

Drugs and Solvents Policy

The word "substance" or "drug" covers anything taken into the body to change the way it functions. It includes medicines, alcohol, tobacco, as well as illegal drugs such as ecstasy and cannabis. While recognising that tobacco and alcohol are the drugs with which our pupils are most likely to experiment, there is a growing concern that pupils are finding themselves in situations where illegal substances are being made available to them.

Whilst we acknowledge that the numbers of young people who use and misuse substances is rising, it is important to recognise that the vast majority of young people are choosing not to use substances. However, it is also important to realise that school children even those in the early years in secondary school are likely to be exposed to the effects and influences of drug misuse in the wider community and that it is now an issue in rural areas just as much as in deprived inner-city areas.

In drawing up this policy consideration has been given to

- substance abuse **prevention** and
- methods of **intervention** if a pupil is found abusing drugs.

The policy deals with drugs and solvents, alcohol and tobacco as separate issues.

Prevention

- The programmes of work in Personal and Social Education (PSE), Science, Physical Education and Religious Education (RE) cover the physical and moral effects of drug and solvent abuse in our society and are presented in such a way as to discourage experimentation. In PSE and RE the programmes help pupils to develop mature responses to the dangers of substance abuse and how to deal with pressure of the peer group when confronted socially with alcohol, cigarettes and drugs. It is hoped that all areas of the curriculum will contribute to developing an awareness of the dangers of substance abuse.

Each member of staff in our school will be made aware of the problems, signs and symptoms of drug and solvent abuse and has a responsibility to adhere to and promote this policy. Opportunities will be created to update staff regularly in the battle against drug abuse and parents will be provided with relevant literature from time to time.

Procedures Should an Incident Occur Involving Drugs or Solvents

Should an incident occur in the school where pupils are involved in the abuse of drugs or solvents, the following procedures will be carried out:

Legally Held Substances

In the case of misuse of **legally held substances**, the member of staff who discovers the incident should call the member of staff with First Aid Training and the **designated teacher** who will

- **Assess the situation**
- **Ensure the safety of the pupil and others**
- **Give emergency aid and seek medical attendance if necessary**
- **Inform parents**
- It is important that he/she remains calm especially if it is suspected they have consumed any substances.
- Make sure the pupil has plenty of fresh air.
- If they want to sleep turn them on their side so that they won't choke on their vomit.

- Pupils will, if it is thought necessary, be taken to a health centre to receive medical assistance.

Illegally Held Substances

In the case of misuse of illegally held substances, **the above steps will be taken**. Advice and guidance will be sought if necessary from WELB's Assistant Education Officer with responsibility for Drug and Solvent abuse. Should any illegal substance be found on the premises staff should take possession of the evidence preferably in the presence of a witness. The relevant authorities, eg the parents, the community police liaison officer should be informed.

Suspicion of trafficking in illegal drugs in school will lead to an investigation co-ordinated by the Designated Teacher. If an offence is confirmed, the person or persons concerned will be dealt with under the school disciplinary procedures. Guidance will be given to pupils and parents on the availability of specialist advice from support agencies.

Incidents where pupils are suspected of buying illegal drugs in school or bringing illegal drugs into school will be investigated, and, if this is found to be happening, counselled by the Designated Teacher and by other support agencies as appropriate. Parents will be informed. If the offence is confirmed the person or persons concerned will be dealt with according to the school's disciplinary procedures - Principal will be involved - initially suspension, ultimately expulsion.

Pupils suspected of taking drugs outside school will be monitored and, if appropriate, offered counselling and their parents will be informed. The school and parents can then work together to support the young person involved. The Governors will expect parents to inform the Principal or Designated Teacher if they suspect their children of drug-taking.

Any incident involving the misuse of drugs or solvents will be carefully documented and records kept in confidential files; it will be dealt with confidentially.

Should an incident involving drug or solvent abuse occur in school, its implications will be considered by a team which will include the following staff members:

- The Designated Teacher: Ms R Bogue
- Pastoral Care Team: KS3: Ms R Bogue
KS4: Ms AM Clare-Kelly

- A Form Teacher

The team will meet on a regular basis to

- Assess the local drug scene/consider information supplied to the school
- Decide if any action needs to be taken and
- Review the policy.

The involvement of the media will be dealt with by the Headteacher.

All staff - teaching and non-teaching will be made aware of the above procedures.