are encouraged, where people feel valued and respected and where there is genuine tolerance, fairness and support for those in difficulty. This philosophy underpins and forms all the work we do and is central to the policy document.

The use of drugs in school

This school does not accept the possession, use or supply of drugs (whether legal or illegal) on the premises, on school trips or during extra-curricular activities by any member of the school community. The only exception is for legitimate medicinal use and the school would have to be officially informed in writing. **(See Administration of Medication Policy)** It has been agreed that a drug is "any substance that changes the way the body functions, mentally, physically or emotionally".

This policy focuses on four key areas:

1. Alcohol, Tobacco and Drug Education Programmes
2. Managing Drug Related Incidents
3. Training and Staff Development
4. Monitoring, Review and Evaluation.

1. Alcohol, Tobacco and Drug Education Programmes

St. Multose N.S. is committed to providing an age-appropriate education programme for all students which will be incorporated into the Social, Personal and Health Education programme currently running in the school.

Educational Aims

- To increase the self-esteem and confidence of the young people
- To equip young people with personal and social skills
- To enable young people to make informed, healthy and responsible choices
- To provide honest and age appropriate information on drugs, both those which are beneficial and those which are harmful and/or illegal
- To minimise the harm caused by drug misuse by offering supportive interventions.

Parents

Parents are to be made aware and informed of what is happening in the school with regard to drug education. Parents will also be consulted regularly if the need arises. If community courses are available, parents will be informed. The school will liaise with the Gardaí, specifically the Community Garda, Tusla, doctors, pupil

health nurses and Hugh Delahunty from Kinsale Youth Social Services and other relevant organisations as necessary.

2. Managing Alcohol, Tobacco and Drug Related Incidents

The school approach

We acknowledge that in all situations involving drugs, there needs to be a balance between the needs of the young person, the needs of the school community and the reputation of the school. Listening, separating fact from myth and support will be our initial approach to the situation.

Drug Incidents

The following are examples of a drug incident:

- Emergencies when the person may be unconscious
- Intoxication/unusual behaviour
- Suspicion/rumour of drug use, possession or dealing
- Disclosure by another person
- Possession of a legal/illegal drug on the school premises or on a school related activity. This includes smoking on school premises by all persons using school premises.
- Selling/supplying legal illegal drugs
- Person seeking help from a member of staff
- School grounds being used for drug activity
- Drug paraphernalia found on school property

Assessing a drug incident:

In all cases where there is no immediate danger to the young person/s, it is important to take time to assess the situation before responding. Complete the drug incident report form, including date, time and witnesses. (See addendum)

Recording procedure:

In situations of confirmed use/possession or supply, then all the details will be recorded and acted upon as per this policy and within the guidelines of the school Code of Behaviour/Anti-Bullying Policies. A written recording procedure will be used.

Managing a drug incident:

It is important in all suspected or confirmed drug incidents that a limited number of people are involved in managing the incident. People will be informed on a "need to know" basis. The principal, who is also the Designated Liaison Person (Fiona Giles) and person/s directly involved in the case will be informed and all written documentation will be held confidentially by the principal/Designated Liaison Person. (a report to the Board of Management will be made, in line with our school Child Safety Statement and National Child Protection Guidelines.

Parents/Guardians:

In all cases the school will want to involve the parents/guardians. This needs to be handled sensitively and wherever possible support offered to them. In the first instance, the Designated Liaison Person will offer this support. If the drug incident involves a parent/guardian or parents/guardians, the DLP may reserve the right not to involve one or both parents/guardians at this stage of the procedure. The security of the child/children is the driving force, as well as the security of the mandated persons.

Gardaí/Tusla:

It is agreed that the principal or a Designated Liaison Person will contact the local Garda Station to inform them of a confirmed drug incident. The DLP will prepare a Tusla report with any mandated persons and liaise with the duty/designated social worker/s. The Board of Management will be informed of all such communications.

Counselling / Pastoral Care:

The pastoral care system is our first response to a drug incident. For some young people their involvement with drugs may be masking some underlying difficulties and for others it may be a phase of experimentation, which they will pass through safely.

- In response to all incidents, pastoral support will be offered
- If the person has a serious drug problem, then referral to a drug treatment centre will be recommended
- Parents and staff involved in the incident will be offered support.

Confidentiality:

Teachers cannot offer total confidentiality to a young person who discloses drug involvement. We recognise the need for care in this area as the young person may be coming to the teacher because they trust him/her and need help. How this situation is handled will have an important bearing on the outcome. Information must remain private and only disclosed on a strict "need to know" basis. The young person and parents/guardians must be informed about what is happening and why. The well being and welfare of the young person and the teacher must be the prime focus. The school recognises that the issue of confidentiality is complex.

Media:

The Chairperson of the Board of Management will handle all media queries. The school will not comment on individual cases but will refer to the school policy and the procedures in place to manage any drug-related incident. The school's Critical Incident procedures may be implemented at this point.

3. Training and Staff Development

Staff:

- The Board of Management will make available training to staff involved in delivering Social, Personal and Health Education programmes
- All staff will be offered drug information and awareness training as necessary.
- Detailed and specific training will be made available to the Designated Liaison Person and key staff in relation to managing drug related incidents
- First aid/CPR training will be made available to all staff

Parents & Board of Management:

- The school will provide opportunities to attend information evenings and workshops on issues relating to drugs, should they arise. The Parent Association may take charge in planning these events. Information about talks and workshops in the locality will be circulated to parents. KYSS maintain useful links to useful organisations and are available to meet with and advise parents.

Young people:

- This school will offer all its pupils, age appropriate, drug education programmes within the context of their SPHE classes, particularly the Walk Tall Programme.

Review of the policy

The policy will be reviewed regularly and/or in the event of changing information/legislation, by the staff and Board of Management, in consultation with the wider school community.

Evaluation

Teachers, parents and Board of Management will be involved in the evaluation of this policy. Legal evaluation will be incorporated.

Ratification and Communication

Copies of the policy will be freely available in the school and is posted on our school website. Children will be made aware of the policy as part of their drugs education within the context of a Social and Personal Health Education Programme. The policy was ratified by the Board of Management on:

Date: 5th June 2019

Signed: 

St. Multose National School.

Report Form for Recording Incidents Involving Alcohol, Tobacco and Drug Use

Date:

Time:

Name of student(s) involved:

Location:

What happened? - include only the facts. What was seen? What was said? Who was involved?

Action taken:

Proposed follow-on action:

Report completed by:

Signature:

Signature of Designated Liaison Person: