

MEREWORTH COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL



DRUG AWARENESS POLICY

Date of Publication	November 2021
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Review Date	November 2023
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Drug Education and the Management of Drug Related Incidents

Introduction

The misuse of drugs both legal and illegal by young people can have a serious impact on their educational attainment, relationships with family and friends and their health and well-being, preventing them from reaching their full potential.

Schools play a fundamental role in providing drug education and in creating a safe and supportive environment that enables young people to develop their knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes to drugs and drug related issues.

It is a government requirement that all schools have an up to date drug education policy that is accessible to all and is reviewed on a regular basis.

Mereworth Community Primary School has a social as well as a curricular responsibility to promote the well-being of all our pupils and to teach them to make healthy and informed choices. Our curriculum is rooted in the promotion of the spiritual, moral, social, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils and aspires to prepare them fully for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.

This policy sets out to provide the whole school community with a clear understanding of a definition of substance misuse, how we aim to address the issue within school and set out links to other school policies which support this area.

This policy applies to everyone entering or working within the boundaries of the school, including outside spaces. The school will not tolerate the use of any illegal drugs and this policy clearly sets out the process for dealing with any persons suspected of using drugs in school. The school is also a non-smoking site, this includes the use of Electronic Cigarettes.

The taking of drugs to ease medical conditions is a situation every child will experience. Children need to be taught the difference between drug taking for medicinal purposes and drug misuse. Drug misuse is an educational issue, but schools alone cannot solve the problem of misuse. Primary aged pupils, although rarely involved in misuse, can be exposed to the effects and influences of misuse in the wider community.

Context

Mereworth Community Primary School has approx 210 pupils on roll, ranging from the age of 4 to 11 years. The school is located in Mereworth village, drawing in pupils from mainly Kings Hill and surrounding villages. The school the national average number of pupils on the Special Needs Register.

Definitions

For the purpose of this policy a 'drug' is a substance people take to change the way they feel, think or behave. This includes both legal and illegal substances, volatile substances (solvents), alcohol, tobacco and prescribed drugs.

'Drug misuse' in the context of this policy refers to the non-medical use of drugs that are only intended for medical treatment and the use of drugs that have no accepted medical purpose. The main controlled drugs are opiates, stimulants, tranquillisers, hallucinogens and cannabis.

The use of alcohol and tobacco, although legal, do have long term negative effects on personal health and as such, pupils need to be made aware of the consequences that abuse of these substances could have. When teaching about lifestyle choices, sensitivity to the individual circumstances of pupils is paramount, as some children may be living with the consequences of excessive alcohol and tobacco consumption at home.

The use of Electronic Cigarettes, although, not illegal, does still cause controversy with health professionals according to the Public Health England research and commissioned report dated May 2014. It has been suggested that Electronic Cigarettes may have an effect on smoking uptake and nicotine dependency by children, at present there is not enough data to support this theory. However, there is some evidence to suggest that e-cigarettes are not risk free.

The long term impact of use is still unknown. When teaching about Electronic Cigarettes alongside tobacco, teachers need to be aware that although they can't be seen to be addictive they may help with ceasing cigarette dependency. They may also look similar in size and shape they can also be distinguishable by smell and unlike normal tobacco cigarettes some places allow the use of Electronic Cigarettes. Electronic cigarettes also deliver nicotine in the form of vapour rather than smoke and compared to tobacco products are significantly safer. More information about Electronic Cigarettes and the research carried out can be found.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/vaping-in-england-an-evidence-update-february-2019/vaping-in-england-evidence-update-summary-february-2019>

The Aim of Drug Education at Mereworth

The Drugs Policy forms part of the PSHE (Personal, Social and Health Education) curriculum. It is the aim of the school through this delivery to ensure that all children work and learn together in a secure, caring, stimulating, challenging, warm, friendly and supportive environment.

Emphasis is placed on enabling discussion of children's experiences and reflecting on the skills needed to stay healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve, and to make their contribution to the school and their community.

The aim of Drug Education is to provide an opportunity for pupils to explore and develop their knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes to drugs and drug related issues to enable them to make informed decisions about all sorts of drugs.

Through the Drugs Policy and the delivery of a Drugs Awareness programme tailored to the needs of the children, it is the aim of the school to ensure that all children in its care have the best possible skills and appropriate information to enable them to make informed decisions about keeping themselves safe and choosing a healthy lifestyle.

Through this learning, the children should be able to have an understanding of the risks that they would be taking and the consequences of their actions. They need to be aware of the dangers, but also the positive uses of drugs. To understand how drugs can affect the body, and that not all drugs are illegal, but that all drugs do have an effect on the body. To know that some foods also contain substances that can also affect these changes.

Drug Education at Mereworth:

Increases pupils' knowledge and understanding and clarifies misconceptions about:

- 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
- the prevalence and acceptability of drug use among peers
- the complex moral, social, economic and political issues surrounding drugs

Develops pupils' personal and social skills in order to make informed decisions to keep themselves safe and healthy, including:

- assessing, avoiding and managing risk
- communicating effectively

- resisting pressures
- finding information, help and advice
- devising problem-solving and coping strategies
- developing self-awareness and self esteem

Enables pupils to explore their own and other peoples' attitudes towards drugs, drug use and drug users, including challenging stereotypes and exploring media and social influence.

We also aim to develop the moral framework within which children relate to issues surrounding:

- Self-respect
- Truthfulness and honesty
- Acceptance of personal responsibility
- Consideration of how our actions affect others
- Tolerance of, and respect for, differing views and behaviour
- Understanding and care for others who have a problem
- The right of others to hold and express their own views
- Co-operation for the common good

Planning and Teaching Drug Education

Drug education should be delivered through the PSHE curriculum, because it focuses on providing pupils with the opportunity to develop their knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes.

Teachers are expected to use the following:

- the non-statutory framework for PSHE and Citizenship at Key Stages 1 and 2
- the statutory requirements within the National Curriculum Science order for all phases as the basis for developing drug education

Drug Education needs to be delivered in a safe, secure and supportive learning environment. Therefore it is essential that clear ground rules are negotiated with pupils regarding confidentiality, rights to privacy and respect and boundaries. Young people should be actively encouraged to participate in their own learning and to question and think critically.

Delivery should include a wide range of teaching and learning approaches and the core principles of these include:

- ensuring that every pupil succeeds through the provision of an inclusive education within a culture of high expectations
- the purpose of each lesson is made clear
- time is given for pupils to reflect, consolidate and apply their learning

- pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning and to record their own progress
- building on what learners already know: structure and pace of the lesson so that pupils know what has to be learnt and how
- making learning vivid and real – develop understanding through enquiry, e-learning and group problem solving
- making learning an enjoyable and challenging experience – stimulate learning by matching teaching techniques and strategies to a range of learning styles
- enriching the learning experience – infuse learning skills across the curriculum
- promoting assessment for learning – make pupils/young people partners in their own learning

A wide range of active learning approaches should be used to ensure that all young people actively participate.

The programme for Drugs Awareness can be delivered through a variety of methods, including Circle time, Role play/drama, poetry, writing plays, painting, writing, Hot-seat, Group discussion and raw/write activities, ICT and videos. Children learn by visiting the Chemist, talking to the School Nurse or the Doctor.

Teachers are always best placed to take the lead role for the overall drugs programme, but outside contributors can play a valuable role in supporting schools. Teachers also need to ensure that the resources they use are relevant, up to date and appropriate in order to meet the needs of the children in their care.

Staff development and Support

All staff should have a general drug awareness and a good understanding of the school's policy for drug education and the management of drug related incidents and any other related policies.

It is essential that all staff involved in the teaching of drug education have the opportunity to develop skills and knowledge to enable them when working with young people to confidently address drugs and drug related issues. Activities to help their development can include:

- team teaching or teachers observing other skilled staff with ongoing support from a coach/mentor
- participating in collaborative enquiry and action research supported by teaching networks
- training courses with support to apply learning in the classroom

Assessment, Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting

Monitoring and evaluating enables the school to identify the relevance and effectiveness of the drug education programme through the teaching activities and resources used and whether they meet the needs and interests of the young people. The pupils should also be encouraged to reflect on the main issues of their learning.

Managing Drug Related Incidents

Definition

A drug related incident is defined at Mereworth as a person on the premises, be it pupil, parent, carer or visitor, who is under the influence or in possession of intoxicating substances. It may also refer to incidents out of school which directly affect Mereworth children and their immediate families.

The Head Teacher is the named staff member responsible for co-ordinating the school's response to drug incidents.

There are a number of young people in schools and other educational establishments who may require medication to be administered during the school day. Pupils with medical conditions requiring this on a regular basis should be made known to all staff and members of the school community.

Medication for pupils, if Asthma related, it is kept in a locked cupboard in the classroom. Pumps must be named and accompanied by a letter from parents/carers. Parents are required to attend the school office and sign a form explaining the dosage and when medicine should be administered. Diabetes is treated similarly with snacks and medication kept in the office for the child to test their blood sugar. ADHD medications & Epi- pens are kept in the office. However, Piriton and other anti-histamine medication are kept in the classroom. All staff administering medication are required to complete a form detailing the dosage given, date, time and initialling where appropriate.

There are photographs and details of children requiring regular medication in the staffroom, school office and each teacher has a folder containing these details. A list of pupils with medical conditions is updated at the start of each new academic year. A whole school list of pupils with medical conditions is also available in the school office.

The school has members of staff who have been trained in first aid or paediatric aid. The children know how to gain help via the Staff, and Lunch-time Supervisors.

The school will follow the law in that it permits school staff to take temporary possession of a substance suspected of being an illegal drug for the purpose of preventing an offence from being committed or continued in relation to that drug providing that all responsible steps are taken to destroy the drug or deliver it to a person lawfully entitled to take custody of it. This will usually be performed with the assistance of the police on occasions which do not involve alcohol or tobacco, (which will be destroyed on the premises). In issues concerning drug paraphernalia the police will always be contacted.

The school will involve parents/carers in personal searches and searches of school property, but at all times with at least two members of the school staff in attendance.

Circumstances Defining where Parents/Carers or Other Agencies Including the Police may Need to be Notified

Schools are recommended to conduct a careful investigation to judge the nature and seriousness of each incident. The emphasis should be on listening to what people have to say and asking open-ended questions. Schools should consider separating any pupils involved in the incident and ensuring that a second adult witness is present. Issues such as confidentiality, child protection, police intervention and referral to external agencies need to be given careful attention to safeguard the needs of those involved and to ensure an appropriate response is taken. Any incident involving the misuse of drugs will take account of:

- the age and maturity of the child or young person
- any previous incidents of drug misuse by the child or young person
- which drug/s are being used/supplied
- is the drug legal or illegal
- how much is being used and how often
- how they take the drug, where, with whom
- how long has it been going on
- the child's home circumstances
- pupil's knowledge and understand of the school policy and rules

Any response should balance the needs of the individual with those of the wider school community, and aim to provide pupils with the opportunity to learn from their mistakes and develop as individuals.

Drug/alcohol related problems are rarely, if ever, isolated and are usually indicative of wider issues in a young person's life. A holistic approach is essential when assessing drug/alcohol use and other factors that are impacting on a young person's life and behaviour. Schools should develop a range of responses in line with local protocols. Schools have a role in identifying pupils who have drug related needs. The process of identifying needs should aim to distinguish

between those who could benefit from targeted prevention, and those who require a more detailed assessment of their needs.

Staff members have no legal obligation to report an incident involving drugs to the police. However, schools need to work in partnership with the police to outline:

- when an incident can be managed internally by the school
- when the police should be informed or consulted
- when the police should be actively involved
- when a pupil's name can be withheld and when it should be divulged to the police

Schools should make a full record of unauthorised drug incidents. Storage of sensitive information about pupils or staff should be stored in accordance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998 (The school will also be compliant with the new General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) which, come into effect in May 2019). A book for recording is kept in the Head Teacher's office.

If incidents involve a child, the Head Teacher as Child Protection Officer will consult all relevant agencies as well as calling the parent/ carer into school to collect or discuss the pupil.

Responsibilities

The school's Governing Body has a responsibility to oversee the policy and the Head Teacher will report any incidents in the Head Teacher report, at the termly Full Governing Body Meetings.

Links to other Policies

There are numerous links to other policies, namely Child Protection, Health and Safety and Confidentiality, Behaviour and Exclusion.

The whole school community shares a responsibility in the successful implementation of this policy.

A reference copy of this policy can be located in the school office and on the school website.
