



Drugs Policy



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Policy for Drugs Education

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Rationale

For the purpose of this document the term 'drugs' includes tobacco, alcohol, over-the-counter and prescribed medication, volatile substances and controlled drugs. This school does not condone the misuse of drugs but recognises that there has been a considerable increase in the abuse of drugs in recent years in Northern Ireland. Drug misuse appears to be affecting an ever-younger population and the so-called "recreational" use of drugs can lead to a dangerous acceptance of illegal and harmful drug misuse as part of everyday life.

We believe that this school has a vital preventative role to play in combating the misuse of drugs by young people and we therefore include a drugs education programme in our curriculum.

This school sees its role as that of a caring community committed to the physical, mental, social, emotional, moral and spiritual health, safety and well-being of our pupils and staff.

We want our pupils to make informed and responsible decisions about drugs by increasing their knowledge and by developing in them appropriate values, attitudes and skills. However, we recognise that drug misuse is a whole-community issue and that schools alone cannot solve the drugs problem; the school is only one of a number of groups and agencies which must play a part in the education of young people and we make use of their expertise where possible in the delivery of the programme.

Copies of the guidance on which this policy is based (Drugs: Guidance for schools in Northern Ireland) are available from the Department of Education website www.deni.gov.uk (Circular 2004/09).

Definitions

For the purpose of this document and in line with the guidance issued to all schools by the Department of Education (2004/09) **drugs will include any substance which, when taken, has the effect of altering the way the body works or the way a person behaves, feels, sees or thinks.**

As well as everyday substances such as tea and coffee, drugs include:

- alcohol and tobacco;
- "over-the-counter" medicines, such as paracetamol;

- prescribed drugs, such as antibiotics, tranquillisers, inhalers and Ritalin;
- volatile substances, such as correcting fluids/thinners, gas lighter fuel, aerosols, glues and petrol;
- controlled drugs, such as cannabis, LSD, Ecstasy, amphetamine sulphate (speed), magic mushrooms (processed), heroin and cocaine; and
- other substances such as amyl/butyl nitrite ('poppers') and unprocessed magic mushrooms.

Ethos

Our motto for the school is ' Believe and Achieve.'

Newbuildings Primary School Drugs Policy will be delivered through the Health Education Programme, Religious Education Programme and PDMU programme in the school.

It complements and supports the aims and objectives of the school which seek to provide a caring, secure, happy and stimulating environment for the children and the staff. In creating this, each child feels of value and can achieve their potential, both as individuals and as members of a local and global community. Through this policy we also aim to develop and encourage tolerance towards the attitudes, beliefs and efforts of others.

The school is committed to the health and safety of everyone in it and we will work together with parents and the local community to enable our pupils to make healthy, informed choices and to discourage the misuse of drugs.

Aims and Objectives

The main aims and objectives of this policy are as follows:

- To have a clear and agreed understanding among everyone in the school community about the implications and possible consequences of drug use/misuse.
- To provide all staff (teaching and non-teaching) with adequate training and support to enable them to deal effectively and confidently with incidents of suspected drug misuse, and to ensure that the agreed procedures are consistently and sensitively applied in all situations.
- To empower teaching staff through appropriate training and support to develop and deliver an effective drug education programme.
- To provide a drug education programme which

- develops pupils' self-esteem and promotes positive attitudes in their relationships with others;
 - gives pupils' opportunities to develop the values, skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to make informed and responsible decisions about the use/misuse of drugs including tobacco, alcohol and volatile substances, within the context of a healthy lifestyle; and
 - helps pupils' develop the skills necessary to assert themselves confidently and resist negative pressures and influences.
- To provide appropriate support and assistance for those pupils affected by drug-related issues.
 - To inform parents of the content of this policy and the procedures to be implemented in the management of incidents of suspected drug misuse.
 - To establish an environment in which the school is free from the misuse of all drugs.

Roles and Responsibilities

Pupils

- Be aware of and adhere to school rules in relation to drug use/misuse, including tobacco, alcohol, over-the-counter and prescribed medication, volatile substances and controlled drugs.

Parents/Guardians

- Support the school in the development and implementation of this policy, including the school's procedures for handling incidents of suspected drug misuse and the drug education programme.
- Support your son/daughter if they have become involved with drugs.

All staff (teaching and non-teaching)

- Be alert to the possibility of drug use/misuse.
- Be familiar with the school's procedures in the handling of suspected drug-related incidents.
- It is not the responsibility of the individual staff member to investigate the circumstances surrounding an incident, however he/she should deal with any emergency procedures if necessary.

- Any information, substance or paraphernalia received should be forwarded to the designated teacher for drugs who may have to take immediate action.

Teachers delivering the Drug Education programme

In addition to the above:

- Deliver the school's drug education programme.
- Try to create an atmosphere in the classroom in which pupils can freely contribute to discussion, safe in the knowledge that the comments, ideas and feelings of the group are valued.
- Support pupils in their class if necessary.
- Liaise with the designated teacher for drugs regarding any aspect of the programme/policy, as necessary.

The Designated Teacher for Drugs (Name: Susan McGowan)

- Ensure that all staff and parents are aware of and have access to a copy of the policy.
- Have oversight and co-ordination of the planning of curricular provision in compliance with the statutory requirements including periodic update and review of the policy.
- Liaise with other staff responsible for pastoral care in co-ordinating the delivery of the drug education programme.
- Be responsible for co-ordinating the school's procedures for dealing with incidents of suspected drug misuse.
- Co-ordinate training and induction of all staff in the procedures for dealing with incidents of suspected drug misuse.
- Determine the circumstances surrounding any suspected drug-related incident.
- Complete a suspected incident report form and forward to the Principal.
- Ensure the engagement and active participation of parents in all aspects of drug education.
- Act as the point of contact for outside agencies working with the school.

The Principal

- Ensure that members of the Board of Governors have been consulted on and ratified the policy.

In the case of incidents of suspected drug misuse:

- Ensure the welfare and well being of the pupil(s) involved in the incident and the rest of the school community.
- Ensure that the following people are informed (where relevant):
 - * **Parents/guardians**
 - * PSNI - preferably the Community and Schools Involvement Officer (CSIO)
 - * Board of Governors

- * Designated Officer in WELB
 - * Members of staff
 - * Other pupils and parents informed within the confines of confidentiality
- Agree, in consultation with the Board of Governors, appropriate pastoral and disciplinary responses in relation to the incident, including counselling services/support.
 - Retain written records of the incident and ensure a copy of the report is submitted to Board of Governors and EAWD.
 - Review procedures and amend as appropriate.

The Board of Governors

- Examine and approve the completed policy and education programme, prior to their implementation in the school.
- Ensure the policy is published in the school prospectus and that it is reviewed at regular intervals.
- Be fully aware of and adequately trained to deal with suspected incidents of drug misuse, including tobacco and alcohol, and their appropriate disciplinary response.
- Agree in consultation with the principal appropriate pastoral and disciplinary responses in relation to suspected drug related incidents.
- Designate a Governor to work with the Principal and designated teacher for drugs in relation to drug-related incidents.

The Caretaker

- Be vigilant around and conduct regular checks of the school grounds for drug-related paraphernalia, and inform the designated teacher for drugs as appropriate.
- Ensure the safe storage, handling and disposal of potentially harmful substances such as solvents and cleaning fluids.

Training and Information

All staff (teaching and non-teaching) and Governors will be provided with training to support the full implementation of this policy including the delivery of the drug education programme. Information awareness sessions/drug awareness evening will be offered to parents/guardians on an annual basis or when the need arises.

The Drug Education Programme

The drug education programme in Newbuildings Primary School is just one part of the whole school response to drug use/misuse. The programme provides opportunities for pupils to:

- acquire knowledge and understanding in relation to drug use/misuse;
- identify values and attitudes in relation to drug use/misuse;
- develop skills to enable them to consider the effects of drugs on themselves and others; and
- make informed and responsible choices within the context of a healthy lifestyle.

An overview of the programme is included in the appendix along with the procedures for dealing with a suspected drugs incident.

Procedures for dealing with suspected drug related incidents

Fundamental to dealing with incidents of suspected drug misuse is the principle of *'in loco parentis'*, and the school will always take the steps that would reasonably be expected of any parent to safeguard the well being and safety of all the pupils in their charge.

- **Medicines** - the school insists that parents / guardians provide written details of any medical condition that individual pupils may have including the medication they are currently taking.
- Medicines / tablets must not be brought to school by pupils. Parents requiring their child to take any medication during the school day must bring the medication to school themselves, suitably labelled. Parents/ guardians must also sign the school medication form indicating what the medication is for and how often it is to be administered. The child's teacher must keep a record in their class Medication Log each time medicine is administered.
- **Tobacco**- in the event of a pupil being found with cigarettes on his/ her person, the cigarettes will be confiscated, the parents/ guardians informed and action taken will be in line with the school's Behaviour Policy after all considerations are taken into play.
- **Alcohol** - no alcohol should be consumed by pupils on the school premises or whilst on school trips. In the event of a pupil being found with alcohol on his /her person, the alcohol will be confiscated, the pupil's parents/ guardians informed and action will be taken in line with the school's Behaviour Policy.
- **Solvents**- Newbuildings Primary School will ensure that potentially harmful substances are safely stored and pupils are supervised carefully in the event of them having to be used in the course of their work. The use of correction fluid and aerosol sprays will be discouraged at all times. All the Buildings

Supervisor's materials will be securely held. Teachers will be extra vigilant when using certain marker pens which may have a pungent smell.

- **Illegal substances** - All staff should be aware of the legal implications of discovering a young person in possession of a controlled drug and how they are expected to deal with such an event.

Procedures for responding to an incident of suspected drug use / misuse.

- In any incidence involving suspected drug use/ misuse, the teacher member of staff must immediately inform the Designated Drugs Teacher, in this instance Mrs Susan McGowan.
- If there are drugs or drug related materials, they must be gathered up by the teacher and put somewhere safe.
- All children's safety must be guaranteed as a main priority. This may mean moving children away from the area where there is a problem. This must be done promptly.
- The designated teacher for drugs will then assess the situation, inform the principal or in her absence the vice- principal of the incident and send for a First Aider.
- The First Aider: Mrs Rosemary Nicholl will assess whether the individual needs further medical attention.
- The child's parents / individuals's next of kin will be informed and the child / individual taken to hospital.
- In a potential life- threatening situation, an ambulance will immediately be sent for and the child/ individual taken to hospital immediately.
- Once informed, the principal or, in her absence, the vice-principal will determine the circumstances surrounding the incident and inform the relevant people.
- The child/ individual will be offered any relevant counselling.
- If it is deemed necessary the principal will deal with the incident through the school's Behaviour policy following consultation with the parents of the child and the child / individual themselves.
- Where a teacher or member of staff suspects that a child/ individual may have some drugs or drug paraphernalia concealed in their belongings, they may ask the child/ individual if they can search them. This will be done within the child's / individual presence and in the presence of another adult.
- **No member of staff may search a child's / individual's belongings without their permission or the child / individual being present.**
- Where a child needs to be detained, this will be done with in the school's policy for Safe Handling.
- No child/ individual may be detained under duress.

- Teachers must never guarantee confidentiality in relation to a disclosure by a pupil, as they have a legal obligation to pass on information regarding a criminal activity to the police.
- Members of staff must also respect the confidentiality of the child/ individual concerned and respect their right to privacy.

The school will at all times give careful consideration as to how any information relating to an incident of suspected/confirmed drug use/misuse is communicated to staff, pupils and parents/guardians.

The parents/guardians of the pupil(s) directly involved in an incident of suspected drug use/misuse will be informed of the incident recognising that the future of a child or adult can be adversely affected. **Confidentiality is of paramount importance in drug related incidents and subsequent outcomes.**

Dealing with the Media

If the school receives an enquiry from the media the caller will only be referred to the principal or, in the absence of the principal, a designated nominee. This will usually be the Vice- Principal.

When responding to the media the privacy of the pupil(s), his/her family and/or any staff members will be respected at all times

Monitoring and evaluation

The school will ensure that procedures are put in place to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of all aspects of this policy. Information will be regularly collected from pupils and staff as part of the monitoring process, and this will then be evaluated against the aims and objectives of the policy at appropriate intervals.

- All incidents regarding drugs will be carefully noted and kept by the designated teacher for drugs.
- The frequency of drug incidences will be carefully monitored by her and if there is an increase this will be investigated and reported to the Principal and the SMT so that the appropriate steps can be taken to address the situation.
- The designated teacher for drugs will report to the SMT on a half termly basis unless there is an immediate need to do so sooner.
- The principal will report to the Board of Governors on a termly basis unless there is a need to do so sooner.
- The designated teacher for drugs will also monitor the effectiveness of the drugs Education programme on a termly basis.

- This will take place at staff meetings and the teachers will be asked for their input into programme, how it may be amended or developed.
- This will be reviewed and updated to take into account any change in circumstances within the school and the pupils.
- The drugs policy is tightly aligned to the Behaviour Policy when decisions need to be taken regarding the sanctions to be used following an incident of suspected drug use/ misuse.
- The drugs policy is also tightly aligned to the Pastoral Care policy of the school so that the necessary help and advice may be given to each child/ individual following a suspected incident of drugs use / misuse.
- The school's Medication Policy is also enforced within the drugs policy when medicines /tablets are to be administered at school.

Communication and Dissemination of Policy

Parents are at liberty to request a full copy of it at any time. The full policy is available from the school office. .

The policy will be reviewed and updated as required but at least every two years.

Appendix 1.

CHECKLIST FOR HANDLING SUSPECTED DRUG RELATED INCIDENTS IN SCHOOLS

This is a guide on the key procedures to undertake when a drug-related incident occurs in schools.

1. Ensure the safety of the individual pupil involved, of other pupils, yourself and other staff. On finding a situation with a suspected substance: -

- Get help immediately from another adult.
- Assess situation, to see if this is a life-threatening situation or not.

If an emergency: -

- If necessary contact an ambulance.
- Put person under the influence of the drugs in the recovery position.
- Ensure airways are cleared.
- Remove any other bystanders from the immediate vicinity.

Then in all cases: -

- Carefully gather up any drugs / paraphernalia / evidence lying around and keep safely.
- Ascertain which substances / drugs have been taken and how much.
- Secure all drugs and paraphernalia and give to the Principal / designated teacher for drugs immediately, and lock them away.
- Contact the parents/guardians as soon as possible.

2. Ensure all incidents are properly investigated and recorded: -

- Never accuse pupils of drug dealing/possession; these are alleged illicit substances until substantiated by the PSNI.
- Conduct search procedures according to school policy. (**Never search personal belongings without permission.** It is okay to search school property such as lockers, cupboards or desks).
- Ensure all drugs are safely and securely stored or destroyed, making sure that this is witnessed by another adult and recorded.
- Gather details and data from all the eyewitnesses at the scene.
- All statements and phone calls should be recorded, signed and dated.
- Record all information on official incident form and sign and date, or ensure accurate details are given to whoever is writing the form and co-sign.
- Ensure an incident form is filled in and forwarded to the E.A. - Western Division.
- Ensure that you follow all the procedures in your School's Drugs Policy.

3. Ensure appropriate individuals and agencies are informed and contacted as needed: -

- Principal and designated teacher for drugs
- Parents / guardians

- ❑ PSNI (CSIO)
- ❑ E.A. - Western Division
- ❑ Chairperson initially and subsequently the Board of Governors
- ❑ The Education Welfare Officer
- ❑ No media statements, only the Principal should do this
- ❑ Other pupils, parents and staff are only told on a need-to-know basis

A pastoral / disciplinary response needs to be made by the school, balancing the need for compassion and the pupil's welfare with the need to send a clear message about illegal actions and behaviour and the impact on the school community.

Appendix 2

Form Reporting Incidents of Suspected Drugs Use/misuse

Name of child/children involved:

Date of Incident:

Name of person dealing with the incident:

What happened?

Who was informed of the incident: (please tick)

- Principal and designated teacher for drugs
- Parents / guardians
- PSNI (CSIO)
- E.A. - Western Division
- Chairperson initially and subsequently the Board of Governors
- The Education Welfare Officer
- No media statements, only the Principal should do this
- Other pupils, parents and staff are only told on a need-to-know basis

What actions will take place to deal with the incident:

Appendix 3

Drugs Education Programme

Foundation Stage - Topics Covered

Knowledge and Understanding

P1&P2

- Simple information about how the body works and the ways we can look after our bodies.
- Safe / unsafe substances in the home and school. Simple safety rules.
- The reasons why people use medicines, tablets and inhalers. Simple safety rules.
- Discuss the people who can help pupils when they have questions and concerns.

Key Stage 1

P3& P4

As above but with the following additions:

- Discuss the people who are involved with drugs in their work; doctors, nurses, chemists, paramedics.
- Introduction to the drugs which pupils may encounter and encourage an understanding that all drugs can be harmful if not properly used.

Skills

- Individual likes and dislikes.
- Making friends with one another.
- Discussing feelings and concerns about illness and taking medicines.
- Keeping themselves and others safe.
- When and how to get help from adults.
- Knowing how and why to say "No".

Attitudes and Values

- Respect and caring for themselves.
- Respect and caring for others.
- Realising that all adults and older children are not necessarily friends.

Other opportunities will be used through Drama and Role Play. The use of theatre Companies such as Replay Theatre Company will be used to help teach important messages.

Drugs Education Programme

Key Stage 2 - Topics Covered

Knowledge and Understanding

P.5

- Looking in more detail at the body - how it works and ways to keep it healthy.
- Safety procedures when using medicines - different types of medicine, their value and life-saving qualities of some drugs prescribed.

➤ **Appendix 3 (cont.)**

- People who can help pupils when they have questions or concerns.
- School rules relating to medicines, alcohol, tobacco, solvents and other drugs. These to be discussed and rules made by the children.
- Dangers from handling discarded drugs- related equipment.

P6 & 7

As above plus:

- Alcohol, caffeine, tobacco and other drugs pupils are likely to encounter and their affects on the body and on behaviour and the risks associated with drug -taking.
- Identifying and understanding pressures and influences.
- Simple First Aid.
- People who might persuade pupils to take drugs including friends, known adults, peers and other children .

P7 only

- Introduction to the law relating to the use of legal and illegal drugs.

Skills

- Personal strengths and weaknesses.
- Handling social relationships.
- Expressing and communicating feelings and concerns about drugs and their use.
- Identifying risks.
- Coping with peer influences.
- Communicating with adults.
- Making informed and healthy choices and knowing the consequences of actions.
- Keeping safe; giving and getting help.

Attitudes and Values

- Valuing oneself and other people.
- Attitudes towards the use of alcohol and tobacco within the home and the wider society.
- Parents and teachers reaction to drugs and their use.
- Attitudes and beliefs about different drugs, the people who use / misuse them and why they use them.
- Responses to media and advertising: the presentation of medicines, alcohol, tobacco and other legal drugs.

The Drugs education programme will be taught through the Health aspect of the PDMU programme, Science programmes of study, the Religious Education programmes of study and through Circle Time activities.

Children in primary 6 and 7 classes will also avail of the services and booklets from Hope North West; the Fit for Life material.