
1. **Background**

1. Belvedere College, SJ, is committed to promoting the health, safety, and wellbeing of every student in its care and it seeks to enable students fulfil their intellectual, moral, spiritual, social, cultural and personal potential by providing them with a holistic education in fulfilment of the College mission.
2. The College recognizes that drugs, including lawful and controlled substances, are accessible within the local community and, as part of that community, it has a role to play in the education, prevention, support and management of drug related and substance abuse incidents.
3. The College seeks to create an environment that fosters a responsible understanding of and attitude towards the risks and dangers of substance abuse for the benefit and wellbeing of all members of the College community.
4. This Policy should be read in conjunction with the College Policy on Alcohol.
5. The College is dedicated to working together with parents and staff in implementing this Policy for the benefit and welfare of all students.

2. **Scope**

1. This Policy is concerned with the abuse and misuse of any substance, controlled or otherwise, including, drugs, solvents, alcohol and tobacco (hereinafter called 'substance abuse') which has the effect of damaging and/or altering the way in which the human body functions, whether at a physical, psychological or emotional level and it includes the abuse of substances that may not, in themselves, be unlawful.
2. The prohibitions on substance abuse as outlined in this policy extend to all current students of the Belvedere community whether such abuse occurs within or beyond the confines of the College.
3. The terms of this Policy are without prejudice to the use of prescribed medications taken by a student under medical supervision for the purposes of the management or treatment of a medical condition. Where students are required to take such prescribed medication on a long-term basis notice thereof must be given to the College authorities.

3. **Policy Objectives**

The objectives of this Policy are:

1. to provide a safe and secure environment that promotes the welfare and development of students as members of the College community;

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2. to protect students from the actual and potential harmful effects of substance abuse through education and the provision of accurate information;
 3. to recall the responsibilities of all students, staff and parents in relation to the protection of students from substance abuse;
 4. to apprise parents of their obligations in relation to education in substance abuse and in the event of their son being suspected of engaging or having engaged in substance abuse;
 5. to outline the College procedures in the event of a suspected or an actual incident of substance abuse;
 6. to clarify the consequences of any breach of the College prohibition on substance abuse as outlined in this Policy;
 7. to confirm the limitations of the College's liability for any loss, damage or injury caused and/or contributed to by a breach of the terms of this Policy.

4. Policy Statement

1. It is the policy of Belvedere College, SJ, to prohibit all students from all forms of substance abuse, including, but not limited to the unlawful possession and/or use and/or supply of illegal and controlled substances.
2. This prohibition applies to all students and at all times, both within the College campus and beyond and extends to all College related curricular and co-curricular activities.
3. Since students are both representatives of and ambassadors for the College at all times, the prohibition contained in this Policy persists for the duration of time that they are enrolled as members of the Belvedere College community.

5. Code of Conduct Required of Students

1. All students admitted to Belvedere College, SJ, are obliged to comply with the College's Code of Conduct and, in particular, shall adhere strictly to the College policies on Alcohol and on Substance Abuse.
2. Students shall accept that they represent and are ambassadors of the College at all times and will strive to ensure that its good name and high reputation are respected and upheld.

6. Education Programmes

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1. The College provides an Alcohol, Tobacco and Drug Education programmes as part of the College curriculum which aim to provide clear, accurate and up to date information concerning the nature, signs, dangers and consequences of substance abuse.
 2. Parents are apprised of the Drugs Awareness education available to students. Sessions in Drugs Awareness are, where possible, made available for parents.

7. Staff Training

1. The College shall ensure that its teachers are offered training in Drugs Awareness as part of their in-service training and/or their training in Social, Personal and Health Education and/or their training in Religious Education.
2. The Deputy Principals shall liaise with Year Heads in the coordination of the Substance Abuse Education Programme. Year Heads shall have overall responsibility for the pastoral needs and discipline of their specific year group and shall liaise with student support teams, local health authorities, Garda liaison officers and other agencies involved in or supportive of education in substance abuse.
3. College staff are advised of the need for vigilance in relation to signs of substance abuse on the part of students whether such signs are evident in the work, behavior or appearance of students in their care.
4. Staff are required to report to the Headmaster and/or to one of his deputies any incident of suspected or actual incident of substance abuse to include possession and/or supply.

8. Responsibilities of Parents

Parents are obliged to understand and accept the full extent of their responsibilities in relation to education in and prevention of substance abuse. In this regard, parents shall:

1. recognise that the College owes a duty of care to all students, staff and members of the Belvedere community and must discharge its obligations in accordance with this duty;
2. attend the Drugs Awareness programmes offered by the College to the parents as part of the *Induction Programme for Parents or Guardians of New Students*;

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3. consult with and educate their sons about the nature, danger and consequences of substance abuse;
 4. satisfy themselves that their son is aware of, understands and accepts the Code of Conduct required of students and, in particular, the College's prohibition on substance abuse which persists for the duration of his time as a student of Belvedere College, SJ;
 5. inform the College Headmaster in the event that they suspect and/or are concerned about their son in relation to any actual or potential incident of substance abuse;
 6. attend all meetings and briefings organized by the College in relation to any actual or potential substance abuse incident involving their son;
 7. complete all necessary forms and furnish all relevant medical and other information concerning their son to the College authorities, as required;
 8. understand that the College may request that a student undergoes drug testing as part of its pastoral care of students; and
 9. cooperate fully with the College authorities in the event of their son being involved in an incident of substance abuse.

9. Managing Incidents of Substance Abuse

1. The College views all instances of substance abuse in a serious light. An incident of substance abuse involves any circumstance in which a student uses, possesses, distributes or supplies drugs (whether controlled or otherwise), solvents, alcohol or tobacco at any time whether on or off the College premises.
2. An incident of substance abuse may come to the attention of the College in any number of ways, including, through the manifestation of unusual or intoxicated behavior, disclosure by a third party, the presence of drug related material on the person of a student, the discovery of evidence on the College premises or through the occurrence of an emergency or a critical incident.
3. Whenever such an incident of substance abuse occurs, it is assessed as a serious incident and a Serious Incident Report Form is completed and submitted to the Headmaster. Where necessary, a student's bag, locker and other belongings may be searched.
4. An incident of substance abuse may give rise to personal, pastoral, disciplinary, legal and other considerations. Whereas pastoral support is offered to all students affected by such an incident, the College will at all times discharge its moral and legal obligations to report matters to the

relevant authorities, as appropriate and necessary.

5. Whereas information concerning an incident of substance abuse is treated as confidential, the College does not and cannot guarantee absolute confidentiality or non-disclosure of the information relating thereto. Information is communicated on a 'need to know' basis, including, where necessary to the relevant authorities. Parents are informed.
6. All media inquiries in relation to any incident of substance abuse allegedly occurring in relation to a student or students of the College shall be directed towards and responded to by the Headmaster.
7. Where a student presents with a substance abuse problem a referral to the appropriate support services will be made.

10. Disciplinary Procedures

1. In the event of an incident of substance abuse, disciplinary procedures in accordance with the College's rules for breaches of its Code of Behaviour will be implemented, forthwith.
2. Students who engaged in substance abuse or who threaten or compromise the health and safety of others and who fail to respond, as required by the College, may face permanent expulsion.

11. Insurance and Issues of Indemnity

Whereas insurance provisions are in place in respect of all College approved activities, a person who causes and/or contributes to any damage or injury to a third party by reason of substance abuse may be exposed to a claim for indemnity and/or contribution.

12. Dissemination and Review of Policy

1. The College Policy on Substance Abuse shall be distributed to all members of the College community. It shall be published on the College website and distributed to all parents of new pupils as part of their Induction Programme.

The College shall be monitor and review this Policy on a periodic basis and shall seek to ensure that best practice in relation to the prevention and management of substance abuse is observed.