**Substance Abuse Policy**

**A drug can be defined as a chemical, which causes changes in the way the human body functions mentally, physically or emotionally. For the purpose of this policy we are concerned with drugs which have the power to change a pervious mood and the way a person thinks about things and drugs or which the taker may become physically or more often psychologically dependent**.

The school sees itself as having a role in the process of enabling students to increase control over and improve their health. We endeavor to promote the well being of students by:

1. Providing a safe and healthy environment.
2. Promoting positive health behaviour.
3. Increasing knowledge about health.
4. Promoting the self-esteem and self-awareness of students.
5. Working in partnership with the parents and pupils.

To this end, in response to the encroaching drug culture in our society we feel the need to implement a comprehensive policy to address the problem of substance misuse.

**The Policy will focus on:**

1. Strategies for prevention of substance misuse problems i.e. Walk Tall, Alive-0, S.P.H.E.
2. Procedures for dealing with drug incidences in the school.
3. Guidelines and information for teachers to improve their response to the problem of substance misuse.

***This document should read with the Code of Behaviour and Discipline Policy in this school****.*

# Implementation of the Policy

The policy will be available from the principal to the Board of Management, Teachers and other staff members.

Parents and Guardians will be given a copy of the Policy on enrolment of their child in the school. Enrolment will be on acceptance of this and other school policy documents by them.

The Policy will be regularly evaluated and updated where necessary.

***The school wishes to make clear that the primary role of substance misuse prevention rests with the parents.***

**Education:**

*It is accepted amongst educationalists that education about alcohol, tobacco and drugs is best carried out by teachers through the inclusion of S.P.H.E. in the curriculum.*

*This S.P.H.E. Programme would also draw on the expertise available from the community i.e. Parents, Gardaí and Health Board.*

### Smoking

#### School Policy

* Seir Kieran’s N.S. is a non- smoking area.
* Students are not permitted to smoke or possess cigarettes on the school premises or on school grounds and school bus.
* Staff are prohibited from smoking.
* Visitors have to comply with the no smoking policy.
* Pupils found smoking on the school premises will be reported to the Principal. Investigation will be carried out to establish the facts – smoking issue discussed with pupil, parents informed, Board of Management informed.
* Tobacco will not be permitted as a prize for school raffles.

### Alcohol

#### School Policy

* Seir Kieran’s N.S. is an alcohol free area.
* Pupils will not be allowed to bring alcohol into the school or to consume alcohol in school or during any school activities.
* If a teacher is of the opinion that a student is under the influence of alcohol, she/he will immediately inform the Principal and consult on what action should be taken.
* Where a student comes to school under the influence of alcohol, their parents will be called in to take them home.
* Students breaking these rules will be dealt with according to the school’s disciplinary procedure.
* If alcohol is required for an adult only school function, permission shall be sought from the Board of Management.

### Illicit Drugs and Solvents

#### School Policy

* Students are forbidden from being in possession of or using illicit drugs or solvents in the school premises.
* Illicit drugs found on the school premises should be locked away and the Gardai contacted to dispose of them. Teachers are advised not to transport illicit substances at any time.
* If a teacher is of the opinion that a student is under the influence of illicit drugs or solvents, s/he will immediately in form the Principal and consult on what action should be taken.
* Where the school suspects trafficking of illicit drugs, an investigation will be carried out. Parents of any student involved will be informed. The advice and assistance of the Garda Juvenile Liaison Officer will be sought.
* The school Board of Management will expect parents to inform the Principal or teacher if they suspect their child of drug taking.