

Substance Use Policy

For the purpose of this policy, it is important to state that “a drug is any chemical which alters how the body works, or how the person behaves or feels. This includes both legal and illegal substances”.

This policy applies to students, teachers, non-teaching staff, parents and any others using the school building. It applies during school-times (including break-times) and to all school related activities.

This policy exists to provide a safe and secure environment for learning and to offer supports for those experiencing difficulties.

It is illegal to smoke inside or on the grounds of any public building including schools.

Substance Use Education

- St Patrick’s N.S. offers substance use education through the SPHE Programme (Social, Personal and Health Education). This is provided by teachers
- St Patrick’s N.S. also draws on the expertise of local community-based services in the provision of education concerning substance use.

Management of Alcohol, Tobacco and Drug Related Incidents
Incidents involving alcohol, tobacco and drug use might include:

- Use or suspected use of alcohol, tobacco, drugs on the school premises or during school related activities;
- Intoxication/Unusual Behaviour;
- Disclosure about use;
- Finding substances and/or associated paraphernalia;
- Possession and/or supply on the school premises or during school related activities.

St Patrick's N.S. will respond to incidents in a caring as well as a disciplinary way. The school will make referrals to relevant agencies, where necessary, and deal with individual cases as they arise.

When incidents come to the attention of teachers, they will report them directly to the Principal/Deputy Principal, who in turn will seek advice/make decisions on the most appropriate course of action to take in the best interest of the child/children. This may, in some cases, require involving the local Gardaí or other relevant agencies. However, parents will be fully informed in all matters relating to their child/children.

Should the media become involved in cases relating to the school, the Principal will respond following consultation with the Board of Management.

All staff of St Patrick's N.S. are aware of and sensitive to the signs and symptoms of substance misuse. Staff are also aware of the laws relating to alcohol, tobacco and drug use and how they relate to themselves, the school and the students.

For Health & Safety reasons, children are not allowed to use Tippex/Correction Fluid in school.