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## Rationale

For the purpose of this document the term 'drugs' includes tobacco, alcohol, over-the-counter and prescribed medication, volatile substances and controlled drugs. This school does not condone the misuse of drugs but recognises that there has been a considerable increase in the abuse of drugs in recent years in Northern Ireland. Drug misuse appears to be affecting an ever-younger population and the so-called "recreational" use of drugs can lead to a dangerous acceptance of illegal and harmful drug misuse as part of everyday life.

We believe that this school has a vital preventative role to play in combating the misuse of drugs by young people and we therefore include a drugs education programme in our curriculum.

This school sees its role as that of a caring community committed to the physical, mental, social, emotional, moral and spiritual health, safety and well being of our pupils and staff.

We want our pupils to make informed and responsible decisions about drugs by increasing their knowledge and by developing in them appropriate values, attitudes and skills. However, we recognise that drug misuse is a whole-community issue and that schools alone cannot solve the drugs problem; the school is only one of a number of groups and agencies which must play a part in the education of young people and we make use of their expertise where possible in the delivery of the programme.

Copies of the guidance on which this policy is based (Drugs: Guidance for schools in Northern Ireland) are available from the Department of Education website [www.deni.gov.uk](http://www.deni.gov.uk) (Circular 2004/09 and 2015/23).

## Definitions

For the purpose of this document and in line with the guidance issued to all schools by the Department of Education (2004/09) **drugs will include any substance which, when taken, has the effect of altering the way the body works or the way a person behaves, feels, sees or thinks.**

As well as everyday substances such as tea and coffee, drugs include:

- alcohol and tobacco;
- "over-the-counter" medicines, such as paracetamol;

- prescribed drugs, such as antibiotics, tranquillizers, inhalers and Ritalin;
- volatile substances, such as correcting fluids/thinners, gas lighter fuel, aerosols, glues and petrol;
- controlled drugs, such as cannabis, LSD, Ecstasy, amphetamine sulphate (speed), magic mushrooms (processed), heroin and cocaine; and
- Other substances such as amyl/butyl nitrite ('poppers') and unprocessed magic mushrooms.

## **Ethos**

We are committed to:

- The aims of Catholic Education.
- A Child Centred Education.
- Working closely with parents in the education of their children
- High academic standards.
- Developing positive and effective pastoral care systems in our school.

## **Aims and Objectives**

- To have a clear and agreed understanding among everyone in the school community about the implications and possible consequences of drug use/misuse.
- To provide all staff (teaching and non-teaching) with adequate training and support to enable them to deal effectively and confidently with incidents of suspected drug misuse, and to ensure that the agreed procedures are consistently and sensitively applied in all situations.
- To empower teaching staff through appropriate training and support to develop and deliver an effective drug education programme.
- To provide a drug education programme which
  - develops pupils' self esteem and promotes positive attitudes in their relationships with others;

- gives pupils' opportunities to develop the values, skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to make informed and responsible decisions about the use/misuse of drugs including tobacco, alcohol and volatile substances, within the context of a healthy lifestyle; and
- Helps pupils' develop the skills necessary to assert themselves confidently and resist negative pressures and influences.
- To provide appropriate support and assistance for those pupils affected by drug-related issues.
- To inform parents of the content of this policy and the procedures to be implemented in the management of incidents of suspected drug misuse.
- To establish an environment in which the school is free from the misuse of all drugs.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **Pupils**

- Be aware of and adhere to school rules in relation to drug use/misuse, including tobacco, alcohol, over-the-counter and prescribed medication, volatile substances and controlled drugs.

### **Parents/Guardians**

- Support the school in the development and implementation of this policy, including the school's procedures for handling incidents of suspected drug misuse and the drug education programme.
- Support your son/daughter if they have become involved with drugs.

### **All staff (teaching and non-teaching)**

- Be alert to the possibility of drug use/misuse.
- Be familiar with the school's procedures in the handling of suspected drug-related incidents.
- It is not the responsibility of the individual staff member to investigate the circumstances surrounding an incident, however he/she should deal with any emergency procedures if necessary.

- Any information, substance or paraphernalia received should be forwarded to the designated teacher for drugs who may have to take immediate action.

### **Teachers delivering the Drug Education programme**

In addition to the above:

- Deliver the school's drug education programme.
- Try to create an atmosphere in the classroom in which pupils can freely contribute to discussion, safe in the knowledge that the comments, ideas and feelings of the group are valued.
- Support pupils in their class if necessary.
- Liaise with the designated teacher for drugs regarding any aspect of the programme/policy, as necessary.

### **The Designated Teacher for Drugs (Name: Mrs Cochrane)**

- Ensure that all staff and parents are aware of and have access to a copy of the policy.
- Have oversight and co-ordination of the planning of curricular provision in compliance with the statutory requirements including periodic update and review of the policy.
- Liaise with other staff responsible for pastoral care in co-coordinating the delivery of the drug education programme.
- Be responsible for co-coordinating the school's procedures for dealing with incidents of suspected drug misuse.
- Co-ordinate training and induction of all staff in the procedures for dealing with incidents of suspected drug misuse.
- Determine the circumstances surrounding any suspected drug-related incident.
- Complete a suspected incident report form and forward to the Principal.
- Ensure the engagement and active participation of parents in all aspects of drug education.
- Act as the point of contact for outside agencies working with the school.

### **The Principal**

- Ensure that members of the Board of Governors have been consulted on and ratified the policy.

In the case of incidents of suspected drug misuse:

- Ensure the welfare and well being of the pupil(s) involved in the incident and the rest of the school community.
- Ensure that the following people are informed (where relevant):

- \* Parents/guardians
  - \* PSNI - preferably the Community and Schools Involvement Officer (CSIO)
  - \* Board of Governors
  - \* Designated Officer in SEELB/CCMS
  - \* Members of staff
  - \* Other pupils and parents informed within the confines of confidentiality
- Agree, in consultation with the Board of Governors, appropriate pastoral and disciplinary responses in relation to the incident, including counselling services/support.
  - Retain written records of the incident and ensure a copy of the report is submitted to Board of Governors and SEELB/CCMS as appropriate.
  - Review procedures and amend as appropriate.

### **The Board of Governors**

- Examine and approve the completed policy and education programme, prior to their implementation in the school.
- Ensure the policy is published in the school prospectus and that it is reviewed at regular intervals.
- Be fully aware of and adequately trained to deal with suspected incidents of drug misuse, including tobacco and alcohol, and their appropriate disciplinary response.
- Agree in consultation with the principal appropriate pastoral and disciplinary responses in relation to suspected drug related incidents.
- Designate a Governor to work with the Principal and designated teacher for drugs in relation to drug-related incidents.

### **The Building Supervisor**

- Be vigilant around and conduct regular checks of the school grounds for drug-related paraphernalia, and inform the designated teacher for drugs as appropriate.
- Ensure the safe storage, handling and disposal of potentially harmful substances such as solvents and cleaning fluids.

### **Training and Information**

All staff (teaching and non-teaching) and Governors will be provided with training to support the full implementation of this policy including the delivery of the drug

education programme, Staff training to take place. Information awareness sessions/drug awareness evening will be offered to parents/guardians.

## **The Drug Education Programme**

The drug education programme in this school is just one part of the whole school response to drug use/misuse. The programme provides opportunities for pupils to:

- acquire knowledge and understanding in relation to drug use/misuse;
- identify values and attitudes in relation to drug use/misuse;
- develop skills to enable them to consider the effects of drugs on themselves and others; and
- Make informed and responsible choices within the context of a healthy lifestyle.

The drugs Education programme for the school is outlined in **Appendix 1**. The programme will include the involvement of outside agencies where appropriate.

### **Procedures for dealing with suspected drug related incidents**

Fundamental to dealing with incidents of suspected drug misuse is the principle of *'in loco parentis'*, and the school will always take the steps that would reasonably be expected of any parent to safeguard the well being and safety of all the pupils in their charge.

The following procedures will be used in St. Joseph's Primary School when dealing with a drug related incident:

#### **1. Illness and Inappropriate Behaviour (Appendix 2)**

#### **2. Taking Possession of a suspected controlled Drug and /or Associate Paraphernalia**

- The law permits school staff to take temporary possession of a substance suspected of being a controlled drug for the purpose of protecting a pupil from harm and from committing the offence of possession (**Appendix 3**)
- The member of staff should take the suspected drug and any associated equipment and or paraphernalia to the designated teacher immediately.
- This will then be given to the school Principal who will lock it away.
- It will then be handed over to the PSNI.

**\* School staff should NOT attempt to analyse or taste an unidentified substance.**

- An adult witness should be present when confiscations occur and a record kept of the details.

### **3. An allegation of a suspected Controlled Drugs- related incident**

- If the designated teacher or Principal receive an allegation of possession it may be appropriate to search a pupil's desk or locker if there is cause to believe it contains unlawful items, including controlled drugs.
- A search CANNOT take place without the consent from the pupil. This includes the pupil's schoolbag, coat or any other personal belonging.
- Searches should be made in the presence of the pupil and an adult witness.
- Suspicion of a pupil concealing drugs on their person - every effort should be made to secure the VOLUNTARY production of these substances.
- If a pupil refuses, the parents/ guardians and the police should be contacted.
- A member of staff should never carry out a physical search of a pupil.

### **4. Possession, Possession with intent to supply and supply of controlled drugs.**

- It is illegal for pupil(s) to be in possession of a controlled drug.
- A member of staff should take possession of the suspected controlled drug.
- The pupil(s) should be escorted to the designated teacher for drugs.
- The school policy will be followed.

### **5. Detaining a Pupil**

- Pupils CANNOT be detained in school against their will.
- Pupils will be invited to remain in school under the supervision of the designated teacher and the principal until parents/guardians and PSNI arrive.

- If there are reasonable grounds to suspect that a pupil has taken a controlled drug or is in possession of one then a citizen's arrest can take place. **(Appendix 3)**
- Staff should be aware and be able to recognize when a pupil is a danger to themselves or others and their duty of protection as a result of being **loco parentis**.
- It is NOT illegal for pupils to possess or use other substances which are NOT CONTROLLED e.g. tobacco, alcohol and solvents. These issues will be dealt with under our disciplinary policy and parents will be notified immediately.

## 6. Finding Drugs- related paraphernalia

- Any member of the school community who encounters any paraphernalia associated with drug use/ misuse should use extreme care, as these items may be hazardous.
- The presence of paraphernalia should be reported immediately to the designated teacher for drugs.
- The designated teacher and the principal will assess the situation and liaise with the PSNI.
- PARAPHERNALIA MAY INCLUDE: small bottle, pill bottles, aerosols, hypodermic needles, drugs themselves.

## 7. Alcohol

- Pupils are not allowed to bring alcohol into school. Parents and visitors under the effects of alcohol will be asked to leave the premises and return at a later date for the safety of the whole school.
- Tobacco  
The school is a no smoking site-indoors and outdoors, including school vehicles-at all times. Pupils are not permitted to bring in to school smoking materials, including matches and lighters. In the interests of health and safety, should a pupil be found in possession of any of these on the school premises they will be confiscated.
- Solvents
- The school will ensure that potentially hazardous substances are stored safely, and pupils will be supervised if it is necessary that they come into contact with them during the course of their work. Pupils are not permitted to be in possession of solvent based products.

## 8. Recording an Incident

- **Appendix 4** will be used.

- Reports will be treated as confidential and stored in a file in the Principal's office.
- Pupils should record a written statement of their involvement or if they are a witness.
- These statements will be kept in the same file
- Other senior teachers will be used to supervise pupils if there is more than one pupil involved and separate statements are required.
- **Appendix 5- Summary of Managing a Drugs Related Incident in St Joseph's P.S**

## School Response

The school Principal is responsible for the decision on how to respond to particular incidents

A range of factors may be relevant and need exploration to determine the seriousness and needs of those involved and an appropriate response e.g.

**"At all times the needs of the individual pupils must be considered and appropriate interventions and support mechanisms put in place."**

The principal and Board of Governors will at all times refer to the **"Drugs: guidance for school in N.I." pages 35-38**

## Emergency Procedures

PHONE 999 then:

Qualified First Aiders:

Irene Fitzsimons

Lesley Cochrane

Imelda Porter

Anne-Marie Brannigan

- Find out what has been taken if possible.
- If a pupil is drowsy (depressant drug) try to keep them awake , (walk, talk to them or cold cloth to back of neck)
- DO NOT give pupils something to eat.
- If a pupil is unconscious put them in the recovery position.
- Check on any changes on pulse or breathing.
- If a pupil stops breathing- mouth to mouth.

- If a pupil is distressed (stimulant drug) try to reassure them, it is important they calm down and relax.
- If a pupil has taken **LSD** they should be supervised in a darkened, quiet room to avoid sensory stimulation.

## **Administrating Prescribed Medication**

1. No member of staff is obliged to administrate prescribed medication
2. The school Principal will administrate prescribed medication if the class teacher is unwilling to do so.
3. Only teaching members of staff may administrate prescribed medication unless permission is granted by the BOG.
4. Prescribed medication can only be administered if there is written consent from the parent /guardian.
5. This written consent must include clear instructions for administration, dated and signed.
6. Consent will be filed in a pupil's individual file in the main school office.

## **Employees**

The Health and Safety at Work (N.I.) Order 1978 requires the employer, i.e. BOG, to protect the health, safety and welfare of employees at work.

The employee also has a legal responsibility to protect their own health and safety and that of their colleagues.

The BOG of St Joseph's Primary has a Health and Safety Sub-Committee directly responsible to them.

Every member of staff has been issued with a Health and Safety Manual.

The BOG will refer to the "Drugs and Alcohol in the Workplace Guidance" (HSENI) with respect to problems associated with staff use of alcohol and/or other drugs.

The school will at all times give careful consideration as to how any information relating to an incident of suspected/confirmed drug use/misuse is communicated to staff, pupils and parents/guardians.

The parents/guardians of the pupil(s) directly involved in an incident of suspected drug use/misuse will be informed of the incident recognising that the future of a child or adult can be adversely affected. Confidentiality is of paramount importance in drug related incidents and subsequent outcomes.

The school will give information to young people and parents about local support services which are available to them. **(Appendix 5)**

## **Dealing with the Media**

If the school receives an enquiry from the media the caller will only be referred to the principal or, in the absence of the principal, a designated nominee.

When responding to the media the privacy of the pupil(s), his/her family and/or any staff members will be respected at all times.

## **Monitoring and evaluation**

The school will ensure that procedures are put in place to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of all aspects of this policy. Information will be regularly collected from pupils and staff as part of the monitoring process, and this will then be evaluated against the aims and objectives of the policy at appropriate intervals.

- The Board of Governors will monitor and evaluate the Drugs Policy every 3 years **OR**
- After a suspected Drugs-related incident
- Parents, staff and pupils will be asked for their involvement in this process **(Appendix 6)**.

## **Communication and Dissemination of Policy**

The school will include details of this Policy in their prospectus.

A complete copy is available to anyone who requires it on request.

## **CHECKLIST FOR HANDLING SUSPECTED DRUG RELATED INCIDENTS IN SCHOOLS**

This is a guide on the key procedures to undertake when a drug-related incident occurs in schools.

**1. Ensure the safety of the individual pupil involved, of other pupils, yourself and other staff. On finding a situation with a suspected substance: -**

- Get help immediately from another adult.
- Assess situation, to see if this is a life-threatening situation or not.

**If an emergency: -**

- If necessary contact an ambulance.
- Put person under the influence of the drugs in the recovery position.
- Ensure airways are cleared.
- Remove any other bystanders from the immediate vicinity.

**Then in all cases: -**

- Carefully gather up any drugs / paraphernalia / evidence lying around and keep safely.
- Ascertain which substances / drugs have been taken and how much.
- Secure all drugs and paraphernalia and give to the Principal / designated teacher for drugs immediately, and lock them away.
- Contact the parents/guardians as soon as possible.

**2. Ensure all incidents are properly investigated and recorded: -**

- Never accuse pupils of drug dealing/possession; these are alleged illicit substances until substantiated by the PSNI.
- Conduct search procedures according to school policy. (**Never search personal belongings without permission.** It is okay to search school property such as lockers, cupboards or desks).
- Ensure all drugs are safely and securely stored making sure that this is witnessed by another adult and recorded.
- Gather details and data from all the eyewitnesses at the scene.
- All statements and phone calls should be recorded, signed and dated.
- Record all information on official incident form and sign and date, or ensure accurate details are given to whoever is writing the form and co-sign.
- Ensure an incident form is filled in and forwarded to the SEELB/CCMS, as appropriate.
- Ensure that you follow all the procedures in your School's Drugs Policy.

**3. Ensure appropriate individuals and agencies are informed and contacted as needed: -**

- ❑ Principal and designated teacher for drugs
- ❑ Parents / guardians
- ❑ PSNI (CSIO)
- ❑ SEELB/CCMS as appropriate
- ❑ Chairperson initially and subsequently the Board of Governors
- ❑ The Education Welfare Officer
- ❑ No media statements, only the Principal should do this
- ❑ Other pupils, parents and staff are only told on a need-to-know basis

A pastoral / disciplinary response needs to be made by the school, balancing the need for compassion and the pupil's welfare with the need to send a clear message about illegal actions and behaviour and the impact on the school community.