

Drugs and Substance Abuse Policy - March 2024

St. Adrian's Catholic Primary School



'To Learn, To Love, To Live as a Community of God with Christ as our Teacher'

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Drug and Substance Abuse

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Aims of this policy

To clarify the school's approach to drugs, for staff, pupils, governors, parents or carers, and to clarify the legal requirements and responsibilities; to give guidance to staff on the school's drugs education programme; to safeguard the health and safety of pupils and staff in our school; to enable staff to manage drug-related incidents properly.

Definition

At St Adrian's we would define the term "drug" to be any substance which affects the way in which the body functions physically, emotionally or mentally. This may include:

- tobacco
- alcohol
- volatile substances - solvents, petrol, aerosols, etc.
- prescribed / over-the-counter medicines (paracetamol, cough medicine)
- prescription medicines – (tranquillisers, amphetamines, anabolic steroids)
- illegal drugs or substances (cannabis, heroin, LSD, ecstasy)

Values

Set in the broader context of personal, social and health education at St Adrian's, our drugs education reflects our 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 as appropriate 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 and carers. We strive for effective communication and co-operation.

All medical drugs on school premises are kept within the school office with the exception of asthma inhalers, in accordance with school policy. Those administered to children are only done so with parental consent, with signed permission and directions regarding frequency.

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. Medicines on school trips are placed under the care of the journey first-aider or appointed member of staff, who oversees careful administration.

With exceptions for alcohol, all non-medical drugs on school premises are unacceptable.

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 the knowledge, skills and attitudes to appreciate the benefits of a healthy lifestyle and to relate these to their own actions, both now and in the future.



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We aim:

- To enable our pupils to make healthy, informed choices through increasing their knowledge, challenging and exploring attitudes and developing and practising skills.
- To help our pupils to develop a sense of self-awareness and self-esteem.
- To increase understanding about the implications and possible consequences of drug use and misuse.
- To listen to the thoughts, feelings and concerns of our pupils and to ensure that is appropriate to their level of understanding and need.
- To help our pupils to distinguish between different substances, consider their use, misuse, benefit and harm, and the importance of taking medicine in accordance with the instructions and not sharing medicines with others.
- To counter any inaccurate messages which our pupils may receive about drugs.
- To encourage an attitude of understanding for those experiencing or likely to experience drug use (including those dependent on medicinal drugs).
- To widen our pupils' understanding about related health, social and legal issues.
- To enable our pupils to identify where help and support can be found.

We intend to achieve our aims through:

- A coordinated 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 messages at different ages and stages that are age appropriate.
- Content and teaching approaches, which match the needs and maturities of all our pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language.
- Integration of drug education into the curriculum.
- Involvement of the whole community, including staff, governors, parents, pupils and relevant visitors as appropriate.
- Training and support for staff in the planning and delivery of drug education.
- Our commitment to a smoke-free environment on school premises via a non-smoking policy for all employees, students, visitors and outside contractors.
- Regular revision of policy and practice.
- Working in partnership with parents and carers.

Planning

Opportunities for drug education are identified on long- and medium-term planning as part of other curriculum areas. They may be included under subject areas other such as science, if these reflect opportunities through topic content.

Special Educational Needs

Additional support may be given by staff. Activities may be differentiated.



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Teaching – curriculum, materials and approaches

Delivery will be:

- Through planned elements of national curriculum subjects and Religious Education;
- Through pastoral time;
- Through assemblies;
- Through occasional planned and negotiated visits from school nurse, police officer or other appropriate people;
- Through the use of story, literacy, science or PE work on healthy lifestyles and other opportunities;
- Through informal curriculum and opportunities for extra-curricular activities.

Teaching about drugs will begin in Key Stage 1, when pupils are taught about seeing the doctor, visiting the chemist, and the importance of medicines and their safe handling.

In Key Stage 2 pupils may learn about the dangers of alcohol, smoking and of volatile substance abuse and encourage them to consider risks and effects.

A wide range of teaching approaches can be used which involve children's full participation as appropriate.

Confidentiality

All incidents involving drugs will be dealt with in strict confidence according to policy guidelines. Any incidents involving children should keep their needs clearly in focus and decisions regarding actions made accordingly.

Working with visitors

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 school policy. School staff must always be present and the educational outcomes evaluated. At St Adrian's we subscribe to the code of practice laid down by the Hertfordshire Drug Action Team as stated in "Preventing Drug Misuse Through Education – a policy and strategy for Hertfordshire".

Roles and responsibilities

This policy relates to all members of our school community and will be made available to staff. Whenever adults interact with children, they must 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.



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Teaching and support staff have a responsibility to contribute to the taught curriculum for drug education as appropriate. The curriculum may be delivered through specific drug education inputs as well as through a wider programme of science or personal and social skills development.

The Head-teacher and Senior Leadership Team (SLT) have the ultimate responsibility for ensuring that policy and practice in this area is followed, including appropriate curriculum content and response to drug-related incidents.

The Governor with responsibility for drug education and drug-related issues should receive training in drug issues to assist with understanding the issues involved and how they relate to wider issues of behaviour and school ethos. This governor contributes to reviewing drug education policy and practice.

Additional responsibilities may include:

- supporting the head-teacher in following relevant guidance;
- informing and consulting with parents about the drugs education policy if necessary;
- liaising with the LA and health organisations, so that the school's policy is in line with the best advice available;
- supporting the head-teacher in any case conferences, or in appeals against exclusions.

Parents

The primary role in children's drugs education lies with parents. We wish to build a positive and supporting relationship with the parents of our pupils, through mutual understanding, trust and cooperation

Response to possible drug-related incidents

As our definition of drugs includes medicines, alcohol and tobacco, it is therefore important that all aspects of an incident are considered. The needs and circumstances of the pupil are paramount.

We will consider each situation individually and recognise that a variety of actions in response may be necessary to drug-related incidents as recommended by LA and national guidance. If the situation leads to a medical emergency the school emergency aid procedures will be followed immediately.

In the absence of a medical emergency the headteacher will be informed and an appropriate response considered. We will refer to the hertfordshire guidelines on responding to drug-related incidents and in determining the response the implications of any action we take will be carefully considered. The focus of any response will be the pupil not the substance and we will seek to balance the interests of the individual, other members of the school community and the wider community.



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Responses will be cross-referenced with related school policies such as:

- Positive Behaviour Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy

Unless there are exceptional circumstances we will inform parents or guardians at the earliest opportunity so that we can work together to support the pupil and to resolve difficulties.

There are a range of professional colleagues who can give or obtain advice and support in drug- or alcohol-related situations. (These may include the school's Education Welfare Officer, the local Police Liaison Officer or other external agencies whose advice or support may be taken.) These colleagues can help with a needs assessment and support us in developing an appropriate response. The parents and/or pupil/s will always be told when information is being passed on.

Our aim is to enable all pupils to fulfil their potential. We will work with the pupil, their parents or carers and colleagues from other agencies to remove barriers to achievement and resolve any difficulties that exist. Drug-related situations will be considered alongside other circumstances in the young person's life and not in isolation.

Monitoring

Monitoring or recording of drug-related incidents involving children in school will be made in accordance with our whole school positive behaviour policy. Incidents will be recorded on an individual pupil's incident record, which will display repetition or patterns of inappropriate involvement.

Substances found within school premises

Should a substance suspected of being illicit be found on the school premises it will be handed to the head-teacher and, in the presence of another member of staff, placed in a sealed container in a safe place until it can be delivered to or collected by a police officer. They will also be involved in advising the school on the most appropriate response to the situation.

All staff will be made aware of the legal constraints on gathering evidence and questioning those involved. They will not take action without involving the head-teacher or member of the SLT.

Review

This policy is the responsibility of the head-teacher and will be reviewed on a three-yearly cycle.