

Substance Use Policy St Gabriel's Primary School

This policy applies to all students, staff members, users of the school premises and visitors. It is applicable during school-time, including breaks and to all school related activities. It applies to the school building, grounds and any area where a school related activity or tour takes place. The policy aims to provide for the needs of pupils and respond appropriately to issues involving illegal drugs, alcohol, tobacco, vapes etc. We endeavour to prevent pupils from using such substances through developing positive self-esteem and giving age appropriate information in the context of our Social, Personal and Health Education (S.P.H.E) programme. Parental education is overseen by our Home School Community Liaison teacher.

Management of Alcohol, Tobacco and Drug Related Incidents

In the event of an incident involving substance misuse, the school will offer as much support and help as possible to the parties involved. This may also include the engagement of the school's Code of Behaviour up to and including suspension or expulsion.

A drug related incident might include:

- The possession of alcohol, illegal drugs or related items on school grounds or at school related activities
- The sale or supply of an illegal substance
- Disposal of drugs or related items (e.g. syringes) on school property.
- Intoxication or unusual behaviour following the intake of alcohol, tobacco or illegal drugs
- Disclosure about the use of alcohol, tobacco, vapes or illegal drugs
- The possession of tobacco, e-cigarettes or vapes by persons under 18
- Smoking on the school premises. (Smoking is banned in the school in accordance with the Tobacco Acts 2002 and 2004.)

Reporting procedures

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: Gardaí informed depending on seriousness of incident

Step 5: Area Health Board informed for disposal of items where required.

It may be necessary to seek legal advice. A Child Protection referral may be made to Túsla, depending on the nature of the incident.

Parents 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 Gardaí 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 Principal or Deputy Principal.

Role of the Board of Management

- Ratify, implement and monitor this policy
- Provide for training for staff members
- Make decisions involving critical incidents
- Deal with the media in the event of a critical incident, in accordance with the critical incident policy.

Management of Persons in the Workplace under the Influence of Drugs and/or Alcohol

The Board of Management shall ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that pupils and other persons in the workplace are not exposed to risks to their safety, health or welfare from persons under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol. The term “in the workplace”, in the preceding sentence includes all school related activities taking place under the supervision of a teacher, with the Board’s approval, in and away from the school premises.

Every school employee shall, while at work, ensure that he or she is not under the influence of an intoxicant as required by Section 13, Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005.

Should the Principal and/or Deputy Principal have reasonable grounds to believe that a staff member is unfit for work, due to being under the influence of an intoxicant, the Principal and/or Deputy Principal shall ask that person to remove him/herself from the workplace, in the interests of health, safety and welfare of the employee and others. In the case of employees who are at work under the influence of an intoxicant, disciplinary procedures may be implemented.

Should the Principal and/or Deputy Principal have reasonable grounds to believe that an employee of any contractor is unfit for work, due to being under the influence of an intoxicant, the Principal and/or Deputy Principal shall ask the contractor to remove his/her employee from the workplace.

If a member of staff has reasonable grounds to believe any person, other than a staff member or employee of a contractor, is unfit to be on the premises, due to being under the influence of an intoxicant, the staff member shall report their belief promptly to the Principal and/or Deputy Principal, who shall ask that person to remove themselves from the workplace.

If a member of staff has reasonable grounds to believe that a parent or adult collecting a pupil from school or presenting themselves on the premises for another reason is unfit to be on the premises or unfit to take care of the said pupil, the Principal and/or Deputy Principal will be informed and the duty of care will apply to the pupil. All necessary steps will be taken to protect and safeguard the pupil. This may include contacting another family member, Tusla or Gardaí

In the event that a staff member or any other person, referred to above, refuses a reasonable request to remove him/herself from the premises, the Principal and/or Deputy Principal may call the Gardaí to forcibly remove the person in question.

The Board of Management acknowledges its responsibility in promoting the welfare at work of staff members. An Employee Assistance Service is available to staff. In the event that substance abuse appears to be adversely affecting the performance and/or attendance pattern of any member of the staff, the Board of Management may request such staff member to contact the Employee Assistance Service, seek counseling, attend for an occupational health assessment and/or other professional intervention.

All incidents, relating to the presence of persons at school or on the school premises, under the influence of an intoxicant, shall be recorded and reported as soon as possible to the Board of Management.

The Board of Management shall consider all such reports and decide on the appropriate action to be taken in the circumstances of each particular case.

Related policies, procedures and forms

Admissions & Participation
Administration of Medication
Anti-Bullying (Children)
Child Safeguarding Statement
Code of Behaviour
Critical Incident
Educational Trips
Special Educational Needs
Dangerous Occurrence Report Form
SPHE policy

Ratification and review: This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on April 8th 2024 and will be reviewed as necessary and at least within a four-year period.

Signed:

Chairperson of Board of Management

Date:

All school policies are available from the school office and/or on the school website