

# Ballyholme Primary School



## Drugs Education Policy

**Name of Designated Teacher for Drugs**

Miss R Taylor

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Chair of Governors**\_\_\_\_\_

**Date of Review**\_\_\_\_\_

# Contents

## Introduction

- Rationale
- Definitions
- Ethos
- Aims and Objectives

## Development and Implementation

- Roles and Responsibilities
- Training and Information
- Drug Education Programme
- Procedures for dealing with drug-related incidents
- Procedures for the administration of prescribed medication
- Monitoring and Evaluation
- Communication and Dissemination of policy
- Appendix
  - Form for reporting suspected guidelines drug related incidents

## **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.

## **Ethos**

In Ballyholme Primary school the welfare and safety of our pupils is paramount. We feel that our drugs education programme will promote that sense of well-being, as well as the safety and security of the pupils within our school.

This policy is based on the guidance provided by the Department of Education for Northern Ireland in the following documents:

- DE Circular 2015/23 Drugs Guidance
- CEA Drugs Guidance for Schools in Northern Ireland (Revised Edition 2015)

Ballyholme Primary School promotes the rights of the child, based on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of a Child. This policy takes into account Article 3 which states:

**'The best interests of the child must be a top priority in everything we do'**

## Definitions

For the purpose of this policy the terms **drug** and **substance** will include any product 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, tobacco and tobacco related products including nicotine replacement therapy and electronic cigarettes;
- “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;
- new psychoactive substances (NPS), formerly known as legal highs, which contain one or more chemical substances that produce similar effects to illegal drugs and are sold as incense, salts or plant food marked ‘not for human consumption’
- 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.

## 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**

- 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-ordinating 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
  - \* Board of Governors
  - \* Designated Officer in EA
  - \* 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 EA 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 on the school website 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.

### **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 information/training to support the full implementation of this policy including the delivery of the drug education programme.

### **Drugs Education in the Curriculum**

The drugs education programme in Ballyholme Primary School will be included in teachers' planning and will form part of the curricular area of Personal Development and Mutual understanding (PDMU). It will also be supported by the pastoral care programme and policy throughout the school and will link with other subject areas such as Religious Educations, health education and PE. When available, the school will use the PSNI to deliver specialised drugs education lessons.

The programme is a preventative one and is pupil centred, delivered through active learning. The aims of the programme are:

- To promote positive attitudes towards personal health:
- To inform pupils of the effects of drug use and abuse:
- To help pupils acquire skills to resist peer pressure:
- To build up the self-esteem of pupils;
- To help pupils acquire decision making and problem solving skills that will empower them to take responsibility for their own health and safety.

### **Responses in the Event of a Suspected Drugs-related Incident**

Dealing with a suspected incident requires extreme sensitivity on the part of all those involved. All staff should be aware of the procedures for:

- Dealing with substances found on the school premises;

- Finding / suspecting a pupil / adult of processing / distributing an illegal substance;
- Pupils suspected of having taken drugs in school.

These procedures are outlined in the. *'CEA Drugs Guidance for Schools in Northern Ireland (Revised Edition 2015) Section 3: Responding to Drug-related Incidents'*.

## **Illness, Unusual or Uncharacteristic Behaviour**

Young people's behaviour may be unpredictable and bizarre for many reasons during their time at school. Changes in behaviour may indicate a range of difficulties and problems and may be related to a medical condition, rather than substance misuse. It is, however, important to note that intoxication, physical collapse or unconsciousness can also result from initial experiment with drugs.

Staff should bring any indications of illness, unusual or uncharacteristic behaviour because of suspected substance abuse to the attention of the designated teacher for drugs. They should not make any judgement until they have determined the circumstances surrounding the incident. Where staff believe a pupil may have taken a substance they suspect is a drug, they should seek medical assistance immediately after following the recommended emergency procedures. The school must inform parents and the PSNI.

## **Taking Possession of a Suspected Controlled Drug and / or Associated Paraphernalia**

The law permits school staff to take temporary possession of a substance suspected of being a controlled drug to protect a pupil from harm and prevent the pupils committing the offence of possession. The teacher should, using appropriate safety precautions, take the suspected substance and any associated equipment and /or paraphernalia to the designated teacher for drugs as soon as possible. They should arrange for its safe storage until the school can hand it over to the PSNI officer to identify whether it is a controlled substance. School staff should not attempt to analyse or taste an unidentified substance. An adult witness should be present when staff confiscate the substance and the school should keep a record of the details using the school's Drug Incident Report form.

## **An Allegation of a Suspected Controlled Drug-related Incident**

### **Carrying Out a Search**

If the designated teacher for drugs receives an allegation of possession, he may need to search a pupil's desk or locker, if he has cause to believe it contains unlawful items, including controlled drugs. However, teachers cannot search personal belongings in the desk or locker without consent. Staff should only search the pupil's personal belongings, including school bag, coat and other items with the pupil's



consent. Staff should carry out this search in the presence of the pupil and another adult witness.

If the school suspects pupils of concealing controlled drugs on their person or in their personal belongings, staff should make every effort to encourage them to produce these substances voluntarily. Staff should ask pupils to turn out their pockets or schoolbags. If the pupils refuse, staff should contact their parents or carers and the PSNI to deal with the situation. ***A member of staff should never carry out a physical search of a pupil, unless there is compelling evidence that the pupil has committed an offence.*** If staff recover a substance or object that they suspect has a connection with drugs, they should take possession of it and make a full record using the schools' Drug Incident Report Form.

## **Possession, Possession with Intent to Supply and Supply of Controlled Drugs**

Schools must be aware that pupil involvement in suspected controlled drug-related incidents may take several forms. These could include:

- Possession:
- Possession with intent to supply; and / or
- The supply of controlled drugs.

It is illegal for pupils to be in possession of a controlled drug. If a member of staff comes across a pupil(s) in possession of what they believe or suspect to be a controlled drug, they should immediately attempt to take possession of the substance and escort the pupil(s) to the designated teacher for drugs who will deal with the incident as outlined in the school policy.

## **Staff Policy on Smoking and Alcohol**

Ballyholme Primary School is a smoke (including e-cigarettes) and alcohol free zone. For further information, refer to the Health and Safety Executive's website ([www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk)).

## **Confidentiality**

Should a pupil reveal any personal drugs information, which puts them or any other pupil at risk, this must be passed on to the designated teacher / principal. Confidentiality can never be guaranteed, as we are responsible for all of the pupils in our school.

## **Disciplinary / Pastoral Care Responses**

The principal will retain responsibility for deciding how to respond to a particular incident and will take into account factors such as:

- The age of the pupil
- Does the pupil admit or deny the allegations?
- Is this the first or subsequent offence?
- Is the drug legal or illegal?
- Quantity of the drug involved?
- What was the pupil's motivation?
- Does the pupil know and understand the school policy and school rules?
- Where does the incident appear on a scale from possession of a small quantity to persistent supply?
- If illegal supply is suspected, how much was supplied and was the pupil coerced to buy for others, or is there evidence of organised or habitual supply?

At all times the needs of individual pupils will be considered and appropriate intervention and support mechanisms will be put into place. Any sanction imposed will be justifiable in terms of:

- The seriousness of the incident;
- The identified needs of the pupil and the community;
- Consistency with published school rules;
- Consistency with disciplinary actions for breaches of the school rules (theft, violence and bullying).

## **Procedures for Using Outside Agencies**

Any visitor providing an input into the drugs education programmes will be given a copy of the 'Drugs Policy'. They will have a clear set of aims and objectives as well as a lesson plan. The teacher will view these to ensure they are appropriate and will remain in class with the visitor.

## **Guidance for Confiscation and Storage of Harmful Substances**

Any confiscated drugs or drug-related items should be given to the principal for storage in a locked cabinet in the principal's office and then given to the PSNI.

## **Guidance on the Administration of Medication in School**

Please refer to the school policy on the Administrations of Medications.

Medication will only be given on school trips and / or residential if the parent / carer has signed a consent form. If the child needs any other medication, he/she will be taken to the nearest hospital.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

This policy will be reviewed every two years and / or after any drug related or suspected drug related incident to see if there are any improvements to be made.