



Harcourt Terrace Educate Together National School
Email: info@htetns.ie Address: Harcourt Terrace, Dublin 2. D02 FC64

No: (01) 5292970

Substance Use Policy Harcourt Terrace ETNS

Mission Statement

Harcourt Terrace ETNS is an Educate Together School, run in accordance with the Rules for Primary Schools of the Department of Education. We provide a child-centred, co-educational, equality-based, and democratically run environment. Our mission is to educate pupils to their fullest potential while enhancing their self-esteem and creativity. All pupils are treated as individuals, and their uniqueness is celebrated. All members of our school community are encouraged to respect themselves and others, and we aspire to provide our children with the life skills necessary to become the best they can be.

Scope of Policy

This policy applies to students, teachers, auxiliary staff members, users of the school premises, visitors, i.e. every person who enters the school campus. It is applicable during school-time – including breaks and to ALL school related activities. It applies to the school building and grounds and to any area where a school related activity takes place, e.g. School Tour.

What is the school definition of a "substance"?

The term "substance" will be interpreted in the widest possible sense to include the following:
(This list is not exhaustive)

- Alcohol
- Tobacco
- E-cigarettes
- Vapes
- Legal and/or illegal drugs (including over the counter/prescribed medication)
- Other dangerous substances
- Other substances that are deemed not appropriate for primary school-going children

Who does this policy refer to?

This policy addresses substance use issues in respect of students, staff, parents/guardians, and others involved in the school

Parents/guardians, staff, external workers



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- The use of alcohol, tobacco, e-cigarettes, vapes, illegal substances is prohibited by law in a school building or its premises.
- In the event that external maintenance contractors or similar doing work in the school who require a cigarette break etc, they will be asked to take their break outside of the school premises and out of sight from the pupils
- As a courtesy to our pupils, the school asks that parents/guardians do not smoke or vape outside of the school walls at drop-off and collection time
- Parent-teacher meetings may not proceed if a party is clearly under the influence of alcohol or drugs. In this event, the relevant staff will conclude the meeting immediately and consult with the principal for further action.

Pupils

- The use of and possession of alcohol, tobacco, e-cigarettes, vapes, illegal substances, controlled substances etc. is strictly prohibited for all pupils. See below for school procedures in relation to this event taking place.
- This policy will apply to pupils during school time (including break times) and to all school related activities to include sporting activities, school tours, fieldtrips etc.
- There may be some instances where pupils require medication, natural herb remedies or other substances for health reasons. In this situation, the Administration of Medicine policy should be consulted. As part of this policy, staff will ensure that any arrangement is safe for all involved.
- Note: non-alcoholic beer or wine, malt drinks, spirits, fake cigarettes are not permitted at school

Education concerning substance use

In Harcourt Terrace ETNS, we fully recognise and acknowledge that education about alcohol, tobacco and drugs is most effective if provided in the broader context of a Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) programme which is developmental and delivered in the context of a safe and supportive whole-school environment. In this regard, substance misuse prevention will be covered/taught through the medium of the revised "Walk Tall" programme launched during the school year 2016-2017 <https://pdst.ie/walktall>. (Please also refer to our school's SPHE policy for information regarding the delivery and implementation of the "Walk Tall" programme). Class teachers will teach the Walk Tall Programme within the school.

Aims of Policy

The primary aim is prevention. We aim to:

- Protect pupils from the harmful effects of substance misuse.



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- Promote healthy lifestyles by preventing the use of tobacco, vapes, e-cigarettes alcohol, solvents, and illegal drugs.
- Promote positive self-esteem through a supportive school climate and age-appropriate education.
- Equip pupils with the knowledge and skills to make safe, responsible choices regarding substance use.

Relationship to School's Mission, Vision and Aims

This policy aligns with the school's characteristic spirit by:

- Involving staff, pupils, Board of Management members, and parents/guardians in promoting a healthy, safe, and supportive learning environment.
- Encouraging shared responsibility for preventing the use of tobacco, vapes, e-cigarettes, alcohol, solvents, and illegal drugs.
- Fostering respect, wellbeing, and positive lifestyle choices that reflect the school's core values.

Rationale

Young people face many challenges affecting health and well-being, including exposure to alcohol, tobacco, vapes, e-cigarettes and drugs. Schools have a responsibility to provide education and support for these issues.

Legal and strategic frameworks guiding this policy include:

- The Education Act 1998, which promotes social and personal development and health education.
- The National Drugs Strategy – Building on Experience, requiring schools to have a substance use policy.
- Reports by the National Advisory Committee on Drugs emphasizing the importance of school-based prevention.
- The European School Survey Project on Alcohol and Other Drugs (ESPAD) highlighting high alcohol and tobacco use among Irish youth.

The Board of Management has a moral and legal obligation to ensure compliance with criminal law and safeguard the school community.



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Management of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Drug-Related Incidents

Examples of such incidents:

- Unusual or inappropriate behaviour linked to alcohol, tobacco, vapes, e-cigarettes or drug use.
- Sale, passing, or possession of illegal substances.
- Discovery or disposal of drugs or related items (e.g., syringes) on school property.

Reporting Procedure:

1. Witness informs teacher/staff member/Principal.
2. Principal informs parents/guardians.
3. Principal informs Chairperson of the Board of Management.
4. Gardai informed if incident is serious.
5. The HSE/ Dublin City Council informed if there is a need for the safe disposal of items or to remove any substance related paraphernalia (if applicable/relevant).

Other courses of action that will be considered may include

- Seeking advice from outside agencies i.e. TUSLA/Duty Social Worker
- Outside medical assistance may be required, and the emergency services will be contacted if this is the case.

Parental Involvement:

- If a child is involved, parent-guardians will be informed and expected to cooperate.
- Parent-guardians of other children will be informed only if necessary.

Board of Management Responsibilities:

- Ratify, implement, monitor, and evaluate this policy.
- Provide training for staff if required.
- Make decisions on critical incidents and liaise with anyone connected.



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Medical Interventions:

- Universal precautions (gloves, safe disposal of needles, cleaning procedures).
- Train staff for first aid and medical emergencies.
- Critical Incident Policy is in place at Harcourt Terrace ETNS.

Media Protocol:

- Media queries handled collaboratively by the Chairperson of the Board of Management and principal with prepared statements.

Management of Persons in the Workplace Under the Influence of Drugs/Alcohol:

- The Board ensures that children and staff are not exposed to risks from anyone under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- Staff must not attend work under the influence of an intoxicant (per Section 13 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005).
- Should the Principal and/or Deputy Principal have reasonable grounds to believe that a staff member is unfit for work, due to being under the influence of an intoxicant, the Principal and/or Deputy Principal shall ask that person to remove him/herself from the workplace, in the interests of the safety, health and welfare of the employee and others. In the case of employees who are at work under the influence of an intoxicant, disciplinary procedures may be implemented.
- Should the Principal and/or Deputy Principal have reasonable grounds to believe that an employee of any contractor is unfit for work, due to being under the influence of an intoxicant, the Principal and/or Deputy Principal shall ask the contractor to remove their employee from the workplace.
- If a member of staff has reasonable grounds to believe any person, other than a staff member or employee of a contractor, is unfit to be on the premises, due to being under the influence of an intoxicant, the staff member shall report his/her belief promptly to the Principal and/or Deputy Principal, who shall ask that person to remove themselves from the workplace.
- If a member of staff has reasonable grounds to believe that a parent or adult collecting a pupil from school or presenting themselves on the premises for another reason is unfit to be on the premises or to take care of a pupil, the Principal and/or Deputy Principal will be informed and the duty of care will apply to the pupil. All necessary steps will be taken to protect the pupil and safeguard their best interests.



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- In the event that a staff member or any other person, referred to above, refuses a reasonable request to remove him/herself from the premises, the Principal and/or Deputy Principal may call the Gardaí to forcibly remove the person in question.
- The Board of Management also acknowledges its responsibility in promoting the welfare at work of all other staff members. In the event that substance abuse appears to be adversely affecting the performance and/or attendance pattern of any member staff, the Board of Management may request such staff member to seek counselling or other professional intervention through The Employee Assistance Service (telephone: 1800 411 057).
- All incidents, relating to the presence of persons at school, under the influence of an intoxicant, shall be recorded and reported as soon as possible to the Board of Management.
- The Board of Management shall consider all such reports and decide on the appropriate action to be taken in the circumstances of each particular case.
- Gardaí may be called if refusal occurs.
- All incidents recorded and reported to the Board of Management.

Implementation Procedures

- Copies of this policy available to all staff, Parent-guardians, and the wider school community via our school website.

Monitoring and Review Procedures

- All substance-related incidents will be recorded.
- Policy reminders issued to staff at the first meeting each year.
- Board of Management to monitor adherence of this policy.

Ratification, communication and implementation:

This policy was ratified and adopted by the Board of Management of Harcourt Terrace Educate Together National School on 4th December 2025

This policy will be circulated to all parent(s)/carer(s) following ratification and a copy will be published on the school website.

This policy will be brought to the attention of all staff members upon their appointment to the school.

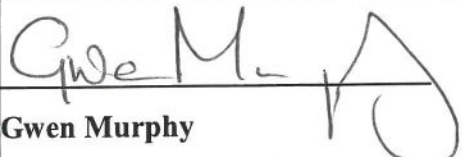
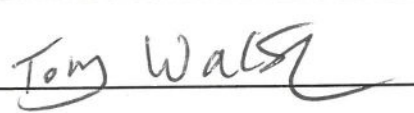
The implementation of the policy shall be monitored by the Principal and the Chairperson of the Board of Management.



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Signed on Behalf of the Board of Management:

Chairperson:	
	Gwen Murphy
Date:	<u>4th</u> December 2025
Principal:	
	Tony Walsh
Date:	<u>4th</u> December
	2025