

# Ysgol Dyffryn School



## Substance Misuse

# **SUBSTANCE MISUSE**

## **Introduction**

This policy was first produced in May, 1997 by a working group including Deputy Head, Health/Drug Education Co-ordinator, classroom teachers, governors, parents, pupil representatives and the Schools Liaison Officer. It gives clear guidance to staff, governors, parents and pupils on the school's view of drugs, its strategy for drug prevention, how drug-related incidents are managed and the rules relating to drugs in schools. The policy is reviewed on an annual basis.

## **The Need for a Policy**

This school believes that drugs play a part in the lives of every one of us, and that experimentation with drugs has always been a feature of many young people's lives.

It is the responsibility of the school to help reduce the harm from drugs, to play a role in drug prevention and help those who misuse drugs. Schools need a policy which gives a clear view on the use of drugs in school and the importance of drug education.

This policy emphasises the school's pastoral role and pro-active approach to drug education, and states a clear view on handling any problem drug use in school. In developing this policy, the school has considered its legal responsibility, the needs of pupils, teachers, governors, parents and the local community.

## **A Definition of Drugs**

Drugs are substances that alter the mind, the body or both. This policy is concerned with:

- Legal drugs such as alcohol, tobacco and solvents,
- Over the counter and prescribed drugs such as tranquillisers and pain killers
- Illegal drugs such as ecstasy, cannabis, cocaine, crack and heroin
- And other drugs young people may use such as "poppers".

## **Drug Education and Drug Prevention**

This school provides a comprehensive and planned drug education curriculum for all pupils incorporating knowledge, attitudes and skills which will enable pupils to make informed decisions about drugs and their use. The school acknowledges that a positive school ethos helps pupils to feel valued and part of the school community and in so doing helps to foster positive self images which may help pupils cope better in situations involving drug use.

## **Statement on the use of Drugs in school**

This school believes that the possession and use of drugs in school or during the school day is inappropriate. **All the drugs covered by this policy are not permitted to be brought to, sold, passed on or obtained on school premises or during the school day.** The only exception will be for those children who need medication in case of life threatening emergency situations. This

must be agreed and arranged by Headteacher and governors. **Any breaking of these rules may result in punishment including permanent exclusion.** Staff are encouraged to promote a non-smoking policy.

### **Confidentiality**

Pupils at this school need to feel able to talk in confidence to a member of staff about a drug related problem without the fear of being judged or told off. The welfare of young people will always be central to our policy and practice. However, teachers will not be able to promise complete confidentiality in order to seek specialist help if needed and pupils will be made aware of this. Information about a pupil in relation to drugs will follow the same procedure as for other sensitive information. The Head of Year and Headteacher will be sought, if appropriate, following discussion with the pupil involved. Confidentiality will be maintained beyond certain key people including the Head of Year, Headteacher and Assistant Headteacher.

### **Parental Involvement**

Parents will be informed of the existence of a school policy on drugs and will be given an outline of the drug education curriculum. The policy will be available to parents – (and on the school website) any concerns should be addressed to the school.

Parents will be informed if there is any suspicion that their child is involved inappropriately with drugs in any way.

Parents/carers will be contacted if their child is caught breaking the rules on drugs. Opportunities will be made available for parents to obtain support and guidance concerning drugs and other health related issues.

### **Police Involvement**

In most cases, any punishment is likely to be a school, not a police matter. However, the school is aware of the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 which controls heroin, cocaine, LSD, MDM (ecstasy), amphetamines, cannabis and many other drugs. This Act makes it an offence to possess or supply these drugs and allows individuals to take possession of an illegal drug in order to prevent someone else committing an offence, providing it is handed to the police or destroyed immediately, in the presence of a witness.

The school maintains strong links with the local community police and through their involvement in the drug education curriculum, pupils develop a greater understanding of the role of the police in relation to drugs and about the laws relating to drugs. It is the policy of this school to contact the local community police/schools involvement officer when an incident has involved illegal substances and to hand it to the police.

### **Responding to Drug Related Incidents**

In all situations involving drugs the following principles apply:

*All situations will be carefully considered before deciding on the response.*

*The needs of the child will always come first.  
The pastoral system will be the first recourse if at all possible.  
Parents/carers will be involved at an early stage and throughout any investigation.  
Support agencies, including the police, will be involved if appropriate.  
Support for pupils will be maintained and counselling arranged, if appropriate.*

## **Disciplinary Response**

Situations which include breaking of the school rules on drugs will result in punishment. The type of punishment cannot be categorically stated as it will depend on the exact nature and degree of the offence. The school employs a variety of sanctions related to the offence e.g. fixed exclusions, community service. Permanent exclusion may be considered. Parents/carers and pupils will be kept informed throughout the investigations.

## **Counselling Response**

Pupil welfare is paramount and in all incidents involving drugs, referral for counselling or support within the school will be actively considered. The school has links with local drug agencies who can offer counselling and would also work with pupils as part of the drug education programme. We believe that those pupils who are misusing illegal and volatile substances should be encouraged to seek help at the earliest possible stage. The school is supported by a Drugs and Substance Misuse Worker who visits the school frequently and receives referrals.

## **Reporting Procedures**

The reporting procedure ensures that only a limited number of people will be involved in any incident. All incidents are reported to the appropriate Head of Year and Assistant Headteacher. If exclusion is considered then the procedure for this is put into action by the Headteacher involving the governors. All incidents are written down and kept in the Secure Office as confidential items.

## **Managing Drug Related Incidents**

Incidents involving drugs may take the form of emergencies, intoxication, discovery/observation, disclosure, suspicion/rumour. This policy considers responses to these situations.

### **Emergencies, Intoxication, Discovery/Observation**

The absolute priority at every stage is the health and safety of the pupil. If there is the slightest doubt regarding the pupil's health, obtain medical assistance and give emergency aid if necessary.
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Keep calm. Involve a colleague at the earliest stage possible and inform the Drugs Co-ordinator as soon as possible.
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Separate pupils from peers and supervise in a quiet room. Normally the effects of the drug will wear off after about 30 minutes.
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The substance, if available, should be removed from the pupil in the presence of a witness. Personal property may be searched if there is reasonable cause to suspect that it contains an illegal substance. Intimate physical searches are
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not permissible.
If a controlled drug has been taken from a pupil it must be handed to the police or a pharmacist as soon as possible. If this is not possible, the substance must be destroyed.
If no illegal substance is found but there is a certainty that drugs are being misused by pupils, the key staff involved should liaise with the Police to decide on how best to deal with the incident
The parent/carer concerned will be notified of the incident.
A report of the incident will be written down and given to the Drugs Co-ordinator. All written reports will be kept in the office as confidential items.

## **Disclosure**

When a pupil discloses to a member of staff that he/she has been using drugs, or is concerned about someone else's drug use, the teacher will be non-judgemental and caring and will show concern for the pupil's welfare. Pupils will know that teachers cannot promise total confidentiality if further support is to be considered such as referral to a drug service or counselling service. Information about the pupil will only be given to key people and no one else unless the pupil gives consent. Total confidentiality is maintained at all times in drug and counselling services. The school has strong links with local drug services and a system of referral to these agencies.

## **Suspicion/Rumour**

Staff do not act quickly on the basis of rumours of drug or a belief that a pupil is using drugs just on behaviour alone. However, if there is a suspicion, evidence will be collected over a period of time before making the decision to question the pupil(s) involved.

## **Administering medicines**

Parents of pupils in need of medication must ensure that the school is accurately advised about the medication, its usage and administration. School staff cannot be responsible for the administration of medicines. Exceptions can only be made after agreement with staff and the Headteacher.

## **Training and Support for Staff**

The school will ensure that staff receive training to help them provide effective drug education and support for their teaching and understanding of the issues. The Head of PSE has responsibility for ensuring there is drug education within the curriculum and receives support from the Education Department in this.

The school takes advantage of the support, advice, information and training provided by the Local Education Authority and other local organisations.

## **Application of the Policy**

It is expected by the school that the school policy on substance misuse should apply:-

- On school premises
- While pupils are travelling to and from school on transport provided by the LEA.
- On school organised excursions.

**Review of this Policy**

This policy is reviewed annually and in the light of any incident that may occur which is related to drugs.

Approved by the Governing Body on 20<sup>th</sup> September, 2016

Signed ..... Chair of Governors

Next Review September, 2017