

Alcohol, Tobacco and Drug Policy

Section 1: Introduction to Policy.

This school, the C.B.S. Charleville, is committed to addressing the needs of the whole school in relation to drugs. In the current climate of social change and rising misuse of both legal and illegal substances, the school has a role in both creating an awareness and in educating the students and wider community to the dangers involved with this misuse and its effect on the individual and the community in order to create a safer environment for all who are served by the school.

This policy applies to everyone in the school community.

Rationale of
Policy

1. The Board of Management of the school recognises and accepts the seriousness of various research findings regarding the problems associated with drug and in particular alcohol misuse.
2. The policy aims to protect students, teachers, staff and parents from dangers arising out of substance misuse in school and school related activities.
3. The school recognises that drugs both legal and illegal are available in the local community and that the school being part of this community has and will have drug related incidents, which need to be handled in a clear and consistent and sensitive way.
4. The school policy aims to co-operate fully with the strategic plan adopted by the government under the National Drugs Strategy 2001-2008 and made mandatory for schools in Circular 18/02

School Mission Statement/Ethos.

The Christian Brothers' Secondary School in Charleville is a school whose primary aspiration is to create an educational environment conducive to the intellectual, moral, spiritual and physical development of its students and the self-fulfillment of all partners within the school Community.

This philosophy underpins and informs all the work we do and is central to this policy document.

The school asserts its right to protect and promote its Christian ethos by requiring specific standards of behaviour and by prohibiting any practices which involve the possession, use or supply of banned or prohibited drug paraphernalia by any student in the school, on school trips and outings, or during any school related-activity.

Section 2: The Use of Drugs in School.

The school does not accept the possession, use of or intent to supply drugs in the school, on school trips and school related activities, by any member of the school community. The only exception is for legitimate medicinal use and the school has to be informed in writing of same.

The policy is based on four key elements.

- (i) Alcohol, tobacco and drug education programmes.
- (ii) Managing a drug related incident.
- (iii) Training and staff development.
- (iv) Monitoring, review and evaluation.

Alcohol, Tobacco and Drug Education Programmes

The school is committed to providing a comprehensive and time-tabled drug education programme for all students, which will be incorporated into the Religious Education Programme and the SPHE programme (at Junior level) currently running in the school.

To facilitate teachers in the provision of this programme, appropriate training will be made available.

The programme will be delivered by the staff of the school with occasional planned inputs from external speakers and organisations.

Where visiting speakers are used, the content of their input will be discussed in full with the organising teacher prior to presentation and the teacher will normally remain in the class to enable follow-up concerns and questions to be addressed.

Our educational aims in relation to Drug Education are:

- ◆ To increase the self – esteem and confidence of the students
- ◆ To equip the students with personal and social skills.
- ◆ To enable the students to make informed, healthy and responsible choices.
- ◆ To provide honest and age appropriate information on drugs.

This policy is part of a general pastoral approach being adopted by the school to ensure a healthy, caring and supportive learning environment. The substance use Policy is one among many policies which serve to incarnate the school's ethos.

It must also be recognised that parents work in partnership with the school in informing and educating their children regarding substance abuse. Parents are always expected to assist and co-operate fully with the school as it seeks to deal justly and effectively with any incidents of substance misuse which may arise.

In recognising the role of parents as a partner in the school community, consultation with parents on the best use of available resources in the community to support the school in its programme and policy implementation is encouraged and welcomed.

Section 3: Procedures for Managing a drug related incident.

At all times the individual needs and concerns of the student will be treated with the utmost respect, balanced with the needs and concerns of the wider school community.

The following outlines the school's policy on managing a drug related incident.

Confidentiality.

For a number of reasons, the school cannot guarantee confidentiality to students regarding drug-related incidents.

These include:

- ◆ The personal welfare and safety of the students
- ◆ The potential implications for safety and welfare of other students and the wider school community
- ◆ The seriousness of drug use; physically, mentally etc.
- ◆ The team ethos of the school staff for whom the sharing of information can ensure that the best course of action is pursued. Information relating to all drug-related incidents is, however, restricted to the appropriate parties.
- ◆ Potential consequences for the student of a criminal record in terms of future training and employment prospects and future involvement in crime.
- ◆ Other constraints under which teachers work which limit the confidentiality they can offer.

Internal lines of Reporting

All students are encouraged to talk to a staff member regarding a drug related incident when it occurs, or when an incident is uncovered, the School Principal will in turn involve the Class Tutors/Pastoral Care team members as deemed appropriate.

Records.

A written recording procedure will be used. This procedure will ensure that a fair process of challenging the student about behaviour of concern is in place. (see incident report form Appendix II.)

Written records to be retained of all incidents and stored by the Principal in a confidential file. Records should include any warning and/or advice given to the student and the consequences of repetition of the behaviour.

In written records, the recording of factual information only is preferable. Any opinion must be stated as such.

During the course of any investigation the following procedures will apply:

- (a) Copies of all records deemed relevant to the position of the student concerned and to the nature of the complaints or allegations that a student is facing will be made available to the student and his parents – at the discretion of the school – in time to permit the student a reasonable opportunity to make his own reply to the matters at issue and any representations that he would wish to make or have made on his behalf.
- (b) The school will allow the student concerned and his parents reasonable time to respond to the matters at issue. The school will take in to account any response so made and any other relevant extraneous considerations or mitigating circumstances that may be appropriate to the specific case.
- (c) The school shall shortly thereafter inform the student and his parents of the school’s findings and their reasons to these. If the school finds that the students has been guilty of or involved or implicated in an incident, it shall indicate the penalty or sanctions that it intends to impose in the circumstances.

Parents:

Parents/Guardians will be notified at the earliest opportunity if their son is involved in a drug related incident as parental involvement and support is seen as essential in the resolution of these difficulties. They will be required to attend the school to discuss what has happened and the course of action to be taken. The student will be informed that their parents/guardians are being notified.

As this can be a distressing time for the students parents/guardians and other family members, every effort will be made to deal with the matter as discreetly and sensitively as possible within the terms of the school alcohol, tobacco and drug policy.

Outside authority involvement.

The school, at its own discretion, will liaise with any appropriate outside authority and seek advice or assistance as it deems appropriate in relation to its investigation of an incident.

Gardaí.

This school has a positive working relationship with local Gardaí and together they have the welfare of the individual student, other students and the wider school community to consider.

- ◆ In incidents involving suspicion or and/or discovery of illicit drugs the Gardaí will be informed and requested to come to the school.
- ◆ Illicit substances discovered are to be stored in a secure manner with the least amount of handling until taken into the possession of the Gardaí.
- ◆ In keeping with school Code of Behaviour, staff members may search school property when they have “reasonable cause” to believe it contains items in breach of this policy.
- ◆ Students may also be asked to reveal anything in their possession by a staff member or be searched by the Gardaí.

Sanctions.

Drug incidents are complex and in situations where the school rules regarding drugs are broken, the sanctions and punishments will be implemented depending on the nature and severity of the offence. These will be consistent with school rules regarding other breaches of conduct.

In relation to a verified and investigated incident, the Board of Management may implement disciplinary actions or sanctions, including but not limited to: an oral warning, a written warning, a suspension of three days duration, a suspension of more than three days duration, other sanctions short of expulsion and expulsion.

The school can, at its sole discretion, postpone the issue of sanctions to take account of mitigating circumstances or representations that it considers should be taken into account. The school asserts the right to exercise an appropriate show of mercy.

The school should also ensure that pastoral supports are offered to the student/students and parents affected by an incident of substance abuse. These incidents can be sometimes traumatic for those involved and the services of a tutor, counselor, chaplain etc. would demonstrate the school's Christian commitment at a time of personal crisis.

See the code of Conduct and Behaviour Appendix II.

Care/Counselling.

With regard to students health, happiness and general well being, every possible support will be offered to students from school staff.

Because of the potentially insidious nature of drug use for the person and the school community and our desire to aid the resolution of the difficulty for all involved, students directly involved in incidents related to Alcohol and illicit drugs must agree to avail of the school counselling services or, where appropriate by an external agency.

The school endeavours to support parents and work with them in the resolution of all difficulties relating to their son.

Health and Safety

In accordance with the Health and Safety Policy in the school, all materials of a dangerous nature will be stored securely in a safe area where they will be unobtainable by anyone other than those who use them in the course of their work duties. These include cleaning agents and solvents.

The possession and use of Solvent Based Correction Fluid is not allowed due to its solvent properties.

The use of non-aerosol personal hygiene products are encouraged from the point of view of the environmental aspect and health aspect in terms of abuse and respiratory problems e.g. Asthma.

On enrolment to the school, parents are asked to notify the school authorities of any medical problems relating to their child and of any medication prescribed or otherwise being taken by their

child e.g. asthma sufferers and their inhalers. This information to be relayed to the appropriate class teachers.

The school authorities will not issue the students with any medication.

Contact will be made with families should there be a need to allow a student to go home because of sickness, or where there is a need to take a student to the doctor.

Emergency Procedures.

In the event that a student physically collapses or loses consciousness as a result of drug abuse, the following steps should be taken.

1. Immediately call on a designated first aider.
2. Call for professional Medical help
3. Inform the Principal
4. Principal contacts the parents.

School Staff Development policy should include basic First Aid for all teachers and ancillary staff. In particular, it is envisaged that there will be at least 1 designated Certified First Aider available on staff.

Section 4: The involvement and roles of various parties in an incident investigation.

<p>The Role of the Principal</p>	<p>The Principal or his delegate is the person responsible for all matters relating to this area. He or she may nominate the Deputy Principal or Year Head or other nominated staff to act on his or her behalf in the investigation of a substance abuse incident.</p> <p>The duties and responsibilities of the Principal (hereafter to be understood as meaning the Principal or his/her nominee) in this regard include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) the Principal is responsible for dealing with abuse incidents arising at the school. (ii) All reports of abuse incidents or suspected incidents must be reported to the Principal. (iii) The Principal makes all decisions regarding investigation of an incident: communication with, liaison with, and reporting to relevant parties; and disclosure of information regarding an investigation (iv) The Principal is responsible for keeping all relevant parties properly informed regarding investigation developments. (v) The Principal is responsible for the secure and confidential storage of any written documentation and records associated with an incident. (vi) The Principal is responsible for taking possession of any banned or prohibited substances or drug paraphernalia and deciding what should be done with same upon appropriate advice. (vii) The Principal may seek the assistance of the deputy Principal, year head and/or school guidance counselor in conducting an incident investigation.
<p>Notifying and communicating with parents and Students.</p>	<p>The previous section has dealt with the procedure for communicating with parents and students in the event that an abuse incident continues to be investigated, and the school is required to put the particulars of the matter to the student or students concerned.</p> <p>However, independent of such a development, the school may wish to contact the parents of a student for a variety of reasons regarding a <i>suspected</i> abuse incident.</p> <p>In such an event, the school will immediately inform parents – particularly where there is a concern regarding the health and welfare of a child – and share any available information that may help parents in attending to their child’s health and wellbeing and will keep students informed about what is happening and why. It is important to clarify that such actions will be undertaken without prejudice to the school’s separate and independent obligation to investigate and manage any abuse incident.</p>

<p>Issue of Confidentiality</p> <p>As far as Practicable</p> <p>Cannot be total</p> <p>External Agencies</p>	<p>The school recognises the importance of limiting, as far as is practicable, the number of people involved in investigating and managing an abuse incident and that it is the aim of the school only to involve those properly concerned with an incident. However, it should ensure that students and their parents accept that</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. the duty of teachers and staff to the school community preclude them from offering total confidentiality to any students when they come in contact with an abuse incident or suspected abuse incident. 2. The school may be required in a given situation to contact, as appropriate, such authorities as the Gardaí, Health Board, Probation Service, or Officers of the Courts. 3. The school may need to engage the expert assistance of an appropriate third party to properly investigate an incident. 4. The school may be duty bound to notify certain persons about an incident and/or the outcome of an incident investigation under statute, regulations or Department of Education and Science guidelines.
<p>Media Inquiries</p>	<p>In dealing with inquiries from the Media the school</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Will not comment on any individual matter when an investigation is in progress other than to outline its policy and procedures for managing incidents. 2. However, it should also make clear that in the interests of the school's reputation, the Board of Management may clarify the school's position regarding an incident after the investigation has been completely concluded.

Section 5 Training and Staff Development.

The school will provide

Staff:

- ◆ The school will make available training to staff involved in delivering the drug education programmes.
- ◆ All staff will be offered drug information and awareness training.
- ◆ Detailed and specific training will be made available to the drug co-ordinator and key staff in relation to managing drug related incidents.
- ◆ First Aid Training will be made available to staff.

Parents and Board of Management.

- ◆ The school will provide opportunities to attend information evenings on issues relating to drugs and the school policy.

These will be offered as part of the induction course for parents of new students to the school.

Students.

In relation to the students the school will:

- ◆ Offer all students programmes relating to alcohol, tobacco and
- ◆ Provide Drug education within the context of the Junior Certificate and Leaving Certificate programmes.

Section 6: Monitoring and Evaluation of the policy.

This policy will be reviewed annually or in the light of changing information, by the drug policy working group in consultation with the wider school community.

The review will take place annually prior to the Easter Break by the drug policy review committee.

Dissemination of Policy.

Copies of this policy will be disseminated to all the school community. It will also be freely available from the Principal's office or drug co-ordinator and it will be given to all new staff and parents of new children as part of their induction to the school.

The students will be made aware of the policy as part of their drugs education within the context of Religious Education.

Approval

This policy has been approved by the Board of Management on

Signed;

Chairperson

Appendix I: Definitions	
	<p>The aim of this section is to provide definitions for specific and technical phrases that appear throughout the policy document so that these do not have to be defined within the body of the policy. This approach helps make the main document clearer to a reader and easier to formulate for the school. It also conforms to the guidelines for School Development Planning that a policy statement should be “clearly structure, concise and specific, and written in jargon-free language. The following definitions should be highlighted.</p>
A Drug	<p>In our school policy it has been agreed that a drug is understood as “any chemical substance (excluding food) which changes the way the body works or alters how a person behaves, thinks or feels.” Such a description includes many substances we normally think of as drugs e.g. cannabis, heroin, ecstasy as well as the illicit use of substances like alcohol and tobacco.</p>
The School	<p>This should specify that the “School” includes school buildings, grounds, play areas, public areas where students congregate coming to and going from school, and any other specific area that might apply.</p>
Banned or Prohibited Substances	<p>This should define what constitutes a banned or prohibitive substance and should include all substances covered by the Misuse of Drugs Act, non-validated prescription medication, all alcohol and tobaccos used contrary to the law of the land. It should also state that the School reserves the right to determine that a substance found at the school qualifies as a banned or prohibited substance.</p>
Drug Paraphernalia	<p>This should include any banned or prohibited substance as defined above, any items that may be deemed to be used in the taking of illicit substances, and any written or printed material promoting the use of illicit substances.</p>
An abuse incident	<p>This should be defined as any incident relating to banned or prohibited substances that occurs in the School or during school functions or outings or any such incident that may be deemed damaging to the health or welfare of the student concerned, to other students, or to the Policy or reputation of the School. It should also state that the school reserves the right to determine whether a specific incident constitutes an abuse incident to be addressed under the terms of the Policy.</p>
Parents	<p>For the purpose of the policy, Parents should be defined to include natural parents, foster parents, step parents, or guardian of the student concerned as applicable, or any person acting in loco parentis, either on a temporary or permanent basis, on the date of an abuse incident.</p>

Who has been informed?

What action has been taken?

What further action is necessary?

Signed: _____