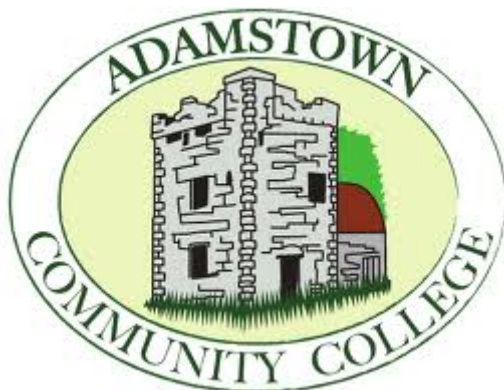


Adamstown Community College



Substance Misuse / Abuse Policy

Introduction:

Adamstown Community College is committed to addressing the concerns of the whole school community in relation to substance misuse / abuse. This policy applies to teachers and all other school staff, parents, pupils, the Board of Management and all users of the College premises. The policy applies at all times on the College premises, in the vicinity of the College and also on College related tours or outings.

This document should be read in conjunction with the College's Code of Behaviour/Discipline policy and the SPHE policy. It will be available to all the stakeholders of the College and to the community through the college website.

The College believes that the primary role of substance misuse prevention rests with parents/guardians.

Clear definition of drugs as understood by the College:

A Drug, without medical approval, can be defined as a chemical which causes changes in the way the human body functions, either mentally, physically or emotionally. "Drugs" include illegal drugs such as cannabis, ecstasy etc. and legally available drugs such as alcohol, tobacco and solvents.

Students, irrespective of social background or educational attainment, are at risk of becoming involved in substance misuse. The use of unprescribed drugs, including tobacco and alcohol, conflict with the healthy lifestyle which schools strive to promote amongst students.

Aims:

The aims of our Substance Misuse / Abuse Policy are as follows:

- The development of a framework for education concerning substance use/misuse.
- The development of a framework for the management of alcohol, tobacco and drugs related incidents.
- The provision for training and staff development.

Objectives:

The objectives of this policy are as follows:

- To develop positive self-esteem in our students and to give them the confidence, skills and knowledge necessary to make healthy life choices.
- To help students to appreciate their self-worth and the worth of others.
- To teach students a sense of responsibility for themselves and others.
- To help students develop strategies to assist in the prevention of substance misuse / abuse.
- To ensure teacher training in the various education programmes which relate to substance misuse / abuse.
- To provide guidelines and information for parents to give their children in relation to substance misuse / abuse.

- To ensure that the school has correct procedures in place for dealing with any substance misuse / abuse incident or possession which may arise in the College. See appendix 2 for procedures.
- To educate students to accept responsibility for their actions.

Instances of substance misuse / abuse, taking / possession as understood by the College:

The Substance Misuse / Abuse Policy relates to the following categories which apply to persons on the College premises or on College-related activities:

1. Substances which are affecting someone's behaviour.
2. Substances which are in someone's possession.
3. Substances which are being taken.
4. Any conversations made involving intended use, possession or sale of harmful and/or illegal substances.
5. Substances being given or sold.
6. Suspected overdose.

Rationale:

- 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 population and respond appropriately to what are sometimes sensitive and emotive issues. The Education Act 1998 provides that schools should promote social and personal development of students and provide health education for them.
- The National Drugs Strategy, 'Building on Experience' is now Government policy and it requires schools to have a substance use policy in place. (Guidelines October 2002).
- The recent report from the National Advisory Committee on Drugs entitled 'Drug use prevention' (November 2001) underlines the

importance of schools developing substance use / misuse policies.

- The 1999 European School Survey Project on Alcohol and other Drugs (ESPAD) Report highlighted the seriousness of the problem among sixteen years olds in Ireland. Alcohol was identified as being the dominant drug of misuse in Ireland whilst the use of tobacco and other drugs was above the ESPAD average.
- This policy will enable the College to provide suitable age-appropriate drugs education for our students.
- This policy will enable the College to respond appropriately to an issue involving alcohol, tobacco and other legal and illegal drugs.

This policy has been formulated to protect all the students and staff in this school. Issues outside the College that encroach on the College community - one of these is the use / misuse of substances. It is likely that members of the College community have encountered substance misuse outside the College. The management of Adamstown Community College recognise that the area of substance misuse is a very sensitive area with the potential to affect students and staff. The College, in arriving at a policy to deal with the possession of, distribution of, and use of substances, is conscious that each situation is unique and thus, a flexible response is required. By substances the College means legal drugs, illegal drugs, vapes /e-cigarettes, prescribed drugs unless prescribed by a medical professional to the student, solvents etc. This policy should be read as being in accordance with the College Code of Positive Behaviour.

Policy content:

This policy focuses on four areas

1. Education regarding Substance Use
2. Management of substance-related issues in the College
3. Training and Staff development

1. Education regarding substance use:

We believe that education in the College about alcohol, tobacco and drugs is most effective if provided in the broader context of Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE).

Through SPHE, our students will practise and develop specific skills and experience a value system which supports primary prevention in a holistic, caring, nurturing environment.

The content objectives of SPHE, relating to substance misuse, will be addressed in an age appropriate manner using SPHE time.

In addition, the College will draw on the expertise available within the community such as parents, Gardaí, Juvenile Liaison Officers, Health Board, the Education Staff of the Regional Drugs Task Force and the Support Staff of the PDST.

When inviting speakers to talk to students, the College will take care to ensure that all speakers are suitably qualified, have experience working with post-primary school students and work within the parameters of the College's SPHE programme and the school's ethos.

The Class Tutor should be present during visits of outside speakers if possible.

Management of substance-related issues in the school:

Smoking

- The College building and the vicinity around the school building is a non-smoking area (as per the Public Health (Tobacco) (Amendment) Act 2004).
- Students are not permitted to smoke or be in possession of cigarettes on the school premises or on any other school related activity.
- Visitors to the College will comply with the non-smoking policy.
- Students found smoking or in the possession of cigarettes, will be reported to the school management and parents/guardians will be

informed.

- School management may report students to the Environmental Protection Officer and they or their parents may be liable to a fine if prosecuted.

Alcohol

- The College premises is an alcohol free area.
- Students are not allowed to bring alcohol into the school, to consume alcohol in school or to consume alcohol during any school activities.
- If a teacher is of the opinion that a student is under the influence of alcohol, s/he will immediately inform the school management and consult on what action should be taken.
- Where a student comes on to the premises under the influence of alcohol, their parents will be called to take them home.
- Students breaking these regulations will be dealt with according to the College's Code of Behaviour.
- If a teacher or other adult comes to the College under the influence of alcohol, the Principal will take appropriate action.

Illicit Drugs and Solvents

- Students, staff and all visitors are forbidden to be in possession of, or using, illicit drugs or solvents on the College premises.
- Illicit drugs found on College premises should be locked away and the Gardaí contacted to dispose of them. Teachers should alert school management as soon as possible.
- If a member of staff is of the opinion that a student or adult is under the influence of illicit drugs or solvents, s/he will immediately inform the Principal and consult on what action should be taken.
- Where the College suspects distribution of illicit drugs, an investigation will be carried out where warranted. Parents of any students involved will be informed. The advice and assistance of the Garda Juvenile

Liaison Officer will be sought.

- The B.O.M. will expect parents to inform the Principal or teacher if they suspect their child of drug taking.
- The response to incidents involving substance misuse in the College will be largely of a pastoral, rather than a disciplinary nature depending on the severity of the incident.
- It may be considered necessary in certain circumstances to seek legal advice.
- A written account of all incidents will be kept by the College.

College personnel will seek to establish the facts and to be clear about the nature of the incident before deciding on a course of action. The student should not be confronted openly before his/her peers. There should be no assumption of guilt regarding substance misuse, as there are a variety of conditions, which might mimic the suspected misuse of substances. The possession of tablets may be for medicinal use.

The teacher is entitled to request the surrender of a suspicious substance. This should be done with minimal fuss. The teacher should not seek to search the student or his/her possessions or locker. Where there is a refusal to co-operate the student should be brought to the Principal/Deputy Principal. The Principal/Deputy Principal will recognise that the health/safety and the wellbeing of the student/students is paramount and will seek medical aid if deemed necessary. The student will be provided with the appropriate guidance and support they need.

The role of the teacher carries a duty of care towards the student, which involves a degree of confidentiality. However, this does not preclude reporting a genuine suspicion or fear. The quality of the relationship between teacher and student is central to noticing a change in behaviour. Teachers should always discuss with colleagues and Year Head any significant altered behaviour or performance of a student.

The Principal may decide in particular circumstances to opt for a counselling

solution or may involve the Board of Management in suspension (short term, long term). Return to the College may depend on participation in an appropriate counselling/ addiction-counselling programme. Parental involvement and guarantees may also be required. The Principal will deal with any/all queries from the media.

Training and staff development:

The Board of Management has an ongoing commitment to training and staff development. At present the school is assisted in this by the Professional Development Service for Teachers.

At all times teachers are encouraged to:

- Appreciate the contribution that the SPHE programme can make to the prevention of substance abuse
- Develop a supportive classroom environment
- Be aware of and sensitive to the signs and symptoms of substance misuse
- Become aware of the laws relating to alcohol, tobacco and drug use and how they relate to themselves and their students

Appendix 1

Need to find relevant phone numbers

Support Agencies:

DDLETB Psychological Support Service	01 4598446
HIV Helpline	1800 459 459
Drug Treatment Centre Board	01 6488600
Alcoholics Anonymous	01 8420700
Tallaght Hospital	01 4142000
Lucan Garda Station	01 6667300
Clondalkin Drugs Task Force	01 4579445
South-Western Regional Drugs Task Force	045 848538
Cumas / Cairdeas	01 4573515
Bawnogue Youth and Family Support Centre	01 4572938
Lucan Youth Services	01 6217640
Community Addiction Support Programme	01 6166750
Cuan Dara Detoxification Unit	01 6206050
Dochas Family Centre	01 6234531
Beacon of Light Counselling Centre	01 4578700

General Practitioners:

Applewood Primacare, Griffeen Avenue	6105022
Dr. John Barrett, Medical Centre, Superquinn SC, Lucan	6212528
Dr. Rita Connolly / Dr. Matt Lynch, 11 Ballyowen Road, Lucan	6240129
Finnstown Medical Centre	6212288

Appendix 2

Procedures for Categories

Substances affecting someone's behaviour

Symptoms might include a fall-off in work over time, dilated pupils, erratic or uncharacteristic behaviour.

Any staff member who is worried about the behaviour of a student should verbally report this to senior management. After consultation with the student, the Principal/Deputy Principal will discuss the matter with the referring member of staff. Year Head and Tutor should then be made aware of the situation. Casual discussion about the pupil in any form is inappropriate and unhelpful. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) will be informed by the Principal or Deputy Principal and the pupil may be referred for appropriate treatment.

Substances which are in someone's possession

A member of staff who finds a student in possession of any substance should immediately seek the assistance of any member of school staff or seek assistance from the Principal/Deputy Principal/Acting Principal. The student will be taken to an appropriate area. The Principal/Deputy Principal/Acting Principal asks the student to hand over the substance in their presence. The member of staff who found the student writes a report of the circumstances. If the student refuses to hand over the substance the parent(s)/guardian(s) will be informed by telephone, unless known home circumstances warrant disclosure in a more appropriate manner. The student will be kept in school, out of circulation, under supervision, until the parent(s)/guardian(s) arrives to discuss the situation with the Principal/Deputy Principal/Acting Principal. Failure to contact the Parent(s)/guardian(s) may necessitate the Gardai to be called.

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) and pupil will be made aware of consequences which may include:

- expulsion
- specific period of suspension

-other privileges may be withdrawn.

Substances which are being taken in school

The care and management of a pupil in this category is as above.

Any suspicious actions involving substances

A staff member should investigate any incident which arises that involves students, in a school context, in suspicious action concerning substances. A verbal report should then be given to the Principal/Deputy Principal/Acting Principal. The parent(s)/guardian(s) will be called to the College by the Principal/Deputy principal and informed of the situation. The student will be suspended from the College pending an investigation by the appropriate authorities and action taken according to the prevailing procedures.

Substances being given or sold

Any student involved in the selling or distribution of substances on school premises or school related activities will be reported to the Gardai and will be suspended from school pending a decision by the Board of Management on the matter. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) have the right to appeal any suspension or expulsion to the Board of Management.

Disciplinary action for student who takes illicit/illegal substances on to the College grounds

- The pupil being cautioned strongly by the Principal/Deputy Principal concerning the student's future in the school.
- A letter being sent to parent(s)/Guardian(s).
- Parent/Guardian and student obliged to enter into an individualised contract.
- Suspension from school and referral to the Board of Management.
- Reported to Gardai.

Appendix 3

Emergency Procedure in Suspected Overdose

1. Don't leave alone. Comfort. Reassure.
2. Seek medical help.
3. Attempt to determine drug taken.
 - (a) Ask the student.
 - (b) Ask friends/associates.
 - (c) Check locker/clothing if the situation is deemed an emergency.
 - (d) Be aware of odours.
4. Contact Parent(s)/Guardian(s).