

CBS Thurles Substance Abuse Policy



CBS THURLES

Mission Statement

'Thurles CBS is a place of learning where students are prepared for adult life, academically, emotionally, spiritually and culturally.

We strive for a safe environment, free from bullying. We aim to promote the Christian values inspired by the vision of Blessed Edmund Rice.

We seek to create an atmosphere of respect for the needs and talents of all members of our school community, while challenging all to reach their full potential'.

Ethos

As an Edmund Rice School, CBS Thurles seeks to promote the five key elements of an Edmund Rice School as espoused by the ERST Charter:

- Nurturing faith, Christian spirituality and Gospel-based values
- Promoting partnership in the school community
- Excellence in teaching and learning
- Creating a caring school community
- Inspiring transformational leadership

Section 1:

Introduction

1. CBS Thurles is committed to addressing the needs of the whole school community in relation to drugs' education. The school community, Board of Management, staff, parents & students, share responsibility of ensuring the acceptance and implementation of the substance abuse policy.
2. Our school policy on Substance Abuse will reflect the values of the school's Mission Statement. In particular, the school strives to provide a safe, caring and learning environment for its students.
3. The school asserts its right to protect and promote its ethos by promoting high standards of behaviour and by strongly prohibiting the possession, use or sale of illegal drugs or alcohol.
4. The school acknowledges that drugs – both legal and illegal – are available in the larger community and that the school, being part of the community, may have drug incidents.
5. The school recognises and accepts the seriousness of various research findings regarding the problems associated with drugs and alcohol abuse.
6. A drug is regarded as "any substance which changes the way the body functions, mentally, physically or emotionally." This policy focuses on tobacco, alcohol and drugs.

Section 2:

Policy

1. CBS Thurles prohibits the possession, use or supply of banned drugs, drug paraphernalia or alcohol by any student in the school, on school trips or during any school-related activity.

2. Any pupil using, selling / buying or having illegal drugs in his possession, will be suspended and will be referred to the Board of Management for a decision on expulsion. This rule applies to boys coming to and going home from school, during the school day and while away on school trips. The use of alcohol on the school premises or while away on school trips is also banned.
3. By law, smoking is forbidden on the school premises. A student who does so will be liable to a period of suspension.
4. Breaches of these rules on alcohol, tobacco or illegal drugs are dealt with in accordance with the school's Code of Conduct.
5. In the case of drugs for legitimate medication use, the parents of students taking prescribed medication are required to inform the school of that fact.

Section 3:

Programmes for Alcohol, Tobacco & Drug Education

1. CBS Thurles, within the limited resources available to it, will provide appropriate education programmes for all its students.
2. These programmes will be age-appropriate and will be incorporated into existing programmes already being taught in the school. These programmes include Social, Personal & Health Education, Religious Education, Physical Education and Civic, Social & Political Education.
3. The school will each year consider inviting outside agencies such as CREW Network to provide further information to students.
4. Teachers will be offered appropriate in-service training organised through the SPH Support Service.
5. Parents will be expected to support the school in its mission regarding alcohol and drug education (a) by informing and educating their children regarding substance abuse (b) by assisting and co-operating fully with the school as it seeks to deal with any incidents that may arise.
6. To assist the parents in their role, the school will provide them with information on what is happening in the school regarding the programmes mentioned above. The school, through its Parents Council, will continue to organise Drug Awareness Evenings.
7. The School Counselling Service is available to all students and parents.

Section 4:

Management of Alcohol, Tobacco & Drug-related Incidents

1. In the event of an abuse incident, the school will seek to strike a balance between the welfare of the student or students involved and the welfare of the school community as a whole and the reputation of the school.
2. In situations where it is apparent that a student is under the influence of alcohol or banned drugs, the student will be removed from class and met with by the Principal, Deputy Principal, Guidance Counsellor or Year Head or other teacher. Parents will be contacted as a matter of urgency and required to come to the school and take their son home. Where deemed necessary, the school will seek medical attention for the student.
3. Where it is apparent that there is immediate danger to students or the school community, the school reserves the right to suspend or remove temporarily from the school any student involved in a suspected abuse incident pending a further and complete investigation of the incident.
4. All incidents and investigations of incidents will be properly recorded.
5. The school will take all steps required to fully investigate and assess any abuse incident. Parents will be informed of such investigations and will be invited to come to the school.
6. The Gardaí will be informed of all incidents involving alcohol and illegal drugs.
7. The school will take possession of any banned or prohibited substances and drug paraphernalia associated with a drug incident, carefully recording all such items and retaining them pending completion of the investigation, unless otherwise instructed by the Gardaí.
8. The school, at its own discretion, will liaise with any appropriate outside authority and seek advice or assistance as it deems appropriate in relation to its investigation of an incident.
9. In all cases, pastoral and school counselling support will be offered to students involved in drug or alcohol incidents.
10. Teachers and other staff cannot offer total confidentiality to a young person who discloses drug involvement. Information received will be only be disclosed on a “need to know” basis.
11. The principal will handle all media queries.
12. Students who are involved in drug or alcohol related incidents will be subject to the school’s Code of Conduct. Disciplinary measures involving suspension and expulsions will be

taken in accordance with the school's policy on Suspensions & Expulsions.

13. In the case of a student being allowed to return to school following a drug or alcohol related incident, the Board reserves its right to make whatever conditions it deems necessary. These conditions may include external counselling, on-going testing for drug abuse and on-going consultations with external agencies such as Juvenile Liaison Officer, other Gardaí, Health Board etc.

Section 5:

Training & Development

1. The school, in conjunction with Department of Education & Skills will facilitate appropriate training for staff relating to alcohol, tobacco and drugs.
2. The school, in conjunction with the Parents Council, will provide opportunities for parents to attend information sessions in relation to drugs and alcohol abuse.
3. The school will offer all students programmes relating to alcohol, tobacco and drug education.

Section 6:

Monitoring, Reviewing & Evaluating

The school will monitor, review and evaluate its Policy and procedures on an on-going basis.

Approval

This policy has been approved by CBS Thurles Board of Management.

Signed: _____ Date: _____
Chairperson, Board of Management