

Gaelscoil Aonach Urmhumhan

6. Úsáid Substaint ar Scoil/Policy Statement on Substance Use

* ***Réamhra***

This policy applies to pupils, teachers, special needs assistants, parents/guardians, secretarial, maintenance and cleaning staff, visitors and visiting students, inspectors, health board officials, gardeners, builders, extr-curricular teachers etc, and **all** users of the school building, hall and premises/grounds.

It applies during school hours and this includes all break times and all school related activities: while children are in the care of school personnel, or school designated contractors (extra-curricular activities). It applies also to groups or persons renting the hall for non-school activities.

* ***Ethos na Scoile***

Our Substance Use Policy reflects the ethos of our school and its mission statement in that it endeavours to provide a safe and secure environment for working and learning, and to engage the partners in education both in the process of compiling the policy and the implementation of same. Visitors are expected to uphold the ethos of the school.

* ***Rationale***

Gaelscoil Aonach Urmhumhan is initiating a substance use policy for the following reasons.

1. The world in which we live in presents our young people with many challenges which affect their health and well being. Exposure to legal and illegal substances is part of this reality. Our policy is the result of reflection on how we will provide for substance mis-use prevention education.
2. The National drugs Strategy require us to have a Substance Use Policy.
3. The Education Act(1998) provides that schools promote S.P.H.E.
4. Provision in advance for drug-related issues/incidents is an important element of our policy.
5. To afford a uniform, cohesive, clear common philosophy on the area of substance use in our school.

At this point we outline our shared understanding of the word 'drug'

**A drug is any chemical which alters how the body works,
or how the person behaves or feels**

Included are:

- * Illegal Drugs
- * Contents of Bosca Garchabhair
- * Prescription Drugs
- * Cleaning/Paint/Varnish/Building
- * Drinks with high concentration of
- * Alcohol
- * Art Materials
- * Tobacco
- * Over the counter drugs
- * Tippex
- * Vape Products
- * Aerosols

* ***Policy Content***

1. Education concerning substance use;

The related content objectives of the curriculum (99) will be our guidelines in this as in all matters. The areas covered are alcohol, tobacco, medicines, legal and illegal drugs.

No change will be made to our curriculum or its suggested array of varied methodologies. The objectives related to substance use and misuses come under the strand units.

Sabháilteacht agus Cosaint (*Safety and protection*)

Ag tabhairt aire do me chorp. Taking care of my body (*Sub unit Health and well being*)

2. Management of School Drug-related Issues;

1. Over the counter substances

Children are not allowed to have in their possession over the counter substances, or drinks with high concentration of caffeine. Confiscation of these items will follow if found, and parents notified.

2. Prescription Drugs;

Issues involving prescription drugs will be dealt with in line with our administration of medicines policy. Confiscation of these substances will also follow and parents notified.

3. Solvents

We will aim to keep the school as free from solvents as possible. Spray deodorants and aerosols are forbidden. (Should anyone become concerned about a child, advice will be sought and the issue discussed with parent/guardian. Advice given by speakers, trainers and An Príomhoide on recording evidence should be taken)

4. Alcohol

If a child is found to be in possession of alcohol it will be confiscated and parents informed. Should a parent come to the school and appear to be under the influence of a substance all reasonable care will be taken to ensure the safety of the child.

Should an employee of the B.O.M appear to be under the influence of a substance appropriate action will be taken.

5. Tobacco

It is illegal to smoke in a school

Gaelscoil Aonach Urmhumhan is a smoke free zone. Should a child be found to have cigarettes/tobacco they will be confiscated and parents informed.

6. **Illegal substances**

If what appears to be an illegal substance is found on the premises it will be stored in a safe place and the Gardaí will be informed and asked to remove it as soon as possible. In the event of a child being found in possession of what appears to be an illegal substance it will be confiscated and stored safely. Gardaí will be asked to remove the substance from the school and parents will be informed.

7. **Record and Report**

As with all Child Protection issues any concerns should be recorded as per guidelines (Caomhnú Páistí) and reported to D.L.P.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

The development, implementation and evaluation of this policy will be the responsibility initially of the policy committee and ultimately review of the Principal teacher and An Bord Bainistíochta. In terms of curricular work-that will be the remit of staff teachers and the principal teacher and informally supported by parents/guardians, all ancillary staff and visitors.

Evaluation, will take place first at staff level and then at Board level to allow a feed-back feed-forward assessment of the policy. It shall be reviewed at the end of the school year and shall form part of registration and initiation for new pupils.

The indicators used to assess the effectiveness of the policy will be;-

Views and opinions of staff, Bord Bainistíochta, Coiste na dTuismitheoirí and relevant others (e.g. Health Board representative, J.L.O, Pharmacist, Doctor, Legal Experts).

4. Training and staff development

- (i) Day seminar on 'Walk Tall' (S.M.P.P.) Programme.
- (ii) Information leaflets for all members of staff.
- (iii) Access to internet at school for staff
- (iv) Where need is seen education will be provided
- (v) Coiste na dtuismitheoirí will be encouraged to support the process by providing ongoing information to parents and by inviting guest speakers to keep them informed of current situations regarding drug issues.