

## **SUBSTANCE USE POLICY**

### 1) **TITLE OF POLICY**

The name of this policy will be: -

**The Substance Use Policy of St. Brigid's Girls' National School,  
Palmerstown, Dublin 20.**

### 2) **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.

### 3) **AIMS OF POLICY**

The aim of the substance use policy of St. Brigid's Girls' National School 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.

### 4) **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, our School Completions Programme officer and members of the local community in the committee responsible for formulating the policy, see Appendix 2.
- Including reference to substance use in the enrolment policy.
- Including reference to substance use in our Code of Discipline and School Rules.

## 5) **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 recent report from the National Advisory Committee on Drugs entitled 'Drug use prevention' (November 2001) underlines the importance of schools developing substance use policies.

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 St. Brigid's has a moral and legal obligation to ensure compliance with the criminal law..

## 6) **IMPLEMENTATION PROCEDURES**

Copies of the policy were distributed to Board of Management members for ratification in September 2005.

When ratified and amended, copies were given to: -

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

## 7) **TIMEFRAME**

This policy in its final draft was ready by June 2005. It was circulated to staff members, parents and Board of Management by late September 2005. The first annual review was held on 16 May 2006 and procedures will be reviewed annually each May.

## 8) MONITORING AND REVIEW PROCEDURES

A record will be kept in school of all substance use incidents.

There will be an annual meeting of this Drugs' Formation Policy Committee to monitor and review procedures to be held in May each year.

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.

## 9) POLICY CONTENT

### a) MANAGEMENT OF ALCOHOL, TOBACCO AND DRUG RELATED INCIDENTS

- The policy committee members believe that young people are most at risk in relation to substance use in St. Brigid's Girls' National School in recreational areas, on the way to and from school and at out of school related activities supervised by staff members of St. Brigid's G.N.S.
- Incidents relating to (a) alcohol, (b) tobacco and (c) drug use are addressed in the school's Code of Behaviour and the Enrolment Policy and pupils may be suspended or expelled if involved in any drug related incident.
- The school's shared understanding of a 'drug related incident' is: -
  - a) Any unusual or unbecoming behaviour resulting from intake or use of alcohol, tobacco or illegal drugs;
  - b) The sale or passing on of any illegal substance,
  - c) the possession of alcohol, tobacco or illegal drugs on school grounds or at school related activities,
  - d) 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 Gardai 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: -
  - a) Ratify this policy;
  - b) Implement this policy
  - c) Monitor and evaluate it;
  - d) To sponsor/provide training for staff members.
  - e) Make decisions involving critical incidents.
  - f) 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: -
  - i) ‘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 yellow bin to dispose of needles or other unsuitable appliances.
  - ii) First Aid training has been given to a staff member who is now qualified and certified to assist with medical emergencies.
  - iii) Copies of all relevant phone numbers are appended (see Appendix 1)
  - iv) A local doctor from a local practice has agreed to respond to a medical emergency in the school.
  - v) The Board of Management is currently devising a Critical Incident Policy.
- The school has established an excellent rapport with the local Garda station and will invite representatives from the local Gardai 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)	<b>01 672 8000</b>
➤ Child Care & Family Support Services	<b>01 626 8101</b>
➤ Drug Education Officer	<b>01 626 8101</b>
➤ Drug Helpline	<b>1800 341 900</b>
➤ Cherry Orchard Hospital (Pharmacy)	<b>01 620 6012</b>
➤ Juvenile Liaison Officer (Michael Heffernan)	<b>01 666 7242</b>
➤ Sgt. John Edgeworth, Community Garda	<b>01 666 7200</b>
➤ Al-Anon, Alateen Family Groups	<b>01 873 2699</b>
➤ Cathleen Lockwood, Palmerstown Pioneers Assoc.	<b>01 626 7158</b>
- 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.

Amended 17<sup>th</sup> October 2005

Amended 16<sup>th</sup> October 2006

Amended 28<sup>th</sup> May 2009

## **APPENDIX 1**

Al-Anon, Alateen Family Groups	<b>01 873 2699</b>
Cathleen Lockwood, Palmerstown Pioneers Assoc.	<b>01 626 7158</b>
Chairman, Mr. Fergus Hayden	<b>01 626 7282</b>
Cherry Orchard Hospital (Pharmacy)	<b>01 620 6012</b>
Child & Family Centre, Ballyfermot	<b>01 626 8101</b>
Child Care & Family Support Services	<b>01 626 8101</b>
Chris Byrne, School Psychologist	<b>01 461 4883</b>
Drug Education Officer	<b>01 626 8101</b>
Drug Helpline	<b>1800 341 900</b>
Drugs/HIV Helpline	<b>1800 459 459</b>
Fire Brigade, Belgard Road, Tallaght	<b>01 457 1155</b>
Juvenile Liaison Officer (Michael Heffernan)	<b>01 666 7242</b>
N.A. (Narcotics Anonymous)	<b>01 672 8000</b>
National Educational Psychological Services	<b>01 461 4824</b>
Noeleen Conboy, Principal	<b>086 8398661</b>
School Inspector, Mr. Sean O'Diomasaigh	<b>087 2509254</b>
Sgt. John Edgeworth, Community Garda	<b>01 666 7200</b>
St. James Hospital	<b>01 416 2782</b>
Tallaght Hospital	<b>01 414 3500</b>

Dr. P. Sharpe Dr. H. Daly Dr. S. Maguire	} The Surgery, 31, Manor Road, Palmerstown, Dublin 20	<b>01 626 5672</b>
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**Drugs Advisory and Treatment Centre**  
Trinity Court, 30/31 Pearse Street,  
Dublin 2 **01 677 1122**

**Drugs/AIDS Services:**

- ❖ South Western Area Health Board,  
Bridge House, Ballyfermot, Dublin 10 **01 620 6400**
- ❖ East Coast Area Health Board,  
Centenary House, Dun Laoghaire **01 280 3335**
- ❖ Northern Area Health Board,  
Phisboro Tower, Dublin 7 **01 882 0300**

**Alcohol Services**

- ❖ East Coast Area Health Board:  
Baggot Street Community Alcohol Treatment Unit **01 660 7838**

## APPENDIX 2

### SUBSTANCE USE POLICY FORMATION COMMITTEE

	<u>PHONE</u>
Martin Casey, <b>(Parent)</b> 17, The Dingle, Woodfarm Acres, Palmerstown, Dublin 20	<b>087 2313550</b>
Michael Smith, <b>(S.C.P. Co-Ordinator)</b> C/o Pobal Scoil, Oak Court, Palmerstown, Dublin 20	<b>086 8111391</b>
Donal Ryan, <b>(Parent)</b> 44, The Coppice, Woodfarm Acres, Palmerstown, Dublin 20	<b>626 7520</b> <b>087 9720687</b>
Mary McGrath, <b>(Parent)</b> 17, Palmerstown Green, Palmerstown, Dublin 20	<b>626 8636</b>
Tony Stafford, <b>(Community Representative)</b> 19, Heather Grove, Palmerstown, Dublin 20	<b>087 2808750</b> <b>623 5768</b>
Deirdre Byrne, <b>(Member, Board Of Management)</b> 2, Heather Grove, Palmerstown, Dublin 20	<b>626 6034</b>
Noeleen Conboy, <b>(Principal)</b> St. Brigid's G.N.S. Palmerstown, Dublin 20	<b>626 5431</b> <b>086 8398661</b>