



DE LA SALLE HIGH SCHOOL  
DOWNPATRICK

**SUBSTANCE ABUSE  
POLICY**

Definition of substance abuse. "The inappropriate and/or excessive use of psycho-active chemicals. Prescribed medication, illicit drugs and solvents". (Dept of Educ No 192/2/ Misuse of Drugs)

N.B. The possession and/or use of illicit drugs is a criminal offence. The school must comply with all legal requirements. Should a pupil be found in possession of an illicit substance the relevant authorities will be contacted. (i.e. Social Services, Police)

### The Context

The availability of substances is of growing concern and has become a significant factor in the prevailing pattern of abuse. The drug "culture" seriously impinges upon the "youth culture" of today. Our young people are exposed to conflicting value systems and guidance in their efforts to achieve initiation into adult society.

The school management of substance – related problems and incidents will take account of the full range of substances such as tobacco, e-cigs (any smoking paraphernalia), prescription drugs and alcohol.

The school will also take into consideration the level of maturity of the pupil, the degree and extent of his involvement in the substance abuse, the school's legal obligations and the pupil's entitlements. Because of the complexity of the issues involved in any substance abuse incident each case will be dealt with individually within the guidelines of the policy document.

### The Task

The task of the school within this area is framed within the overall academic and pastoral aims of the school and is governed by the ethos towards which the school aspires. This is detailed in the School Development Plan.

#### **The School's Specific Task in This Domain Is to:**

1. Develop and increase the self-esteem of our pupils
2. Create awareness about substance abuse issues and their associated problems
3. Provide comprehensive information to our pupils about various substances so that informed choices can be made
4. Promote the development of self-management skills especially the coping skills required to respond to social/peer pressure and to deal with the probability of the "offer situation".
5. Co-operate with outside agencies and consider and support behaviour modification strategies when dealing with a pupil who becomes involved in substance abuse.
6. The school will endeavour to deal with a pupil who becomes involved in substance abuse across most subject areas

7. Provide all staff with the appropriate training, to acquire the necessary skills and are aware of the current procedure to deal with incidents of substance abuse on school premises

### The Policy

In response to the task the school policy is to:

- Support Health Education in school by promoting the concept of preventive health education as part of the whole school process
- Provide a framework for dealing with actual substance abuse
- Provide guidelines for dealing with substance related problems
- Raise awareness of the issues by:
  - Training Staff
  - Providing information to parents
  - Liaison with parents and other agencies
- Co-operate with pupils, parents and outside agencies in any remedial or therapeutic efforts.

Matters relating to substance abuse are viewed within the context of the broad Pastoral Care Policy of the school. The emphasis will be placed upon a preventative rather than a reactive model of care. All teachers irrespective of their role are involved in the school's pastoral care provision.

### Implementation of the Policy

The school ensure that a health education programme is delivered in the school through the PD Programme. The Head of Personal Development will be responsible for the monitoring and evaluation of this programme.

As part of the Staff Development Programme of the school, Inset Days will be set aside to provide information and training for staff in substance abuse issues.

The school will update parents about substance abuse issues at regular intervals. Parents concerned about the issue of substance abuse can contact the Head of Pastoral Care in De La Salle High School.

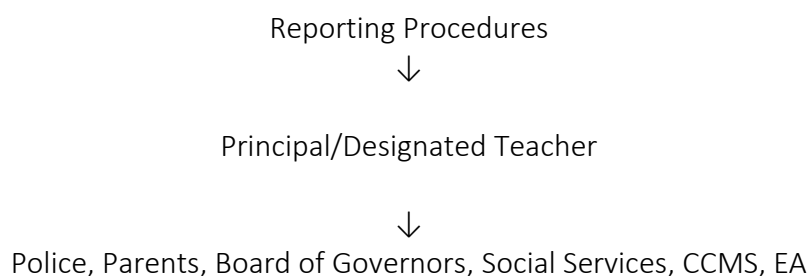
### School Response to Substance Abuse

A pupil who brings to school, attempts to engage in the sale, distribution, or sell illicit substances on the school property will be dealt with through the school Disciplinary Procedures. (See Appendix 1)

A pupil who comes to school or who is suspected to be under the influence of drugs while at school will be dealt with through the school Disciplinary Procedures (appendix 1).

### **Reporting Procedures**

The Principal/designated teacher will investigate and write a report on the incident. A written record will be kept of each stage in the reporting procedure. The incident will be reported to the Police, the Parents of the pupil/s involved, Social Services, the Board of Governors, CCMS and EA.



### **LEGAL POSTION**

#### **Legislation – The Misuse of Drugs Act 1971**

**Offences**     **Section 3** Importing of Controlled Drugs

**Section 4** Production/supply or offer to supply controlled drugs and be concerned in the production or supply of controlled drugs to be concerned in the making of an offer to supply controlled drugs.

**Section 5** Possession of controlled drugs (excluding possession with intent to supply to another)

Defences – To be in the possession of controlled drugs (excluding possession with intent to supply to another) S.5 (4). In any proceedings for an offence under section 5 (2) of this Act in which it is proved that the accused has a controlled drug in his possession, it shall be a defence for him to prove.

- (a) That knowing of suspecting it to be a controlled drug, he took possession of it for the purpose of preventing another from committing or continuing to commit an offence in connection with that drug and that as soon as possible after taking possession of it he took all such steps as were reasonably open to him to destroy the drug or to deliver it into the custody of a person lawfully entitled to take custody of it.

Or

- (b) The knowing or suspecting it to be a controlled drug, he took possession of it for the purpose of delivering it into the custody of a person lawfully entitled to take custody of it and he took all such steps as were reasonably open to deliver it into the custody of such a person.

### **Explanatory**

The first defence paragraph (a) is to cover the situation when, for example, a teacher or another adult in the school finds a pupil in possession of a controlled drug and takes it from him, providing that as soon as possible he either destroys the drug or delivers it to a person lawfully entitled to take possession of it, then that person will have a complete defence to unlawful possession.

The second defence paragraph (b) is to cover the situation when, for example, a teacher or another adult in the school finds a controlled drug on school premises – providing that as soon as possible he takes it to a person lawfully entitled to take possession of it then that person will have a complete defence to unlawful possession.

### **Controlled Drugs**

**Class A** – LSD, Cocaine, Heroin, MDMA, Ecstasy

**Class B** – Cannabis, Amphetamine

**N.B.** Neither list is exhaustive and reflects only the most commonly used drugs.

## APPENDIX 1

The Board of Governors will deal with each drug related incident in the school according to its seriousness, applying appropriate sanctions.

- The Disciplinary Sub Committee of the Board of Governors will meet with a CCMS representative, to ascertain the appropriate action to be taken by the school.
- The Sub Committee recommendation will be brought to the full Board of Governors for ratification.
- The sanctions available to the Board of Governors will be:
  - i. Pupil suspended from the school for a fixed period under investigation.
  - ii. Pupil undertakes a support programme organised by the school.
  - iii. Pupil expelled from the school.
- The support programme organised by the school will include elements of the following:
  - i. Support/Counselling from the school counsellor/an external agency.
  - ii. Completion of a drugs education programme facilitated by an outside agency.
  - iii. A daily monitoring report conducted by the school over a three month period.
  - iv. Involvement by PSNI Juvenile Officer after the three month period is completed.
  - v. Any other support deemed appropriate by the school.