

DRUGS POLICY

Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to inform all members of the school community how drug education and drug-related incidents are dealt with. As a School we have the interests and well being of all pupils and Staff involved at heart. As stated in the School aims we wish to “ *establish an environment where pupils and staff are valued and supported as individuals and where their rights and dignity are maintained..... The School expects all its members to act with integrity, to display a concern for justice and to be sensitive to the needs of other people.*”

We define a drug as a substance that, when administered to the body, brings about change. This could include altering moods, feelings or behaviours, changing perceptions or the way in which the body functions. Drugs, in our understanding, include medicines (if misused), tobacco, alcohol, solvents, poppers and illegal substances such as cannabis, amphetamines, ecstasy, LSD, heroin and crack/cocaine etc.

School rules on drugs:

- We condemn the misuse of drugs by any member of the School community and the illegal supply of drugs.
- All drugs covered by this policy, with the exception of reasonable quantities of prescribed medicines and drugs purchased over the counter from a pharmacy, are not permitted to be brought into, sold, passed on or otherwise obtained on school premises or during official school trips and activities.
- These rules apply to school staff and all other adults working in and for the School, apart from the appropriate use of alcohol at official School events and legal medical use of drugs.

Drug Education

We recognise that along with parents and other agencies, the School can enable pupils to understand how drugs can benefit or harm individuals and communities.

Our programme of Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) includes work about drugs and making informed decisions. The affects of drugs, good and adverse, are also covered in the science curriculum. This combination of approaches seeks to:

- Enable our pupils to make responsible, healthy, informed choices about the role drugs might play in their lifestyle, by acquiring sound information, exploring attitudes and values and by developing effective decision making and communication skills.
- Promote self-esteem and sense of worth in each individual pupil.
- Increase awareness and understanding of possible legal, social, economic and health consequences arising from the use and misuse of drugs.
- Enable pupils to identify sources of appropriate support.

These aims will be met not only through the PSHE curriculum (Appendix1) but also through other curriculum subjects as it is considered to be a cross-curricular responsibility and may equally result in discussion in English Literature lessons as Religious Studies and PE . The work is co-ordinated by the Deputy Head who will also organise the formal contribution of the school counsellor and outside speakers.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Head

- The Head has overall responsibility for the implementation of the policy, for liaison with the Board of Governors and parents, and external agencies as appropriate, and for the training and support of Staff.
- The Head must ensure that all pupils are aware of the policy and its implications.
- The Head is responsible for liaison with the media, in conjunction with the Chair of Governors, when necessary.

Chair of the Board of Governors

The Chair of the Board of Governors, in consultation with the Head, is empowered to take any necessary urgent action, and to report this to the next meeting of the governing body.

All Staff

All members of Staff must know the School's policy and to seek to obtain the relevant skills and knowledge to support the policy.

Action To Be Taken In Incidents Involving Misuse of Drugs

It is vitally important the Staff, pupils and parents should be clear about the action that will be taken in any drug related incident.

1. Staff should ensure that all cases of misuse of drugs, or suspected misuse, are reported to the Head or the Deputy Head if the Head is unavailable.
2. In all instances involving substance misuse or supply on the School's premises parents will be informed, and their co-operation sought.
3. The School will consider each drug incident separately and consider the appropriate response, bearing in mind the circumstances of the case, and the need to balance the interests of the pupil, other members of the School and the wider community.
4. However, the Governors believe that it essential that parents and pupils are clear about the normal sanction that will be applied in particular instances, as follows:

- a) a pupil who supplies any drugs or solvents (whether legal or illegal, and regardless of the seriousness of the use) on the School's premises, or during a School trip, will normally be permanently excluded for a first offence.
'Supply' includes retailing drugs on the premises, communicating with a drug dealer on behalf of another pupil of the School, introducing fellow pupils to a drug dealer, and any other instance of procuring legal or illegal drugs for herself or other pupils. 'Supply' includes supplying for money or free-of-charge. 'drugs or solvents' includes substances which the pupils believe to be such, even if subsequent investigation shows that this is not the case.

In the case of the supply of a drug which is legal (including over-the-counter drugs) the Head will assess the seriousness of the incident before deciding whether to exclude permanently, for a fixed period, or not at all.

Before making a decision on exclusion the Head will ensure that a satisfactory investigation has been carried out.

- b) a pupil who has any legal or illegal drug in her possession will normally be excluded for a fixed period FOR A FIRST OFFENCE, to be determined by the Head after considering all the circumstances of the case.

The Head will also determine what counselling needs to be provided and/or other action needs to be taken during or after the exclusion.

For a SECOND OFFENCE the Head will determine whether a further fixed term exclusion is appropriate, or whether it is appropriate to exclude permanently. In coming to a decision the Head will take into account any medical/police/social service/ drug adviser reports that may be available, and consider whether further counselling is appropriate.

Offences Outside the School

If a pupil is involved in a drug-related incident outside the school the Head will assess the implications for the pupil and the School and determine the best course of action bearing in mind the interests of the pupil and the interests of the School and wider community. Exclusion would not normally be appropriate for a first outside-school offence.

The Head will consult the Police Liaison Officer or other agency, if appropriate, before making a decision.

Involvement of the Police

Although there is no legal duty to inform the police of any drug incident in the School, the Governors' policy is that the Head will determine whether to inform the Police Liaison Officer and will seek any relevant support and advice. Where the School suspects that drugs are being sold on the School's premises all relevant suspicions and information will be passed to the police.

Staff Training

The Head will endeavour to ensure that Staff will receive appropriate training in drug education and the handling of incidents that they might come across. All Staff should know this school policy and be informed of any changes to it.

Monitoring and Review

The Board of Governors will, with the Head, review the policy annually and will assess its effectiveness and whether any changes are necessary.

This policy is next due for Review in September 2011