

St Bede C of E Primary Academy



Drugs and Related Incidents Policy

St Bede C of E Primary Academy statement

St Bede C of E Primary Academy believes that the presence of unauthorised drugs in our school is not acceptable.

We want our school to be a safe place for us all to work and the presence of unauthorised drugs represents a threat to our health and safety. This policy should be read alongside the administration of medicines policy.

Rationale

This policy reflects DfE guidance and accords with advice in the healthy schools programme guidance from the LA and guidance from the local drug action team.

Aims

The aims of this policy are to:

- Clarify the school's approach to drugs for staff, pupils, governors, parents/carers and to clarify the legal requirements and responsibilities;
- give guidance to staff on the school's drugs education programme;
- safeguard the health and safety of pupils and staff in our school;
- enable staff to manage drug-related incidents properly.

Terminology

The term 'drugs' is used throughout this policy to refer to *all* drugs:

- All *illegal* drugs (those controlled by the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971);
- all *legal* drugs including alcohol and tobacco and also volatile substances (those giving off a gas or vapour which can be inhaled);
- all medicines whether over the counter or on prescription.

Responsibilities

The Headteacher will:

- ensure that staff and parents are informed about this drugs policy;
- ensure that the policy is implemented effectively;
- manage any drug-related incidents;
- ensure that staff are given sufficient training, so that they can teach effectively about drugs, and handle any difficult issues with sensitivity;

- liaise with external agencies regarding the school drugs education programme and ensure that the PSHE curriculum covers drug related issues;
- monitor the policy and report to governors, when requested, on the effectiveness of the policy.

The governing body will:

- establish general guidelines on drugs education;
- support the Headteacher in following these guidelines;
- inform and consult with parents about the drugs education policy;
- liaise with the LA and health organisations so that the school's policy is in line with the best advice available;
- support the Headteacher in any case conferences or in appeals against exclusions.

Objectives of drugs education

Drugs education should enable pupils to develop their knowledge, attitudes and understanding about drugs, and to appreciate the benefits of a healthy lifestyle, relating this to their own and others' actions. Drugs education is taught through PSHE and Science lessons. Such lessons should:

- build on knowledge and understanding;
- provide accurate information and clear up misunderstandings;
- explore attitudes and values, and examine the risks and consequences of actions relating to drugs;
- develop pupils' interpersonal skills, their understanding of rules and laws, and their self-awareness and self-esteem;
- ensure that children are taught about drugs in an appropriate manner, following guidelines that have been agreed by parents, Governors and staff.

Drugs education

We regard drugs education as a whole-school issue and we believe that opportunities to teach about the importance of a healthy lifestyle occur naturally throughout the curriculum.

We acknowledge that by the time pupils are in Year 6 some of them may have had some experiences with drugs already, so we must help to equip pupils to handle risky situations, before they actually meet them.

We recognise that learning is most effective when it addresses the development of knowledge, attitudes and skills together, and when teaching and learning are participative and active. We use a variety of teaching styles that are characterised by active learning. We find out what the children know already, we pose dilemmas, and we get the children to discuss choices. Wherever possible the information we give is visually reinforced. We use drama, role-play or ICT to demonstrate various strategies and scenarios. In short, we seek to engage our pupils. We give them the opportunity to talk to groups or to the whole class. We encourage them to listen to the views of others, and we ask them to explore why drugs are such a problem for society.

We recognise that pupils with special educational needs may be more vulnerable, that different communities have different attitudes towards drug abuse, and that some pupils may have drug-abusing parents.

Drugs education takes place during normal lesson time. Sometimes a class teacher will seek support from the school nurse or another health professional. In teaching this course we follow the DfE and LA guidelines. The resources and materials that we use are recommended either by the Health Authority or by the LA. Lessons that focus on drugs education form part of a sequence of lessons that are designed to promote a healthy lifestyle.

Drugs at school

Solvents and other hazardous chemicals must be carefully stored, to avoid inappropriate access, or use by pupils. Teachers are cautious with older, solvent-based Tippex, with aerosols, with glues and with board-cleaning fluids.

Legal drugs are legitimately in school only when authorised by the Headteacher. Members of staff who smoke must keep their tobacco and matches or lighters secure. Smoking is not permitted anywhere in the school.

Alcohol to be consumed at community staff, or parents' events will be stored securely beforehand. To sell alcohol we must be licensed under the Licensing (Occasional Permissions) Act, 1983.

Drugs incidents

The first priority is safety and first aid, i.e. calling the emergency services and placing unconscious people in the recovery position.

Pupils suspected of being intoxicated from inhaling a volatile substance will be kept calm; chasing can place intolerable strain on the heart, thus precipitating sudden death.

Any drug suspected of being illegal will be confiscated and stored securely, awaiting disposal; these precautions must be witnessed and recorded. Staff should not taste unknown or confiscated substances.

Legal but unauthorised drugs or medicines will also be confiscated and will be returned to parents; the school may arrange for the safe disposal of volatile substances. Where a pupil is suspected of concealing an unauthorised drug, staff are *not* permitted to carry out a personal search, but may search pupils' bags, trays etc.

The Headteacher will decide if the police need to be called or whether the school will manage the incident internally. A full record will be made of any incident.

The Headteacher will conduct an investigation into the nature and seriousness of any incident, in order to determine an appropriate response. Staff will be cautious about discharging a pupil to the care of an intoxicated parent, particularly when the parent intends driving the pupil home. Staff will arrange an alternative. The focus will be the pupil's welfare and safety. Where the behaviour of an intoxicated parent repeatedly places a child at risk, or the parent or carer becomes abusive or violent, staff should consider whether the circumstances of the case are serious enough to invoke child protection procedures, and possibly the involvement of the police.