

MERE SCHOOL

Drug Policy

At Mere School we try to nurture a climate where all pupils will want to learn. Through the curriculum we undertake to promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of all pupils at our school to prepare them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. We do this through reinforcing positive behaviour and providing a caring response to the learning needs of the pupils. We recognise that though drugs may not always be harmful, all carry the potential for harm. Safety and effective management therefore underpin both the school's drug education and its response to any incidents.

When dealing with young children it is imperative that should a drug related issue arise, every member of staff is confident and able to follow an agreed practice.

The term 'drug' refers to illicit substances, prescribed and over the counter medicines, glue, tobacco, alcohol, and anything seen as potentially harmful to a child.

This policy has been written with reference to national guidelines and will be reviewed according to our policy review cycle or sooner if required. It will be reviewed by the staff and observations from governors, parents and pupils.

Aims

- To safeguard the health and well-being of all pupils at all times.
- To consider all drugs, legal, medicinal and illegal and to respond constructively to the issues raised by their availability and use in society.
- To outline the aims and organisation of the school drug education programme.

School Drug Co-ordinator

It is our policy to have a named School Drug Co-ordinator, with an agreed task specification, which will be reviewed in the light of experience. Our School Drug Co-ordinator will be Mrs Liz West. She will act as the school's central reference point for all matters related to drugs. Principal functions will be to oversee drug education, attend to training and resourcing needs, co-ordinate the school's management of situations involving unauthorised drugs of any kind, and ensure adequate communication at all levels.

Drug Education

All pupils have an entitlement to drug education through the provision of the Science curriculum and through PSHE and Citizenship. Our purpose is to give our pupils the knowledge, skills and attitudes to appreciate the benefits of a healthy lifestyle and to relate these to their own actions both now and in their future lives.

There is an emphasis on building and maintaining self-esteem, and upon the unique value of each individual pupil. We also aim to develop the confidence, the skills and the sense of personal responsibility of each pupil to manage their own behaviour. We move progressively from a greater emphasis on protecting pupils' safety at the bottom of the school, to fostering their own responsible behaviour by the time they leave us.

Within the context of PSHE provision, our drug education plans to provide opportunities for the pupils to:

- take responsibility.
- feel positive about themselves.
- participate.
- make real choices and decisions.
- meet and talk with people.

- develop relationships.
- consider some simple social and moral dilemmas arising from different aspects of life.
- ask for help.

Parental Involvement

Our school will aim to share responsibility for the education of pupils with parents, who will be kept informed and involved through newsletters, awareness raising evenings and individual discussions when appropriate.

Support: Outside Speakers and Visitors

Our school works with the following agencies to provide relevant information and co-ordinated support: LEA school drugs adviser, police liaison officer, school nurse, health promotion specialist, Wiltshire's Drug and Alcohol Action Team. We are always careful to negotiate the role of visitors/speakers so that their contribution fits our needs and they are clear of the school's approach to drug education. The class teacher is always present when visitors are working with our pupils.

Drugs on School Premises, Drug Incidents

The parents and pupils at Mere School are made aware of the school's policy on alcohol, smoking, solvents, illegal drugs and medicines.

Medicines

The school has a policy for the administration of medicines that must be followed for everyone's safety.

Medicines are not to be kept on the school premises for pupils except for the following:

- should any child need regular medicine for asthma, the inhalers are kept by the class teacher for the children to administer themselves.

Alcohol

Alcohol is not permitted on the school premises. The Governors may grant special permission for social functions with parents, school fairs etc. Parents/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.

Smoking

The school is a non smoking building at all times.

Illegal Drugs

All illegal drugs are forbidden on the school premises.

Solvents

The head teacher is responsible for the ordering of products in the school to ensure they are solvent-free, wherever possible, and that potentially harmful substances are stored safely. Children should never come in direct contact with solvents in school. The cleaning fluids are under lock and key at all times.

Drug Incidents

We agree to a clear pathway in response to potential drug incidents on the premises.

The drug incidents can be either:

- 1 rumours of parents or pupils using drugs.
- 2 reports of parents or pupils using drugs.
- 3 use of drugs by pupils on school premises and residential/day visits.
- 4 pupils bringing drugs into school.
- 5 drug dealing on school premises and in school vicinity.
- 6 pupils disclosing about their drug use.
- 7 how medicines are be administered.

In the case of the above incidents reference will be made to the advice given in the booklet 'Dealing with Substance Related Incidents in Schools' and outlined in the pathway in 'Managing and Making Policy for Drug-Related Incidents in Schools'.

We will consider the following points in any planned course of action:

- the management of a drug incident should normally be co-ordinated through the schools drug co-ordinator and reported to the headteacher.
- the headteacher will usually inform the police when illegal drugs are found on a pupil or on the premises, although there is no legal obligation to do this, and with advice from the LEA Press Office and Legal Department will handle any media involvement. The LEA will be informed as soon as possible.
- all drug incidents and responses must be recorded within 24 hours.
- any substances or drug paraphernalia such as discarded syringes will be handled and disposed of safely and with due regard to the law.
- the situation will be assessed and parents/carers informed as appropriate.
- when talking with any pupil(s) about a drug related incident, the member of staff needs to be aware that the purpose is to confirm or reject suspicions or allegations sufficiently to decide on further action, and not to necessarily carry out a police investigation.
- the school's response to a child who is involved with drugs is to balance with the needs of that child and the health and safety of other pupils.
- appropriate support will be provided – agreeing a pastoral support programme, access to counselling, taking disciplinary action involving external agencies as appropriate, ie social services, police.

Autumn Term 2007

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