



Witton Middle School

Drugs Policy

Development process

- Witton Middle School accepts the need for teachers, governors, pupils, their parents/carers and other agencies to work together to combat drug misuse by our pupils, particularly within school. The whole school has agreed on how to respond and manage the broad range of potential situations involving illegal, and other unauthorised drugs.
- This policy was developed and agreed in consultation with governors, staff, parents/carers, pupils and other agencies including the School Nurse and Community Support Officer. It is reviewed every two years.

Location and dissemination

- This policy is available on the school website for parents/carers and governors, on the school network for all staff to access, with a master copy to be filed in the school office.

The context of the policy and its relationship to other policies

- This policy is closely linked to other school policies such as: Behaviour Policy, Health and Safety Policy, Medical Needs (pupils) Policy, Access to Information Policy, Off-Site Visits Policy and Safeguarding Children Policy.

Local and national guidance

- The policy reflects and refers to national guidance and priorities as outlined in DfES Drugs: National Healthy Schools Standards, QCA Curriculum Guidance (2002), Guidance for Schools (2004), Worcestershire County Guidance (2007), PSHE Education Guidance 2008.

The purpose of the policy

- The purpose of the school drug policy is to:
 - clarify the legal requirements and responsibilities of the school;
 - reinforce and safeguard the health and safety of pupils and others who use the school;
 - clarify the school's approach to drugs for all staff, pupils, governors, parents/carers, external agencies and the wider community;
 - give guidance on developing, implementing and monitoring the drug education programme;
 - enable staff to manage drugs on the school premises, and any incidents that occur, with confidence and consistency, and in the best interests of those involved;
 - ensure that the responses to incidents involving drugs complement the overall approach to drug education and the values and ethos of the school;
 - provide a basis for evaluating the effectiveness of the school drug education programme and the management of incidents involving legal and other unauthorised drugs;
 - reinforce the role of the school in contributing to local and national strategies.

To whom and where does the policy apply

- This policy applies to school pupils, all staff, parents/carers and visitors to the school.
- This policy applies, at all times, when staff are acting in *loco parentis*, including educational visits.
- The policy applies to pupils travelling to and from school and during break and lunchtimes.

Definition and terminology

- The definition of a drug given by the United Nations Office on Drugs and crime is:
"A substance people take to change the way they feel, think or behave."
- For the purpose of this policy it includes:
 - all illegal drugs (those controlled by the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971)
 - all legal drugs including alcohol, tobacco, volatile substances (those giving off a gas or vapour which can be inhaled), ketamine, khat and alkyl nitrates (known as 'poppers')
 - all over-the-counter and prescription medicines.

The school's stance towards drugs, health and the needs of pupils

- This school takes positive steps to prevent the misuse of drugs, as part of its commitment to *Healthy School* status.
- **Illegal drugs** have no place in schools. The school believes that the possession and/or use of drugs (other than prescribed medicines), in school, during the school day or while travelling to/from school is inappropriate and will take action according to this policy.
- **Tobacco** - this school is a no smoking school in line with LA Policy.
- **Alcohol** - the possession or consumption of alcohol by pupils is banned. The consumption of alcohol by staff or other responsible adults is not permitted during the school day or whilst supervising children at any time. Any alcohol brought on to the premises should be stored in a secure place. Staff have a professional responsibility to provide appropriate role models for pupils.
- **Solvents** – pupils are banned from bringing any aerosols or solvent-based products to school. The school will ensure that any harmful substances, including aerosols, are stored safely and pupils supervised carefully in the event of them being used during the course of the day.
- The school actively works to reduce the impact of risk factors and strengthen protective factors by promoting:
 - safe and supportive relationships;
 - regular school attendance;
 - the ability to cope well with academic and social demands at school;
 - strong supportive social networks;
 - good social skills;
 - realistic self-awareness and self-esteem;
 - a good knowledge of the effects and risks of drugs;
 - a good knowledge of general health and how to ensure good mental health;
 - a good knowledge of how to access help or information;
 - work with parent/carers, particularly around communicating and setting boundaries;
 - participating in extra-curricular activities;
 - counselling and other support mechanisms.

Key responsibilities

- **The Headteacher** - is the designated senior member of staff with overall responsibility for all drug issues within the school. (The Headteacher should be informed immediately of any concerns).
- **The Curriculum Leader for PSHCE** - is responsible for the planning, co-ordination, monitoring and evaluation of Drug Education curriculum throughout the school.
- **The Site Manager** – regularly checks the school premises for drug activity. Any drugs or paraphernalia found will be recorded, reported to the Headteacher and dealt with in accordance with this policy.
- **All staff (teaching and support staff)** - should be made fully aware of the procedures for managing incidents and should strictly adhere to them.

Drug education

- The aim of drug education is to provide opportunities for pupils to develop their knowledge, skills and attitudes to drugs and appreciate the benefits of a healthy lifestyle, relating this to their own and other's actions.
- The National Curriculum for Science outlines the statutory provision for drugs education, incorporated into the general science curriculum:
 - Key Stage 2** (Years 5 and 6) should be taught that tobacco, alcohol and other drugs can have harmful effects;
 - Key Stage 3** (Year 7) should be taught that the abuse of alcohol, solvents, tobacco and other drugs affect health; that the body's natural defenses may be enhanced by immunisation and medicines; and how smoking affects lung structure and gas exchange.
- The PSHCE curriculum reflects other discretionary topics (QCA Schemes of Work) that reflect knowledge, understanding, attitudes and social skills in order to:
 - enable pupils to make healthy, informed choices;
 - promote positive attitudes to healthy lifestyles;

- provide accurate information about substances;
 - increase understanding about the implications and possible consequences of use and misuse;
 - widen understanding about related health and social issues;
 - enable young people to identify sources of appropriate advice and personal support.
- Through our drugs education teaching we aim to cover the following knowledge, skills and attitudes:

Knowledge	Skills	Attitudes
The short and long term effects and risks of drugs. The rules and laws relating to drugs. The impact of drugs on individuals, families and Communities.	Assessing, managing and avoiding risk. Communicating effectively. Resisting pressures. Finding information, help and advice. Devising problem-solving and coping strategies Developing self- awareness and self-esteem.	Enabling pupils to explore their own and other peoples' attitudes towards drugs, drug use, drug users, social influences.

Methodology and resources

- All pupils will follow an integrated drug education programme that is responsive to their needs and relevant to their age, experience and maturity.
- It is delivered through the existing curriculum for science and PSHCE, mainly by class teachers, with support from the police *Star Project* in Year 6 (now teacher led).
- Pupils encounter a range of learning opportunities to cater for preferred learning styles including discussion with teachers and peers, role play, circle time and interactive video presentations.

Staff support and training

- It is essential that all staff (teaching and support staff) have general drug awareness and a good understanding of the policy, including how to manage drug incidents.
- New staff will be able to access training as part of their induction.
- Existing staff will review the policy together as part of the internal two-yearly programme of school policy review (this may involve external agency support).
- The PSHCE Co-ordinator shall receive appropriate external training, and will lead staff training, as appropriate.
- Professional Development opportunities can also be made available for other staff, as required.

Assessment, monitoring and reviewing

- The elements of drug education delivered as part of the PSHCE curriculum will be assessed as part of the overall PSHCE curriculum.
- The school will use a variety of methods to assess the effectiveness of drug education and will not concentrate solely on the knowledge gained.
- The quality, relevance and effectiveness of the school's drug education programme will be reviewed regularly by the PSHCE Co-ordinator through self evaluation and this process will be integral to the planning and development of the PSHCE programme.
- Pupils will take part in self-evaluation activities for each module of work.

Management of drugs at school

- The primary concern of the school is the care and welfare of the pupils and as such will seek to balance the safety and security of the school with the needs of the pupils.
- In the event of a drug related incident occurring on the premises, the school will apply the framework for procedures for dealing with an incident taken from *DfE Drugs: Guidance For Schools 2004* (Appendix 8: Responding to incidents involving drugs).
- In all instances involving illegal drugs, the following principles apply:
 - all situations will be carefully considered before deciding on a response;
 - the needs of the child will always come first;
 - a pastoral approach is the first response, if at all possible;

- parents/carers will be involved at an early stage and throughout any investigation;
 - support agencies including the police may be involved;
 - support for pupils will be maintained and counselling arranged if appropriate;
 - responses may include both a disciplinary and counselling response.
- To ensure the safety of all young people and staff the school will take possession of any drugs and will deal with them in the following manner:

Illegal drugs – will be confiscated, packaged in a plastic bag or envelope and all details relating to the incident recorded and passed on to the Headteacher. The Headteacher will store them in a secure place and contact the police to deal with the disposal of the substances. This should be witnessed by two members of staff. Under no circumstances should school staff attempt to identify drugs by tasting them, nor should they leave the school premises with substances in their possession. Full details of the incident shall be logged on an incident form. Parents/carers will be informed of the incident and, where appropriate, a meeting set up to discuss the incident and the resulting sanctions.

Other drugs – (alcohol, tobacco, solvents and medicines) the school will confiscate the substances, store them securely as above and will contact parents/carers who will be invited to school to discuss the incident and any consequences of breaking school rules. At this visit the substances will be returned to the parent(s)/carer(s).

Disposal of drug paraphernalia – every effort is made by the Site Manager to ensure that the school grounds are kept free of such material. In the case of needles and syringes the needle will be covered for safety and will then be placed in a secure container, using gloves. The use of bottles or cans for the storage of needles is not appropriate. The school will then contact the local police or environmental health to discuss the disposal of the paraphernalia.

Searches - members of staff must not search personal property without the consent of the pupil or his/her parents/carers. When a pupil is suspected of concealing illegal or unauthorised drugs, it is not appropriate for a member of staff to carry out a personal search. Every effort must be made to persuade the pupil to hand over voluntarily any drugs, in the presence of a second witness. The police may be called if the pupil refuses to co-operate and the presence of illegal drugs is suspected.

Medicines in school

- Some pupils may require medicines that have been prescribed for their medical condition during the school day. The agreed school arrangements (LA Handbook of Safety Information) for administering medicines is as follows:
 - all medicines must be kept in a secure area, storage instructions followed (eg in a fridge), and administered under the supervision of trained office staff (class teachers should not keep or administer medication, unless in an emergency, on school trips or in extreme circumstances). An exception to this rule should be made, however, for medicines provided for emergency treatment such as reliever inhalers for asthmatic pupils, glucose tablets for diabetics and adrenalin (Epi pen) for severe allergy, which should be made accessible;
 - medicines should only be administered following a written request from parents/carers which clearly states the name and class of the pupil, together with the dose and the time(s) of day at which it should be taken and any special conditions for the storage of the medicine (eg to be kept in the refrigerator);
 - medicines should only be accepted in relatively small quantities (the exception to this may be longer-term medication, such as Ritalin);
 - it is strongly recommended that medicines are only accepted by staff if they are brought by the parent/carer, rather than sent with the pupil;
 - pain killers (eg. Ibuprofen, paracetamol, including 'junior' forms such as Calpol) can be administered to pupils on written parental request (child's name and dob must be recorded on the bottle/box and signed by the parent/carer);
 - medicines such as Ritalin (registered as a class 'B' drug) must also be kept separately in a locked container, within a secure drawer or medical cabinet.

Counselling response

- The child's welfare is paramount and in all incidents involving illegal drugs, referral for counselling or support will be actively considered.

- Parents/carers will be informed, unless in cases where disclosure may place the child at risk.

Disciplinary response

- Intentionally breaking the school rules on drugs will result in disciplinary action.
- Fixed-term exclusion may be used whilst investigations are taking place.
- Permanent exclusion will only be considered and used in exceptional circumstances, such as dealing in drugs (only as a final resort, after other approaches have been taken).
- Parents/carers will be informed throughout the investigation.

Police involvement

- The school seeks to actively work in partnership with the local police.
- In most cases, any incidents are likely to be a school, rather than a police matter.
- In the case of illegal drugs, however, the school will confiscate them, store them securely and arrange to hand them to the police.
- The school will ensure that pupils have access to up-to-date information and sources of help.

Reporting procedure

- The reporting procedure ensures that a limited number of people will be involved in any incident.
- All incidents will be reported to the Headteacher.
- If exclusion is considered then the procedure for this is to put into action by the Headteacher, who will inform the Chair of Governors.
- All incidents will be recorded and kept in the Headteacher's office as confidential items.

The needs of the pupil

- Staff should be aware, through the school records of medical and social issues, that some pupils are more vulnerable to drug misuse and other social problems.
- Staff must consider the known social background of all pupils before starting the lessons and ensure that all pupils receive appropriate information and support.

Referral and external support

- The child's welfare is paramount and, in cases involving drugs, referral for external counselling or support will be considered.
- Where possible, and where this will not compromise the pupils' safety, the school should seek the involvement of parents/carers in such a decision.

Confidentiality

- Pupils need to feel able to talk in confidence to a member of staff about a drug-related matter without fear of being judged or told off. However, the boundaries need to be made clear to pupils, prior to disclosure, that a member of staff cannot offer absolute confidentiality.
- Where there are concerns about the child's safety, this will be dealt with under the school's
- All concerns should be reported to the Headteacher, in the first instance, immediately after the disclosure.

Involvement of parents/carers

- Parents/carers will be informed of the drug education curriculum, have access to the policy and have the opportunity to raise concerns.
- Parents/carers will be contacted if their child is caught breaking the rules on drugs.
- Information will be made available for parents/carers to access support and guidance concerning drugs and other health related issues.

The Role of Governors

- As part of their general responsibilities for the management of the school the governors play a key role in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the school's Policy for Drug Education.
- They will continue their involvement through regular feedback from the Headteacher and/or PSHCE Co-ordinator, as well as through the two-yearly review programme for School Policy.

