



Melcombe Primary School Drugs and Alcohol Policy

Reviewed by: Carol Campbell

Date adopted: 20th November 2017

Signed D. Charman

Date 20 Nov 2019

Dennis Charman
Chair of the Governing Board

Date for Review: 20th November 2019

Introduction

In 2004 the DfES updated its guidance to schools about drugs. This policy reflects that guidance, as well as the content of the QCA schemes of work. It links with advice in the Healthy Schools' Programme and guidance from the PSHE Association and the local authority (LA). We differentiate between drugs as medicines and drugs which may be harmful to health in order to ensure that pupils understand that some drugs help us.

Aims

The aims of this policy are to:

- clarify the school's approach to drugs, for staff, pupils, governors, parents or 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.

This school 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.

Responsibilities

The Headteacher or Deputy Head Teacher will:

- ensure that staff and parents/carers 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
- monitor the policy and report to governors, when requested.

The governing body will:

- designate a governor with specific responsibility for drugs education
- support the school in following these guidelines
- inform and consult with parents/carers about the drugs education policy
- liaise with the LA and health organisations
- support the Head Teacher 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. It 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 all children are taught about drugs in a consistent manner
- follow 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,

but especially in science, PSHE and citizenship, RE and PE. There are also opportunities in circle time.

Teaching about drugs will begin in Key Stage 1, when pupils are taught about seeing the doctor, visiting the chemist, and the importance of medicines and their safe handling.

In Key Stage 2 pupils will learn that alcohol is the most widely used drug, and that its dangers can be overlooked. We will ensure that our pupils are aware of the risks associated with drinking. We teach pupils that smoking is a minority habit, and encourage them to consider its effects and risks. We also teach pupils about the dangers of volatile-substance abuse, because of the high risk of accidental death, especially for first-time and occasional abusers.

We acknowledge that by the time pupils are in Year 6 some of them may have already had some experiences with drugs, so we must help to equip pupils to handle risky situations and know where to go for help.

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 and role-play to demonstrate various strategies and scenarios. We seek to engage our pupils and we give them the opportunity to talk to groups or to the whole class and invite a theatre group (as appropriate). We encourage them to listen to the views of others, and we ask them to explore why drugs are a problem for society.

We aim to teach all pupils about drugs, however different their attainment levels, and however diverse their requirements. 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.

Sometimes a class teacher will seek support from the school nurse or another health professional. We follow the DfES and LA guidelines. The resources and materials that we use are recommended 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

(See medication policy)

Solvents and other hazardous chemicals must be stored securely, to prevent inappropriate access, or use by pupils. Health and safety guidelines are followed.

Legal drugs are legitimately in school only when authorised by the Headteacher.

Drugs Incidents

An incident involving unauthorised drugs in school is most likely to involve alcohol, tobacco or illegal drugs.

The Head teacher 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 head Teacher will conduct an investigation into the nature and seriousness of any incident, in order to determine an appropriate response.

The role of parents

The school is well aware that the primary role in children's drugs education lies with parents. We wish to build a positive and supporting relationship with the parents of our pupils, through mutual understanding, trust and cooperation. To promote this objective we will:

- inform parents about the school drugs policy
- invite parents to view the materials used to teach drugs education in our school
- answer any questions parents may have about the drugs education their child receives in school
- take seriously any issue which parents raise with teachers or governors about this policy, or about arrangements for drugs education in the school
- encourage parents to be involved in reviewing the school policy, and making modifications to it as necessary
- inform parents about the best practice with regard to drugs education, so that they can support the key messages being given to pupils at school.

Members of staff will be cautious about discharging a pupil to the care of an intoxicated parent. They may suggest an alternative arrangement. 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 will consider whether the circumstances of the case are serious enough to invoke child protection procedures, and possibly the involvement of the police.

Monitoring and review

The curriculum committee of the governing body will monitor the drugs policy. If the policy needs modification, then the committee will report its findings and recommendations to the full governing body. The curriculum committee takes into serious consideration any representation from parents/carers about the drugs education programme, and comments will be recorded.