

# WESLEY COLLEGE DUBLIN 16



## POLICY ON SUBSTANCE USE

# **Wesley College, Dublin**

## **Policy on Substance Use**

### **Framework for Policy**

#### **a) Statement of the College's view on Drugs**

The College has an obligation to educate, protect and, where necessary, discipline young people in its care with regard to drugs and drug use. While it is recognised that drug usage is increasingly common in society as a whole, the College hereby clearly states that involvement with tobacco, alcohol, solvents or illegal drugs, or misuse of medicines in school, on College trips, going to and from the College, or in a manner which would affect life in, or the reputation of the College, is forbidden.<sup>1</sup>

It is our belief that values are formed primarily in the home and that parents have the main responsibility for the behaviour and attitudes of their children with regard to drugs.

#### **b) Moral and Values Framework**

The aim of the College is that each pupil should develop to his or her full potential and become a constructive and caring member of society. Given this, we feel it is essential to do all that we can to ensure that pupils are in a safe environment while in the College. Parents, pupils and staff should know that the College is a place which is drug free.

#### **c) Definition of Drugs as Understood by the College**

By drugs the College means:	Tobacco
	Alcohol
	All Illegal Drugs
	Electronic Cigarettes, Solvents
	*Medicines

\* Everyday medicines, for example painkillers/cough medicines, should not be brought into the College without seeking the permission of the College. Pupils who require such medicines may visit the College Medical Centre and request to see the nurse on duty if this is necessary. If parents wish their children to have access to

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<sup>1</sup> Refer also to the Code of Behaviour, acceptance of which is a condition of entry into Wesley College.

prescription or other medicines, a written note must be given to the Tutor, Year Head or Nurse on duty.

#### **d) Drugs Education in College**

In the light of the recommendations from the Department of Education *and Skills*, a programme in Social, Personal and Health Education ~~now~~ runs throughout the Junior Cycle in the College. Drugs Education forms a significant part of this programme. Drugs education is also part of the Transition Year Guidance and Senior Cycle RE programmes.

As well as a comprehensive substance abuse programme in school, there is a role for outside speakers where this is considered appropriate.

#### **e) Guidelines on Managing Drug Related Situations**

##### Procedures

Any pupil or member of staff who finds a pupil with drugs, or in a drug related situation, must immediately report what he or she has heard, seen or found to the Principal, Deputy Principal, Vice Principal or appropriate Year Head.

All unauthorised drugs will be confiscated and illegal substances will be handed over to the appropriate authorities.

Any parent who becomes aware of drug use by pupils on the College campus, on College trips or in any way related to the College is requested to inform the Principal, Deputy Principal or relevant Year Head as a matter of urgency. Remaining silent about drug use is not acceptable.

##### In the case of:

- **Illegal Drugs**

The College is obliged to report to the Gardaí the possession of, or the providing of others with, illegal drugs. Involvement of any kind with illegal drugs is very serious and any imposition of sanctions will reflect this. This policy applies to students while on the College campus, on trips, going to or from the College, or when representing the College in any way.

Pupils found in possession of, or providing others with, illegal drugs, may be suspended until the matter can be considered by the Board of Management.

Should an incident occur involving illegal drugs, or should the College have reason to suspect pupils of involvement with such drugs, the College will seek statements from persons believed to be involved in, concerned with, or having knowledge of the situation. The College will take all the steps required to investigate fully a situation involving illegal drugs and will take whatever time it deems necessary to do this.

Any involvement with the possession, use or supply of illegal drugs or substances is seen as an extremely serious offence. The Board of Management reserves the absolute right to dismiss from the College any student found in possession of, or providing others with, illegal drugs.<sup>2</sup>

A pupil who is involved in *any way* with illegal substances in College, on College trips, going to or from the College, or representing the College in any way, may be requested to attend for professional assessment and/or counselling at an appropriate treatment centre. Any such student will be permitted to remain on the rolls of the school only on strict conditions laid down by the Board.

- **Alcohol and Solvents**

Any involvement with the possession, supply or consumption of alcohol or solvents is also strictly forbidden and will lead to suspension or expulsion as deemed appropriate. Repeat offences in any of the above categories will lead to expulsion of the pupils involved.

If the College considers the pupil to be at risk as a result of their involvement with such substances, it may require that the pupil attend for professional assessment and/or counselling.

- **Tobacco**

The College reserves the right to suspend any pupil found smoking while on the College campus, on College trips, going to and from the College, or when representing the College in any way. Pupils found assisting or encouraging other pupils to smoke may also be suspended.

Repeat offenders in any of the categories above may be suspended automatically. Persistent smoking may lead to expulsion of the pupils involved.

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<sup>2</sup> Refer also to the Code of Behaviour (section on Illegal Drugs, Dangerous Objects, Alcohol, Smoking) acceptance of which is a condition of entry into Wesley College.

## **f) Conclusion**

Following sanctions, the College will endeavour to support and assist pupils who have breached this policy. While the College will do its best to offer pastoral care and support to a pupil who is involved in a drug related incident, the safety and welfare of the whole College community has to be the College's first priority. This objective will be achieved if there is strict observance of the College's rules by the pupils, support for these rules by parents and fair implementation of the rules by staff and management.

Approved by the Board of Management  
Wesley College  
April 2015