

POLICY ON DRUGS

The school recognises that it has an important role to play for its pupils in drug education in an era in which there is increasing influence on young people by friends and peers, through the media and from a variety of role models.

As the abuse of drugs is a whole community issue the school will work in partnership with parents and outside agencies to seek to prevent the onset of drug misuse. A drugs education programme, which forms part of the school's PSE programme, will provide all pupils with the opportunity to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes to equip them to resist the use of drugs.

The aims of the Drugs Education programme are:

Knowledge

- a) to understand the role of drugs in society.
- b) to help young people distinguish between different substances and consider their use, abuse, benefits and harm.
- c) to inform pupils of the effects of drug abuse.
- d) to understand the factors that lead to drug use and misuse.
- e) to be aware of the status of all drugs within the law.
- f) to explore healthy methods of dealing with pressures, anxieties, boredom and understand the benefits of a drug free lifestyle.

Skills

- a) to help pupils acquire decision-making skills and be able to make informed decisions, independent of others, about the use of drugs.
- b) to help pupils develop the ability to understand, express and communicate their feelings.

- c) to help pupils acquire skills in managing the pressures of the youth culture they live in.
- d) to encourage an approach in which each pupil is actively involved.
- e) to minimise the chances of any pupils misusing drugs.

Attitudes

- a) to help pupils in the development of their self-respect, self-reliance, self-discipline and self-worth.
- b) to promote a sense of responsibility in respect of personal, family and community health.

The Drugs Education Programme is delivered to students through Programmes of Study in PSHE, Science, RE, PE and, where appropriate, through other subjects.

Co-ordination of Drugs Education Programme

Mr Mohan, the “co-ordinator” for drugs education will assist in:

- * liaising with other bodies in relation to drugs education
- * ensuring that this drugs education programme is being implemented
- * advising on drug-related incidents at school
- * advising other staff on drugs education

Procedures for dealing with drug-related incidents

With the exception of the appropriate use of prescribed medication, about which the school should be informed as necessary, the school will not accept the illicit use of drugs either on its premises or in any social or extra curricular activity associated with the school.

The school will consider each substance incident individually and recognizes that a variety of responses will be necessary to deal with incidents. The school will seek to balance the interests of the pupils involved, the other school members and the local community. **Only the Headmaster will make any reply to enquiries from the press.**

The SMT member responsible for child protection, or in his absence another member of SMT, will as designated teacher, manage the responses to such incidents.

(a) If a student discloses to a teacher that he is taking drugs outside school the teacher should:

(i) Indicate to the student that the teacher can offer no guarantee of confidentiality. The teacher will communicate the details to the designated teacher who will inform the Headmaster.

(ii) The Headmaster, or designated teacher, will inform the parents.

(b) If the student is found in possession of illegal drugs or is involved in the supplying of drugs on the school premises or at any event organized by the school:

(i) The student should be asked to hand over the substance, if possible in the presence of a witness. In the absence of a witness do not be put off from retrieving substances. (The law permits staff to take temporary possession of a substance suspected of being a controlled drug to protect a pupil from harm and committing the act of possession).

(ii) Remove the substance and record the time, place and circumstance when the substance came into your possession.

(3) Take the substance immediately to the designated teacher for drugs incidents who will then take it to the Head. Do not keep the substance on your person or in a place of safe keeping; to do so may place you at risk.

(4) An official report should be completed recording the time, date and circumstances of the findings. Parents will be informed first. All such drug related incidents will be reported to the police.

(5) The substance will be handed over to the police who will be able to identify whether it is an illegal drug.

(6) If the substance is identified as an illegal drug the student will be excluded from school and the chairman of the Board of Governors will be informed. Parents will be required to identify and avail of appropriate support for the student.

(7) In the event of a discovery of any equipment associated with substance abuse, especially needles and syringes, pupils should not be allowed to handle such items. All equipment found must be handled by adults with utmost care. The Headmaster must ensure that materials are placed in a secure and rigid container until disposed of.

SANCTIONS

Parents will be requested to attend the school, meet the Headmaster or a member of SMT and the student will be taken home. Students will remain under supervision on the school premises until collected by parents. Until investigations by all relevant authorities are complete students will remain suspended initially for 5 days to be renewed at the discretion of the Board of Governors.

Conclusive proof of drugs possession, soliciting drugs or intent to supply drugs will result in expulsion.

USE OF PRESCRIBED DRUGS AND MEDICINE

Parents must inform the school office in writing of any prescribed medication their son requires.

Details should include:-

- i) the pupil's name and class,
- ii) name and strength of the medication,
- iii) dosage and times when it should be taken.

Where possible the dose is to be limited to that required for one day.

Except under these conditions, no pupil should be in possession of any medication.

A pupil should not give any medication to another pupil.

Staff should not administer any medication to pupils.

It is recommended that all staff should have access to training every two years, to keep them informed and up-to-date in the recognition of drugs, their symptoms and other drug related issues. Similar opportunities will be made available for parents.