

**St. Cuan's College,
Castleblakney
Ballinasloe, Co. Galway.**



Alcohol and Drug Use Policy

Ratified & Adopted by The Board of Management

MISSION STATEMENT

St. Cuan's College is a Catholic Diocesan Co-Educational College.

St. Cuan's College is dedicated to the academic, social, cultural and spiritual growth of its students. In this pursuit, we are devoted to achieving the highest attainable level of education and promoting the development of young men and women of strong moral character consistent with the school's Christian tradition.

We endeavour to create a stimulating, respectful and supportive environment for staff, students and families in which all are valued and encouraged to develop and share their unique talents. St. Cuan's College promotes further education beyond Leaving Certificate, inviting the local community to join us in our pursuit of personal development - mind, body and spirit.

The objective of St Cuan's drug use policy is to communicate the school's position on drug use and to outline the school's commitment to educate students about drug usage and to develop an understanding of personal responsibility.

- 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 drugs 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 must be informed as well.
- A student or teacher may not give another student any prescribed or “over the counter” medicine.
- Chemicals in school laboratories will be held under lock and key. Students will handle and use such substances only under their teacher’s supervision.
- Cigarettes (*in accordance with the Tobacco Smoking Prohibition Regulations of 2003*) and Electronic Cigarette smoking is prohibited on school grounds.

The policy is focused in three key areas:

- Alcohol and Drug Education Programmes
- Managing Alcohol and Drug Related Incidents
- Training and Development
- Monitoring, Review and Evaluation

1. Alcohol and Drug Education Programmes

The school is committed to providing an Alcohol 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 the following actions:

- Teachers offered Drug Awareness training, SPHE training or any relevant training through in-service training.
- Outside speakers are used where appropriate to reinforce the work done in class.
- 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.

- Student Drug Education will be achieved through:
 1. SPHE programme
 2. Science
 3. Outside speakers

2. Managing Alcohol and Drug Related Incidents

The school acknowledges 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. When assessing a drug incident, 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.
- Completion of a drug incident report.

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. The person/s suspecting, observing or receiving information in relation to an incidence of drug misuse will complete a 'Drugs Report Form' immediately and present the completed form to the Principal. 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 Gardai- Juvenile Liaison Officer, and any drugs will be dealt with by Gardai. 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 well-being and welfare of the student and the 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 alcohol/drugs are broken, sanctions and punishments will be implemented depending on the nature of the offence. These will be consistent with school rules. (see code of conduct).

3. Training & Development

We will provide:

Staff:

The school will facilitate training for staff involved in the SPHE programmes.

All staff will be offered drug information and awareness training regularly. Specific training will be made available to the Drug Co-Ordinator and key staff in relation to managing drug related incidents.

Parents/Guardians:

The school will provide opportunities to attend drug workshops, information evenings and sessions on the School Drugs Policy on an annual basis.

Students:

The school will offer all its students drug education programmes within the context of their SPHE classes. TY students will study First Aid.

4. Monitoring the Policy, Review and Evaluation

The Drug Policy Co-Ordinator will monitor the policy once a term 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:

- Drug Education Programmes
- Managing Drug related Incidents
- Parent, Staff and Management Training will be reviewed.

Evaluation

Teachers, Parents/Guardians, Students and the Board of Management will be involved in the evaluation of this policy on a biannual basis.

Dissemination of Policy

This policy will be available via St. Cuan's College website. It will also be available from the Principal's Office.

Students will be made aware of the policy within the context of St. Cuan's College SPHE programme.