

## St. Oliver's Special School



### Substance Misuse Policy

#### Introduction

This policy applies to students, teachers, special needs assistants, bus escorts, auxiliary staff members, users of the school premises, visitors, i.e. every person who enters the building. It is applicable during school-time - including breaks and to ALL school related activities. It applies to the school building and grounds and to any area where a school related activity takes place, e.g. social-outings and extra-curricular activities.

#### Aims of Policy

The aim of the substance use policy of St. Oliver's Special School is primary prevention. We aim to protect our pupils from the harmful effects of substance misuse and try to prevent them from using or being exposed to tobacco, alcohol, solvents and illegal drugs. We aim to develop in our pupils' better self-esteem, through providing a positive school climate and atmosphere and through giving our pupils age appropriate information from educational programmes. Also we aim to provide a safe environment where all staff and adult personnel in the school abstain from tobacco, alcohol, solvents and illegal drugs.

#### Policy Content

The Board of Management of St. Oliver's Special School acknowledges that the likelihood of alcohol, tobacco or drug related incidents occurring among the students in our school is low but in the event of this issue arising the following guidelines will be followed.

#### Management of Alcohol, Tobacco and Drug Related Incidents

Substance use could occur in St. Oliver's Special School anywhere on the school grounds or in view of the school, on the way to and from school on the bus and/or at out of school related activities supervised by staff members of St. Oliver's Special School.

Incidents relating to alcohol, tobacco and drug use are addressed in the school's Code of Behaviour and the Enrolment Policy and pupils may be suspended or expelled if involved in any drug related incident.

The school's shared understanding of a 'drug related incident' is:

- Any unusual or unbecoming behaviour resulting from intake or use of alcohol, tobacco or illegal drugs
- The sale or passing on of any illegal substance,
- The possession of alcohol, tobacco or illegal drugs on school grounds or at school related activities
- Disposal of drugs or related items (e.g. syringes) found on school property.

The reporting procedure for such incidents is:

**Step 1:** Witness to drug related incident informs teacher/ Principal and completes an Incident Report Form

**Step 2:** Principal inform parents/guardians

**Step 3:** Principal informs Chairperson of Board of Management

**Step 4:** Gardai informed depending on seriousness of incident

**Step 5:** Area Health Board informed for disposal of items (if necessary)

Parents will be involved by accepting the school's Code of Behaviour and Enrolment Policies. They will be informed of an incident involving their own child and will be asked to accept responsibility, co-operate with the school authorities and with the Gardaí if necessary.

Parents will be involved in incidents involving another child only if deemed necessary by the school authorities; if parents are aware that another child is involved in drug-related incidents under the scope of this policy they should inform the teacher or school Principal.

The role of the Board of Management is to:

- Ratify this policy
- Implement this policy
- Monitor and evaluate it
- To sponsor/provide training for staff members
- Make decisions involving critical incidents
- To deal with the media in the event of a critical incident.

This policy puts the following procedures in place to deal with an incident requiring medical intervention:

- 'Universal Precautions' will be applied; e.g. wearing of proper protective gloves etc., washing and making safe an area after an incident; provision of an appropriate bin to dispose of needles or other unsuitable appliances
- First Aid Responders and school nurse will be available to assist with medical emergencies
- Copies of all relevant phone numbers are appended (see Appendix 1)
- The Grove Medical Centre will respond to a medical emergency in the school

- The Board of Management has devised a Critical Incident Policy.

The school has established an excellent rapport with the local Garda station and will invite representatives from the local Garda station to speak with senior pupils. Whether or not to inform the Gardaí of minor incidents will be at the discretion of the Principal and the Chairperson of the Board of Management, but they will be involved in any serious substance abuse incidents.

At local level the following support agencies are available to which students involved in substance misuse might be referred:

- N.A. (Narcotics Anonymous)
- Túsla
- Drug Education Officer
- Drug Helpline
- Juvenile Liaison Officer
- Community Garda

**1800 341 900**

In the event of media interest in relation to a 'drug related incident', the matter will be referred to the Board of Management and the Chairperson will issue a prepared statement to the media as per our Critical Incident Policy.

### **Management of Persons in the Workplace Under The Influence of Drugs and/or Alcohol**

The Board of Management shall ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that pupils and other persons in the workplace are not exposed to risks to their safety, health or welfare from persons under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol. The term "in the workplace", in the preceding sentence includes all school related activities taking place under the supervision of a teacher, with the Board's approval, and both within and away from the school premises.

Every school employee shall, while at work, ensure that he or she is not under the influence of an intoxicant as required by Section 13 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005.

Should the Principal and/or Deputy Principal have reasonable grounds to believe that a staff member is unfit for work, due to being under the influence of an intoxicant, the Principal and/or Deputy Principal shall ask that person to remove him/herself from the workplace, in the interests of the safety, health and welfare of the employee and others. In the case of employees who are at work under the influence of an intoxicant, disciplinary procedures may be implemented.

Should the Principal and/or Deputy Principal have reasonable grounds to believe that an employee of any contractor is unfit for work, due to being under the influence of an

intoxicant, the Principal and/or Deputy Principal shall ask the contractor to remove his/her employee from the workplace.

If a member of staff has reasonable grounds to believe any person, other than a staff member or employee of a contractor, is unfit to be on the premises, due to being under the influence of an intoxicant, the staff member shall report his/her belief promptly to the Principal and/or Deputy Principal, who shall ask that person to remove him/herself from the workplace.

If a member of staff has reasonable grounds to believe that a parent or adult collecting a pupil from school or presenting themselves on the premises for another reason is unfit to be on the premises or to take care of the said pupil, the Principal and/or Deputy Principal will be informed and the duty of care will apply to the pupil. All necessary steps will be taken to protect the pupil and safeguard their best interests.

In the event that a staff member or any other person, referred to above, refuses a reasonable request to remove him/herself from the premises, the Principal and/or Deputy Principal may call the Gardaí to forcibly remove the person in question.

The Board of Management acknowledges its responsibility in promoting the welfare at work of teachers. Inspire Wellbeing for All (telephone: 028-90328474 or website: [www.inspirewellbeing.org](http://www.inspirewellbeing.org) ) is available to teaching staff. In the event that substance abuse appears to be adversely affecting the performance and/or attendance pattern of any member of the teaching staff, the Board of Management may request such staff member to contact Inspire Wellbeing.

The Board of Management also acknowledges its responsibility in promoting the welfare at work of all other staff members. In the event that substance abuse appears to be adversely affecting the performance and/or attendance pattern of any member of the non teaching staff, the Board of Management may request such staff member to seek counseling or other professional intervention.

All incidents, relating to the presence of persons at school, under the influence of an intoxicant, shall be recorded and reported as soon as possible to the Board of Management.

The Board of Management shall consider all such reports and decide on the appropriate action to be taken in the circumstances of each particular case.

**Review:**

The Board of Management will review its Substance Use Policy on a bi-annual basis.

**Ratification and Communication:**

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 19<sup>th</sup> September 2018. The policy will be made available to all school staff and to parents/guardians of children in the school on request.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Principal

Date of review: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Appendix 1**

#### **Important Contact Numbers**

Drugs Advisory and Treatment Centre  
Trinity Court, 30/31 Pearse Street, Dublin 2

01 677 1122

Substance Misuse Prevention Programme

01 4528017