

Rockbrook Park School

Substance Use and Abuse Policy**Introduction**

Rockbrook Park School is committed to ensuring the health and safety of the whole school community and takes very seriously any issues or incidents related to substance use and abuse. This policy applies to all students in the school.

Definitions

“Substance” as used in this policy refers to:

Smoking	Relates to the use of cigarettes and any tobacco based product in any form.
Vaping E-smoking	Relates to the use of any non-tobacco based device from which material is drawn into the body by inhalation, irrespective of whether or not a vapour is released or the product contains nicotine.
Alcohol	Relates to anything which contains alcohol.
Drug(s)	Relates to anything which changes the way a person functions: mentally, physically or emotionally.

Prohibitions

- Use and abuse of any substance designated by the school as prohibited, as well as being in possession or taking possession of any such substance, is prohibited at all times to students on the school campus, during external school activities, on school trips, on school buses or at any time or in any location where a student is wearing the school uniform and representing the school.
- Substances designated by the school as prohibited are:
 - Cigarettes and any other tobacco product
 - Vaping or e-smoking products
 - Drugs
 - Solvents
 - Chemicals
- Some of the above prohibitions apply to students at *all times* whilst they are enrolled students in the school: evenings, weekends and holiday periods — for example, a student involved in an incident of using or possessing drugs or solvents will come under school sanction regardless of when the incident occurred.
- The above prohibitions apply to all visitors to the school (students from other schools or otherwise).

Medicines

The school must be informed if a student has a medical condition and have in their possession and take medical drugs in school. A student may not give another student any prescribed or ‘over the counter’ medicine.

Education programme for students

The School is committed to providing education to all students on substance abuse. This is done through the Men of Character programme, mentoring and all other character development activities. Our aims are to:

- Increase the self esteem and confidence of our students.
- Equip our students with personal and social skills.
- Enable our students to make informed, healthy and responsible decisions.
- Provide clear and age appropriate information on drugs and alcohol.

Managing substance use and abuse incidents involving students

The school acknowledges that in situations involving substance use and abuse there needs to be a balance between the needs of the student, the needs of the school community, the reputation of the school and legal considerations.

The approach of the school is a problem-solving and goal-orientated one. The school will:

- Gather information to understand the context and factors related to the incident.
- Compile an incident report.
- Keep the relationship with the student as positive as possible throughout.
- Involve the student's parents and his mentor from the start.
- Contact the Gardaí if relevant.
- Agree specific sanctions/interventions.
- Implement these sanctions/interventions and evaluate their impact.

Disciplinary procedures for students

When the prohibitions of this policy are breached by students in the school, sanctions will be implemented proportionate to the nature of the offence and in line with procedures detailed in the school's behaviour policy.

- Smoking/vaping/e-smoking — on the 1st offence the student will be put on an internal reflection day; on 2nd and subsequent offences, the student will be sanctioned by external suspension (temporary).
- Alcohol/drugs — on the 1st and subsequent offences, the student will be sanctioned by external suspension (temporary or permanent).

Training and development for staff and parents

- Specific training will be made available to the Principal, Deputy Principal and other key staff in relation to managing incidents relevant under this policy.
- Relevant First Aid training for all staff will be encouraged.
- The school will disseminate information and advice to parents as appropriate.

Monitoring the policy, review and evaluation

The Deputy principal monitors this policy to ensure that it is of practical benefit to the school. The school and the Board of Management review and update this policy once each year.

Dissemination of policy

This policy will be made available on the school website. Staff will be trained in relation to the policy through staff meetings. Students will be educated in the policy within the context of the Men of Character programme and via meetings with their Year Heads.