

Moyle Park College



Substance Abuse Policy

Moyle Park College *Policy on Substance Abuse*

- Moyle Park College is committed to the health and safety of its members and will take action to safeguard their well-being.

- Moyle Park College will not tolerate the misuse¹ of drugs² or solvents by students of the school, nor the illegal supply or possession of these substances in school or during school activities. Students who fail to comply with this policy will jeopardize their right to remain in Moyle Park College.

- Moyle Park College acknowledges the importance of its pastoral role in the welfare of young people, and through the general ethos of the school, will seek to persuade pupils in need of support to come forward.

We wish to state that as part of its care for the welfare of its pupils, the school believes it has a duty to inform and educate young people on the consequences of substance abuse. The school takes a proactive stance on this matter. The school believes that health education is a vital part of the education of every pupil, in particular through the S.P.H.E. programme in the school.

Fundamental to our school's values and practice is the principle of sharing responsibility for the education of young people with parents; by keeping them informed and involved at all times. Effective communication and co-operation is essential to the successful implementation of this policy.

Our educational programmes on Substance Abuse have the following aims: To enable pupils to make healthy, informed choices by increasing knowledge, challenging attitudes and developing and practicing skills particularly in relation to self-esteem. To provide information about substance abuse. To increase understanding about the implications and consequences of substance abuse. To encourage an understanding of the personal

situation of those experiencing or likely to experience substance use. To enable young people to identify sources of appropriate personal support and information. These aims are fulfilled through aspects of the pupil's experiences in the taught curriculum, the informal curriculum and through opportunities for extra-curricular activities. In Moyle Park College we deliver the taught curriculum mainly through the Social Personal and Health Education programme. Other opportunities to reinforce learning occur in other parts of the teaching programme. The school actively co-operates with other agencies such as Clondalkin Drug Task Force in order to deliver on its commitment to drugs education and to deal with incidents of substance misuse.

1. Drug misuse is defined as the use of any drug, legal or illegal, which damages some aspect of the user's life-, i.e. their mental, physical or emotional health, their relationships and their ability to perform effectively. This definition includes not only illegal drugs but also solvent abuse.

2. A drug is defined as any chemical which causes change in the functioning of the human body either physically, mentally or emotionally - e.g. alcohol, cigarettes, cannabis etc.

Procedures to be followed in responding to:

1. Suspected Possession of Drugs on School Premises or on school activities.

- a. Current disciplinary procedures to be followed as stated in the Code of Discipline.
- b. Year Head brings student to the Principal or Deputy-Principal.
- c. The Principal or Deputy—Principal clearly outline the allegation(s) to the student.
- d. The student's parents are informed and asked to come to the school.
- e. A clear line of communication should be maintained between all the participants.
- f. The student will remain out of class under the supervision of the

Principal or

Deputy- Principal while in school until such time as the disciplinary committee meeting takes place.

2. A student is found in possession of drugs on the school premises. a.

Substance is confiscated and given to the Principal or Deputy Principal. b. The student is brought to the form-teacher and then to the year-head who

then accompanies the student to the Principal's or Deputy Principal's office. c. The Principal or Deputy— Principal then

1. take possession of the substance and records the details.
2. Gardai to be informed and the substance handed over to them.
3. Normal internal disciplinary procedures to take place: i.e. parents to be informed and asked to come to the school. If, in the opinion of the Discipline committee, the issue is one of gross misconduct, the committee will refer the matter to the B.O.M. for decision.
4. The guidance counsellor will be informed of the situation and the students will be advised to make contact with the counsellor.
5. Information on local support services will be made available to the parents and student.

3. A student is suspected of dealing drugs — (distribution of drugs to other students be it profit or non-profit making) i. Contact is made with the Principal and/or the Deputy—Principal by member of

staff or by whoever is reporting the suspicion.

ii. The Principal initiates an investigation following the usual internal procedures.

iii. The Principal or Deputy-Principal will contact:

iv. The parents/guardians of the student v. The

Gardai vi. The school's guidance counsellor

- vii. The student is withdrawn from class under the supervision of the Principal or Deputy-Principal while the matter is being investigated by the relevant authorities.
- viii. Parents are requested to attend any further interviews with the student in the school with regard to the matter under investigation.
- ix. If the suspicion is found to warrant further disciplinary action the matter then goes to a disciplinary meeting.
- x. If in the opinion of the Discipline committee, the issue is one of gross misconduct, the committee will refer the matter to the B.O.M. for decision.
- xi. The student/parents/guardians will be informed of the local services available to him/them for counselling.

Note: Where a suspicion is based on a disclosure by a student(s), the rights and anonymity' of that student(s) will be upheld by the school insofar as is practical.

Provision for Training and Staff Development

- The B.O.M. accepts that on-going training and staff information is needed in the area of drugs education.
- In-service training will be provided/sourced for all staff members on an on- going basis.
- The school is committed to establishing on-going contact with the relevant services in the area of drugs education/ awareness.

Information for Parents / Guardians

- As part of the school's commitment to work in partnership with parents/guardians of our students, the school will organise an information evening on drug awareness during every academic year.
- Parents/guardians of each student will receive a copy of the Drugs Policy and any subsequent revision of the document.

This policy is subject to periodic review by the Board of Management