



Scoil Náisiúnta Baile Chaisleáin an Róistigh

Substance Use Policy

Reviewed in January 2020 by staff members

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. **Castletownroche N.S.** is committed to addressing the needs of the whole school in relation to substance use, noting that a drug is 'any substance that changes the way the body functions, mentally, physically or emotionally'.

Aims:

The aim of the substance use policy of **Castletownroche N.S.** is primarily 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 both now and in the future. 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 various educational programmes, including our school-wide SPHE curriculum.

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.

Castletownroche N.S. acknowledges that the school has an important role in terms of education, prevention, support and the handling of drug related incidents and proposes to work closely with parents/guardians to implement this policy, to ensure their child's health and safety. It is emphasised that the primary role of substance misuse and prevention rests with the pupils' parents/guardians.

Castletownroche N.S. is committed to enabling students to fulfil their academic, intellectual, moral, spiritual, social, cultural and physical potential and to fostering the development of personal responsibility in an atmosphere of tolerance, fairness and support.

Castletownroche N.S. endeavours to promote the wellbeing of students by:

- Providing a safe and healthy environment.
- Promoting positive healthy behaviour.
- Increasing knowledge about health and wellbeing.
- Promoting self-esteem and self-awareness of students.
- Working in partnership with parents and pupil.

Statement of School Position on Substance Use

Smoking and Tobacco/e-cigarettes/vaping pens

Castletownroche N.S. is a restricted smoking area as clearly indicated by signs on and around the school premises.

Students are not permitted to smoke or possess cigarettes on school premises, on school activities or on school tours.

All persons on the school premises are required to comply with the restricted smoking policy.

Alcohol

The school is an alcohol free zone. The Board of Management may grant exceptions for events organised by the Parents Association, for example raffle prizes (can only be collected by an adult). Students are not permitted to possess or consume alcohol on school premises, on school activities or on school trips.

Illicit Drugs

Students are prohibited from possession, use or supply of illicit drugs on school premises, on school activities or on school tours.

Solvents

The school does not accept the misuse of solvent-based substances.

All chemicals on the school premises are locked away and prohibited for student use unless under direct teacher supervision.

Medication

All use of medication on school premises, on school activities or on school trips should comply with Castletownroche N.S. policy on Administration of Medication.

No student may give another student any prescribed or over the counter medication.

Breaches of these rules

All breaches of the rules shall be considered to be serious misconduct.

Pupils found in breach of these rules will be dealt with in accordance with the procedures set out in the Castletownroche N.S. Code of Behaviour.

Our educational aims in relation to Drug Education are:

- To increase self-esteem and confidence of our students.
- To equip our students with personal and social skills.
- To enable our students to make informed, healthy and responsible choices.
- To provide clear and appropriate information on drugs.
- To minimise harm.

These aims will be achieved through:

- Staff
Participation in Drug awareness training, SPHE training or any other relevant training through regular in-service courses.
- Students
SPHE programme, incorporating Stay Safe and Walk Tall, Grow in Love
SESE programme, incorporating science
A health promoting environment.
- Parents

Drug information and awareness sessions can be organised if requested or if the need arises

- Whole School Community

Outside speakers on relevant topics for staff, students and parents as deemed appropriate.

Managing alcohol, tobacco and drug related incidents in Castletownroche N.S.

We, in **Castletownroche N.S.**, acknowledge that in all situations involving drugs, there needs to be a balance between the needs of the young person, the needs of the school community and the reputation of the school.

In all cases where there is no immediate danger to the young person/s, it is important to assess the situation. Listening, separating fact from myth and support will be our initial approach to the situation. Disciplinary procedures will be implemented if school rules are broken and expulsion will only be an option when all else has failed. A Drug Incident Form will need to be completed. (See APPENDIX 1). Sanctions and punishments will be implemented depending on the nature and severity of the offence.

The school's shared understanding of a 'drug related incident' is:

- Any unusual or unbecoming behaviour resulting from intake or use of alcohol, tobacco or illegal drugs
- The sale or passing on of any illegal substance,
- The possession of alcohol, tobacco or illegal drugs on school grounds or at school related activities
- 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 (record kept)
- Step 2:** Principal informs 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 (if applicable)

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 Gardaí if necessary.

Parents will be involved in the discussion of 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 Board of Management immediately.

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.

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 of the 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 the safety, health

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 his/her belief promptly to the Principal and/or Deputy Principal, who shall ask that person to remove him/herself 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 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 the pupil and safeguard their best interests.

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 role of the Board of Management is to:

- Ratify this policy
- Implement this policy
- Monitor and evaluate it
- To sponsor/provide training for staff members
- Make decisions involving critical incidents
- To deal with the media in the event of a critical incident.

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/ Principal/ Deputy Principal will issue a prepared statement to the media. We will also contact our INTO district representative, NEPS and Túsla in order to receive additional support for staff and members of the school community where needed.

Ratification of Policy:

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on _____

Policy review:

In accordance with the systematic review of policies in Castletownroche N.S., this policy will be reviewed every 3 years or immediately following any serious incidences or if a need arises.

Staff will be informed that the review has been completed. The updated policy will be readily accessible to all members of the school community; a policy folder will be available in all classrooms, it will be published on the school website & will also be provided to the Parent's Association. A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department.

Signed: _____ Signed: _____
(Chairperson of Board of Management) (Principal)

Date: _____

Date of next review: January 2026

