



DRUGS EDUCATION POLICY

The aim of the drugs education policy is to acknowledge and clarify the school's role in drug prevention and drug education and ensure it is appropriate to pupils' needs. The policy will provide information about procedures in response to any drug-related incident and provide guidance to teachers, support staff and outside visitors.

This drugs education policy ensures that our school takes a whole school approach on the issue of drugs as part of the commitment to being a healthy school. Teachers need to be confident and skilled to teach drug education and pupils, who are concerned about drugs, need to be supported.

The policy aims to have clear procedures for responding to drug-related incidents. Sanctions for incidents are consistent with the school's discipline policy.

This policy relates to the Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) programme, behaviour policy and health and safety policy.

Definition

Drugs are those that are legal, such as alcohol, tobacco and solvents, over the counter and prescribed drugs and illegal drugs such as cannabis, ecstasy, heroin, crack/cocaine and LSD.

The school believes that the possession and use of drugs in school or during the school day is inappropriate. All the drugs covered in this policy are not permitted to be bought, sold, or otherwise obtained on school premises or during the school day, including when pupils are on school visits. These rules apply to adults working at and for the school. Individual exceptions may be made for pupils who need to take prescribed medicines where appropriate.

Drugs Education

The school provides a planned drug education curriculum as part of PSHE that reflects knowledge and understanding, attitudes and personal and social skills. Drug education will:

- enable pupils to make healthy, informed choices by increasing knowledge, exploring their own and other people's attitudes and developing and practicing skills
- promote positive attitudes towards healthy lifestyles
- provide accurate information about substances
- increase understanding about the implications and possible consequences of use and misuse

- encourage an understanding for those experiencing or likely to experience substance use
- widen understanding about related health and social issues, e.g. sex and sexuality, crime, HIV and AIDS
- seek to minimize the risks that users and potential users face
- enable young people to identify sources of appropriate personal support

On the whole teachers teach drug education, but where appropriate, outside visitors may contribute and will be aware of the school drug policy. Teachers have access to on-going support and training as part of their own professional development and teaching materials are reviewed for quality and relevance.

The school actively co-operates with other agencies such as community police, social services, the LEA and health and drug agencies to deliver its commitment to drugs education.

Statutory Duty of School

The head teacher takes overall responsibility for the policy and its implementation, for liaison with the Governing Body, parents, LEA and appropriate outside agencies and for the appointment within the school of a substance co-ordinator, who will have general responsibility for handling the daily implementation of this policy. The head teacher will ensure that all staff dealing with substance issues are adequately supported and trained.

Implementation

In instances involving substance misuse or supply on the premises, and following discussion between staff members who know pupils well, parents will be informed at the earliest opportunity by the head teacher. The school and parents can then work together to support the young person involved.

If a young person admits to using or supplying substances off the premises, the teacher's discretion will be involved, but informing the appointed substance co-ordinator is appropriate action. The co-ordinator should inform the head teacher, who will inform the parents.

There is no legal obligation to inform the police, though they may be able to give relevant support and advice. However, a school cannot knowingly allow its premises to be used for the production or supply of any controlled drug, or the preparation or smoking of cannabis or opium. Where it is suspected that substances are continuing to be sold on the premises, details regarding those involved, as well as as much information as possible, will be passed to the Police Liaison Officer or Community Affairs Department.

The governing body will be involved in drug education and drug-related incidents in the same manner as any other matter concerning the direction of the school.

The school will consider each substance incident individually and recognize that a variety of responses will be necessary to deal with incidents. The school will consider very carefully the implications of any action it may take. It seeks to balance the interests of the pupil involved, the other school members and the local community. Permanent exclusion may be warranted as a final sanction when all other reasonable steps have been taken.

Regarding the welfare of staff, the school will follow the County Council Policy on drug and alcohol misuse as part of its health and safety policy, which is designed to reduce to a minimum the possible effects of substance misuse on the user, other employees and the environment.

The head teacher will take responsibility for liaison with the media, where required. As the issue of substance misuse is an emotive one, and is likely to generate interest from the local and national media, the school will take appropriate advice and guidance from the LEA press office and legal department to ensure that any reporting of incidents remains in the best interests of the young people, their families and the school. The LEA should be informed as soon as possible. This may be done via the LEA adviser for drugs education, or the school support officer.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

The Governing Body will review this policy annually and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the school

Reviewed on Friday 16 October 2002

Related Items

SEX AND RELATIONSHIP EDUCATION POLICY

BEHAVIOUR POLICY

HOMEWORK POLICY

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

This Policy was produced following INSET with Barry Gibson, Schools Drug Adviser.