

Drug Education and the Management of Drug Related Incidents

The aims of the policy are to:

- provide a consistent approach throughout the school to all aspects of drug education and the way drug related incidents are dealt with.
- encourage pupils, parents and staff to develop an awareness and knowledge of harmful substances available in our society and the skills to make informed and responsible choices now and in later life.
- stress the benefits of a healthy lifestyle.
- enhance parenting skills.
- meet statutory requirements.
- relate to the Personal, Social, Moral and Health Education programmes which help to prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.

The objectives are to ensure:

- pupils, parents and staff are provided with accurate and current information about substances, encompassing legal drugs like tobacco and alcohol, prescribed and preparatory medicines, substances like caffeine, anabolic steroids and solvents as well as illegal substances.
- attitudes towards substance use and misuse held by some pupils, parents and staff are challenged.
- pupils are aware that the smoking, inhaling, injection or swallowing of any prohibited substances by pupils, either on the school premises or on the way to and from school is not allowed under any circumstances.
- the bringing of cigarettes, alcohol or any other drugs, together with matches, lighters, lasers, fireworks or any other hazardous materials to school is strictly forbidden.
- the promotion of pupils self-esteem and confidence so they can resist peer pressure to misuse drugs and the skills to avoid the misuse of drugs.
- pupils, parents and staff who are misusing drugs or who have concerns about the misuse of drugs know where to obtain support and guidance.

Good Practice Guidelines if misuse is identified :-

- Do not panic. Avoid rushing in, jumping to conclusions and making hasty decisions. It is important to make time to think the issue through carefully.
- It is essential to assess the drug use carefully. There are obviously different types of drug use. A pupil experimenting for the first time is very different from a pupil who is a regular user. The real risks involved depend on the drug taken, the amounts and the frequency of use. Personal factors are also important.
- Schools can react in a number of different ways including the use of sanctions, the provision of care/counselling and education/information. Staff need to anticipate what effects, both negative and positive, their responses will have and on whom.

Pupils in possession of cigarettes, matches, lighters, and alcohol will have these articles confiscated in the first instant. Parents will be informed by telephone or letter to arrange for the collection of the substances and a suitable approach agreed to support the pupil. In more serious cases parents will be interviewed and assessed by the appropriate Support Services.

- Pupils in possession of solvents or illegal substances will have these articles confiscated, parents will be called and together they will meet with the Police Liaison Officer
- Incidents will be logged in pupil files and in a log book kept in the office.

The school maintains the right to issue a variety of sanctions, including fixed term or permanent exclusion if deemed necessary.

Confidentiality

Pupils need to be aware of this when they disclose to a teacher that they are involved with drugs, that the teacher cannot guarantee absolute confidentiality given the seriousness of the issue and in the light of Child Protection procedures which must be followed for any pupil thought to be at risk. This means referral to an

outside agency.

Medicines (There is a separate policy)

Pupils need to be aware that apart from inhalers all medicines they need to take during the day must be handed in to the school nurse, with specific details about dosage and frequency. They also need to be carefully labelled. The nurse will see to the administration of medicine at appropriate times.

PROCEDURE :-

- 1) Clarify the substance and the misuse.
- 2) Staff should then discuss appropriate action with the Head or Deputy and the School Nurse.
- 3) Does school need to contact an outside agency for advice?
- 4) Is this particular incident one which should be reported to the Police?
- 5) Which is the best way for school to involve parents at this stage?
- 6) Does the pupil need to be counselled and given appropriate information?
- 7) Does this misuse call for a programme of intervention?
- 8) Is it such a serious offence that it requires exclusion?

Signs and Symptoms

These may indicate drug misuse by pupils. parents or staff

Warning signs in individuals:-

- Excessive spending, borrowing or stealing of money or goods
- Unusual outbreaks of temper
- Time is being spent away from home, classroom or school
- Decline in school performance
- Disregard for physical appearance
- Lack of appetite
- Heavy use of aftershave or perfume to disguise the smell of drugs
- Changes in the pattern of attendance
- Decline in willingness to participate in activities
- Wearing sunglasses at inappropriate times (to hide dilated/constricted pupils)

Warning signs in groups

- Maintaining distance from pupils or staff
- Being the subject of drug related rumours
- Talking to strangers on or near the premises
- Use of drug takers slang
- Exchanging objects or money in unusual circumstances
- Stealing which appears to be the work of several individuals

Your main responsibility is for any pupil, parent or staff at immediate risk, but you also need to ensure the well-being and safety of others. Put into practice your school's first aid procedures

The procedures for an emergency apply when a child or young person or others are at immediate risk of harm. A person who is unconscious, having trouble breathing, seriously confused or disoriented or who has taken a harmful toxic substance, should be responded to as an emergency.

1. assess the situation
 2. if a medical emergency, send for medical help and ambulance
- If the person is conscious:
- ask the person what has happened and to identify any drug used
 - collect any drug sample and any vomit for medical analysis
 - do not induce vomiting
 - keep the person under observation, warm and quiet

If the person is unconscious:

- ensure that the person can breathe and place in recovery position
- do not move the person if a fall is likely to have led to spinal or other serious injury which may not be obvious
- do not give anything by mouth
- do not attempt to make the person sit or stand
- do not leave the person unattended or in the charge of a pupil
- pass on any information available including vomit and any drug samples

LEGAL FACTS - THE LAW

The Medicines Act 1968

Many drugs used as medicines are legally available on doctors prescriptions only, e.g. heroin, methadone, tranquillisers. Some can be bought without prescription, but only in chemists' shops (pharmacies), e.g. strong cough medicines; a few can be bought in any shop, e.g. Paracetamol

The Misuse of Drugs Act 1971

Controls the misuse (non-medical) of certain drugs. Apart from prepared opium it is not actually illegal to use the controlled drugs covered by this act. However, it is illegal to:-

- simply have the drug (possession)
- have the drug to sell/give to others (possession with intent to supply)
- make or grow the drug (production).
- give, sell or share the drug (supply)
- import or export (trafficking)
- allow your home, or premises you manage, to be used for supplying, or offering to supply the drug

Some of the controlled drugs covered by the Misuse of Drugs Act;

- CLASS A: LSD, Ecstasy, cocaine, heroin, other strong opiates, magic mushrooms (prepared)
- CLASS B: Barbiturates, amphetamines, codeine, other weaker opiates.
- CLASS C: Sleeping tablets, cannabis, tranquillizers, weak opiates e.g. Temgesic.
- Any controlled drug prepared for injection counts as CLASS A.

Possession means being found to have a controlled drug on you, your clothes, in your car, house or bag. If you can't prove that the drug was for your personal use only. you may also be charged with possession with intent to supply. You don't have to tell the police if you know someone is using or dealing, but you could be in trouble if you deliberately obstruct enquiries.

SUBSTANCES :-

Where possible make sure that all children :

- know that all medicines are drugs but not all drugs are medicines
- know that all medicines are harmful if not used properly
- know about different types of medicine and that some people need them to live a normal life
- know and understand simple safety rules about medicines, tablets, solvents and household substances.

Where appropriate make sure that as many children as possible :

- know that all medicines are drugs and not all drugs are medicines
- know that there are over-the -counter, prescribed, legal and illegal substances and have some understanding of their effects
- know how to make simple choices and exercise some basic techniques for resisting pressure from friends and others
- know the important and beneficial part which drugs have played in society.

Reviewed April 2008