

North Connaught College Policy - Substance Misuse:

Revised September 2013

This Policy relates to ALCOHOL, TOBACCO AND DRUG USE –and any such substance that may be deemed a risk to the person or others

Introduction

THE COLLEGE POSITION

NCC is committed to addressing the needs of the whole College in relation to drugs. The policy has been drawn up and accepted by the Principal, Tutors, Board of Management and Students. It is necessary that all involved work together to implement this policy. It is vital that all stakeholders actively work with the college to implement this policy to ensure students' health and safety. In this policy "Drug" means any substance which changes the way the body functions, mentally, physically or emotionally. The College recognises that drugs both legal and illegal are available in the local community and that the College, as part of that community, has an important role in terms of education, prevention, support and the handling of drug related incidents.

College Mission Statement

North Connaught College is a school where students are encouraged to actively participate in a Learning Environment, where each individual is supported, respected as unique and where every effort is made to develop knowledge and skills appropriate to their needs

- The College does not accept the possession, use or supply of illegal drugs in the College, or in the case of college related activities by any member of the college community.
- The College does not accept the use or supply of alcohol or tobacco during College time by any student with the exception of a designated smoking area.
- The College does not accept the misuse of solvent based substances.
- Students may have prescribed or "over the counter" medicines for legitimate personal use only.
- Students whose medical condition requires them to take long term medication during college time are advised to inform the college in the interests of health and safety.
- A student or tutor may not give another student any prescribed or "over the counter "medicine.
- Specialist chemicals/treatments will be held under lock and key. Students will handle and use such substances only under tutor supervision.

The policy is focused in four key areas:

1. Alcohol, Tobacco and Drug Education/Information
2. Managing Drug Related Incidents.
3. Training and Staff Development.
4. Monitoring, Review and Evaluation.

1. Alcohol, Tobacco and Drug Education Programmes.

The College is committed to providing Alcohol, Tobacco and Drug Education advice for all students. Our educational aims are:

- To increase the self esteem and confidence of our students.
- To equip our students with personal and social skills.

- To enable our students to make informed, healthy and responsible decisions.
- To provide clear and age appropriate information on drugs.
- To minimise the harm caused by drug abuse by offering supportive interventions.
- These aims will be achieved by:
 1. Staff, students and Board working as a 'health aware' community
 2. Tutors and students will be offered Drug Awareness training through regular in-service.
 3. Outside speakers are used where appropriate.
 4. Student Drug Education will be achieved through
 - Advice upon enrolment
 - This policy document
 - Ongoing advice and information sessions

2. Managing Alcohol, Tobacco, Drug Related Incidents

We acknowledge that in all situations involving drugs, there needs to be a balance between the needs of the student, the needs of the college community, the reputation of the college and legal considerations.

An incident management group will be established to investigate suspected cases of substance misuse

Assessing a drug incident – where there is no immediate risk

If there is no damage to the student/s, it is important to:

- Take time to listen and assess before responding.
- Separate fact from rumour.
- In situations of confirmed use or possession or supply all details must be recorded and acted upon.
- Document the facts for the drug incident
- Incident management group will decide next steps

Managing a drug incident – where there is a risk a limited number of people are involved in all suspected or confirmed drug incidents. People will be informed on a "need to know" basis. All written records will be held confidentially by the Principal or Deputy Principal and/or IMG. In the case of illegal drugs the Principal or Deputy Principal will contact Gardaí.

Any drugs/substances which are found or confiscated will be dealt with by Gardaí.

In response to all incidents, pastoral support will be offered.

If a student has a problem then referral will be recommended – Contact with the local HSE will be advised

Staff and other students involved in the incident will be offered support. Confidentiality is a complex issue. It is important that the limits of confidentiality are discussed with students before any disclosure is made. The well being and welfare of the student and tutor must be a primary focus.

The Principal/Senior management will handle all media enquiries. They will not comment on individual cases but will refer to the College policy and procedures in place to manage any drug related incident.

Disciplinary Procedures

Drug incidents are complex and in situations where the college rules regarding drugs are broken, sanctions and punishments will be implemented depending on the nature of the offence. These will be consistent with college

e rules (see Attendance and Participation Guidelines)

3. Training & Development We will provide as follows

Staff

All staff will be offered drug information and awareness training regularly. Specific training will be made available to key staff in relation to managing drug related incidents.

First Aid training will be made available to all staff regularly.

Students

The College will offer all its students drug education advice/information

4. Monitoring the Policy, Review and Evaluation The Policy will be monitored regularly to insure that it is of practical benefit to the College. The areas of:

- Drug Education Programmes
- Managing Drug Related Incidents will be reviewed.

Evaluation Tutors, Students and the Board of Management will be involved in the evaluation of this policy when it has been in place for one year. Again the two specified areas above will be evaluated.

Dissemination of Policy

- Copies of this policy will be distributed to all the college community.
- Copies will be given to all new students as part of their induction to the College
- **As a condition of enrolment students are required to sign the agreement below which will be copied and maintained in the College records**

Agreement:

I, _____

accept the rules and conditions as

set out in this, the Substance Misuse Policy of NCC.

(Detach this section and submit to College Authorities)

Date. _____

