

Substance Abuse Policy

THE COLLEGE POSITION

Dunboyne College of Further Education is committed to addressing the needs of the whole college in relation to drugs. The policy has been drawn up and accepted by the Principal, Deputy Principal, Tutors, Board of Management and Students. It is necessary that all involved work together to implement this policy. In this policy "Drug" means any substance which changes the way the body functions, mentally, physically or emotionally. The College recognises that drugs both legal and illegal are available in the local community and that the College, as part of that community, has an important role in terms of education, prevention, support and the handling of drug related incidents.

THE COLLEGE ETHOS

As stated in the College's mission statement, "*Dunboyne College of Further Education provides access to higher education and career opportunities that enable students to develop the knowledge and skills necessary to achieve their professional goals*". Dunboyne College is committed to enabling students to fulfil their academic, intellectual, moral, social, cultural and physical potential. It also is committed to fostering the development of personal responsibility. This is the ethos which guides the Substance Abuse Policy.

- The College does not accept the possession, use or supply of illegal drugs in the College, or on outside activities by any member of the college community.
- The College does not accept the possession, use or supply of alcohol in the college or on college activities by any student.
- The College does not accept the misuse of solvent based substances. Students may have prescribed or "over the counter" medicines for legitimate personal use only.
- The College and relevant teachers must be informed if a student has a medical condition requiring prescribed drugs.
- A student or teacher may not give another student any prescribed or "over the counter" medicine.
- Chemicals in college laboratories will be held under lock and key. Students will handle and use such substances only under their teacher's supervision.

The policy is focused in three key areas:

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

1. Managing Drug Related Incidents

We acknowledge that in all situations involving drugs, there needs to be a balance between the needs of the student, the needs of the college community, the reputation of the college and legal considerations. Assessing a drug incident: If there is no damage to the student/s, it is important to:

- Take time to listen and assess before responding.
- Separate fact from rumour.
- In situations of confirmed use or possession or supply all details must be recorded and acted upon.
- Then complete the incident report – available from the main office.

If there is damage to a student – follow the college First Aid procedures, followed by the above.

Managing a drug incident

A limited number of people are involved in all suspected or confirmed drug incidents. People will be informed on a "need to know" basis. All written records will be held confidentially by the Principal or Deputy Principal. Parents/Guardians will be involved if appropriate. They will be informed sensitively and support offered to them. In the case of illegal drugs the Principal or Deputy Principal will contact the Gardaí, and any drugs will be dealt with by the Gardaí. In response to all incidents, student support will be offered.

If a student has a problem then referral will be recommended. Parents/Guardians, staff and other students involved in the incident will be offered support if appropriate. Confidentiality is a complex issue. It is important that the limits of confidentiality are discussed with students before any disclosure is made. The wellbeing and welfare of the student and teacher must be a primary focus.

The Principal or Deputy Principal will handle all media enquiries. They will not comment on individual cases but will refer to the college policy and procedures in place to manage any drug related incident.

Disciplinary Procedures

Drug incidents are complex and in situations where the college rules regarding drugs are broken, sanctions and punishments will be implemented depending on the nature of the offence. These will be consistent with college rules (see the code of conduct).

DCFE

3. Training & Development

We will endeavour to provide staff with drug information and awareness training.

Specific training will be made available to key staff in relation to managing drug related incidents, when appropriate.

First Aid training will be made available to all staff regularly.

4. Monitoring the Policy, Review and Evaluation

The Drug Policy Co-Ordinator will monitor the policy once a term to ensure that it is of practical benefit to the College. The result will be recorded and made available to the Principal.

The following areas will be reviewed:

- Managing Drug Related Incidents
- Staff and Management Training

Evaluation

Teachers, Students and the Board of Management will be involved in the evaluation of this policy when it has been in place for one year. Again the two specified areas above will be evaluated.

Dissemination of Policy

Copies of this policy will be distributed via the Dunboyne College website. A copy of this policy will be available from the Principal's Office. Copies will be given to all new staff and Students will be made aware of the policy during induction week.