



CBS PRIMARY TRALEE

Where everybody is a somebody

Substance Use Policy

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1. Introduction and Rationale

1.1 Definition of Substance Use

A substance is defined as any substance that alters how the body functions physically, emotionally, or mentally. This includes alcohol, tobacco, vaping products, nicotine pouches or other smokeless nicotine products, solvents, prescribed medication when misused, and illegal substances.

1.2 Rationale

CBS Primary School Tralee recognises that children grow up in a society where exposure to substances such as alcohol, tobacco, and vaping products is increasingly common. The school is committed to protecting pupils from the harmful effects of substance misuse, promoting healthy lifestyles, and ensuring a safe, secure, and supportive learning environment for all members of the school community.

The Education Act 1998 places a responsibility on schools to promote the social and personal development of pupils and to provide health education. This policy supports that responsibility and reflects national guidance from the Department of Education and Tusla.

1.3 Relationship to School Ethos

This policy aligns with the ethos of CBS Primary Tralee, which promotes self-worth, responsibility, respect, inclusion, and wellbeing. The policy supports pupils in developing confidence, resilience, and the skills needed to make safe and informed decisions.

2. Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to:

- All pupils enrolled in the school
- All staff members, including teachers, ancillary and auxiliary staff
- Parents or guardians
- Visitors, contractors, and users of the school premises

The policy applies during all school time, including breaks, and during all school related activities such as school tours, outings, extracurricular activities, and events organised or supervised by the school. It also applies to school provided transport and any location where a school activity takes place.

3. Goals and Objectives

The objectives of this policy are to:

- Educate pupils about the dangers of substance misuse through the Social, Personal and Health Education curriculum and wellbeing learning
- Support staff in preventing, identifying, and responding appropriately to substance related concerns
- Provide clear, consistent procedures for managing substance related incidents
- Promote a positive, healthy, and supportive school environment
- Protect the safety, wellbeing, and best interests of all pupils

Substance use prevention is addressed through SPHE programmes including Walk Tall, Stay Safe, and age appropriate wellbeing lessons, in line with the Primary Curriculum Framework.

4. Policy Content and Rules

4.1 Prohibition

The possession, use, or supply of alcohol, tobacco, vaping products, nicotine pouches or other smokeless nicotine products, solvents, or illegal substances is strictly prohibited on school premises and during all school related activities, whether on or off the school grounds. This prohibition applies regardless of whether the product is smoked, inhaled, chewed, placed orally, or consumed in any other form.

4.2 Medication

The administration of prescribed medication is managed in accordance with the school's Administration of Medicines Policy. Only medication that is necessary, legitimate, and authorised may be brought onto school premises.

4.3 Staff Conduct

Staff members must not report for work or engage in school related activities while under the influence of alcohol or illegal substances. This requirement is in line with the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 and Department of Education guidance.

5. Management of Incidents

5.1 Assessment

All substance related incidents will be assessed by the Principal, or Deputy Principal in the Principal's absence, taking account of the safety and wellbeing of pupils and staff.

5.2 Confiscation

Any illegal or prohibited substances will be confiscated by the Principal or a designated staff member. Substances will be stored securely and handed to An Garda Síochána where appropriate. The HSE may be contacted for the safe disposal of items.

5.3 Immediate Actions

Where an incident occurs, the following actions may be taken:

- Medical assistance will be sought immediately if required
- Parents or guardians will be informed
- The Chairperson of the Board of Management will be notified
- An Garda Síochána may be informed depending on the seriousness of the incident

5.4 Confidentiality and Recording

All incidents will be recorded in a secure and confidential manner in line with school procedures and GDPR requirements. Information will be shared on a need to know basis only.

6. Sanctions and Support

6.1 Disciplinary Procedures

Any breach of this policy will be dealt with in accordance with the school's Code of Behaviour. Sanctions may include suspension or expulsion, depending on the seriousness of the incident.

6.2 Support for Pupils

The school recognises the importance of a supportive and child centred response. Pupils involved in substance related incidents will be supported through pastoral care within the school and, where appropriate, through referral to external support services such as the HSE, Drug Education Officers, or other relevant agencies.

The school will seek to balance accountability with care, always acting in the best interests of the child.

7. Review and Communication

This policy is reviewed regularly by the Board of Management in consultation with staff and, where appropriate, the Parents' Association. The policy will be reviewed at least every three years, or sooner if required due to legislative changes or updated guidance from the Department of Education or Tusla.

The policy is communicated to parents and staff following ratification and is made available to the school community.

8. Child Protection and Safeguarding

This policy operates in conjunction with the school's Child Safeguarding Statement and Children First procedures. Where a substance related incident gives rise to a child protection

concern, the Designated Liaison Person will follow Children First National Guidance and determine whether a report to Tusla is required.

9. Ratification

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management of CBS Primary School Tralee on

Signed: June O'Callaghan
Chairperson, Board of Management
Date: 15/04/2026

Signed: Brandan Smith
Principal
Date: 15/4/26