

Doxey Primary School Drugs Policy

Introduction

Research has shown that by the age of 11 many primary school children have extensive knowledge of the world of drugs. For some, this knowledge may be inaccurate and incomplete, for others it will develop through personal experience. Together research shows that up to 50% of children have tried an illegal drug by the age of 16. The figures also suggest that the first age of experimentation is decreasing and that children of primary age are exposed to opportunities to try both illegal and illegal drugs.

The 1995 white paper 'Tackling Drugs Together' stated that schools had an important role both in reducing the misuse of drugs and minimising their health risks.

Drugs education should contribute to:

- Increasing the safety of communities from drug related crime
- Reducing the acceptability and availability of drugs to young people
- Reducing the health risks and other damage related to drug misuse

At Doxey we believe that drugs education should provide:-

- Accurate information presented simply and clearly
- Informative and accessible reading materials
- Access to other adults besides teachers, providing they are expert and credible
- Stimulating and enjoyable classroom tasks
- Opportunities to develop their knowledge and understanding in a challenging and safe atmosphere where they feel secure enough to play a full and active part.

We aim to provide a consistency of approach throughout the school and to encourage children to develop knowledge and skills to make informed and responsible choices now and in later life and to stress the benefits of a healthy lifestyle. At Doxey Primary School we encourage children to develop positive attitudes and values and to ensure that Health and Safety procedures are followed when dealing with incidents/equipment related to drugs and drug use. Welfare of pupils is paramount and procedures and policies are designed to reflect this commitment.

Objectives

- To develop children's personal and social skills including refusal and decision making skills
- To help children take increased responsibility for themselves and their actions.
- To encourage children to value themselves and others.
- To encourage children to help and support others.

- To encourage children to work cooperatively in active learning and group work.
- To clarify what children already know, give information to clarify facts and correct false knowledge and beliefs.
- To help children deal with the effect of media coverage of issues relating to drugs.
- To support staff in dealing with issues and incidents relating to drugs and drugs use.
- To ensure all staff are aware of procedures relating to drugs and drug use at Doxey Primary School.
- To provide opportunities for pupils to acquire knowledge and identify the distinction between authorised and unauthorised drugs.
- To develop and equip pupils with the knowledge, attitudes and skills necessary to build their resilience and avoid peer group pressure or unwanted drug offers from others.
- To build pupils' decision-making skills and increased self-esteem.

Definition

At Doxey 'drugs' include any substance that affects your body.

This includes socially acceptable and unacceptable drugs.

These will include:-

- Tobacco
- Alcohol
- Medicines
- Illegal substances

The role of the Head of School

It is the responsibility of the Head of School to ensure that staff and parents are informed about this drugs education policy, and that the policy is implemented effectively. It is also the Head of School's role to ensure that staff are given sufficient training, so that they can teach effectively and handle any difficult issues with sensitivity. The Head of School will liaise with external agencies regarding the school drugs education programme and ensure that all adults who work with children on these issues are aware of the school policy and work within this framework. The Head of School will monitor the policy on a day to day basis and report to governors, when requested, on the effectiveness of the policy.

The role of governors

The governing body has the responsibility of setting down these general guidelines on drugs education. The governors will support the Head of School in following these guidelines. Governors will inform and consult with parents about the drugs education policy. Governors will also liaise with the LA and health organisations so that the school's policy is in line with the best advice available.

The role of parents

The school is well aware that the primary role in children's drugs education lies with parents. We wish to build a positive and supporting relationship with the

parents of children at our school through mutual understanding, trust and cooperation. In promoting this objective we will:

- inform parents about the school drugs education policy and practice;
- invite parents to view any materials used to teach drugs education in our school;
- answer any questions parents may have about the drugs education their child receives in school;
- take seriously any issue which parents raise with teachers or governors about this policy or the arrangements for drugs education in the school;
- encourage parents to be involved in reviewing the school policy and making modifications to it as necessary;
- inform parents about the best practice known with regard to drugs education so that the parents can support the key messages being given to children at school.

Resources

Drugs education is part of the planned PSHE curriculum and is also delivered through the teaching of Science and through circle time. The PSHE framework outlines the areas to be covered each year.

The NC guidelines for science require that children are taught:-

- At KS1 about the role of drugs and medicines
- At KS2 that tobacco, alcohol and other drugs can have harmful effects

Teaching

Our approach to drugs education is one which children are given information in the belief that increased knowledge about drugs and the risks will empower children to make informed and safe decisions. We approach this in a sensitive manner appropriate to the age and experiences of the children concerned.

Teaching is:-

- Well resourced
- Reflects the needs and experiences of pupils
- Uses a range of teaching methods including group work, discussions, videos and outside speakers
- Reinforces messages about healthy lifestyles
- Flexible and relevant
- In the context of a wider PSHE programme
- Interesting and stimulating
- Informed.

Outside visitors

If outside speakers are used in any aspect of the drugs education programme, their contribution will be properly planned. They will support the work of the teacher who will meet with the speaker beforehand to plan the work and explain the school's policy on drug education. Teachers will be present and involved in all sessions and will evaluate the work afterwards. The teacher has overall responsibility for the session and the work planned.

Managing drug related incidents

The member of staff responsible for co-ordinating the schools response to drug incidents is the headteacher, Mrs Baker. Doxey Primary School's definition of a drug incident is any incident involving illegal, intoxicating or age-restricted substances. The physical boundaries of the school define the extent of the school premises during the school day and the school term. But school rules and expectations of behaviour extend further if pupils visit a library, for example, or leave school to visit an old people's home as part of a community project, whether supervised or not. School boundaries as they apply to conduct also extend to include school trips, and clear guidance to staff is given about their supervisory responsibilities. It is made clear to pupils which school rules still apply if they leave the school during the lunch break, and which will apply on a school trip abroad, where drug laws may differ. Staff are made aware of any controls on their own drug use (e.g. of alcohol, tobacco and medicines) when on duty. The school is a no smoking school which means cigarettes cannot be smoked anywhere on the school premises. Responsibility for pupils' welfare is wholly the parents' or carers' while they are at home, and principally the school's while pupils are at school. However, in between home and school, it will be shared, perhaps transferring at a particular time of day or distance from the school by a member of staff - the drug policy still applies on those occasions. The law 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 reasonable steps are taken to destroy the drug or deliver it to a person lawfully entitled to take custody of it. In taking temporary possession and disposing of suspected illegal drugs the member of staff will hand it over to Mrs Baker, or the next senior member of staff in her absence. They will then ensure it is locked away until any other agencies are involved and have been informed. The drugs are disposed of following advice from other agencies such as the police, Local Authority, etc. Needles and syringes found within school boundaries will be dealt with in accordance with guidelines produced by Staffordshire County Council Health and Safety Team (see appendix 3).

Searches are considered appropriate when:

- There is reasonable suspicion that a person is carrying drugs.

The school works closely with the police and has a agreed protocol for reporting of illegal drugs:

- Police will routinely be called following any incident of illegal drugs.

In responding to drug incidents, the primary concern of the school is the care and welfare of children and young people. In cases of a medical emergency the school will act promptly to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the pupil and the school community.

The school will seek to balance the safety and security of the school with the individual needs of pupils. Disclosure of any offences to the police is not obligatory. Any incident involving the misuse of drugs will take into account:

- The age and maturity of the pupil
- What the pupil has to say

- The means by which the substance was acquired
- The intention of the pupil and the circumstances of the incident
- Method and frequency of use
- The nature and legal status of the substance involved
- Any previous incidents of drug misuse by the pupil
- Action being taken through the criminal justice system
- The availability of support for the pupil and family from other agencies.

The boundaries of confidentiality will be made clear to pupils. Professional responsibilities in relation to child protection, co-operating with a police investigation and referral to external agencies will be adhered to. Every effort will be made to secure the pupil's agreement to the way in which the school intends to use any sensitive information. Please refer to the school's child protection and confidentiality policies.

Sanctions will:

- Be appropriate to the seriousness of the incident
- Meet the identified needs of the pupil and the wider school community
- Be consistent with published school rules, codes and expectations
- Be consistent with disciplinary action for breaches of other school rules (such as theft, violence, bullying)

The school considers that the education it provides offers, for many youngsters, their best chance of resisting the long-term harm that may be the result of drug misuse. Wherever possible we will strive to sustain the involvement of the young person in formal education. Permanent Exclusion will only be used in respect of a pupil who represents a significant risk to the health and safety of other pupils. Please refer to the Behaviour policy.

As part of the school's outstanding pastoral programme, the school will endeavour to identify and support those pupils who are more vulnerable to drug misuse and other social problems.

Additional support includes:

- Support from outside agencies, such as NSPCC, Barnados, child protection co-ordinator, first response, bereavement councillors, health professionals, LAC so-ordinators, community police officers and the EWO.

Where drug use or misuse seems to be harming a pupil, the pupil will be referred for further help. Where possible, and where this will not compromise the pupil's safety, the school will seek the involvement of the pupil and the pupil's parents/carers in such a decision. Referral procedures will follow individual support agencies' criteria. Sensitive information about pupils or staff will be stored in accordance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998.