



SALESIAN COLLEGE CELBRIDGE SUBSTANCE ABUSE POLICY

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Introduction

The whole school community of Salesian College, Celbridge, is committed to creating and maintaining a caring Christian environment, one which fosters, inter alia, respect for self, for each individual, especially the disadvantaged, and in which all our students can develop to their full potential and become responsible citizens, equipped with the skills they need to successfully meet life's challenges.

This Substance Abuse Policy has been formulated by representatives of the whole school community (staff, students, parents), and approved and adopted by the Board of Management, in accordance with Guidelines from the Department of Education and Science and the National Drugs Strategy 2001 – 2008. It applies to all school related activities and to the whole school community. The only exception is for legitimate medicinal use, in relation to which the School's Management must be informed. This policy has been reviewed in 2019.

Salesian College, Celbridge does not tolerate the possession, use or supply of drugs at any time. We recognize that legal and illegal substances e.g. alcohol, tobacco, illegal drugs etc. are available in the local community and that the school being part of this community has and will have drug incidents which need to be handled in a consistent and sensitive way. This Policy seeks to enable this by offering guidance and establishing procedures to the whole school community for dealing with drug related incidents. It acknowledges the important role the school community plays in drug education.

This policy will be disseminated to the whole school community through the school web-site. It will also be freely available from the school office. All the school community will be made aware of this policy.

In this policy, the term 'drug' denotes '**any substance which changes the way the body functions, mentally, physically or emotionally.**' For example:

- Alcohol,
- Tobacco,
- Medicines,
- Over the counter remedies e.g. paracetamol etc.,
- Illegal drugs,
- Solvents e.g. glue, Tippex, etc.,
- Cleaning agents,
- Gases, aerosols and laboratory chemicals.

This is not an exhaustive list.

This policy focuses on the key areas:

1. Drug Education Programmes;
2. Managing Drug Related Incidents;
3. Training and Staff Development;
4. Monitoring, Review and Evaluation.

1. Drug Education Programmes

The college is committed to providing a comprehensive and timetabled substance education programme for all Junior Certificate students. This is incorporated into the Social, Personal and Health Education Programme currently timetabled in the school.

Our educational aims in relation to Drug/substance Education are:

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

These aims will be met through the following:

- Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) and Religious Education (RE) are core subjects, and will deliver the above aims.
- The SPHE Co-ordinator, SPHE Department, Chaplain and RE Department will work together in delivering the above aims.
- The Pastoral Care System (See Code of Behaviour) will support these aims.
- All staff will be made aware of the school's policy on Drugs and Drug Awareness.
- The school will endeavour to provide Drug Awareness information for students by organizing presentations on substance issues such as presentations organized by the Parents Association and the Junior Liaison Officer with An Garda Síochána.
- Parents will be made aware of the school's substance abuse policy by means of information meetings and the participation of outside speakers.

2. Managing Drug Related Incidents

Drug Incidents

Drug related incidents might involve the following:

- Drug related emergencies when the person may be unconscious.
- Possession of a legal/illegal drug on the school premises, on the way to or from school or on a school related activity.
- Use of legal/illegal drug on the school premises, on the way to or from school or on a school related activity.
- Selling/supplying legal/illegal drugs on the school premises, on way to or from school or on a school related activity.
- Suspicion of drug use, possession or dealing.
- Intoxication/unusual behaviour.
- Disclosure by another person/person seeking help from a member of staff.
- Legal/illegal drug paraphernalia found on school property.
- **This is not an exhaustive list. In an increasingly challenging and changing environment it is not possible for the school to list all possible scenarios and situations which may involve illegal or suspicious substances. Therefore the Board of Management of the school reserves the right to judge whether or not the use of / possession of / selling of / provision of unacceptable / illegal substances may be deemed a breach of the schools Code of Behaviour.**

The School Approach

The whole school community needs to be aware of and alert for the signs of drug use and changes in behaviour. Due care will be taken to discern between allegation, suspicion and direct evidence of drug use. We acknowledge that in all situations involving drugs, there needs to be a balance between the needs of the student, the needs of the school community and the reputation of the school.

The Board of Management understands that it has a role to play in the education of students in relation to illegal substances, however the Board states that it is not solely responsible for this. Parents / Guardians also have a responsibility to educate their child to be aware of the dangers and concerns about illegal substances.

All incidents will be assessed individually.

Disciplinary procedures will be followed if the Code of Behaviour has been breached.

Students caught in possession of or under the influence of controlled substances or involved in any incident related to illegal substances the Board of Management deems serious will be suspended. A full report will be prepared and the student and parents / guardians will be informed that the Board of Management will consider all available sanctions up to and including permanent exclusion from the school for this breach.

The Board of Management must consider the well-being and overall duty of care and responsibility of all students in the school when considering its response to a breach of the Code of Behaviour in relation to Illegal substances.

Confidentiality

On Health and Safety grounds, total confidentiality cannot always be guaranteed to a person who discloses a drug relation incident. However, every effort will be made to protect the identity of the source of information. It is important in all suspected or confirmed drug incidents that a limited number of people are involved in managing the incident. Information will be restricted to the Principal, Deputy Principals, Chaplain/Guidance Counsellor, Year Head and persons directly involved in the case and only disclosed on a strict 'need to know' basis. Parents/Guardians will be informed of all drug related incidents including intoxication / unusual behaviour / suspicion of drug use.

Procedures for Managing Drug Related Incidents

1. Access the situation. In the event of a medical emergency, seek medical assistance and if possible, do not leave the person on his/her own. Contact a parent/guardian/close relative and inform them that medical assistance has been sought. Taking relevant precautions, remove drugs and drug paraphernalia to the Principal's office, the Deputy Principals' office or other safe place and seek medical assistance.
2. In the event of suspicion of drug use, possession or dealing students will be required to attend the Principal's or Deputy Principal's office where they will be requested to co-operate fully with the investigation of the incident. In all circumstances, students will be asked to empty all their pockets, footwear, jackets, bags, lockers and personal property.
3. Report the incident to the relevant Year Head, the Deputy Principals, Principal or Chaplain who will investigate and record the facts of the case.
4. The Year Head, Deputy Principals, Principal or Chaplain will inform parents/guardians of the outcome of their investigations and will inform An Garda Síochána if there are illegal drugs/drug paraphernalia involved. Every effort will be made to contact external agencies as soon as possible in order to ensure any investigation is completed in a correct and fair manner. During extracurricular activities, the teacher in charge will assume these duties.

5. The Year Head, Deputy Principals, Principal, Guidance Counsellor or Chaplain may arrange a meeting with parents guardians, Gardai, JLO and other relevant parties. Parents will be requested to come to the school as soon as possible.
6. With due regard for the Health and Safety of all students in recognition of the School's Health and Safety responsibilities, care will be taken in deciding on the balance between a pastoral and a disciplinary response to a drug related incident. Where appropriate, referral to counselling services will be offered / recommended. If necessary, sanctions will be applied as per the Code of Behaviour. Students and their parents will have the right to appeal a decision to the Board of Management.
7. The Principal or Deputy Principals or a nominated spokesperson will handle all medical queries. The School will not comment on individual cases but will refer to the school's Substance Abuse Policy and the procedures in place to manage any drug related incident.

3. Training and Staff Development

The School will endeavour to provide opportunities for parents and members of the Board of Management to attend information evenings on issues relating to drugs and the school's substance use policy.

4. Monitoring, Review and Evaluation

Ongoing review and evaluation will take cognisance of changing information, legislation, developments in the school-based programme and feedback from parents/guardians, teachers and students. The policy will be revised as necessary given the changing nature of illegal / unacceptable substances.

Medical Support and Information

In case of a medical emergency

Telephone

999 or 112

Gardaí 1 Juvenile Liaison Officer (JLO)
Local Drug Task Forces

Garda Audrey Sheridan 087-0601820

Garda Station, Celbridge

(01) 6288222

This policy was reviewed and adopted by the Board of Management of Salesian College on 09-09-2019

Salesian College has a published Data Protection Policy which was ratified by the Board of Management 09-09-2019. Copies of all school policies are available on request from the school office.