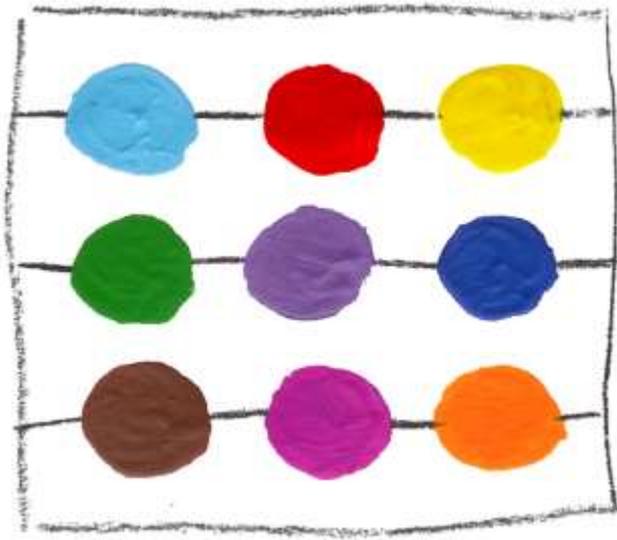


# Substance Use Policy



*Carrigaline Educate Together N.S.*

This document is intended to provide details of the main policies of Carrigaline Educate Together National School (CETNS). It is intended to help parents and guardians understand the environment and approach of the school. This document is regularly reviewed. All feedback is encouraged and welcome.

<b>Version</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Authors</b>
1.0	April 2013	First version of policy	Board of Management
2.0	October 2015	Review of policy	Board of Management

# Substance Use Policy

## **The purpose of this policy is:**

- To comply with requirements of the National Drugs Strategy 2001-2008: ‘Building on Experience’, which sets out a detailed programme of action to be implemented by Government Departments and Agencies to combat the very serious problem of drug misuse in our society
- To ensure the welfare, care and protection of every young person provided for in the Education Act, 1998 and the Education Welfare Act, 2000

## **This policy will apply to:**

- All staff, parents, pupils and school users

## **The policy will apply:**

- During school time including breaks and on all school related trips/activities

## **The following will be involved and their input will be managed in the following ways:**

- It will be a collaborative exercise between Board of Management, staff, parents and students

## **The following will be responsible for the implementation and on-going monitoring of the policy:**

- The Plans and Policy committee, principal, teachers, parents and staff

## **Title**

Substance Use Policy

## **Introductory Statement**

This policy on substance use is a statement in relation to substance use in our school. This draft policy on substance use was prepared by the policy committee made up of parents, Board of Management members and teachers

## **Rationale**

It is necessary to devise a policy on substance use at this time because:

- The National Drugs Strategy, ‘Building on Experience’, is now Government Policy and it requires schools to have a drugs policy in place (Action 43)
- Recent reports from the National Advisory Committee on Drugs underline the importance of schools developing drugs policies:
  1. To develop a shared understanding of the term ‘drugs’ and to define the school’s agreed position in relation to drug related issues
  2. To equip schools to deal with issues relating to substance misuse in a planned and considered way and in accordance with their statutory responsibilities
  3. To assist teachers in their classroom experience

## **Ethos of Carrigaline Educate Together N.S.**

Carrigaline Educate Together N.S. is one of a rapidly increasing number of multi-denominational schools throughout the country. The representative organisation for these schools is 'Educate Together'.

Educate Together aims to meet a growing need in Irish society for schools that recognise the developing diversity of Irish life and the modern need for democratic management structures. In particular, Educate Together guarantees children and parents of all faiths and none equal respect in the operation and governing of education.

The schools operated by the member associations of Educate Together are fully recognised by the Irish Department of Education and Science and work under the same regulations and funding structures as other national schools. However, they have a distinct ethos or governing spirit. This has been defined in the following terms:

- **Multi-denominational** i.e. all children having equal rights of access to the school, and children of all social, cultural and religious backgrounds being equally respected
- **Co-educational** and committed to encouraging all children to explore their full range of abilities and opportunities,
- **Child centred** in their approach to education
- **Democratically run** with active participation by parents in the daily life of the school, whilst positively affirming the professional role of the teachers (*Source: Educate Together Charter*)

Whilst the concepts of child-centredness and co-educationalism are now widely accepted in Irish primary education, what distinguishes the Educate Together schools is their hard work in developing a culturally inclusive and democratic ethos. This has pioneered unique approaches to inclusion of minority opinions and faiths in the Irish context.

The schools have developed education programmes which open the eyes of children to the naturally positive contribution that social, religious and cultural diversity and difference of viewpoint and opinion make to society.

The other characteristic feature of these schools is that they are democratically organised and governed. This maximises the potential for building a genuine partnership between the professional, objective role of the teacher and the necessarily personal involvement of the parent in contributing to their children's education.

*Information taken from the Educate Together website [www.educatetogether.ie](http://www.educatetogether.ie)*

Carrigaline Educate Together N.S. makes the distinction between denominational education and moral/religious education. The ethical curriculum followed by the school is called the Learn Together Curriculum. It is comprised of four strands: *Morality & Spirituality, Equality & Justice, Belief systems, Ethics & the environment.*

Denominational instruction will be facilitated by the school insofar as groups will be permitted to use the school premises. This is organised by parents outside of school hours

## Aims

### **We hope that the implementation of this policy will achieve the following:**

- To ensure the welfare, care and protection of every young person as provided for in the Education Act, 1998 and the Education Welfare Act, 2000
- To ensure that the school complies with legislative requirements and principles of good practice
- To provide pupils with information and skills through engagement with the Social Personal & Health Education (SPHE) curriculum
- To minimise the dangers caused to children by drug misuse and drug misusers within schools/communities
- To manage drug related incidents in a planned manner
- To support parents and pupils in addressing drug misuse

## Guidelines (content of policy)

### **The substance use policy will address issues in relation to**

- 1. Current provision regarding alcohol, tobacco, and drug education**
- 2. The management of substance-related incidents**
- 3. Legislation**
- 4. Staff Development**
- 5. Parental Involvement**
- 6. Links to other policies / procedures**

### **1. Current provision regarding alcohol, tobacco, and substance use education**

The programme will be school-based, developmental and delivered as recommended in the SPHE Curriculum for primary schools

- Information on alcohol, tobacco and substance use is provided through the Walk Tall Programme
- The school's definition of 'drugs' is as follows.  
*'A drug is any chemical which alters how the body works or how the person behaves or feels'.*
- The school will promote awareness with the assistance of the Gardaí and the Health Service Executive (HSE) e.g. nurse/doctor. Outside visitors/speakers are considered in the context of the SPHE programme
- Education concerning substance use is provided through the SPHE strand unit 'Taking Care of my Body'. This will take place every alternate year in the January and February. (see SPHE Whole School Plan)
- When inviting speakers teachers take into consideration **the** suitability of guest speakers **s** and brief them on suitable language to use with children. Class teachers will monitor their contribution.
- Any presentations by visiting speakers are made in the presence of the class teacher
- The school community is supportive of the substance use policy
- Pupils, teachers, staff, parents/guardians and users of the school building are aware of the substance use policy

### **2. The management of substance-related incidents**

- Incidents relating to (a) alcohol, (b) tobacco and (c) drug misuse in relation to children will be reported to parents and/or the HSE. Each Case will be dealt with on a case by case basis
- Incidents are reported by the principal to the Board of Management and they are dealt with accordingly
- School personnel have a shared understanding of a substance misuse incident
- A substance misuse incident is defined as:
  - *Use or suspected use on the school premises*

- *Intoxication/unusual behaviour*
- *Disclosure about use*
- *Finding these substances and/or associated paraphernalia*
- *Possession and/or supply on the school premises or during a school-related activity*
- *Use and/or supply off the school premises*
- School personnel respond to such incidents by reporting to the principal and the deputy in absence of the principal
- Procedures are in place if medical intervention is required: personnel suitably qualified in First Aid will assist and emergency services will be contacted if necessary
- The response to an incident involving alcohol, tobacco or drug use includes an appropriate referral to a support agency, e.g. HSE, Gardaí, NEPS. (This is not an exhaustive list)
- When investigating an incident, teachers are made aware of the need for confidentiality and the use of appropriate reporting procedures
- There is an agreed procedure for involving parents/guardians
  - The principal will meet with parents to discuss any incidents involving their own child
  - If parents have an accusation against another child they will discuss it with the principal
- The Gardaí and/or HSE may be involved in substance related incidents if necessary
- The principal will deal with media inquiries and will give advice to the school community regarding dealings with the media
- The support agencies which are available to assist pupils/staff involved in substance misuse incidents are HSE, Gardaí and NEPS. (This is not an exhaustive list)
- There are adequate mechanisms in place to enable the school to follow up on incidents, which may have taken place. The principal will follow up on incidents and correspond with the Gardaí and other support agencies where appropriate

### **3. Legislation**

- Legislation is complex and schools are advised to be proactive in developing a good working relationship with local Gardaí. The laws that are most relevant to the school are: Misuse of Drugs Acts, 1977 and 1984. Offences under these acts include “Possession with intent to supply” and “Possession for personal use”
- Staff should be sufficiently aware of laws relating to alcohol, tobacco and drug use and how they relate to themselves, to the school and its pupils

### **4. Staff Development**

- There is a shared understanding of the contribution SPHE can make to the prevention of substance misuse
- All staff are aware of the contribution they can make to the prevention of substance misuse within their own classrooms e.g. by developing a supportive class/school environment
- All staff members are sufficiently aware and sensitive to the signs and symptoms of substance misuse
- New staff in particular will be briefed on the substance use policy of the school

### **5. Parental Involvement**

- Parents/Guardians are informed of the school’s SPHE programme on substance use and the substance use policy: at the Infant information night and when letters are sent home before the topic is covered

### **6. Links to other policies / procedures**

- The following plans/policies also have a bearing on the substance use policy:
  - SPHE
  - Ethical
  - Admissions and Participation
  - Health and Safety

- Special Educational Needs
- Critical Incident Management
- Anti-Bullying
- Parental Involvement
- Administrations of Medicines

## Success Criteria

The practical indicators of the success of the policy include:

- The provision of welfare, care and protection of every young person as provided for in the Education Act, 1998 and the Education Welfare Act, 2000
- School compliance with legislative requirements and principles of good practice
- The provision of information and skills through engagement with the Social Personal & Health Education (SPHE) curriculum to pupils
- The minimisation of the dangers caused to children by drug misuse and drug misusers within schools/communities
- The management of drug-related incidents in a planned manner
- Positive feedback from parents in relation to addressing drug misuse
- Positive feedback from teachers, pupils, community, Gardaí, HSE and other related agencies
- Reduction of incidents relating to substance misuse

## Roles and Responsibility

The people who have particular responsibilities for aspects of the policy are the co-ordinating committee, class teacher, pupils, principal, parent/guardian, Gardaí, HSE

## Implementation Date

This policy was implemented in April 2013

## Timetable for Review

It will be necessary to review the plan in the light of changing information, legislation, feedback from parents/guardians, pupils, teachers, community, Gardaí, HSE and other support agencies

This plan is to be reviewed during the school year 2017/18

## Ratification & Communication

The proposed policy will be communicated to members of the Board of Management prior to the meeting of the BOM in November 2015

This plan was officially ratified by the BOM on \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Chairperson BOM

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Reference Section

- SPHE Curriculum
- Building on Experience National Drugs Strategy 2001-2008 Department of Tourism, Sport and Recreation
- Guidelines for Developing a School Substance Use Policy, DES, 2002
- Guidelines for Teachers of Students with General Learning Disabilities, NCCA, 2007
- Responding to Critical Incidents – Advice and Information Pack for Schools, National Educational Psychological Service
- Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures, DES, 2001
- Children First. National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children, Dept. of Health and Children, 1999
- Our Duty to Care, Dept. of Health and Children, 2002
- Walk Tall. Programme for the Prevention of Substance Misuse, Dublin West Education Centre
- Stay Safe Programme. Child Abuse Prevention Programme (CAPP), Bridge House, Cherry Orchard Hospital, Dublin 10
- Bí Folláin. A Programme for Social & Personal Education for Primary School. Standard Printers
  
- **Websites**

**Department of Education and Science**

**[www.education.ie](http://www.education.ie)**

**Department of Health and Children**

**[www.dohc.ie](http://www.dohc.ie)**

**Department of Tourism, Sport and Recreation**

**[www.tourism-sport](http://www.tourism-sport)**

**National Advisory Committee on Drugs**

**[www.nacd.ie](http://www.nacd.ie)**

**NCCA**

**[www.ncca.ie](http://www.ncca.ie)**

**PCSP**

**[www.pcsp.ie](http://www.pcsp.ie)**

**SDPS**

**[www.sdps.ie](http://www.sdps.ie)**

**NPC Primary**

**[www.npc.ie](http://www.npc.ie)**