

## SN Baile Mhic Adaim

### Substance Use

#### Introductory Statement

The whole school staff, parents and Board of Management of SN Baile Mhic Adaim drafted this policy on Substance Use. This project was co-ordinated by the school principal in April 2012.

#### Rationale

The whole school community deemed it necessary to formulate a policy on Substance use for the following reasons:

- The National Drugs Strategy, 'Building on Experience', is now Government Policy and it requires schools to have a drugs policy in place (Action 43)
- Recent reports from the National Advisory Committee on Drugs underline the importance of schools developing drugs policies.
- To develop a shared understanding of the term 'drugs' and to define the school's agreed position in relation to drug related issues.
- To equip schools to deal with issues relating to substance misuse in a planned and considered way and in accordance with their statutory responsibilities
- To assist teachers in their classroom experience

#### Relationship to the characteristic spirit of the school

In the Vision Statement of SN Baile Mhic Adaim we seek to enable each child to develop his/her potential in a safe and secure environment for learning. It also states that our school is dedicated to the care of the whole school community and that we will offer support for those who are experiencing difficulties.'

#### Aims:

By the implementation of this policy, we hope:

- To ensure the welfare, care and protection of every young person as provided for in the Education Act, 1998 and the Education Welfare Act, 2000.
- To ensure that the school complies with legislative requirements and principles of good practice
- To provide pupils with information and skills through engagement with the SPHE curriculum
- To minimise the dangers caused to children by drug misuse and drug misusers within schools/communities
- To manage drug related incidents in a planned manner
- To support parents and pupils in addressing drug misuse.

## **Guidelines (Policy Content)**

The Substance Use policy will address issues in relation to

1. Current provision regarding alcohol, tobacco, and drug education
2. The management of substance-related incidents
3. Legislation
4. Staff Development
5. Parental Involvement
6. Links to other policies / procedures

### **1. Current Provision regarding tobacco alcohol and drug education**

SN Baile Mhic Adaim, within the limited resources available to it, will provide appropriate education programmes for all its pupils. This programme of education will be age-appropriate and will seek to build on and complement existing programmes already being taught in the school - Religion Programme, SPHE and PE.

#### **a. Parents are asked/expected to:**

- Acknowledge the importance of these programmes,
- Recognise that they are in partnership with the School in relation to informing and educating their children regarding substance abuse,
- Assist and co-operate fully with the School as it seeks to deal justly and effectively with any incidents that may arise.

#### **b. To assist the parents in their role the School will:**

- Provide them with information on what is happening in the School regarding education programmes (e.g. SPHE etc.)
- Encourage and welcome consultation with parents on the best use of available resources in the community to support the School in its programme and policy implementation.

#### **c. School Policy regarding alcohol:**

- No alcohol is allowed on the school premises during school hours.
- Alcohol may be allowed for a social night in the school, if agreed by the Board of Management beforehand.

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#### **d. School Policy on Smoking:**

**SN Baile Mhic Adaim is a non-smoking area.**

- Pupils and school employees are not permitted to smoke or possess cigarettes on the school premises or in any other place.

## SN Baile Mhic Adaim

- All adults will comply with the non-smoking policy.
  - Pupils found smoking on school premises will be reported to the Principal, and parents will be informed. Repeated offences will incur a suspension.
- e. School Policy on illicit Drugs and Solvents:**
- Being in possession of illicit drugs or solvents in the school premises is strictly forbidden.
  - Illicit drugs found on school premises should be locked away and the *Gardaí* contacted to dispose of them.
  - If a teacher is of the opinion that a pupil is under the influence of illicit drugs or solvents, she/he will immediately inform the Principal and consult on what action should be taken.
  - Where the school suspects trafficking of illicit drugs, an investigation will be carried out. Parents of any student involved will be informed. The advice and assistance of the *Garda Juvenile Liaison Officer* will be sought.
  - The school's Board of Management will expect parents to inform the Principal or teacher if they suspect their child of drug taking
- A drug can be defined as a chemical, which causes changes in the way the human body functions mentally, physically or emotionally. For the purpose of this policy we are concerned with drugs which have the power to change a previous mood and the way a person thinks about things, and drugs upon which the taker may become physically or more often psychologically dependent.
- The school does not accept or tolerate the possession, use or supply of illegal drugs, alcohol and tobacco in the school, on school trips or on school-related activities, by any of the pupils. The only exception is for legitimate medicinal (essential long-term) use and the school has to be informed by the parent/guardian who must furnish, to the school, written verification from authorised medical personnel.

## 2. The Management of Substance Related Incidents

- a. The following are examples of a drug incident:
- Experimenting with solvents, tobacco and alcohol.
  - Intoxication/unusual behaviour.
  - Suspicion of drug use, possession of, or dealing drugs.
  - Disclosure by another person.

## SN Baile Mhic Adaim

- Possession of a legal/illegal drug on the school premises or on a school-related activity.
- Selling/supplying legal/illegal drugs.
- Person seeking help from member of staff.
- School grounds being used for drug activity.
- Drug paraphernalia found on school property.

### b. Procedure:

Where there is no immediate danger to the pupil, it is important to take time to assess the situation before responding.

- Any Staff member who encounters a drug incident must inform the Designated Liaison Person (DLP). All written documentation will be held confidentially by the Principal.
- It is important that, in all suspected or confirmed drug incidents, a limited number of people are involved in managing the incident. Staff will be informed on a 'need to know' basis.
- Parents will be informed and the "Code of Behaviour" invoked; suspension may follow
- Confidentiality: Where a pupil confides in a member of Staff regarding drug use with a view to seeking help, the Staff member should follow the Child Protection Guidelines. The DLP/Post holder/Principal, in consultation with the Staff member, will then decide on the involvement of parents/guardians at an appropriate time.
- The Principal will liaise with the Garda JLO in the event of any drugs found on the premises. Gardaí will be informed regarding all incidences involving illegal drugs.
- In response to all incidents, parents will be advised to seek support from the relevant Community Care Area.
- If a pupil has a drug problem, parents will be advised to make referral to a G.P. and /or Drug Treatment Centre.
- The Principal will handle all media queries. The school will not comment on individual cases but will refer to the school policy and the procedures in place to manage any drug-related incident.
- The matter should be reported in written form in the serious incident book.
- In situations of confirmed use/possession or supply, then all the details will be recorded and acted upon. The record will be retained by the School.

### c. Drug-related issue relating to adults

Adults found to be smoking or drinking on the premises will be asked to stop.

## SN Baile Mhic Adaim

If they refuse to do so, they will be asked to leave. On failure to comply with the request, the *Gardaí* may be called and the matter will be reported to the Board of Management.

Adults found to be under the influence of alcohol or illicit drugs will be asked to leave. The *Gardaí* will be called and the matter will be reported to the Board of Management.

In cases of suspected drug misuse by parents/guardians, the Child Protection Policy will be invoked.

### d. Drug-related issue relating to Staff

Normally, a verbal warning will be given by the Principal to a staff member who does not comply with the policy. If the matter persists it will be reported to the Board of Management and the Staff member will be advised to seek appropriate help. In cases of an extremely serious nature, disciplinary procedures may be invoked immediately, which may result in dismissal.

## 3. Legislation

Legislation is complex and SN Baile Mhic Adaim is proactive in developing a good working relationship with local *Gardaí*. The laws that are most relevant to the school are: Misuse of Drugs Acts, 1977 and 1984. Offences under these acts include "Possession with intent to supply" and "Possession for personal use".

Staff is aware of laws relating to alcohol, tobacco and drug use and how they relate to themselves, to the school and its pupils.

## 4. Staff Development

Staff of SN Baile Mhic Adaim fully understands the contribution SPHE makes to the prevention of substance misuse and the contribution individual teachers can make to the prevention of substance misuse by developing a supportive class/school environment. The use of an outside visitor/speaker to enhance the work done in class should always be considered in the context of the full SPHE programme and should be undertaken in the presence of the teacher

It is the Principal's responsibility to make new staff aware of the school's policy on substance misuse.

As substance misuse is such a complex issue regular staff training is necessary.

## 5. Parental Involvement

Parents are informed of the school's policy on Substance Use. They also are invited to attend talks given by specialists on this subject which take place from time to time.

## 6. Links to other policies

This policy is supported by the following policies:

- Code of Behaviour
- Health & Safety Policy
- Record Keeping Policy.

## Success Criteria

Some practical indicators of the success of this policy are

- Feedback from teachers, pupils, parents, community, Gardaí, HSE, others
- Reduction of incidents relating to substance misuse in the community

## Roles & Responsibilities

The whole school community have roles as outlined in this policy. In particular they are

### a. Principal

- Co-ordination of this policy
- Sourcing guest speakers for parent meetings on substance mis-use

### b. Class Teachers

- The implementation of this policy in their class rooms
- Vigilance in detecting mis-use
- Reporting to Principal

### c. Pupils

- Complying with the content and guidelines of this policy
- Reporting mis-use to teachers

### d. Parents

- Supporting the work being done in school

## SN Baile Mhic Adaim

### e. Gardaí

- Supporting and advising the school authorities and giving timely advice to staff and pupils
- Building a rapport with pupils and gaining their confidence and trust

### f. HSE

- Providing guest speakers for advice and support

## Roles and Responsibilities

All stakeholders involved in the education of pupils will take responsibility for implementing the policy.

## Implementation Date

This policy was implemented 24<sup>th</sup> April 2012.

## Timetable for Review

This policy will be reviewed every three years.

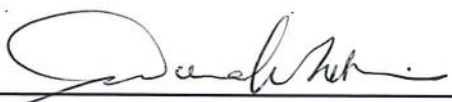
## Ratification & Communication

The Board of Management ratified this policy on 21<sup>st</sup> October 2020.

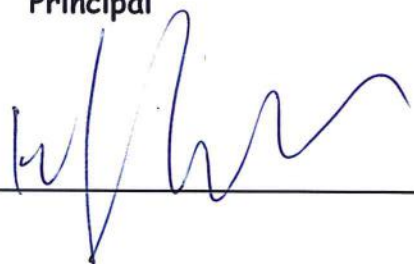
Signed:

Mr. Donal O'Sullivan  
Chairman BOM

Martin Lynch  
Principal



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Date: 21/10/2020

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