

# Drugs Policy

## Larkhill Primary School

### *Rationale*

Reference to 'drugs' is an emotive issue. Society as a whole is anxious about the effects of drug misuse and yet does not always clarify its understanding of the issues. Different groups in society have different perceptions of the dangers and acceptability of different drug types. In some circles drugs can be glamourised and the subject open to misunderstandings. Drugs education in primary schools can cause alarm and yet is essential if we are to equip our children with the necessary skills, understanding and knowledge to move confidently into adult life.

We have a responsibility to inform our children of the facts relating to the substances they will and do encounter in their environment. In many cases they will have already experienced the effect of drugs in the adults around them. It is important that we are sensitive to the experiences that children may have.

We will not tolerate the misuse of drugs within the schools and its grounds. This includes adults who come on to the school premises and may be intoxicated or in possession of illegal drugs. Our school is a no-smoking area and we request all adults to refrain from smoking around the premises. This has also been extended to after-school events.

We recognise that some of our children and parents need a variety of medicines and appropriate arrangements are made to enable the correct distribution of these. Further information can be found in our health and safety policy.

This drugs policy is part of our overall approach to health and well-being. Through our PHSE and C curriculum and through circle time and school ethos we aim to ensure that children recognise the importance of what they chose to eat and drink and the effect which this can have. Self-respect and a healthy lifestyle are all part of an approach which will enable our children to make the right choices for themselves and their families now and in the future.

### ***Definition of 'drugs' for the benefit of this policy***

The term refers to:

- All illegal drugs
- All legal drugs, including alcohol, tobacco, volatile substances
- All over the counter and prescription medicines

### **AIMS**

- To provide the information and support for children to be able to make lifestyle choices
- To encourage a supportive ethos in which issues can be discussed and questions answered
- Ensure the safety of staff and pupils when on the school site

- Provide appropriate role models and examples to illustrate a healthy lifestyle
- Take a firm stance against illegal drugs
- Raise awareness for children of the importance of their choices in forging a healthy lifestyle.
- Recognise the valuable role that medication can have
- Acknowledge that not all family members may make healthy choices and some of the reasons why
- Enable children to develop a self-awareness and realise the power they have to determine their own lives
- Provide a whole school approach to issues of healthy life style
- Draw attention to the effect which peers can have upon the decisions that we make and the need to take a considered approach to this
- Alert children to ways of seeking additional help and support where necessary
- Ensure that children have access to balanced information and views against which they can clarify their own opinions to help children establish the difference between fact, opinion and belief

The Drugs Education Curriculum

*Statutory guidance: Science*

Key Stage 1

**Sc2 2d** about the role of medicines

Key Stage 2

**Sc2 2g** about the effects on the human body of tobacco, alcohol and other drugs, and how these relate to their personal health

*Non-statutory guidance: PSHE and Citizenship*

Key Stage 1

**3f** that all household products, including medicines, can be harmful if not used properly

Key Stage 2

**3d** which commonly available substances and drugs are legal and illegal, their effects and risks

### ***The approach at our school***

There are a number of ways in which we aim to help children understand the implication of drug use and misuse. We recognise that drugs impinge on many of our children's lives in a variety of ways and the subject needs careful handling. We are also aware of the impact of national initiatives and publicity campaigns. We aim to involve different deliverers in providing different perspectives on the issue and to provide opportunity for children to ask questions and share their existing knowledge. There may be many misconceptions which will need to be addressed in a sensitive and factual way. Where teachers are unsure it is acceptable to refrain from answering the question until further clarification can be sought. The methods we use include:

#### **Circle time**

These informal opportunities are taken to enable children to discuss topical issues as they arise in the media, at home and in the locality. The teacher facilitates the discussion, handles any remarks leading to possible disclosures and establishes ground rules.

Circle time provides a particularly good opportunity to discuss issues raised in the Life Education Centre Van and in the more formal Science curriculum. On occasions issues will also have been raised through literature that the children have been reading.

## **PHSE and C**

During our weekly KS2 circle-time aspects are discussed relating to:

- Safety in the handling of household products and medicine
- The effect of smoking and drinking upon our lives and those around us
- The category of 'illegal drugs' and what children understand and know about these
- Building ourselves a healthy lifestyle – looking to the future

## **School Nurse**

Our school nurse is a recognised, familiar figure in our school. Although on hand to support individual cases and families she also helps to deliver aspects of our drugs education by providing some medical information about the effect and use of medicines within our society.

## **Using fiction**

At different times picture books are used as a resource to help support the PHSE and C curriculum and to open up discussion in the nurture group. Using stories enables discussion about issues which can be quite sensitive without appearing to target any individual.

## **Science**

As part of our KS2 science curriculum we include:

- The role of medicines in our lives
- The effects of alcohol and tobacco on our health
- The effects and risks of illegal drugs on health, family and future
- What we mean by a healthy lifestyle and the effect which different food, drink and drugs can have upon us both emotionally and physically

## **Health Week**

*A health week provides an additional opportunity to highlight issues relating to drugs. As the normal timetable is suspended individual classes further their understanding through research, independent enquiry and a variety of visits and visitors. This helps to support both the factual basis of their knowledge as well as the recognition of these issues as relevant to all society.*

### ***In the event of disclosure***

There may be times during discussions about drugs when children make disclosures. Where this is the case the teacher should sensitively listen to what the child has to say whilst also avoiding further disclosure in front of the class. At the end of the lesson it might be appropriate to spend some time with the child allowing them opportunity to speak but following the child protection policy, not asking questions or writing down at this stage. Confidentiality cannot be promised.

As soon as is reasonable, the classteacher should pass on their own concerns to the designated person who will follow the agreed procedure for disclosure handling. The classteacher should always ensure they remain calm and should not appear shocked by what children might have to say.

It is important that children understand the ground rules during any discussion and that they do not put pressure upon one another to reveal personal information.

### ***Drug use on the premises***

Our school makes it clear that drug use on the premises is not acceptable except in the case of prescribed medication which is known to senior management. This includes:

- Smoking on or around the school premises either during the school day or during evening events
- Alcohol on the school site during the school day
- Alcohol consumed by adults in the playground
- Adults on the school premises who are evidently under the influence of alcohol or substances which impair their judgement
- Adults in known possession of alcohol or illegal substances around the school premises

Where school staff suspect that there is transgression of these guidelines senior management should be informed immediately at which point a judgement will be made as to whether they should:

- approach the individual
- call the police
- make arrangements to isolate the individual to ensure the safety of children on the school site

At all times the safety of the children remains the key factor in any decision made whilst staff should also be alert to the danger they may bring on themselves by certain courses of action. Any repeat of transgressions might be referred to the LEA in order for legal action to be taken.

If there is concern that parents collecting a child may potentially place that child at risk the school can, in extreme circumstances, refuse to hand over the pupil. The appropriate services would then be notified immediately.

### ***Drug use by pupils***

It is very rare for primary school pupils to be identified as taking non-medicinal drugs. However, on occasions it might come to the attention of staff that children have been smoking or drinking or taking drugs or be in the company, on occasions of adolescents who are. Each case should be taken individually and the appropriate course of action decided by a senior member of staff. Alternatives include:

- Use of the school behaviour policy
- Referral to parents Referral to the police
- Referral to social services
- Referral to another external support agency such as CHARM
- Use of the red-room for discussion
- Counselling and support for individual children

A combination of the above might be used. Decisions will be based upon the immediate and long term safety of the child involved and the nature and time of the incidents. Parental involvement in any discussion is crucial except where the incident is one considered to relate to child protection. In this case Child Protection policy should be followed and an immediate referral made.

### ***Drugs found on school premises***

Needle/Sharps

These will be removed by members of staff using thick gloves and placed in a sharps box.

Alcohol/Tobacco

Parents will normally be informed and given the opportunity to collect the alcohol and tobacco.

#### Illegal drugs

Temporary possession of these should be removed in the presence of another adult. The drug should be sealed in a plastic bag with details of the time and date found and kept in a locked cabinet. The Police should then be notified.

### ***Special Needs***

It is appropriate that all children have access to the information covered in our Drugs education Programme. Arrangements should be made within classrooms to enable this to happen either through additional TA support or adaptation of curriculum materials. In most cases the largely discursive nature of the subject will mean that all children have equal access.

It should be noted that some children will need to use medication regularly as part of their own special need. Care should be taken at all times to draw a distinction between different types of drugs use and enable children to see the value that medicinal drugs can have in our society. There may be opportunity for individuals with first hand experience of taking medication to share their experiences and discuss the benefits. Any such involvement should be discussed with the child and his/her parent before hand.

### ***Parental Involvement***

Parents are invited to inspect the school's drug policy. If parents have concerns they should be invited into school to share these and to see any materials that are being used.

The School Nurse will discuss with parents any issues relating to drugs as and when the need arises.

### ***Assessment***

It is useful to incorporate a before and after assessment of children's understanding of drugs and their uses.

For example an initial lesson might request children to draw examples of different drugs. This can provide a basis upon which to discuss what children perceive as a drug. At the end of the unit a similar activity will hopefully demonstrate conceptual development. Where particular issues remain this should be noted on a feed forward information as well as being clarified with the group itself.

Assessment for learning is an integral part of our teaching. Children should be asked to share their level of understanding, the most effective teaching techniques and what they believe will help them further as units of work progress. In some cases group work will enable children to support one another.

The elements of drug education that form part of the science curriculum will be assessed in accordance with the requirements of the National Curriculum.

### ***Monitoring***

The before and after pictures can provide a useful indication of the effectiveness of our drugs education programme. Feed forward information provides an indication of how effective the programmes have been and where strengths and weaknesses lie.

Senior Management and KS Leaders will monitor the progress of planning and feed forward. Work trawls and observations provide insight into the children's understanding and the quality of delivery. Discussion with the school council provides additional anecdotal information.

The PHSE&C and Science co-ordinators receive information through :

- Work trawls and observations
- Subject meetings
- Staff meetings

The PHSE&C and Science co-ordinators provide feedback on curriculum developments to the Governors' S&C committee.