

Moyle Park College



Substance Abuse Policy

- 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 misuse of drugs 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 cooperation 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 and Life Skills Programmes. Other opportunities to reinforce learning occur through guest speakers, workshops, awareness campaigns etc. The school actively cooperates with other agencies such as Clondalkin Drug Task Force and other relevant agencies in order to deliver on its commitment to drug 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, vapes etc.

In responding to drug offences, the school will follow procedures as outlined in the Code of Behaviour.

These may include the following:

- **Suspected possession of drugs on school premises or on school activities**

- **Suspected dealing of drugs on school premises or on school activities**

Procedures may include the following:

- i. Contact is made with the Principal and/or the Deputy Principal by a 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: the parents/guardians of the student, the Gardai and the relevant Year Head, Form tutors and school's guidance counsellor
Normal disciplinary procedures will apply under the school's Code of Behaviour.
- 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 a decision where all sanctions up to and including expulsion may be considered.
- 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 information sessions on drug awareness.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the School's Code of Behaviour, Bí Cineálta Policy, Child Safeguarding Policy, Wellbeing Policy, Health and Safety Policy and all other relevant policies.

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