



## **Killygordon National School Substance Use Policy**

### **Scope of Policy**

This policy applies to students, teachers, auxiliary staff members, users of the school premises, visitors, i.e. every person who enters the building. It is applicable during school-time – including breaks and to ALL school related activities. It applies to the school building and grounds and to any area where a school related activity takes place, e.g. School Tour.

### **Aims of Policy**

The aim of the substance use policy of Killygordon National School is primary prevention. We aim to protect our pupils from the harmful effects of substance misuse and try to prevent them from using tobacco, vape products, alcohol, solvents and illegal drugs. We aim to develop in our pupils' better self-esteem, through providing a positive school climate and atmosphere and through giving our pupils age appropriate information from educational programmes.

### **Relationship to School's Mission, Vision and Aims**

The policy aligns with the school's mission, vision and aims by:

- Promoting personal responsibility, respect for self and others, and informed decision-making.
- Supporting the social, emotional, and physical development of students in line with our vision for holistic education.
- Reinforcing the importance of health education and responsible behaviour within the school environment.

As our policies continue to evolve, we aim to further integrate substance use awareness into wider school structures such as enrolment practices and disciplinary guidelines.

### **Rationale**

#### **Why is this policy necessary?**

The world in which we live presents young people with many challenges, which affect their health and well-being. Exposure to alcohol, tobacco, vaping devices and drugs is part of this reality. Schools need to reflect upon how they might provide for the needs of their student cohort and respond appropriately to what are sometimes sensitive and emotive issues.

The Education Act 1998 provides that schools should promote the 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. The report from the National Advisory Committee on Drugs entitled '*Drug Use Prevention*' (November 2001) underlines the importance of schools developing substance use policies.

For the population as a whole, alcohol consumption per capita in Ireland has increased by 41% in the period 1989 to 1999, while the other EU Member States showed either a decrease or a modest increase. Ireland now has the second highest per capita consumption of alcohol in the EU.

The school authority in Killygordon National School has a moral and legal obligation to ensure compliance with the criminal law.

## **Policy Content**

### **Management of Alcohol, Vaping, Tobacco and Drug Related Incidents**

We believe that young people are most at risk in relation to substance use in Killygordon National School in recreational areas, on the way to and from school, and at out-of-school activities supervised by staff members of Killygordon National School.

Substance use is addressed in both the school's Code of Behaviour and Enrolment Policy. Any pupil found to be involved in a drug-related incident may be subject to disciplinary action, including suspension or expulsion, in accordance with these policies.

### **Definition of a Drug-Related Incident**

A shared understanding of a "drug-related incident" includes, but is not limited to:

- Any unusual or inappropriate behaviour believed to be the result of consuming alcohol, tobacco, vapes, or illegal substances.
- The sale, supply, or attempted distribution of any illegal or controlled substance.
- Possession of alcohol, tobacco, e-cigarettes (vapes), or illegal drugs on school premises or during school-related activities.
- Discovery and/or disposal of drugs or drug-related items (e.g. syringes, paraphernalia) on school property.

### **Procedure in the event of an incident**

**Step 1:** Witness to a drug-related incident informs a teacher, staff member, or the Principal.

**Step 2:** The Principal informs the parents/guardians of the student(s) involved.

**Step 3:** The Principal informs the Chairperson of the Board of Management.

**Step 4:** Gardaí are notified, depending on the seriousness of the incident.

**Step 5:** The Health Service Executive (HSE) is contacted for safe disposal of drug-related items, where appropriate.

**Step 6:** Referral to Code of Behaviour

## **Parental Involvement**

Parents and guardians:

- Accept the school's Code of Behaviour and Enrolment Policy upon admission.
- Will be informed immediately of any incident involving their child.
- Are expected to cooperate fully with school authorities and the Gardaí if necessary.

Parents will not be informed about incidents involving other children unless the school deems it necessary and appropriate. However, if parents become aware of a drug-related concern involving another child, they are encouraged to report it confidentially to a teacher, the Principal, or a member of the Board of Management.

## **Role of the Board of Management**

The Board of Management will:

- Ratify, implement, and monitor this policy.
- Provide for training of staff in handling drug-related matters.
- Respond to serious incidents and support the school in making critical decisions.
- Act as the designated point of contact for media inquiries in the case of a critical incident.
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## **Procedures for Medical Intervention**

In any incident requiring medical attention due to substance misuse:

- Universal Precautions will be followed (e.g. gloves worn, area cleaned and made safe, safe disposal of hazardous materials).
- A qualified First Aid responder is available in the school.
- Emergency contact numbers and local medical service details are clearly visible in the school office
- The school's Critical Incident Policy will guide responses in more serious situations.

## **Involvement of An Garda Síochána**

Killygordon National School maintains a strong relationship with the local Garda station. Gardaí will be invited to speak with senior pupils as part of our proactive education approach. In minor incidents, informing Gardaí is at the discretion of the Principal and Chairperson of the Board. However, serious or criminal incidents will always be reported.

## **Educational Provision**

Education about substance use is delivered through the Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) curriculum, using programmes such as:

- Walk Tall
- Stay Safe
- Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE)

These programmes aim to equip students with knowledge, skills, and attitudes to make healthy, informed choices.

At local level the following support agencies are available to which students involved in substance misuse might be referred:

- N.A. (Narcotics Anonymous)
- Child Care & Family Support Services
- Drug Education Officer
- Drug Helpline
- Juvenile Liaison Officer
- Community Garda

**1800 341 900**

In the event of media interest in relation to a 'drug related incident', the matter will be referred to the Board of Management and the Chairperson will issue a prepared statement to the media.

### **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 is available to teaching staff, details of which are included in the appendice of this policy and displayed on staff noticeboard. 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 counseling 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.

### **Implementation Procedures**

Copies of the policy were distributed to Board of Management members for ratification in June 2025. When ratified and amended, copies will be given to:

- All staff members
- Parents' Association
- Committee members
- School Community on request

### **Timeframe**

This policy was discussed at a meeting of the Board of Management and ratified on 13<sup>th</sup> January 2026. The first annual review will be held in January 2027 and procedures will be reviewed annually during each first school term.

**Monitoring and Review Procedures**

A record will be kept in school of all substance use incidents. There will be an annual review of the Board of Management each January. A copy of this policy will be issued to all staff members and a reminder of its contents will be given at the first staff meeting of each year. A Board of Management member has agreed to take responsibility to monitor procedures annually and ensure they are being adhered to.

**Ratification:**

  
Chairperson

13 Jan 26  
Date

Diana Keatley-Robb  
School Principal

13 Jan 2026  
Date

## Appendix 1

### Important Contact Numbers

Drugs Advisory and Treatment Centre  
Trinity Court, 30/31 Pearse Street, Dublin 2

01 677 1122

#### **HSE Drugs and Alcohol Helpline:**

Call our confidential freephone helpline on 1800 459 459 from Monday to Friday between 9:30 am and 5:30 pm.

Email us at any time on [helpline@hse.ie](mailto:helpline@hse.ie)

You can email to ask for a callback or opt to leave a voicemail to ask for a callback.

#### ***Drugs/AIDS Services:***

Substance Misuse Prevention Programme

01 4528017

# Employee Assistance Service.

The Employee Assistance Service is a free and confidential service that provides wellbeing support to teachers, SNAs and all school staff. This service is provided by Spectrum.Life.

Your Employee Assistance Service is available 24/7, 365 days a year, providing\*:

**'In The Moment' Support**

**Online Cognitive Behavioural Therapy**

**Referral to Counselling**

\*On the initial contact, our case manager will complete a quick assessment and when appropriate, referral to short term counselling will be made.

**Register for your wellbeing app:**  
[wellbeingtogether.spectrum.life/login](https://wellbeingtogether.spectrum.life/login)  
Organisation code: yVlIU17

**SMS:**  
Text 'Hi' to 087 145 2056  
**WhatsApp:**  
Text 'Hi' to 087 369 0010  
**Freephone IRE:**  
1800 411 057



Scan the QR Code to learn more



An Roinn Oideachais  
Department of Education