

DRUGS AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE POLICY

Introduction

This policy was initially created by a working party, chaired by the Health Education Co-ordinator. It comprised two Sixth Form students, a Parent Governor, a parent, a staff representative and the Pastoral Deputy Headteacher. The consultation process involved Heads of Year, the Senior Management Team and the Governing Body; the student body and parents were represented on the Working Party. This policy, which has been subsequently reviewed and updated, offers clear guidance to staff, governors, parents and students on:

Drugs

- The strategy for drug prevention
- The management of drug-related incidents
- The rules relating to drugs in schools
- The consumption of alcohol on the premises

St Bernard's Catholic Grammar School is committed to the Health and Safety of its students and will act to safeguard their well being. As a school, we aim to promote the spiritual, physical, cultural and moral development of all our students. Our primary concern is their health and well-being at all times. It is our responsibility to ensure that our students have been given accurate factual information and unbiased advice. We aim to provide them with a programme of personal, health and social education that will prepare them for adult life, which will include lessons on a wide variety of topics including substance abuse.

Definition

For the purposes of this policy we define 'substance abuse' as the use of any mood or performance changing substances, whether legal and illegal, including but not exclusively:

- Drugs, such as cannabis or cocaine.
- Alcohol.
- Tobacco/Nicotine.
- E-cigarettes.
- Solvents.
- Performance enhancing substances, such as steroids.
- Nitrous Oxide.

The school also prohibits the possession of or use of matches, lighters or volatile substances by students when in school, travelling to or from school or on school trips. None of the substances covered by this policy are to be brought to, sold, passed on, or purchased/obtained on the school premises. A breach of these rules may result in punishment, such as formal exclusion, either for a fixed period or permanent.

The only exception to the above relates to prescribed medication, both short term and long term. The use of these medicines in school, travelling to or from school or on school trips is acceptable but only by the person to whom they are prescribed. When in school or on a school trip, they should be kept and administered by the school's Matron or by an appointed member of staff in

her absence. Exceptions to this are inhalers and adrenalin pens which students may keep secure, ready for immediate use as needed. (Please see Administering Medicines section below).

Drugs Education

This school provides a comprehensive and planned drug education curriculum for all students, as part of Health Education within PHSE. It aims to provide all students with the knowledge, attitude and skills to be able to make informed decisions about drugs and their usage.

Drug, alcohol or solvent abuse have no place in our school but staff will always listen to students who have queries about their use/abuse or who are experiencing or are aware of problems related to such substances, whether personally, at home or concerning a friend. Staff will try to preserve confidentiality where possible, but cannot guarantee to do this if there are concerns regarding a student being at risk. In this situation, the member of staff should inform the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead who will then, in discussion with the Headteacher and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead, decide as to the level of safeguarding measures needing to be implemented.

Managing a substance abuse related incident

It is the responsibility of all at St Bernard's (staff and students) to alert an appropriate member of staff, such as the Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher or Designated Safeguarding Lead, as a matter of urgency if there are any concerns that a student (or students) is under the influence of any of the aforementioned substances.

If a student is suspected of using, supplying or holding a substance that is not permitted on the school premises, the Headteacher or the Deputy should be alerted. They will then organise for the student to be approached, for the substance (if present) to be confiscated and for the student to be questioned. These actions may be carried out in person by the Headteacher or Deputy or by an appointed representative, such as a Head of Year or member of the Senior Management Team.

The member of staff has the right to search the student(s) and their possessions if the student(s) is suspected of having brought prohibited substances into school. This search must always be in the presence of another adult. The member of staff also has the right to use reasonable force if necessary. Every effort will be made to inform parents if a search is to take place; they cannot prevent or unduly delay a search, either through protest or by being uncontactable. Anything found in the possession of a student will be clearly labelled, sealed in their presence and handed to the Headteacher, or Deputy Headteacher in his absence. Parents will be informed of the outcome of any search and what further action the school will take. They will also be called in to school.

If the substance is illegal or there is doubt about its identity, the Police may be contacted and the name(s) of the student(s) divulged. If the substances are not illegal or are so-called 'legal high' drugs, the school will not inform the police, but will nevertheless treat the matter very seriously and may apply appropriate school sanctions in accordance with the school's disciplinary policy, including fixed term or permanent exclusion. A report on the incident will be written and the Headteacher will decide whether a disciplinary and/or counselling approach will be taken.

If the student(s) is clearly unwell or unsafe, the school will seek the appropriate advice, medical or otherwise, and where necessary send the student(s) for medical attention elsewhere. In these

circumstances, contact with parents will be made to either ask for them to collect their child from school or to inform them as to where their child has been taken for treatment. Under no circumstances will a student be allowed to go home alone or to any treatment centre unaccompanied if they are suspected to be under the influence of any of the aforementioned substances. If parents cannot be reached, the named person given as an alternative emergency contact will be called. If it has still not been possible to make contact with an appropriate emergency contact, the student(s) will be kept in school with constant medical supervision by a first aid qualified member of school staff or accompanied to the treatment centre by a first aid qualified member of school staff.

Should the student(s) behave aggressively or violently, the school has the right to use reasonable restraint or if necessary to call the police. The student's safety and the safety of other students and staff is our paramount concern. If this were to be the case, the fact that the student(s) behaved in such a manner as a result of being under the influence of drugs, alcohol or solvents will not be seen as an excuse. Any such incident will be followed up by actions in accordance with the school's disciplinary policy and may result in formal exclusion, whether for a fixed period or permanent.

Administering medicines

Students in Years 7 - 11 must not bring in to school any medical drugs unless permission has been given via the medical procedure letter. The drugs must be handed in to Matron in clearly labelled containers.

Students in Years 12 - 13 do not need permission to bring in medical drugs such as paracetamol.

Alcohol on the premises

Students may bring in unopened bottles of alcohol to school to donate to fund-raising. These must be handed in by 8.45am on the day that they are brought into school.

Students in Years 7 - 12 may not consume alcohol on the premises.

Students in Year 13 may consume alcohol on the premises but only under supervision at official school functions, such as the Year 13 Presentation Evening.

Aerosols on the Premises

A student may only bring an aerosol onto the premises with the permission of a member of staff.

The Headteacher reserves the right to assess any case relating to the possession of inappropriate or prohibited substances on its own merits. In most cases where the substances are illegal, the Police Liaison Officer would be involved.

Approved by the Governors' Catholic Life of the School Committee on 5th May 2021.

Review Date: May 2023