

## **Raheen N.S. Substance Abuse Prevention Policy**

### **Introduction**

A drug can be defined as a chemical, which causes changes in the way the human body functions mentally, physically or emotionally. For the purpose of this policy we are concerned with drugs which have the power to change a previous mood and the way a person thinks about things, and drugs which the taker may become physically or more often psychologically dependent.

### **Aims**

The school sees itself as having a role in the process of enabling students to increase control over and improve their health. We endeavour to promote the wellbeing of students by:

- Providing a safe and healthy environment
- Promoting positive health behaviours
- Increasing knowledge about health
- Promoting the self-esteem and self-awareness of students
- Working in partnership with parents and pupils
- To this end, and in response to the encroaching drug culture in our society we feel the need to implement a comprehensive policy to address the problem of substance misuse.

### **The Policy will focus on:**

- Strategies for prevention of substance misuse problems i.e. Walk Tall, S.P.H.E., etc.
- Procedures for dealing with drug incidences in the school.
- Guidelines and information for teachers to improve their response to the problem of substance misuse.
- This document should read with the Code of Behaviour/Discipline policy of the school.

### **Implementation of the Policy**

This policy will be regularly evaluated and updated where necessary.

The school wishes to make clear that the primary role of substance use rests with the parents.

The school Substance Abuse Prevention Policy is implemented through the use of programmes from S.P.H.E. and Walk Tall and will also draw on the expertise available from the community i.e. Parents, Garda and HSE.

### **Smoking**

- The school is a restricted non-smoking area
- Students are not permitted to smoke or possess cigarettes on the school premises
- Visitors will comply with the restricted non-smoking policy
- Pupils found smoking on school premises will be reported to the Principal and parents will be informed
- Tobacco will not be permitted as a prize for school raffles
- We ask local Gardaí to visit schools and speak to classes

### **Alcohol**

- Pupils will not be allowed to consume alcohol in school or during any activities
- If the teacher is of the opinion that a student is under the influence of alcohol, s/he will immediately inform the Principal and consult on what action should be taken
- Where a student comes to school under the influence of alcohol, their parents will be called in to take them home
- Students breaking these rules will be dealt with according to the school's disciplinary procedure

### **Illicit Drugs and Solvents**

- Students are forbidden from being in the possession of or using illicit drugs or solvents on the school premises
- Use of spray deodorants or hair sprays is forbidden even at swimming pool.
- Illicit drugs found on school premises should be locked away and the Garda contacted to dispose of them. Teachers are advised not to transport illicit substances at any time
- If a teacher is of the opinion that a student is under the influence of illicit drugs or solvents, s/he will immediately inform the Principal and consult on what action should be taken
- The school Board of Management will expect parents to inform the Principal or teacher if they suspect their child of drug taking

In implementing this policy, due care will be taken in deciding on the balance between a pastoral and a disciplinary response.

Appropriate reporting and confidentiality will be observed in implementing this policy.

## **Relationships and Sexuality Education Policy**

### **Introductory Statement:**

The school has a responsibility to put in place an RSE policy as part of the wider social, personal and health education strand of the curriculum. This policy was reviewed in September 2015 by the staff of the school.

### **Rationale:**

The need for this policy arises from our schools obligation to provide for all the needs of the student body and respond appropriately to sensitive and emotive issues relating to emerging sexuality.

### **Aims:**

To enhance the personal development, wellbeing and self-esteem of each child

To enable each child to gain an understanding of and respect for human love, reproduction and sexual activity in a sensitive and measured way

To enable the child develop healthy friendships and relationships

### **Relationships to School Ethos:**

The school ethos affirms and supports close links between school and home. Parents have the right to withhold their children from participating in RSE classes. The class teacher sends out a consent form prior to the implementing the 'Busy Bodies' programme.

### **School Provision**

#### **Strand Units:**

Myself - Self identity, taking care of my body, growing and changing, safety and protection

Myself and Others – Myself and family, friends and relating to other people

Taking Care of My Body – Naming parts of the male and female body using appropriate terminology (Junior and Lower Middle classes). Identifying physical changes, understanding puberty and the reproductive system (Senior Classes)

Growing and Changing – The stages of development of a baby from conception to birth (Middle Classes). Understanding sexual relations within the context of a committed loving relationship (Senior Classes).

Teachers do not cover topics such as contraception and same sex friendships. Parents are usually informed if children ask questions on topics outside the curriculum and asked to talk to their child.

### **Methodology**

Circle time is used extensively in Junior Classes to build confidence and address fears. Boys and girls are taught together in all classes. Senior pupils are treated in a mature way and are encouraged to discuss issues that arise with their parents.

### **The Stay Safe and Walk Tall programmes:**

The Stay Safe programme is taught biannually. Aspects of the programme such as bullying are taught in all classes every term of every year. The class teacher delivers the 'Busy Bodies' programme to the 6th class every year, where issues such as physical and emotional development, bodily changes and sexual awakening are explored. Parental consent is sought in writing beforehand and an outline of the programme given to parents well in advance of the programme. The class-teacher stays in the classroom for the entire duration of any talks given to pupils by outside speakers.

### **Topics covered up to 2nd class include:**

- Naming bodily parts using correct terminology
- Bodily changes during growth and development
- Making and keeping friends
- Making age appropriate choices
- Appreciating family life
- Recognising and expressing feelings
- Self care, hygiene, diet, exercise and sleep (link with P.E. policy, Healthy Eating Policy and S.P.H.E. policy)
- Expressing opinions and listening to others
- Keeping safe

### **Topics covered from 3rd to 6th Classes include:**

- Bodily changes
- Healthy eating, personal hygiene, exercise
- Keeping safe
- Expressing feelings
- Family relationships
- Making healthy and responsible decisions
- Forming friendships
- Reproduction, conception (6th Class)

### **Guidelines for Management:**

Parents have the primary responsibility for educating their children in sexual matters. The school R.S.E. programme acts as a support to parents, and parents retain the right to withdraw their children from classes. The programme is taught within the ethos of the school and contemporary issues/topics are dealt with by the teacher at a level appropriate to the age and stage of development of pupils within a moral and spiritual framework. Teachers are present at all times when guest speakers are visiting a class.

### **Child Protection:**

The school follows the DES child protection procedures 2011 and has a Child Protection Policy in place with the Principal as Designated Liaison Person. In cases of disclosure the DLP will follow the procedures as set out in Children First.

### **Teacher Choice/Staff Development:**

The teacher's right to choose is enshrined in the policy and if teachers do not wish to teach specific aspects of the programme or require additional resources, a suitable speaker will be employed by the BoM. The teacher may need to plan the specific material to be covered and should be present during the talk.

### **The staff has availed of training in:**

The Child Abuse Prevention Programme (Stay Safe)

Relationships and Sexuality Programme (RSE)

Walk Tall Programme

Children First

Internet Safety and Social Media Awareness - Webwise

The whole school plan is available in the office. Each teacher is responsible for his/her long term and short term planning, comprising of a yearly and fortnightly scheme of work. A CuntasMiosuil is retained in the staff room filing cabinet.

### **School/Community Links:**

#### **The school is involved in;**

Camogie

CumannamBunscoil – football and hurling and rounders

School Choir

Community Games

Green school project

Credit Union Quiz

Tricks for sticks

**Assessment:**

- Teacher observation
- Inventory of what needs to be changed
- Ensuring all strands are covered
- Teacher designed tasks and tests and self-evaluation
- Feedback from pupils' parents
- Community feedback

**Roles and Responsibilities:**

The school community of BoM, staff, pupils and parents play a key role in the formulation and implementation of the plan.

**Review:**

This policy was reviewed in September 2015. This review involved the teaching staff. It will be reviewed again in 2017.

**Ratification and Communication:**

Following ratification by the Board of Management, this plan will be circulated to all staff members. A copy of the plan will be available to parents and guardians on the school website.

Signed by:

.....

.....

(Chairperson B.O.M) ...Principal.

Date

Date for review: November 2017.