

Substance Abuse

(Alcohol, Tobacco and Drug Use) Policy

INTRODUCTION

THE SCHOOL POSITION

Barraduff National School is committed to addressing the needs of the whole school in relation to drugs. The policy has been drawn up and accepted by the Principal, Teachers, Parents/Guardians, Board of Management and Students. It is necessary that all involved work together to implement this policy. It is vital that parents/guardians actively work with the school to implement this policy to ensure their children's health and safety. In this policy "Drug" means any substance which changes the way the body functions, mentally, physically or emotionally. The School recognises that drugs both legal and illegal are available in the local community and that the School, as part of that community, has an important role in terms of education, prevention, support and the handling of drug related incidents.

THE SCHOOL ETHOS

As stated in the School's mission statement, Barraduff National School is committed to enabling students to fulfil their academic, intellectual, moral, spiritual, social, cultural and physical potential. It also is committed to fostering the development of personal responsibility. This is the ethos which guides the School Health Policy.

- The School does not accept the possession, use or supply of illegal drugs in the school, or on outside activities or in non-school time by any member of the school community.
- The School does not accept the possession, use or supply of alcohol or tobacco in the school or on school activities by any student.
- The School does not accept the misuse of solvent based substances. Students may have prescribed or "over the counter" medicines for legitimate personal use only.
- Students who have in their possession and take medical drugs in school long term must inform the school.
- The School must be informed if a student has a medical condition and relevant teachers, e.g. Support teacher must be informed also.
- A student or teacher may not give another student any prescribed or "over the counter" medicine.

The policy is focused in four key areas:

1. Alcohol, Tobacco and Drug Education Programmes.
2. Managing Drug Related Incidents.
3. Training and Staff Development.
4. Monitoring, Review and Evaluation.

1. Alcohol, Tobacco and Drug Education Programmes.

The School is committed to providing an Alcohol, Tobacco and Drug Education Programme for all students. Our educational aims are:

- To increase the 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 decisions.
- To provide clear and age appropriate information on drugs.
- To minimise the harm caused by drug abuse by offering supportive interventions.

These aims will be achieved by:

1. A Health Promoting Co-ordinator.
2. Outside speakers are used where appropriate to reinforce the work done in class.
3. Parents/Guardians will be consulted on the need for drug education and will be informed of what is happening in the School. Drug information and drug awareness sessions are organised for parents annually.
4. Student Drug Education will be achieved through:
 - SPHE Programme (Walk Tall)
 - Outside speakers where appropriate.

1. Managing Alcohol, Tobacco, Drug Related Incidents

We acknowledge that in all situations involving drugs, there needs to be a balance between the needs of the student, the needs of the school community, the reputation of the school and legal considerations. Assessing a drug incident: If there is no damage to the student/s, it is important to:

- Take time to listen and assess before responding.
- Separate fact from rumour.
- In situations of confirmed use or possession or supply all details must be recorded and acted upon.
- Then complete the drug incident report.

2. Managing a drug incident

A limited number of people are involved in all suspected or confirmed drug incidents. People will be informed on a "need to know" basis. All written records will be held confidentially by the Principal or Deputy Principal. Parents/Guardians will be involved. They will be informed sensitively and support offered to them. In the case of illegal drugs the Principal or Deputy Principal will contact Gardaí - Juvenile Liaison Officer, and any drugs will be dealt with by Gardaí. In response to all incidents, pastoral support will be offered.

If a student has a problem then referral will be recommended. Parents/Guardians, staff and other students involved in the incident will be offered support. Confidentiality is a complex issue. It is important that the limits of confidentiality are discussed with students before any disclosure is made. The wellbeing and welfare of the student and teacher must be a primary focus.

The Principal or Deputy Principal will handle all media enquiries. They will not comment on individual cases but will refer to the school policy and procedures in place to manage any drug related incident.

Disciplinary Procedures

Drug incidents are complex and in situations where the school rules regarding drugs are broken, sanctions and punishments will be implemented depending on the nature of the offence. These will be consistent with school rules (see the code of conduct).

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, and both within 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 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 Board of Management acknowledges its responsibility in promoting the welfare at work of teachers. An Employee Assistance Service (telephone: 1800 411 057 or e-mail: eas@vhics.ie) is available to teaching staff. In the event that substance abuse appears to be adversely affecting the performance and/or attendance pattern of any member of the teaching staff, the Board of Management may request such staff member to contact the Employee Assistance Service.

The Board of Management also acknowledges its responsibility in promoting the welfare at work of all other staff members. In the event that substance abuse appears to be adversely affecting the performance and/or attendance pattern of any member of the non-teaching staff, the Board of Management may request such staff member to seek counselling or other professional intervention.

All incidents, relating to the presence of persons at school, 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.

3. Training & Development

Staff

- The School facilitates training for staff involved in the SPHE programmes.
- Specific training will be made available to the Health Promoting Co-ordinator in relation to managing drug related incidents.
- First Aid training will be made available to all staff.

Parents/Guardians

Parents will be informed of this policy.

Students

Students in all classes will participate in the SPHE Programme on Drug misuse prevention (Walk Tall)

4. Monitoring the Policy, Review and Evaluation

The Health Promoting Co-Ordinator will monitor the policy once a year to ensure that it is of practical benefit to the School. The result will be recorded and made available to the Principal.

The areas of the following will be reviewed.

- Drug Education Programmes
- Managing Drug Related Incidents
- Parent and Staff Training

Evaluation

Teachers, Parents/Guardians, and the Board of Management will be involved in the evaluation of this policy when it has been in place for one year. Again, the three specified areas above will be evaluated.

Dissemination of Policy

Copies of this policy will be distributed to all the school community. It will be available also from the Principal's Office. Copies will be given to all new staff and parents of new pupils as part of their induction to the School. Students will be made aware of the policy within the context of the SPHE programme.

Ratification

This policy was ratified by the Board on:

Signed: Liam Warren Date: 20/03/2025
Chairperson Board of Management

Signed: Claire O'Halloran Date: 20/03/2025
Principal/Secretary to the Board of
Management

Appendix 1**Important Contact Numbers**

Killarney Garda Station	064-6671160
Killarney Ambulance Service	064-7731076

Local GP Practices

Deenagh Medical	064-6632205
Ross Medical	064 6632488
Killarney Medical Centre	064 6620628
Dr. Dan Kavanagh	064 6632988
Dr. Fiona Gallagher	064 6631716
Dr. Laura Malone	064 6632656

HSE South

Rathass, Tralee, Co. Kerry	066-7184500
19 Denny Street, Tralee	066-7184500
25 Denny Street, Tralee	066-7184571