



ST MARY'S  
CATHOLIC SCHOOL

## Drug Education Policy

Staff responsible: Miss McHugh (Drugs Co-ordinator)  
Headteacher  
A Foundation Governor  
Schools Council

The process of policy writing involved consultation between the Headteacher, representatives of teaching staff and governors, the school council, the county Drug Education Consultant, the school nurse and the schools' local police Youth Crime Reduction Officer.

Further guidance came from the Hertfordshire County Council Drug Education Guidance document and national guidance, specifically DfES "*Drugs: Guidance for Schools*" (March 2004).

This school defines the term "drug" as any substance which affects the way in which the body functions physically, emotionally or mentally and includes tobacco, alcohol, solvents, over-the-counter and prescribed medicines as well as illicit substances.

### Values and aims

Set in the broader context of a programme for Personal, Social and Health Education and Science, drug education reflects whole school aims to provide a caring community in which young people can learn to respect themselves and others and take responsibility for their own actions. We are committed to the health and safety of all members of the school community and will take action to safeguard their well being.

Fundamental to our school's values and practice is the principle of sharing the responsibility for the education with parents. We strive for effective communication and co-operation.

All non-medical drugs on school premises are unacceptable.

This policy will apply on the school premises and beyond, wherever pupils are within the care of school staff. This includes school trips and educational visits. The school will also have an interest in the health and well being of the pupils beyond these school boundaries and we would encourage parents and others in the community to adopt the same principles.

### Rationale:

We believe that the purpose of drug education should be to give pupils knowledge, skills and attitudes to appreciate the benefits of a healthy life-style and to relate these to their own actions, both now and in the future.

### We aim to:

Enable young people to make healthy, informed choices through helping them to increase their knowledge, challenging and exploring attitudes and developing and practising skills.

- Help young people to develop further a sense of self-worth and self esteem.



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- Increase understanding about the implications and possible consequences of drug use and misuse.
- Help young people to distinguish between different substances, consider their use, misuse, benefit and harm.
- Listen to young people's thoughts, feelings and concerns and to ensure that drug education responds to their needs.
- Counter any inaccurate messages and myths which young people may receive about drugs with accurate information.
- Encourage an understanding for those experiencing or likely to experience drug use (including those dependent on medicinal drugs).
- Widen understanding about related health, social and legal issues.
- Enable pupils to identify where help and support can be found.
- Develop as a Health Promoting School.

**We intend to achieve our aims through:**

- A co-ordinated, integrated and consistent approach to the curriculum and to possible drug related incidents.
- An appropriate teaching programme which responds to pupils' needs.
- Clearly defined learning outcomes for lessons and other inputs.
- Reinforcement of key s at different ages and stages and in different situations.
- Content and teaching approaches, which messages match the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs.
- Involvement of the whole community, including staff, governors, pupils and visitors.
- Training and support for staff in the planning and implementation of drug education.
- Regular revision of policy and practice.
- Recognising that adults are role models for pupils and committing ourselves to a smoke-free environment; not using alcohol on premises, except on designated staff social occasions when pupils are absent.

[Drug education: *Sections 2.1, 2.5, 3.1 and 3.7*]

**Teaching - curriculum, materials and approaches**

The outline teaching programme is attached in Appendix A.

Drug Education opportunities include:

- Planned elements of National Curriculum subjects, including Science;
- PSHE and Citizenship lessons;
- Pastoral time;
- Assemblies;
- Occasional planned visits from school nurse, police officer or other appropriate people;
- Through the use of visiting theatre/drama groups on the School Feast Day.

A wide range of teaching approaches is used and we particularly encourage active learning methods, which involve children's full participation. Ground rules will be negotiated when appropriate and the sensitivity of the work will be recognised, safeguarding the interests of the pupil and everyone.

[The needs of pupils: *Sections 3.15 & 4.1*]



### **Confidentiality**

Some pupils may choose to mention instances of drug use in class or to individual members of the school community. While staff will want to be supportive, they need to follow our Child Protection guidelines and clearly state that they may not be able to guarantee confidentiality.

[Confidentiality: *Section 4.3*]

### **Working with visitors**

We subscribe to the code of practice recommended by the Department for Education and Skills and by the Hertfordshire Drug Education Forum.

Visitors can make a valuable contribution to drug education provision but do not constitute a comprehensive programme. The rationale for bringing in a visitor must be clear. It must enhance the overall educational experience and must educate rather than sensationalise. It must fit with the stated aims and objectives of our PSHE, Science and drug education policy. School staff must always be present and the educational outcomes evaluated.

Further details of visitor involvement can be obtained from [www.hertsdef.org](http://www.hertsdef.org)

### **Liaison between schools, with parents and the wider community**

We will work with other schools in the area to develop consistent practices to support young people. This includes paying attention to the needs of young people as they transfer from primary to secondary school. We recognise that this and other aspects of community liaison is an important area to which we can contribute with the support of colleagues throughout CSF, the Police, the local authority and other agencies.

### **Roles and responsibilities**

This policy relates to all members of the school community. All staff have a responsibility for drug education and must be fully aware of this policy and its implications for themselves and for others in the community. Whenever adults interact with children, they recognise that they may be influencing attitudes and behaviour.

**All staff** should consider themselves as role models whose behaviour the children are likely to notice and often follow. Staff also have a responsibility to know how they should respond to any possible drug related incidents. They receive training and support in delivering their responsibilities.

**Teaching and support** staff have a responsibility to contribute to the taught curriculum for drug education. They listen to the pupils and determine their specific needs. These needs are met in specific drug education inputs as well as through a wider programme of personal and social skills development.



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The **Headteacher and Leadership Group (LG)** have the ultimate responsibility for ensuring that policy and practice in "this area are fulfilled, including appropriate curriculum content and response to drug related incidents.

**The Drug Education Co-ordinators**-(are responsible for overseeing both curriculum implementation and other elements of school life contributing to drug education. This will include monitoring and evaluating drug education policy and practice throughout the school. The Drug Education Co-ordinators will work with other colleagues to identify where other learning experiences contribute to drug education.

[Staff with key responsibilities for drugs: *Sections 3.7 & 4.2*]

**The Governor** with responsibility for drug education and drug related issues has received training in drug issues and understands the issues involved and how they relate to wider issues of behaviour and school ethos. S/he contributes to reviewing drug education policy and practice.

[The role of governors: *Section 3.14*]

#### **School Protocol on the procedures surrounding an illegal drugs related incident**

1. If an illegal drug or paraphernalia were to be found on school premises:
  - Remove drug/paraphernalia and temporarily store securely in a sturdy container, using gloves where possible, in a designated place (DM's office) and record the details with a witness present (sections 4-7, Appendix 11).
  - Inform the Drugs Coordinator immediately who will liaise with the headteacher.
  - If an illegal drug, Drugs Coordinator to notify the Police for collection.
  - If a legal drug e.g. alcohol, tobacco, these are to be returned to parent/carer by Drugs Coordinator.
  - If an illegal drug has been discovered an investigation will be initiated by Drugs Coordinator, and if the guilty party is discovered, the school will seek to permanently exclude the individual(s) concerned.
2. If a pupil is suspected of being in possession of an unauthorised drug on school premises during school hours make sure they are not left unattended and inform Drugs Coordinator immediately who will liaise with the headteacher.
  - If any member of staff suspects a student of having on school premises an illegal substance they must not approach that individual but refer their suspicions to Drugs Coordinator.



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- When a pupil is suspected of concealing an illegal substance it is not appropriate for a member of staff to carry out a personal search.
- Every effort should be made to persuade the pupil to hand over any suspected illegal substances. This must be done in the presence of a second adult witness.
- If the pupil refuses to respond then the police drugs coordinator must be called, and the pupil kept closely monitored.
- Staff may search pupils' lockers, desks, bags with prior consent of the pupil concerned. If consent is refused then parents may be asked to persuade their child to give consent, or if parents wish to proceed along formal lines, to call the police.
- After any search of pupils' lockers, desks and bags, parents should normally be contacted by the School Drugs Coordinator regardless of whether the result of the search is positive or negative.
- If the pupil is found to have been in possession of an illegal substance the school will seek to exclude them permanently

#### **STATEMENT OF SCHOOL POLICY ON SUBSTANCE USE AND MISUSE**

The Governing Body of St Mary's Catholic School acknowledges the national concern over the growing problem of substance abuse and wishes to state clearly its policy on these matters. This policy has been drawn up within a framework agreed by all secondary schools in Bishop's Stortford/Sawbridgeworth.

#### **Statements of Principle**

- **The School condemns the misuse of substances including drugs and alcohol, and the illegal supply of these substances.**
- **The School is committed to the health and safety of all its members and will take every action to safeguard their well-being.**
- **The School acknowledges the importance of its pastoral role and its related educational programmes in promoting the welfare of young people; a comprehensive programme of personal social and health education has been drawn up for every pupil to complement National Curriculum programmes of study, and reflect the importance of these issues**
- **Acknowledging that there is a shared responsibility, the school is committed to an effective partnership with parents and will seek to work in co-operation with them and appropriate external agencies to provide guidance and counselling for those in need of support.**



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The School acknowledges that while the number of young people who use and misuse substances is rising, there is a need to support and protect the larger numbers of young people who choose not to use or misuse substances.

### **Educational Aims**

- to provide accurate information about substances
- to increase understanding about the implications and possible consequences of use and misuse
- to widen understanding about related health and social issues
- to enable pupils to make healthy, informed choices
- to enable young people to identify sources of appropriate personal support.

These aims are fulfilled through aspects of the School's curricular and extra-curricular activities and its Personal and Social Education programme. They are also met through active co-operation with other agencies. Other professionals involved in the issue of Drug Education will be given a copy of the policy and we would anticipate full support for its values and procedures.

### **Procedural Guidelines**

The Governing body takes overall responsibility for the framing of the policy. The Headteacher will be responsible for its implementation and liaising with the Governing Body, parents, LEA and appropriate outside agencies. The Headteacher will ensure that all staff dealing with substance issues are supported and trained.

1. It is an offence under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971
  - to supply or offer to supply a controlled drug
  - to be in possession of a controlled drug

The Governing Body forbids the supply, use or possession of any illegal substance by any member of the School Community.

2. If there is a suspected substance incident, the School will always seek advice from appropriate external agencies, including the School's Police Liaison Officer, Health Authority or Social Services Department. The School is obliged to contact social services immediately if a child is suspected of being at risk.
3. The School has a statutory duty to inform the police if a serious criminal offence has taken place on school premises. In accordance with national recommendations (DfE Circular 4/93) the School will contact the police should suspected illegal substances be found on the premises.



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4. In instances involving substance supply, use or possession, parents will be informed at the earliest opportunity by the Headteacher or his/her representative.
5. The School will take the firmest action against any pupil found to be involved in the supply, use or possession of illegal substances. All drug-related offences will result in permanent exclusion, save exceptionally in extenuating circumstances. Such circumstances will be determined by the participants of the case conference called by the Headteacher prior to the decision whether or not to permanently exclude.
6. The School will consider each substance incident individually and recognises that a variety of responses will be necessary to deal with incidents.

**If any member of staff has reason to suspect that a pupil may be involved in any form of substance abuse please inform Miss McHugh.**

#### **Review**

Governor Committee: Pastoral

Date of review: May 2016

Next Review Date: June 2019