



SUBSTANCE MISUSE POLICY – EUROPEAN SCHOOL OF VARESE

EN version

Mission of our school:

The European Schools are official educational establishments controlled jointly by the governments of the Member States of the European Union. They are legally regarded as public institutions in all of these countries.

The mission of the European Schools is to provide a multilingual and multicultural education for nursery, primary and secondary level pupils. They are aimed primarily for children of staff of the European institutions.

Rationale for the policy:

This policy is informed by the strategic plan adopted by the Government under the European Drugs Strategy 2021- 2025¹ and made mandatory for schools under the Wellbeing Policy² of the European Schools. This policy takes into account our school's Code of Behaviour, our Child Protection Policy and the General Rules of the European Schools. This policy applies to the entire school community – staff, students, parent(s)/guardian(s) and users of the school buildings and campus. It applies at all times throughout the whole school year and during all school activities on and off the premises including school trips and school related activities.

In the course of their development, young people face many challenges that may affect their health and well-being, including exposure to harmful substances (hereinafter, substances), such as alcohol, tobacco, and drugs (medicines, volatile substances, illegal drugs, new psychoactive substances and other unauthorised substances). Moreover, adolescence and young adulthood are periods of risk-taking and experimentation that often includes substance use. In this context, the school plays an important role in promoting pupils' well-being, including the prevention of substances misuse/abuse. In line with the principles established by the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA), the European Schools system aims at ensuring the schools to provide evidence-based prevention programmes.

This policy should aim not only to reduce substance use, but also to reduce violence, improve learning, produce better academic achievements and create a better school climate, outcomes that are of intrinsic interest to education in the European Schools. The European Schools system aims at reflecting upon how it might provide for the needs of their pupils and respond appropriately to the issue of substance (ab)use, that also involves sensitive and emotive aspects. The context of this policy is also within Italy. This school policy aims to build a bridge between the global/system-wide concepts and the national/local contexts.

This document aims at establishing guiding principles regarding prevention and management of situations of substance abuse, including the provision of specific training to enable different school actors to prevent and manage the situations of substance abuse.

¹ <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/49194/eu-drugs-strategy-booklet.pdf>

² <https://www.eursec.eu/BasicTexts/2022-01-D-6-en-2.pdf> WellBeing Policy Page 38



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The school prohibits the possession, use or supply of banned or prohibited substances and/or drug paraphernalia by any student/staff member in the school building, grounds, on school trips and outings, or during any school related activity. The school reserves the right to determine that a substance found in the circumstances set out above is a banned substance. Drug paraphernalia includes all items associated with the use of illicit substances and any written or printed material promoting the use of illicit substances under Italian law.

The school strictly respects the Italian and Lombardian regulations concerning search and confiscation of substances, intervention of local/national authorities (police, health and social services and organisations) in those cases, and reporting duties concerning substance-related incidents. It is important to remember that prevention and a clear and ongoing information policy are crucial in managing cases of substance abuse. Sanctions will be applicable when necessary, following the internal rules and the General Rules of the European Schools.

The European Schools are an environment free of consumption, possession, and especially the sale or sharing of any harmful substances: alcohol, tobacco, drugs, including any new psychoactive substances. The well-being of every pupil is the central concern of the European Schools. As such, pupils affected by their own or other's drug misuse should have early access to support through the school and other services.

Aims and objectives of this policy:

European School of Varese acknowledges that it has a key role in delivering a programme in substance use education and is committed to implementing the objectives below. The main objectives of this policy applies to the school premises, the school day and when students are on school trips or involved in school activities outside of school:

- To reinforce prevention activities and to increase awareness about substances misuse.
- To reinforce and safeguard the health and safety of pupils and the whole school community;
- To ensure that the environment of schools is kept safe, and substance abuse free.
- To prevent any risk and harm to pupils and other individuals that may result from substance abuse.
- To inform pupils, their parents/legal representatives, staff and others, about the measures to be taken by the school in situations when substances are found or used in school. This is essential to avoid students dropping out of school before S7.
- To provide school staff with a practical tool that enables them to intervene in an appropriate manner when a banned substance is found or used in schools.
- To clarify the legal requirements and responsibilities of the school and other services and authorities.



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- To clarify the procedures for responding to and managing any substance-related incidents that may occur so that they are managed with confidence and consistency and in the best interests of those involved.
- To provide a basis for evaluating the effectiveness of the school and the management of incidents involving use of substances.
- To clarify the necessity to provide training in this area for staff and other partners working with/in the school; and to provide ongoing information sessions for pupils and parents/legal representatives.
- must be communicated to all pupils and parents, who must clearly indicate acknowledgment of this policy. It is available publicly in Italian and English on the school's website.
- This policy charges all school community members with responsibility for health promotion, safety and security, data protection, invigilation of pupils and other relevant groups, in relation to substance abuse.

Policy:

- Training on the area of prevention and management of cases of substances abuse should be made available to the relevant members of the staff.
- Measures to identify, at an early stage, pupils that are at increased risk of developing problematic forms of substance use, for example, poor school attenders, frequent truants or young people with behavioural problems, such as poor impulse control.
- The process of identifying needs should aim to distinguish between pupils who require general information and education, those who could benefit from targeted prevention, and those who require a detailed needs assessment and more intensive support.

Substance Abuse Education:

1. The school is and will continue to be proactive in relation to education in substance abuse prevention. The school provides and will continue to provide formal programmes through Learning to learn (S1), KiVA (S1 & S3), Integrated Science (S1-S3) and Moral/Religion (S1-S7) that are both developmental in nature and age appropriate. Response interventions need to address the wider determinants of risky and impulsive behaviour rather than the substance use in isolation.
2. Educational programmes on substance abuse shall have the following aims:
 - To enable students to make healthy, informed choices by increasing knowledge, challenging attitudes and developing and practising skills, particularly in relation to self-esteem and confidence.
 - To provide information about substance abuse.
 - To increase understanding about the implications and consequences of substance abuse.



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- To encourage an understanding of the personal situation of those experiencing or likely to experience substance abuse.
 - To enable students to identify sources of appropriate personal support and information.
 - To reinforce learning in Science subjects, Religion and Moral by means of cross-curricular and extra-curricular activities with external experts invited to the school to conduct prevention educational programmes. The school invites legal experts from the local police service to speak to students and staff about the legal aspects of illegal substance use/possession. There are also links with the Medical Centres at our school and at the JRC.
 - The school staff consults with the school's medical centre on prevention programme initiatives.
 - Prevention programmes should focus on developing social competencies and refusal skills, healthy decision-making skills, and correcting normative misperceptions about substance use.
3. The school acknowledges the central role of parent(s)/guardian(s) in the implementation of this policy. The school will promote information evenings that AGSEV may wish to host on relevant topics.

Parent(s)/guardian(s) are asked:

- To acknowledge the importance of these programmes.
- To recognise that they are in partnership with the school in relation to informing and educating their children regarding substance abuse.
- To assist and co-operate fully with the school if incidents concerning substance abuse arise.

Procedures for managing alcohol, drug related and other substance abuse incidents:

1. Where a student or students are believed to be in possession of, or under the influence of, an illegal substance, the Director and Deputy Director/Assistant Deputy Director should immediately be informed. Such students should be supervised until the Director Deputy/ADD arrives. Students and their belongings (including schoolbags and lockers) can only be searched by the competent authorities. Two staff members should always be present with a student once a suspicious incident has occurred. Every effort should be made to contact the student's parents.
2. The DIR/DD/ADD, in the presence of a reliable witness, shall take possession of any banned or prohibited substances and drugs paraphernalia associated with a suspected substance abuse incident recording all such items. All items will be handed to the police at the earliest opportunity. The police need to be called to report the illegal substances.
3. The DIR/DD/ADD may, at her/his absolute discretion, liaise with any appropriate outside authority and may seek advice or assistance in relation to the investigation of the incident. The DIR/DD/ADD shall maintain a written record of all communications with outside agencies.



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4. All staff involved will, at the earliest possible opportunity, make a written record of what occurred and forward it to the DIR/DD/ADD
5. The school recognises the importance in limiting, as far as is practicable, the number of people involved in investigating a suspected substance abuse incident. The school shall involve only those directly concerned with the student. In addition to the Director these may include the DD/ADD, the relevant Pedagogical Advisor, the school psychologist, and specific staff directly involved with the incident.
6. Normally if a student is suspected to be under the influence of alcohol or illicit substance abuse, said student is accompanied to the Medical Service for medical evaluation.
7. Training on the area of prevention and management of cases of substances abuse should be made available to the relevant members of the staff.

DUTY OF ALL STAFF

All staff members are accountable for acting and reporting situations of substance misuse, including sharing or sale of substances. The European School of Varese is bound by law to report anything illegal to the police.

The European School of Varese requires all staff to report immediately, via email/in written form, any incidents where pupils/employees/visitors:

1. Encounter the use/suspected use of alcohol/drugs on the school premises in the school grounds or during a school related activity.
2. Exhibit symptoms/behaviour that may suggest the use of alcohol/drugs. Staff should accompany the student to the Medical Centre and inform the school management immediately.
3. Are involved or are suspected of being involved in the distribution, purchase or use of alcohol/drugs.
4. Discover suspect substances/paraphernalia in the school. (Drug Paraphernalia includes any banned or prohibited substance as defined above, any items that may be used in the taking of illegal substances and any written printed or graphic material promoting the use of illicit substances).
5. The school personnel will seek to establish the facts and to be clear about the nature of the incident before deciding on a course of action. There will be no assumption of guilt at this stage.