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Substance Use and Tobacco Smoking

Ethos

The Loreto tradition seeks to promote the moral, spiritual, academic, social and personal development of students in consultation with their parents, having regard to the characteristic spirit reflected in the Loreto philosophy of education. *'(The Educational Philosophy of Loreto Schools (2001)).*

The underlying philosophy is one of concern and caring for the students of the school.

Scope of Policy

The policy will apply at all times during which students and those who accompany them are involved in school related activities.

Definition of School Related Activities

The term 'school related activities' applies to any activities on the school premises, on the way to and from school and during any school related activities in any location outside the school where students are deemed to be participating in school related activities, representing the school or working as part of a school programme.

Aims of Policy

- To provide a safe and secure environment within which the development of each person in the school community can take place.
- To protect each student and staff member in the school in an atmosphere of caring and concern from the potentially harmful effects of alcohol and /or any substance defined as a drug in an atmosphere of caring and concern.
- To provide clear guidelines in regard to the use of alcohol and/ or other substances by students.

Objectives of Policy

- To protect each person from the potentially harmful effects of alcohol and any substance defined as a drug.
- To ensure that other than possession of and use of prescribed drugs in accordance with the instructions of a medical practitioner, no student will have possession of, use, sell, supply or attempt to sell or supply to others on the school premises, on the way to or from school or on school related activities as defined in this policy.



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PART 1 – Alcohol and Drugs

Definition of Substance or Drug

A drug or substance (as used in the context of this policy) is any chemical which alters how the body works, or how the person behaves or feels.

Drugs or substances may be addictive and illegal as well as potentially harmful for an individual. Misuse occurs when the use of the drug (legal or illegal) is harmful to the physical, mental or social wellbeing of an individual, group or society. Prescribed drugs, when taken other than as such can be harmful to the person for whom they have been prescribed or other(s) for whom they have not.

Parents/guardians whose daughter needs to use a syringe, are obliged to inform the school so that correct procedures for the disposal of syringes are put in place. This may involve refrigeration of medicines and storage and disposal of syringes. A form, **M1** (Medical 1) is available from the school office. Parents are obliged to inform the school, by filling out the form, of any medical conditions pertaining to their daughter and also of any prescribed medicines which she may need. The school has an additional policy to cover distribution of medicines.

Substance (including alcohol and/or other substances) use or Possession

- Possession or consumption of alcohol or other substances defined as a 'drug' in the policy, in the school building, on the school premises or by students while they are engaged in any school related activities is expressly forbidden.
- Students found with alcohol or another drug for their own consumption, for supply to others or suspected of being under the influence of any or either, will be disciplined under the **School Code of Behaviour** where these are deemed to be serious offences.

Management of Students Suspected of having used a Drug (including alcohol)

Should a member of staff suspect that a student is under the influence of a substance (s)he will ensure that at no time the student is left unaccompanied.

- The assistance of another member of staff and or a student will be sought if appropriate and practicable so that the safety of no student is compromised.
- Medical assistance will be sought immediately
- The parents/guardians of the student will be contacted as soon as possible
- A formal written report will made by the member(s) of staff involved



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Disciplinary Procedures

The protection and safety of students who have breached the school Code of Behaviour in relation to use of potentially harmful substances is a priority. However the use of such substances cannot be condoned and students who offend will be disciplined in accordance with the relevant sections of the School's Code of Behaviour.

Part 2. Smoking of Tobacco

The Board of Management is obliged to ensure that the terms of the Public Health Tobacco Act 2002 and the Public Health Tobacco Amendment Act 2004, are implemented in the school.

- Smoking is expressly forbidden in the school building, on the school premises or by students while they are engaged in any school related activities
- Students found smoking on the school premises or grounds while in uniform or engaged in school activities, will be disciplined.
- Students who are with other students who are smoking, though they may not be in the act of smoking themselves, are deemed to be condoning smoking and will be disciplined in the same manner as the smokers in whose company they are found.

Disciplinary Action

- A student who is found smoking by a member of staff in the school, will face immediate suspension from class and her parents/guardians will be contacted.
- In-school suspension from class will continue until a parent/guardian comes to the school to collect his/her daughter. She will face automatic suspension for the rest of that school day
- Disciplinary action will be decided upon in accordance with the Code of Behaviour.
- A second or further offence will result in more severe disciplinary action than a first offence.

Availability of Policy

This policy is available to staff, students and their parents, persons who work in the school on a part time and or temporary basis and it applies to all persons who come into contact with the school or its staff or students when engaged in school related activities. New staff will be informed of the policy when they take up employment in the school. The policy is also available on the school website.



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Review of Policy

This policy will be monitored and reviewed annually on behalf of the Board of Management, by the Principal or a person or committee appointed by her in the Summer Term. The practical application of the policy during the preceding year, its efficacy in preventing the use of tobacco or other substances and an assessment of the needs of students and staff in regard to education and awareness about use of these, will form part of the review process.
