



LE CHÉILE EDUCATE TOGETHER
NATIONAL SCHOOL
MORNINGTON ROAD
DROGHEDA
CO. LOUTH

Principal: Fiona Rock
Deputy Principal: Rosemary McGonagle
Roll No: 20146Q
Telephone: 041 9847427
Fax: 041 9847488
Email: lecheile.etsn@gmail.com
www.lecheileetsn.com

School Substance Use Policy

Introduction

This is the Substance Use Policy of Le Chéile ETNS.

Le Chéile ETNS is committed to addressing the needs of the whole school community regarding substance use. The school recognises it has an important role in terms of prevention education, support and handling of drug related incidents but its role is to support the parents /guardians who have the primary responsibility with respect to substance use education.

Definition of a 'Drug'

It has been agreed that a drug is any substance which changes how the body functions mentally, physically and emotionally

Scope

This policy applies to the entire school community, including pupils, all staff, parents/guardians, users of the school building and all visitors to the school. It applies at all times to the school building and grounds, all school related activities and trips.

Rationale

This policy is necessary because

- The world in which we live presents young people with many challenges in relation to alcohol, tobacco and drugs which affect their health and well-being.
- The school wishes to provide for the needs of their pupils and respond appropriately.
- The Education Act 1998 provides that school should promote the social and personal development of pupils and provide health education for them

The National Drugs Strategy 'Building on Experience' is government policy and requires that all schools have a substance use policy.

Relationship to the Characteristic Spirit of the school

This policy is in line with the Mission Statement of the school.

"To promote a philosophy of education in which no child is considered an outsider; which promotes the fullest development of ability irrespective of gender, class or stereotype; and which encapsulates this ethos in a democratic partnership uniquely combining the involvement of parents with the professional role of teachers.

"No child is an outsider"

This vision is promoted and enhanced by the implementation of this agreed policy on substance use.



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Objectives

This policy aims to

- To provide a comprehensive programme of substance misuse prevention education for all pupils in Le Chéile ETNS.
- To equip the school to deal with issues relating to substance use in a planned and considered way and in accordance with its statutory responsibilities
- To manage incidents of substance misuse in a clear and consistent manner
- To support parents and pupils in understanding and addressing substance misuse
- To minimise the dangers caused to young people by substance misuse within schools/communities

Content of the Policy

- A. Education concerning substance use
- B. Management of alcohol, tobacco and drug related incidents
- C. Provision for training and staff development
- D. Monitoring, Evaluating and Review.

A. Education concerning substance use

Our school will provide education concerning Substance Use within the broad context of the Social, Personal and Health curriculum.

The teachers will

- Provide opportunities for pupils to develop skills, be aware of values and attitudes and acquire age-appropriate knowledge regarding substance misuse prevention through S.P.H.E.
- Use the Walk Tall Programme as the resource in providing education concerning substances.
- Follow best practice guidelines (see attached Appendix A)

B. Management of alcohol, tobacco and drug related incidents:

The school will respond to incidents involving alcohol, tobacco, and drug use in a planned and considered way. In certain cases it may be necessary to seek legal advice.

A balance between a pastoral and a disciplinary approach will be used. It may be an appropriate response to an incident to also make a referral to a support agency.

All incidents will be recorded.

Smoking:

The school is a non-smoking area.

Students are not permitted to smoke or possess cigarettes on the school premises or in any other place during school related activities.

Pupils found smoking on the school premises or in any other place during school related activities will be reported to the principal and the parents will be informed.

The incident will subsequently be dealt with in accordance with the school Behaviour Policy.

Visitors will comply with the non smoking policy.



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Alcohol:

Pupils, staff, parents or visitors will not consume alcohol on the school premises or during school related activities.

However, if alcohol is required for an adult only school function permission shall be sought from the BOM. If a member of staff 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.

Parents /guardians will be informed immediately and asked to come and take the student home. If this is not possible the GP/medical services will be contacted.

The incident will subsequently be dealt with in accordance with the school Behaviour Policy.

Illicit drugs/ paraphernalia / solvents

Pupils, staff, parents and users /visitors to the school are prohibited from being in possession of or using illicit drugs, or misusing solvents in the school premises.

All solvents based products are locked away in a safe area.

The use of aerosols by pupils is forbidden.

In case of the actual possession of illegal drugs on the school premises or school related activities the following parties will be informed immediately.

- Principal
- Chairperson BOM
- Gardai
- Parents/ Guardians will be contacted and requested to present themselves at the school or the location of the school related activity where they will be informed of the incident

In the case where a member of staff suspects possession or influence of a substance the principal will be informed immediately and appropriate action will be taken in accordance with the following procedures.

Procedures in dealing with alcohol, tobacco and drug related incidents may include some or all of the following

- Assess the situation – the primary focus being the safety of the child that may be under the influence of the above named substances
- Contact Principal – the principal is informed and then parents/guardians. Others are informed on a need to know basis i.e. BOM, Gardai, outside agencies
- Contact Parents
- Seek medical help
- Record Incident – written factual account (See attached form - Appendix C)
- Referral to outside agency (See attached contact list, Drogheda Community Services – Appendix D)
- Contact Gardai
- Sanctions (*Code of behaviour*)
- Report (*refer to Child Protection Guidelines*)



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NOTES :

- In dealing with a drug related incident a balance will be struck between a pastoral and a disciplinary response. Refer to code of behaviour policy.
- It is school procedure not to respond or comment to the media in relation to a drug related incident unless the BOM has requested or sanctioned it.
- *Administration of Medicines* See school policy
- Confidentiality: People will be informed on a “need to know” basis. Parents /guardians will be involved. In the case of illegal drugs the Gardai will be informed by the principal.
- Appendices A and B refer to best practice guidelines as stated by the Primary Professional Development Service and the DES

C. Staff Training and Development

Staff will have access to training from different agencies. At present primary schools are assisted in this area by the Primary Professional Development Service

Drug Information and Awareness Training (HSE etc)

First Aid Training

Courses that are run in the local education centre are made known to the staff in the school

D. Monitor/Review and Evaluate

This policy will be reviewed in line with SPHE Plan every 2/3 yrs or should an incident occur which requires the policy to be reviewed/ amended, or should there be a change in legislation.

Success Criteria

- Feedback from all the stakeholders
- Education programme evident throughout the school
- Monitoring children’s behaviour
- If an incident occurs was the procedure outlined effective.

Ratify, circulate and implement the agreed policy

As the policy has now been ratified by the Board of Management it is circulated to all staff members and is available to everyone in the school community.

OCTOBER 2010



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APPENDIX A

BEST PRACTICE GUIDELINES

- The class teacher has the primary role and responsibility for the delivery of drug education in the school setting.
- Drug education must be delivered in the context of SPHE and must always include a balance of skills, values and age appropriate information.
- Scare tactics are ineffective and must not be used
- Young people's drug use must not be normalised. We must never give pupils the impression that all young people drink, smoke and use drugs.
- Information must be age, developmentally, culturally and environmentally appropriate. Information that is inappropriate may encourage experimentation/use
- An active learning approach is recommended
- Sensationalist approaches including testimonials are not appropriate and can be counterproductive as they glamorise drugs and drug users.
- Consistent implementation is crucial to effectiveness.
- Supplementary education must complement and not replace or duplicate the school curriculum
- All resources used must be approved in advance by the Principal/BOM and be in line with the ethos of the school and the School Substance Use Policy
- The teacher must be present and actively involved at all times.
- Any intervention without the direct involvement of the class teacher is inappropriate.
- Expectations of school based programmes need to be realistic. They cannot work miracles especially if they are not delivered consistently.
- All personnel engaging with pupils must use appropriate language, behaviour, operate in tandem with the ethos of the school, and in line with the Substance Use Policy, and work under the guidance and supervision of the class teacher at all times

***Primary Professional Development Service
~ The Substance Misuse Prevention Programme***



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APPENDIX B

Circular 0022/2010

To Chairpersons of Boards of Management and Principals of all Primary schools

Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) Best Practice Guidelines for Primary Schools

INTRODUCTION

The Department of Education and Science wishes to advise management authorities of the necessity to adhere to the following best practice guidelines to support the implementation of Social Personal and Health Education (SPHE) at primary level. SPHE is a mandatory curricular subject in all primary schools.

National and international research has consistently shown that the classroom teacher is the best placed professional to work sensitively and consistently with pupils and that s/he can have a powerful impact on influencing pupils' attitudes, values and behaviour in all aspects of health education in the school setting.

RESPONSIBILITY OF SCHOOLS

The Education Act (1998) states that :

A recognised school shall promote the moral, spiritual, social and personal development of students and provide health education for them, in consultation with their parents, having regard to the characteristic spirit of the school.

School management, principals and teachers have a duty to provide the best quality and most appropriate social, personal and health education for their pupils. They also have a duty to protect pupils in their care at all times from any potentially harmful, inappropriate or misguided resources, interventions or programmes.

SPHE: BEST PRACTICE APPROACHES

The following approaches represent best practice in the implementation of SPHE:

- A whole-school approach to the consistent implementation of SPHE is essential.
- The classroom teacher is responsible for the implementation of the SPHE curriculum.
- The teaching of SPHE is founded on an ongoing relationship between pupil and teacher based on trust, understanding, mutual respect and consistency of implementation.
- The SPHE curriculum is developmental and aims to foster the growth of pupils' social and personal skills in a holistic way.
- SPHE must include a substantial skills development element in addition to fostering health promoting values and attitudes using age appropriate information.
- Active learning is the principal teaching and learning approach recommended for the implementation of SPHE.
- Individual themes such as Relationships and Sexuality, Substance Misuse Prevention, Bereavement, Racism and Child Abuse Prevention should not be treated in isolation but rather in the context of the overall SPHE curriculum.



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VISITORS TO PRIMARY SCHOOLS: GUIDELINES

If schools wish to enhance or supplement the SPHE curriculum by inviting visitors to the classroom precise criteria must apply:

- External facilitators/tutors who contribute to the SPHE programme must be approved in advance by the principal and board of management (BOM). Visitors must work under the guidance and supervision of the classroom teacher, who must remain in the classroom with the pupils at all times and retain the central role in the delivery of the subject matter in SPHE lessons. Interventions without the direct involvement of the teacher is not appropriate. Visitors must never replace the class teacher. To do so would undermine the integrity of the curriculum, the credibility and professionalism of the teacher and school, and could compromise the safety and welfare of the pupils.
- Outside facilitators who contribute to the SPHE/RSE programme can play a valuable role in supplementing, complementing and supporting a planned, comprehensive and established SPHE programme.
- Any supplementary interventions must be age and stage appropriate, and should include evidence-based content and methodology and clear educational outcomes.
- All materials proposed for use must be approved in advance by the principal and BOM, be age and stage appropriate for pupils and be in line with the ethos of the school, and the principles of the SPHE curriculum. There is a need also to take account of all relevant school policies and procedures, including the school's child protection policy, RSE policy and substance misuse policy. The *SPHE Teacher Guidelines* (page 103) outline sample criteria for choosing appropriate resources.
- Interventions and external inputs should be evaluated by the school principal, teachers, and pupils (as appropriate) in terms of the content, approach, methodology and proposed learning outcomes.
- It is strongly recommended that parents are consulted and made aware of any visitor or agency proposing to engage with pupils in classrooms and schools.
- The school's SPHE coordinator may also help in the process of whole-school planning and coordination to support the effective implementation of SPHE/RSE.

PLEASE NOTE

Research findings indicate that the following teaching approaches have limited effect and are counterproductive to the effective implementation of SPHE. In light of this, schools are advised to avoid the following approaches:

Scare tactics

Information that induces fear, and exaggerates negative consequences, is inappropriate and counterproductive.

Sensationalist interventions

Interventions that glamorise or portray risky behaviour in an exciting way are inappropriate and can encourage inappropriate risk taking.

Testimonials

Stories focused on previous dangerous lifestyles can encourage the behaviour they were designed to prevent by creating heroes/heroines of individuals who give testimony.

Information only interventions

Programmes which are based on information alone are very limited in the learning outcomes they can achieve and can in fact be counterproductive in influencing values, attitudes and behaviour.

Information that is not age appropriate

Giving information to pupils about behaviours they are unlikely to engage in can be counterproductive in influencing values, attitudes and behaviour.

Once off/short term interventions

Short-term interventions, whether planned or in reaction to a crisis, are ineffective.

Normalising young people's risky behaviour

Giving the impression to young people, directly or indirectly, that all their peers will engage/are engaging in risky behaviours could put pressure on them to do things they would not otherwise do.



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Didactic approach

Didactic approaches which are solely directive in nature are ineffective in the successful implementation of SPHE.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Teachers who require information, advice, guidance, and support in assisting them to implement any aspect of the SPHE curriculum should contact the relevant support service to meet their professional development needs.

Information, advice, guidance, and support is also available from Local Health Service Executive (HSE) Education Officers (Addiction Services) and Health Promotion personnel.

Alan Wall
Principal Officer
Teacher Education Section
[March](#) 2010



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Le Chéile ETNS Substance Use Policy: Appendix C: Report Form

**REPORT FORM FOR RECORDING INCIDENTS INVOLVING
ALCOHOL, TOBACCO AND DRUG USE**

Date: _____

Name of Staff Member: _____

What happened? (Facts only) *What was seen? What was said? Who was involved?
What procedures were followed?*

What are your concerns? *Is this incident related to others?*



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Le Chéile ETNS Substance Use Policy : Appendix D : Drogheda Community Services

Drogheda Community Services

Villa Maria, 57 Fair Street, Drogheda, Co Louth.
Telephone 041-9836084 Fax 041-9834222 e-mail: dcs@edunet.ie
Established 1970

Catchment Area: Drogheda and its environs

Status: Registered charity, limited company

Treatment Facilities

In Patient	No
Out Patient	No
After Care	No
Halfway House	No
Counselling	Yes
Advisory Service	Yes
Employment Assistance Programme	No

Addictions Dealt With

Alcohol	Yes
Drugs	Yes
Smoking	No
Eating Disorders	No
Gambling	Yes
Prescribed Drugs	Yes

Services Designed for

Male Adult	Yes
Female Adult	Yes
Male Adolescent	Yes
Female Adolescent	Yes

Length of Treatment

In Patient	not applicable
Out Patient	as required
After Care	not applicable
Halfway House	not applicable

Qualified Staff

Medical Doctors	-
Psychiatrists	-
Psychologists	-
Nurses	part time
Counsellors	part time

Conditions of Acceptance

Open access and by appointment

Contact

Manager

Method of Payment

No charge

Treatment Methods & Services Provided

One to one counselling, bereavement counselling, family therapy