



Over St. John's C.E. Primary School
'Let your light shine before others.' Matthew 5:16
Drugs Policy

Introduction

Our school policy follows the guidance produced by the Department for Education (DfE) in 2012 *Drugs: Guidance for Schools*. It also accords with guidance from the LA and guidance from Cheshire Police.

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

- 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.

We are well aware of pressures on young people growing up in our modern society and we want to ensure we equip our children with the knowledge and skills to deal with all drug-related issues they encounter so that they are able to make the right choices to live a healthy life.

Aims and Objectives

We aim to equip children with the knowledge, understanding and skills that enable them to make the sort of choices that lead to a healthy lifestyle. Our drugs education programme has the primary objective of helping children to become more confident and responsible young people. We teach children about the dangers to health posed by drug-taking and we aim to equip them with the social skills that enable them to make informed moral and social decisions in relation to drugs in society.

The objectives of our drugs education programme are:

- to provide children with knowledge and information about illegal drugs and the harmful effects they can have on people's lives;
- to enable children to discuss moral questions related to drug taking, and so provide a safe environment for young people to share their thoughts and ideas;
- to help children become more self-confident so that they are able to make sensible and informed decisions about their lives;
- to let children know what they should do if they come across drugs, or are aware of other people misusing drugs;
- to help children respect their own bodies and in so doing, reduce the likelihood that they will be persuaded to become involved in drug abuse;
- to show that taking illegal drugs is a legal *and* moral issue and that choices about drugs are moral choices;
- to ensure that all children are taught about drugs in a consistent manner, following guidelines that have been agreed by parents, governors and staff.

Over St. John's C.E. Primary School Position Statement

Our school believes that the presence of illegal drugs in our school is not acceptable and will not be tolerated. We understand the dangers inherent in the use of illegal drugs and we want to ensure that our children are

kept safe and free from harm. Consequently, we will consider any incident where illegal drugs are found on the school site with the utmost seriousness.

We want our school to be a safe place for us all to work, and the presence of unauthorised drugs, including tobacco and alcohol represents a threat to our health and safety.

When prescription drugs are required for the good health of children they will be kept in a locked safe place and dispensed by an authorised adult.

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.

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 as part of our 1Decision Scheme of work. 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 alcohol. 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. This is taught through the 1Decision scheme of work.

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 and decision making skills 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 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 or carers.

Drugs education takes place during normal PSHCE lesson time. Sometimes, a class teacher will seek support from the local PCSO, 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 predominantly 1Decision materials but can also be supplemented by recommended sources such as 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

Pupils may not bring medication into school. Parents and carers may arrange for medication to be given to their child at school in line with our Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy.

Emergency medication may be stored securely in the classroom (for anaphylaxis or asthma); other drugs will be stored securely in the medical cabinet or staff kitchen refrigerator, as appropriate.

Solvents and other hazardous chemicals must be stored securely, to prevent inappropriate access, or use by pupils.

Alcohol and tobacco are legitimately in school only when authorised by the headteacher. Members of staff who smoke must keep their vapes, tobacco and matches or lighters secure. Smoking is not permitted anywhere on the school site.

Alcohol to be consumed/ raffled at community or parents' events will be stored securely beforehand. To sell alcohol, we must be licensed under the Licensing Act 2003 for a Temporary Event Notice.

Drugs Incidents

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

The first priority is safety and first aid, such as calling the emergency services and placing unconscious people in the recovery position. An intoxicated pupil does not represent a medical emergency, unless unconscious. 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 or carers; 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, coats and so on.

The Head Teacher will decide whether 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.

Responsibilities

The Head Teacher will:

- ensure that staff and parents and 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 on a day-to-day basis, and report to governors, when requested, on the effectiveness of the policy.

The Governing Board will:

- establish general guidelines on drugs education;
- support the Head Teacher in following these guidelines;
- inform parents and carers 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 Head Teacher in any case conferences, or in appeals against exclusions.

The Role of Parents and Carers

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

To promote this objective we will:

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

When an incident concerning unauthorised drugs has occurred in school, and a pupil is involved, we will inform the parents or carers, and explain how we intend to respond to the incident.

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 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 should 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 headteacher will monitor the drugs policy on an bi-annual basis.

This policy will be reviewed every two years.

Signed: H Williamson

Signed: E Snowdon

Head Teacher

Date: November 2024

Review Date: November 2026