



The De Montfort School

UNLOCKING YOUR CHILD'S POTENTIAL

Drugs Policy

Agreed by Governing Body: 11.10.16.
Reviewed by Governing Body: 20.09.17.

The De Montfort School

DRUGS POLICY

“Drug misuse” is defined as the non-medical use of drugs that are only intended for use in medical treatment, and the use of drugs that have no accepted medical purpose. Such drugs are controlled under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 and include opiates such as heroin, stimulants such as cocaine, amphetamines and Ecstasy, tranquillisers, hallucinogens such as LSD and cannabis.

The De Montfort School supports the view that:

“Drug misuse can result in extremely serious problems for individuals, families and communities. All schools have an important role to play in enabling children and young people to make responsible and healthy decisions” [1]

The school therefore believes that Drug Education is essential if students are to be given an adequate preparation for life and it also believes that it is important for staff, pupils and parents to have clear guidelines in the event of any incident of drug misuse.

1. Drugs Education

The aim of the drug education programme is to give students the knowledge, skills and attitudes to appreciate the benefits of a healthy lifestyle, to understand the dangers inherent in drug misuse and to relate this knowledge to their own actions both now and in their future lives. In dealing with the issue of drugs, the school is concerned with the use and abuse of legal drugs, [alcohol, smoking, solvents] as well as the misuse of drugs controlled under the 1971 Act. The policy and curriculum are updated with reference to the ‘Drugs – Guidance for Schools 2004’ (ref 0092/2004).

Drugs education objectives:

- To increase knowledge and understanding of drugs and their effects by providing accurate information
- To improve self-knowledge, particularly in terms of risk taking
- To promote positive attitudes towards healthy lifestyles; to challenge and try to modify these when they may lead to behaviour harmful to health
- To promote a sense of responsibility towards the use of drugs
- To develop social skills such as making informed choices and resisting unhelpful pressures from peers and from advertising
- To enable young people to identify sources of appropriate support
- To widen understanding about related health and social issues such as sexual health and crime

The programme will reflect the views and needs of pupils so that it is age/needs appropriate and demonstrates year on year progression. It will be based on the requirements of the National Curriculum, in particular science, the PSHE framework and citizenship. It will be delivered within a whole school approach through science lessons, PSHE and dedicated PDD time.

The teaching of drug education will:

- Provide opportunities for active learning
- Give accurate and unbiased information
- Allow for the expression and consideration of a range of attitudes and values
- Offer opportunities for discussion and reflection

Organisation

Drugs Education takes place in 2 ways. In Years 7 & 8 it is taught in modules in the PSHE programme. In Years 9, 10, 11 there is coverage in PDD sessions/small group sessions. There is also some cross curricular coverage of drug misuse in:

- Key stage 3 Science [the abuse of alcohol, solvents and other drugs and their effects on health, how smoking affects lung structure and gas exchange].
- Key stage 4 Science [the effects of solvents, alcohol, tobacco and other drugs on body functions].

The opportunity to discuss drug related issues also occurs in English, RE, Geography, PE and Drama.

Use of outside speakers

All Year 9 students in small numbers receive Drugs Awareness Education from The Youth Service every week.

Parental involvement

Detailed information about the Drugs Education programme is available to parents on request.

2. The Management of drug-related incidents on school premises

[This section relates specifically to the misuse of drugs controlled under the 1971 Misuse of Drugs Act]

All schools needs to be aware of the prevalence of drugs and should have policies and procedures for dealing with drug related incidents.

There is close co-operation with the Police Service. April 2010 saw a search of the school by trained dogs and handlers to reassure parents, pupils and the community that the school takes the misuse of drugs and their possession seriously.

Signs of drug misuse

Teachers and non-teaching staff are informed about the warning signs which may indicate that a student is misusing drugs, and need to be aware of them in their dealings with students. In their daily rounds, caretakers should routinely check for any signs of drug misuse.

Teachers and non-teaching staff are aware of the need to be vigilant about drugs misuse and report concerns.

Managing Drug-related Incidents at School

The first priority will always be for the safety of all, dealing with medical emergencies and securing appropriate help.

The school will employ a range of responses, so that the needs of the individual are balanced against those of the wider community. The precise response will be determined after a full and careful investigation into the exact nature of the incident. Pupils will be aware of the range of possible responses and the effect those responses may have on them.

Support for pupils, as appropriate, will be a priority, including referrals to agencies such as SPACE, Worcestershire's multi-agency substance misuse service for young people. Students may also be signposted to the website Frank. In such cases careful attention will be given to issues of confidentiality, in line with the school's confidentiality policy.

The school nurse will be able to give advice regarding all health-related matters.

The school will normally involve the pupil's parents/carers, unless this would jeopardise the pupil's safety.

A full record will be made of every incident and appropriate sanctions issued – see behaviour policy.

Dealing with an incident of drug overdose

A suspected drug overdose [including acute intoxication], should be treated in the same way as any medical emergency. A trained first aider should be summoned if possible, and the emergency services alerted as soon as possible. The Headteacher must be notified and every attempt should be made to contact the student's parents. Outside school incidents of drug overdose are reported to the school through School Health.

Responding to an incident of drug use or selling on school premises

A teacher who suspects or is informed of drug misuse in school must inform the Headteacher and Deputy Head immediately. The sensitive nature of any investigation means that it must be undertaken by senior staff.

The DfES circular 4/95 1448-2005 Drug Prevention and Schools states that:

“Headteachers must retain the responsibilities for deciding how to respond to particular incidents, taking account of factors such as the age of the pupil concerned, whether the incident involved one pupil or a group of pupils and whether there is evidence of particular peer group pressure. The fact that certain behaviour could constitute a violation of the criminal law should not, in itself, be taken as automatically leading to the exclusion of a pupil”.

DfEE circular 10/99 also highlights the need to balance firm and understood sanctions with concern that the individual excluded is not further exposed to drugs (*Para.6.9,33*).

The School views *drug taking* on school premises as a very serious offence. Where there is clear evidence of such an incident taking place, the Headteacher will normally exclude the student concerned. However, the Headteacher will consider each case on its merits and the previous behaviour may be taken into account in deciding whether such an exclusion is a permanent one. The pastoral care and support of the individual student concerned will need to be balanced against the importance of clearly signalling the school's disapproval of drug misuse, and of protecting other students in the school. If a student is excluded on a temporary basis, the school will work with parents and other agencies to ensure support and counselling for the student concerned.

Discovery of Suspected Substances on School Premises

Staff discovering substances which are suspected of being harmful, illegal or requiring further investigation should observe the following guidance:

- Consider the possible need for first aid and follow the school's first aid procedures
- If possible, remove the suspected substance from the location in the presence of a witness. If there is no witness, do not delay, remove the substance and take it to the headteacher, or member of staff authorised to deputise
- If a pupil is, or is thought to be, in possession of a suspect substance do not attempt to search the pupil. You may ask the pupil to voluntarily empty his or her pockets, bag, desk or locker with a witness present. You may not forcibly detain the pupil
- Do not retain the substance on your person or in a place of safekeeping for a later time, since to do this could place you at risk
- Record the time, place and circumstances of the discovery and also record the details of what was found, but do not investigate the substance
- Where drug-related paraphernalia, such as needles and syringes, is discovered, do not attempt to handle this. It should be collected by the appropriate personnel in accordance with health and safety guidelines. The headteacher must ensure that materials are placed in a secure container to await proper collection
- No entry of an incident should be made on the pupil's record until the suspected substance is confirmed by the police as being a controlled substance. If the substance is not a controlled substance, then the entry on the pupil's record will be determined by the headteacher
- There is no legal obligation to inform the police, although they may be able to give relevant support and advice. Once the nature of the substance is confirmed it is legally acceptable to dispose of the substance, typically by flushing down the lavatory. This should be witnessed and recorded
- Where a substance is confirmed as being controlled, it is the responsibility of the headteacher to notify the parents/carers concerned, and, if necessary, to consider further action, including notifying the chair of governors
- In circumstances where it is possible that the school premises are being used for illegal drug use, all reasonable steps must be taken to prevent this, in order to avoid contravening the law

Detailed guidance to staff regarding discovery of substances can be found in *Managing Drug-related Incidents: Guidance for Worcestershire Schools*, (Worcestershire Healthy Schools, 2007).

The *selling of drugs* on the school premises is considered to be an extremely serious offence which endangers both those directly involved and other students in the school. The Headteacher will consider each case on its merits but will normally seek permanent exclusion of a student where there is clear evidence of involvement in selling drugs to other students. The student and his/her parent will have the usual rights of appeal and representation under the school's published exclusion policy. The school will want to ensure that the excluded student has access to professional support and advice from health and social services.

The school takes note of the advice in DfE Circular 4/95 that:

"Although there is no statutory requirement to do so, the Secretary of State would expect the police to be informed when illegal drugs are found on a pupil or on school premises".

and that:

"The law permits school staff to take temporary possession of a substance of being a controlled drug for the purposes of protecting a pupil from harm and from committing the offence of possession. They should hand the substance to the police who will be able to identify whether it is an illegal drug; school staff should not attempt to analyse or taste an unidentified substance."

Confidentiality

Where a student discloses to a teacher that he or she is taking drugs, the teacher should make clear to the student that he or she can offer no guarantee of confidentiality given the seriousness of drug misuse. A teacher might point to sources of confidential information and advice and to treatment and rehabilitation services to help those who are misusing illegal drugs to stop. However, if there is clear evidence that the drug misuse is taking place on school premises, the teacher also has a duty to the school to act in line with the school's policy on the subject.

Liaison with the police and other agencies

The school has good links with the police and other agencies and would want to work closely with all relevant bodies to ensure that the school's policy on Drug Misuse is effective.

Whole School Responsibilities:

- Mr S Weston - Snr Deputy Head, Inclusion
- Mrs F Lovecy - Deputy Headteacher Safeguarding
- Mr G Nichols - Headteacher (disciplinary action related to drug abuse).

Consultation

This policy is reviewed on a regular basis and amended as appropriate.