

# Substance Use Policy

## Mission Statement:

The mission statement of this college is "to face life's struggles and increase our worth in a Christian atmosphere".

## Rationale:

In a society where drugs, legal and illegal, are increasingly available no parent or school can afford to be complacent or think that their teenagers are not at risk. The value of the policy is in the raising of awareness of Parents/Guardians, Staff, Board of Management and Students of substance misuse and obtaining their commitment to prevention. This is in keeping with guidelines on **Wellbeing**, and all **Child Protection** legislation.

## Consultation Process:

This policy has been formulated by a staff sub-committee, in consultation with the whole staff, the students (through the Student Council) and the parents (through the Parents Council).

## Definition of Drugs:

The word 'drug' is understood as a chemical which causes changes in the way we think, feel or act. For the purpose of this policy, drugs include alcohol, solvents, tobacco, other substances both legal and illegal and all medicines. This list is not exhaustive.

## Drug Education:

### • Aims:

To give our students the knowledge, skills and attitudes to appreciate the benefits of a healthy lifestyle and relate these to their own actions, both now and in their future lives, and guide them in how to make positive, informed decisions.

### • Delivery of the Programme:

Drug Education in Rice College is delivered as part of Wellbeing, SPHE, RE and other appropriate curricular areas, and relevant workshops/guest speakers.

### • Guidelines for use of visiting speakers:

- a) Sessions by visiting speakers should be properly planned.
- b) The organising teacher should discuss the content of the delivery with the visitor, ensuring that it is consistent with the college's drug policy.
- c) Visitors should be Garda vetted where necessary
- d) The visitor should sign-in in the reception area of the school, and sign out when leaving the building
- e) The class teacher should be present during the presentation.
- f) The guest speaker should leave name and contact telephone number.

### • Parent Involvement:

The Parents' Council organise information talk sessions for parents as they see fit.

## **Management of Drug related Incidents:**

**Smoking** (tobacco/vaping): the school's policy in this area is as laid down in our Code of Discipline.

### **Introduction:**

The possession, use or supply of alcohol or illicit substances is viewed as unacceptable by this school. Should an incident relating to any of these substances occur, it is the policy of the school to respond in a firm but fair manner, with due regard for safety and welfare of the individual(s), other students of the school, and the wider community. The school will endeavor to handle any such incidents in a discrete and sensitive manner, and to fulfil any legal obligations that apply, in particular in relation to **Child Protection** guidelines and legislation, and **Data Protection** legislation.

### **Internal lines of reporting:**

All alcohol and/or drug -related incidents to be reported to the Principal who will inform the Year head and other staff as appropriate. Written records will be kept of incidents in breach of this policy. Factual information only is to be recorded and stored in compliance with **Data Protection** legislation.

### **Confidentiality:**

In accordance with **Child Protection** legislation confidentiality cannot be guaranteed to students regarding information relating to incidents in breach of this policy. Information may need to be shared, However, discretion within these limits will be observed.

The limits of confidentiality will be explained to the student prior to disclosure where this is possible. Students wishing to speak to someone in confidence may approach any staff member. All staff members are “mandated persons”, and completed PDST and Tusla Child Protection training. The DLP is Mr. Louis Mulqueen (Principal); the DDLP is Mr. John Burns (Deputy Principal).

### **Informing/involving Parents - Gardaí:**

Parents will be notified at the earliest opportunity of their son's/daughter's involvement in such incidents. Their support is essential. They will be invited to the college to discuss the matter. Students will be informed of parents being notified. They will be given information on appropriate external agencies should they wish to seek help.

Any incident of illegal substances found in Rice College will be reported to the Gardaí.

We have the welfare of the individual student, other students and the wider community to consider.

**Sanctions/disciplinary issues:**

Drug related incidents will be dealt with as per the Code of Discipline.

Sanctions up to and including suspension and expulsion may be imposed depending on the seriousness of the incident.

Sanctions are decided by Management, and in some cases the Board of Management.

**Counselling/support of those involved:**

To increase the **Wellbeing** of all, the support of the Pastoral Care Team and the services of the Counsellor may be offered to anyone involved in substance related issues.

Counselling/referral to outside agencies may be offered to persons where deemed necessary.

**Disposing of illegal substances:**

If an illegal substance is found on school property or during a school activity, it will be given to the Gardai.

**Medications:**

It may be necessary for certain students to have access to medications during school hours. These are stored in the offices of the Principal and Deputy Principal, with parental and management agreement.

Medications will be administered, when necessary on medical grounds, following consultation with parents/guardians.

**Health and safety:**

This Substance Abuse Policy will complement the Health and Safety Procedures and Policy of Rice College.

**When and to whom policy applies:**

Except where otherwise stated, this policy applies to all students, staff and other users of the college premises. It is in force at all times on the college premises, during school time, and during school-related activities (including school tours).

**Staff training and support issues:**

CPD in relation to drug/substance abuse is encouraged, and will be made available to staff at appropriate times.

**Monitoring, review, evaluation of policy:**

As all staff are “mandated persons”, it is they who are responsible for the implementation of this policy.

This policy is monitored and reviewed on an ongoing basis, pending change in legislation, and recommended procedures.

**Reviewed by Staff: 24/1/19**

**Reviewed by Parents Association: 27/2/19.**

**Reviewed by Student Council: 26/2/19**

**Ratified by BOM: 8/4/19**