



Christian Brothers College

Substance Misuse Policy

17 December 2024

Substance Misuse Policy

Mission Statement

While firmly rooted in its Christian traditions, the CBC community strives to allow each individual student to grow and develop, and to ensure that the education it gives is suited to each generation of boys.

Definition

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

Context and Rationale

The world in which we live presents young people with many challenges that affect their health and well-being. Exposure to alcohol, tobacco, and substances 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 Minister of State for Health Promotion and the National Drugs Strategy launched *'Reducing Harm, Supporting Recovery'* which is now Government policy, and it requires schools to have a Substance Misuse Policy in place.

School-based interventions

Most universal prevention programmes take place in an educational setting. In Ireland, Substance Misuse Education in Primary and Post-Primary schools have been developed through Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE).

Building the capacity of young people to take charge of their own physical and mental health and wellbeing is at the heart of a whole-school health promotion approach to substance misuse. The Action Plan for Education (2017) aims to ensure resilience and personal wellbeing are integral parts of the education and training system.

Evidence suggests that comprehensive school-based programmes that combine social and personal development and provide information about substance misuse are more likely to be effective in preventing early substance misuse. This approach is a key component of Junior Cycle Wellbeing.

Schools have flexibility in designing their Wellbeing Programme to ensure that it suits their students and their local context. We are encouraged to work towards a shared vision and set of indicators which describe what is important. Active, responsible, connected, resilient, respected and aware are the six indicators which have been identified as central to wellbeing.

It is important to ensure that SPHE teachers and guidance counsellors are given the opportunity to avail of continuing professional development to build their capacity to deliver substance misuse education.

In addition, Wellbeing Guidelines and the Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice 2018-2023, provide a clear and rational structure to support the promotion of health and wellbeing in all schools.

School Policy

This Substance Misuse Policy sets out, in writing, the framework within which the whole College community manages issues relating to substance misuse. It reflects the unique ethos of the school and aims to develop a shared understanding of the term 'substances/drugs'. The partnership approach based on the 'whole school' model was used for the development of this policy. The policy applies to the entire school community.

In this policy, the word "**substance**" refers to any chemical substances, which alter the way, the body functions and/or the person behaves. "**Substances**" will include illegal drugs such as cannabis, ecstasy etc. and legally available drugs such as painkillers, alcohol, tobacco, which includes electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS) and heated tobacco products (HTPs) also called electronic cigarettes (known also as vaping), caffeine and solvents. Tippex and similar type products are also considered as "substances" under this policy.

Drug Definition – A term of varied usage.

In medicine, it refers to any substance with the potential to prevent or cure disease or enhance physical or mental welfare, and in pharmacology to any chemical agent that alters the biochemical physiological processes of tissues or organisms. Hence, a drug is a substance that is, or could be, listed in a pharmacopoeia. In common usage, the term often refers specifically to psychoactive drugs, and often, even more specifically, to illicit drugs, of which there is non-medical use in addition to any medical use.

Professionals often seek to make the point that formulations of tobacco which includes electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS) and heated tobacco products (HTPs) also called electronic cigarettes (known as vaping), alcohol, and other substances in common non-medical use are also drugs in the sense of being taken at least in part for their psychoactive effects (World Health Organisation, WHO).

Christian Brothers College pursues a holistic ethos with the care and wellbeing of each student forming a core part of the school's philosophy of education. As an educational community we believe that the personal and social development of each member of the school community is important. Good relationships are fostered, people feel valued and respected and there is genuine tolerance, fairness and support for those in difficulty.

As a health promoting school, we have an important role in enabling students to enhance their resilience and improve their mental and emotional health and wellbeing.

The wellbeing of students is enhanced by:

- Providing a safe and healthy environment
- Promoting positive attitude towards physical, emotional and mental health
- Increasing knowledge about health
- Actively promoting self-esteem and self-awareness
- Working in partnership with parents/guardians and students

The world in which we live presents young people with many challenges which affect their health and wellbeing. Exposure to alcohol, tobacco and substances is part of this reality. We as a school community, aim to provide for the needs of our students and respond to what are sometimes sensitive issues. The use of non-prescribed substances, including tobacco and alcohol is illegal and has no place in the healthy environment that schools strive to achieve, so that students do not put themselves at risk of suffering damage or causing social harm. If an incident does occur the response will be in keeping with the College's Code of Positive Behaviour and Department of Education and Skills guidelines.

Programmes for Alcohol and Drug Education

The policy is focused on four key areas:

- Alcohol, Tobacco and Substance Education Programmes
- Managing Substance Misuse Related Incidents
- Training and Staff Development
- Monitoring, Review and Evaluation

The College is committed to providing a comprehensive and timetabled Substance Misuse Education programme for all students which will be incorporated into the Social Personal and Health Education Programme currently running in the school. This will be supported by other subject areas, including but not limited to the following: Religious Education, Physical Education, Science and Wellbeing programmes.

Our educational aims in relation to Substance Misuse Education are:

- To increase the self-esteem and confidence of the students
- To equip students with personal and social skills
- To enable students to make informed, healthy and responsible choices
- To provide honest and age-appropriate information on substance use and substance misuse.

These aims will be met through the following:

- Training and Staff Development
 - The College's policy is that all teachers involved in teaching SPHE are given the opportunity to avail of training in group facilitation skills and personal development through Oide and the College encourages staff to attend in-service and provides substitution for in-service attendance where possible.
 - Staff teaching Wellbeing are given the opportunity to attend further training in substance misuse programmes and related areas.

- External Agencies/Outside Speakers

Trained teachers are in the best position to carry out Substance Misuse Education but sometimes it may be appropriate to use external agencies/outside speaker(s) to supplement or reinforce the work done in the College. The contribution of external agencies to Substance Misuse Education complements the teaching that takes place across the curriculum. All external agencies/ speakers will be part of a co-ordinated approach involving other Substance Misuse Education programmes during the school's curriculum.

Procedures for Managing Alcohol, Tobacco, Drug Related or Substance Abuse Incidents

Managing Alcohol, Tobacco and Drug Related Incidents

The College acknowledges that in all situations involving substance misuse, there needs to be a balance between the needs of the young person and the needs of the College community. Listening, establishing facts and support for those involved will be our initial approach to the situation. The College's Code of Positive Behaviour will also apply.

Recognising Substance Misuse

Drug effects are strongly influenced by the amount taken, how much has been taken before, what the user wants and expects to happen, the surroundings in which it is taken, and the reactions of other people. All these influences are themselves tied up with social and cultural attitudes to and beliefs about drugs, as well as more general social conditions. The same person will react differently at different times. So, it is usually misleading to make simple cause-and-effect statements about drugs, such as 'drug X always causes condition 'Y'.

Substance misuse can often result in behavioural changes, and you may need some prior knowledge of the person to make an accurate comparison. Such changes can be obvious or very subtle and may be due to another reason totally unconnected with drug use.

Behavioural signs can include:

- Efforts to hide substance misuse through lying, evasiveness and secretive behaviour
- Sudden and regular changes of mood
- Bouts of talkative, excitable and overactive behaviour
- Unsatisfactory reasons for unexpected absences or broken promises
- More time spent away from home
- Changes in friendships
- Loss of appetite
- Unusually tired
- Unable to sleep at night
- Changes in priorities, including less concern with school/college, less care of personal appearance, non-attendance at usual recreational/leisure activities
- Efforts to get money for substance use, ranging from saving dinner or allowance money, borrowing from friends and relatives and selling own possessions, stealing from friends, school and home and involvement in petty crime
- Secretive behaviour
- Disruptive in school
- Not engaging in school curriculum activities.

Other possible signs include:

- Being very knowledgeable about substances and the local substance use scene
- A defensive attitude towards substances
- A defensive attitude towards substance use
- Unusual outbreaks of temper
- Absence from class and school
- Poor performance at school (academic or extra-curricular)

Correlates of Drug Use

Research with drug users has identified certain factors, or correlates, as being either positively or negatively associated with drug use.

A positive correlation indicates that drug use tends to occur when certain specific factors or variables are present, e.g.

- Knowledge of substances
- Intentions to use
- Impulsive behaviour
- Excessive personal stress
- Boredom
- Anti-social tendencies
- Scepticism about school Substance Misuse Education and media prevention efforts
- Peer pro-substance use attitudes and behaviour
- A lack of parental concern

A negative correlation indicates that substance misuse tends not to occur when other specified factors/variables are present e.g.

- Good self-esteem
- Liking school
- Achievements academically, sports or other interests

- Religious beliefs
- Optimism about future
- Parental intolerance of deviance
- Presence of rules and regulations in the home

It's important to remember that correlates do not necessarily indicate someone's reason to use or not use substances.

Substance misuse incidents

The following are examples of substance abuse incidents:

- Emergencies when the person may be unconscious
- Intoxication/unusual behaviour
- Suspicion/rumour of substance abuse
- Disclosure by another person
- Possession of a legal drug for non-medical use
- Possession of an illegal drug on the school premises or on a school related activity
- Selling/supplying illegal drugs/supplying legal drugs for non-medical use
- Person seeking help from a member of staff
- School grounds being used for substance use activity
- Substance use paraphernalia found on school property

Action Required

In all the listed incidents, it is essential to inform the College Principal or a Deputy Principal as soon as possible. Professional help should be contacted if necessary.

Assessing a substance misuse incident

Staff members should never respond to an incident on their own. All staff are advised to familiarise themselves with "*Responding to Critical Incidents – Resource Materials for Schools*" and the College's Critical Incident Plan. 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. The substance misuse incident report form should be completed (see **Appendix 1**).

Recording Procedure

All staff should be aware of the signs of substance misuse and be alert for changes in behaviour. Adolescence is a period of great change and rumour must not be taken as evidence of substance misuse. In all incidents the Principal is to be notified and the incident report form (see **Appendix 1**) will be completed by the relevant member of staff and submitted to the Principal.

Involvement and roles of various parties in an incident investigation

- Managing a substance misuse incident
In all suspected or confirmed substance misuse incidents only a limited number of people will be involved in managing the incident. People will be informed on a "need to know" basis. The Principal or Deputy Principals, Guidance Counsellors and person/s directly involved in the case will be informed and all written documentation will be held confidentially (as per GDPR) by the Principal. When a staff member identifies a substance misuse incident, it is important not to under or over-react. In case of queries, we will contact the HSE Substance Misuse Treatment Service for professional advice 1800 459 459.

- **Involvement of Parents/Guardians**
In any incident involving unauthorised substances the College will normally involve the student's parent/guardian. If by contacting parents/guardians a student's safety may be at risk the child protection procedures will be followed.
Parents/Guardians are encouraged to approach the College if they are concerned about any issue related to substance use and their son. The College may refer parents/guardians to other sources of help, such as the HSE Substance Misuse Treatment Service.
- **An Garda Síochána**
The Principal or Deputy Principals will contact An Garda Síochána in the event of a suspicious substance being found on school grounds. This substance will be stored in a secure place until An Garda Síochána arrive.
- **Student Support/Counselling**
For some young people, their involvement with substance use may be masking some underlying difficulties and for others it may be a phase of experimentation which they will pass through safely. Appropriate counselling may be offered, or outside professional help may be recommended. If the student has a substance use problem, then a referral to GP/SouthDoc/Emergency Department and/or the HSE Substance Misuse Treatment Service will be recommended.
- **Disciplinary Procedures**
Substance misuse incidents are complex and in situations where the school rules regarding substance misuse are broken the school's Code of Positive Behaviour will be implemented.
- **Confidentiality**
Staff cannot offer total confidentiality to a young person (this is explained in SPHE classes). A student who makes a disclosure regarding substance misuse will be informed that this information will be made known to the Principal. The wellbeing and welfare of the student will be the primary focus.
- **Media**
The Principal or a nominated spokesperson will handle all media queries. Staff will not comment on any individual case but will refer all queries to the Principal or nominated person.
- **Parents/Guardians and Boards of Management**
The College may provide opportunities for parents/guardians and Board of Management members to attend information evenings, etc. on issues relating to substance misuse and the updating and review of the school's Substance Misuse Policy.

Policy Review and Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed every two years.

Dissemination of the policy

The policy will be available on the College website.

Ratified by the Board of Management meeting on 16 December 2024

Signed: Laurence Porter
Chairperson of Board of Management

Date: 16/12/24

Signed: Paul Lorde
Principal

Date: 16/12/24

Incident Report Form for completion by member of teaching staff

Name of student(s):

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Date of incident(s) occurring:

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Details of Incident

Only details which are pertinent to the incident should be recorded. Please attach any written accounts by students.

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Signature of Teacher:		Date:	
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Signature of Year Head/ Deputy Principal/Principal:		Date:	
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(Sections 2/3/5/19/24)

Misuse of Drugs Acts 1977 & Criminal Justice (Psychoactive Substances) Bill 2010

Misuse of Drugs Acts 1977 An Act to prevent the misuse of certain dangerous or otherwise harmful drugs, to enable the Minister for Health to make for that purpose certain regulations in relation to such drugs, to enable that Minister to provide that certain substances shall be poisons for the purposes of the pharmacy acts, 1875 to 1962, to amend the pharmacopoeia act, 1931, the poisons act, 1961, the pharmacy act, 1962, and the health acts, 1947 to 1970, to repeal the dangerous drugs act, 1934 and section 78 of the health act, 1970, and to make certain other provisions in relation to the foregoing. [16th may, 1977]

Section 2

Controlled drugs (1) In this Act “controlled drug” means any substance, product or preparation (other than a substance, product or preparation specified in an order under subsection (3) of this section which is for the time being in force) which is either specified in the Schedule to this Act or is for the time being declared pursuant to subsection (2) of this section to be a controlled drug for the purposes of this Act.

Section 3

Restriction on possession of controlled drugs (2) A person who has a controlled drug in his possession in contravention of subsection (1) of this section shall be guilty of an offence.

Section 5**Regulations to prevent misuse of controlled drugs**

(1) For the purpose of preventing the misuse of controlled drugs, the Minister may make regulations—

(a) prohibiting absolutely, or permitting subject to such conditions or exceptions as may be specified in the regulations, or subject to any licence, permit or other form of authority as may be so specified—

- (i) the manufacture, production or preparation of controlled drugs,
- (ii) the importation or exportation of controlled drugs,
- (iii) the supply, the offering to supply or the distribution of controlled drugs,
- (iv) the transportation of controlled drugs,

Section 19**Occupiers etc. permitting certain activities to take place on land, vehicle or vessel to be guilty of an offence**

1. A person who is the occupier or is in control or is concerned in the management of any land, vehicle or vessel and who knowingly permits or suffers any of the following to take place on the land, vehicle or vessel, namely—

- i. the cultivation contrary to section 17 of this Act of opium poppy or any plant of the genus Cannabis,
- ii. the preparation of opium for smoking,

- iii. the preparation of cannabis for smoking,
- iv. the smoking of cannabis, cannabis resin or prepared opium,
- v. the manufacture, production or preparation of a controlled drug in contravention of regulations made under section 5 of this Act,
- vi. the importation or exportation of a controlled drug in contravention of such regulations,
- vii. the sale, supply or distribution of a controlled drug in contravention of such regulations,
- viii. any attempt so to contravene such regulations, or
- ix. the possession of a controlled drug in contravention of section 3 of this Act,
- x. shall be guilty of an offence.

Section 24

Powers to inspect and demand production of drugs, books or documents

(1) For the purpose of enforcing this Act and regulations made thereunder, a member of the Garda Síochána or a person authorised in that behalf by the Minister in writing may at all reasonable times—

- a. enter any building or other premises in which a person carries on business as a producer, manufacturer, seller or distributor of controlled drugs,
- b. require any such person, or any person employed in connection with such a business, to produce any controlled drugs which are in his possession or under his control,
- c. require any such person, or any person so employed, to produce any books, records or other documents which relate to transactions concerning controlled drugs and which are in his possession or under his control, and
- d. inspect any controlled drug, book, record or other document produced in pursuance of a requirement under this section.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE (PSYCHOACTIVE SUBSTANCES) ACT 2010

Section 1-Interpretation

(1) In this Act—

“Act of 1977” means the Misuse of Drugs Act 1977; “Advertisement” includes every form of **advertisement**, whether or not to the public, in a newspaper or other publication, on television or radio, by display of a notice, by electronic communication, including by means of the internet, or by any other means;

“**Consumption**”, in relation to a psychoactive substance, means to consume the substance (whether or not the substance concerned has been dissolved or dispersed in or diluted or mixed with any other substance)—

- (a) orally,
- (b) by smoking, insufflating or inhaling it,
- (c) by injecting it,
- (d) by applying it externally to the body of the person, or
- (e) by otherwise introducing it into the body of a person;

“**Controlled drug**” has the same meaning as it has in section 2 of the Act of 1977;

“**Psychoactive substance**” means a substance, product, preparation, plant, fungus or natural organism which has, when consumed by a person, the capacity to— (a) produce stimulation or depression of the central nervous system of the person, resulting in hallucinations or a significant disturbance in, or significant change to, motor function, thinking, behaviour, perception, awareness or mood, or (b) cause a state of dependence, including physical or psychological addiction;

Prohibition of sale, etc. of psychoactive substances

A person who sells a psychoactive substance knowing or being reckless as to whether that substance is being acquired or supplied for human consumption shall be guilty of an offence.