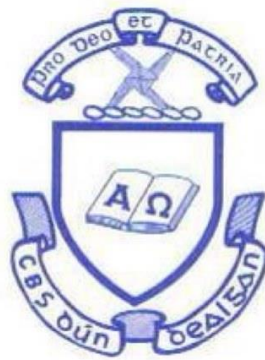


Coláiste Rís



Substance Abuse Policy

The School Position:

Coláiste Rís is committed to addressing the needs of the whole school in relation to alcohol, tobacco and drugs. This policy has been drawn up and accepted by the management, teachers, parents/guardians, Board of Management and students. It is essential 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 school recognises that drugs, both legal and illegal, are available in the local community and that the school, as part of the community, has an important role in terms of education, prevention, support and handling of drug related incidents.

The school ethos

As stated in the school's mission statement, Coláiste Rís is committed to enabling students to fulfil their academic, intellectual, mental, spiritual, social and cultural potential. It is committed to the development of personal responsibility.

- Coláiste Rís does not accept the possession, use or supply of illegal drugs in the school or on outside activities by any member of the school community.
- The school does not accept the possession, use of or supply of alcohol or tobacco in the school or on school activities by any student.
- The school does not accept the misuse of solvent based substances.
- Students may have prescribed or 'over the counter' medicines for legitimate personal use only.
- Students who have in their possession and take medical drugs in school long term must inform the school.
- The school and relevant teachers must be informed if a student has a medical condition.

There are 4 key areas to this policy

1. Alcohol, tobacco and drug education programmes.
2. Managing alcohol and drug related incidents.
3. Training and staff development.
4. Maintaining the policy – review and evaluation.

1. Alcohol, Tobacco and Drug Education Programmes:

Coláiste Rís is committed to providing alcohol, tobacco and drug education programmes to all students. This is carried out with the aid of our peer-mentoring programme. The students involved in this programme deliver alcohol and drug related information to all 1st year students in Coláiste Rís .

Drug education is achieved through:

- SPHE Programme
- Home Economics
- First Aid Course in Transition Year.

Outside speakers are used where appropriate to reinforce the work done in class.

2. Managing alcohol and drug related incidents:

A limited number of people are involved in all suspected or confirmed incidents. Issues will be dealt with in a sensitive way to preserve confidentiality. All records will be held confidentially by the Principal, Deputy Principal or Guidance Counsellor. Parents/guardians will be involved. Parents/guardians will be informed sensitively and support will be offered to them. In the case of illegal drugs, the Principal or Deputy Principal will contact the Gardaí Juvenile Liaison Officer and any drugs will be dealt with by the Gardaí. In response to all incidents, pastoral support will be offered.

If a student has a problem the issue may be referred to the Guidance Counsellor where a referral to an Addiction Counsellor may be recommended. It is important that the limits of confidentiality are discussed with students before any disclosure is made. The welfare of the student and the student body must be the main focus.

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

Disciplinary Procedures:

Sanctions and punishments will be implemented with due regard to the gravity of the offence (c.f. appendix 1) and any mitigating factors that might pertain. These will be consistent with school rules (see code of behaviour).

3. Training and staff development:

The school will facilitate training for staff involved in the SPHE programme.

Staff will be offered drug information and awareness as part of our in career development programme.

Parents/guardians will be provided with information evenings on alcohol and drug awareness.

4. Maintaining the policy, review and evaluation

A group from the whole school community will monitor the policy each year to ensure that it is of practical benefit to the school.

Teachers, parents/guardians, students and the Board of Management will be involved in the evaluation of this policy when it has been in place for 2 years.

Appendix 1:

- A) Any incident whereby a student presents in a manner which indicates that significant substance abuse has occurred will be regarded as a serious breach of this policy and the school rules.
- B) Any incident wherein a student is found in possession of such substances, whether for personal consumption or supply, will be regarded as a grave breach of this policy and the school rules.
- C) Such a grave violation may result in an array of sanctions up to and including permanent exclusion from Coláiste Rís.

Chairman Board of Management

Date