



Policy on Drugs

Why Drug Education?

The purpose of a drug education programme is to provide opportunities for children to acquire knowledge, understand and skills that enable them to consider the effects of drugs and other substances on themselves and others. Drug education is integrated into the area of learning – Personal Social and Emotional Development.

This policy has been written in accordance with the Statutory Requirements contained within Drugs Guidance for Schools in Northern Ireland 2004 produced by the Northern Ireland Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA).

Aims and Objectives

At St. Teresa's Nursery School we aim to equip children with the knowledge, understanding and skills that enable them to make choices that lead to a healthy lifestyle. Our drugs education programme enables children to become more confident and responsible young people. We teach children about the dangers to health posed by inappropriate or accidental use of medical drugs, and we aim to equip them with the social skills that enable them to make informed, moral and social decisions as they get older.

The main objectives of our drug education programme are:

- To provide children with some knowledge and understanding about the harmful effects drugs can have on people's lives;
- To help children become more self-confident so that they are able to make sensible and informed decisions about their lives;
- To let children know what they should do if they come across drugs, syringes or people misusing drugs;
- To help children respect their own bodies and in so doing reduce the likelihood that they will be persuaded to become involved in drug abuse in later life.

Definition

'A drug is any substance which, when taken has the effect of altering the way a person behaves, feels, sees or thinks.' Drugs include:

- Alcohol and tobacco;
- Over the counter medicines such as paracetamol;
- Prescribed drugs such as antibiotics;
- Volatile substances such as glues and aerosols;
- Illegal drugs such as cannabis

Illegal and other unauthorised substances are not acceptable within the school premises including the playground. Prescribed drugs should only be brought onto the premises with the permission of the Principal and should only be administered by parents or the Principal. All bottles or boxes should be clearly labelled with the child's name.

Curriculum

Within the Nursery curriculum children will have the opportunity to discuss how medicines help us to stay healthy and visiting the doctor/hospital. Simple rules associated with medicines may be discussed highlighting the importance of adults giving medicine to children. Harmful substances that may be found at home including bleach may be identified as dangerous to drink. Children will be encouraged to make informed choices regarding taking medicines or harmful substances.

Organisation

At St. Teresa's Nursery School we regard health education as a whole school issue, and we believe that opportunities to teach about the importance of a healthy lifestyle occur throughout the curriculum. Drug education should not be seen as an isolated topic, but as a continuous process that involves the development of skills and attitudes enabling children to make informed choices. Effective drug education should take account of not only the child, but also the family, peer groups and wider community. A strong partnership between the school, outside agencies and parents needs to be promoted.

The majority of drug education is delivered through the Area of Learning - Personal Social and Emotional Development. The class teacher will use Circle Time sessions, and the use of outside visitors such as the school nurse as appropriate to enhance this topic. Assessment is carried out using success criteria from each session that has been built into the planning. Teachers will evaluate the drug education programme to inform future planning.

PROCEDURES FOR HANDLING AND REPORTING INCIDENTS

A suspected drug related incident is described as:

- Suspect drugs or paraphernalia found on the school premises
- A pupil suspected of being in possession of drugs
- A pupil found to be in possession of drugs
- A pupil suspected of being under the influence of drugs

When an incident occurs the member of staff involved should:

- Make the situation safe.
- Send for support.
- Administer first aid if necessary.



- If a drug is found, gloves should be used and it should be secured in a safe place until dealt with by the police.
- Report the incident.

The incident will be in the first incidence reported to the designated teacher and then to the Principal, who will contact the Community and Schools Involvement officer (CSIO) from the police in this area. The parents will also be contacted and made aware of the situation. The incident will be recorded by the teacher involved and by the designated teacher. A 'record of action' form will be filled out (see Appendix 2&3). One copy will be sent to the Education Authority's designated officer for Drugs Education and a copy will be retained for the school's confidential file. The Board of Governors will also be informed.

All staff are made aware of the procedure, which follow the guidelines issued by CCEA Drugs: Guidance for Schools in Northern Ireland 2004.

School staff are not permitted to search pupils' clothing or possessions. Staff may search **school property** such as lockers or desks. However, personal belongings within a desk or a locker cannot be searched without consent. **A search of pupils' personal belongings, including school bag, coat or other items should only be made with the pupils' consent.** Such a search should be made in presence of the pupil and another adult witness. It is acceptable to ask the pupil to empty pockets and school bags.

Where alcohol, tobacco, medicines, matches, lighters or any illegal drugs are discovered on the school premises the standard procedure will always be to confiscate and either to destroy or store in a specified location in the presence of another adult. Only legal drugs will be returned to parents.

Staff will be cautious about discharging a child to the care of an intoxicated parent/carer, particularly when the parent/carer intends to drive the child home. The Principal, will suggest an alternative arrangement for example asking another parent/carer to accompany the child home. Where the behaviour of an intoxicated parent/carer becomes abusive or violent, the Principal will consider whether the circumstances are serious enough to invoke child protection procedures or involvement of the police.

If any drug related incidents should occur, the safety and well being of the child will always be the overriding concern. Each incident will be considered taking into account the circumstances of the individual and the parents. Police and other appropriate agencies will be informed according to the needs of the individual concerned.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

For the purposes of this policy, an emergency is considered to be either:

- A situation in which a pupil or staff are in danger, or



- A sequence of events which require urgent attention.
- A flow chart for dealing with emergencies is contained in Appendix 1 of this policy.
- Emergency first aid and procedures carried out as per First Aid guidelines.

Confidentiality

As a general rule a child's confidentiality is maintained in case of disclosure of illegal drug use.

Child Protection

St. Teresa's Nursery School has a separate Child Protection Policy. Effective drug education may bring about disclosures of child protection issues and staff should be aware of the procedures for reporting their concerns.

Dissemination

The Drug Education Policy is accessible to all staff members, governors and parents/ carers. Copies are available on the school's website and from the school office on request.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The school drugs education policy is reviewed annually to reflect changing circumstances and trends in drug use. The programmes of study for drugs education are continually reviewed and any changes deemed necessary are implemented.

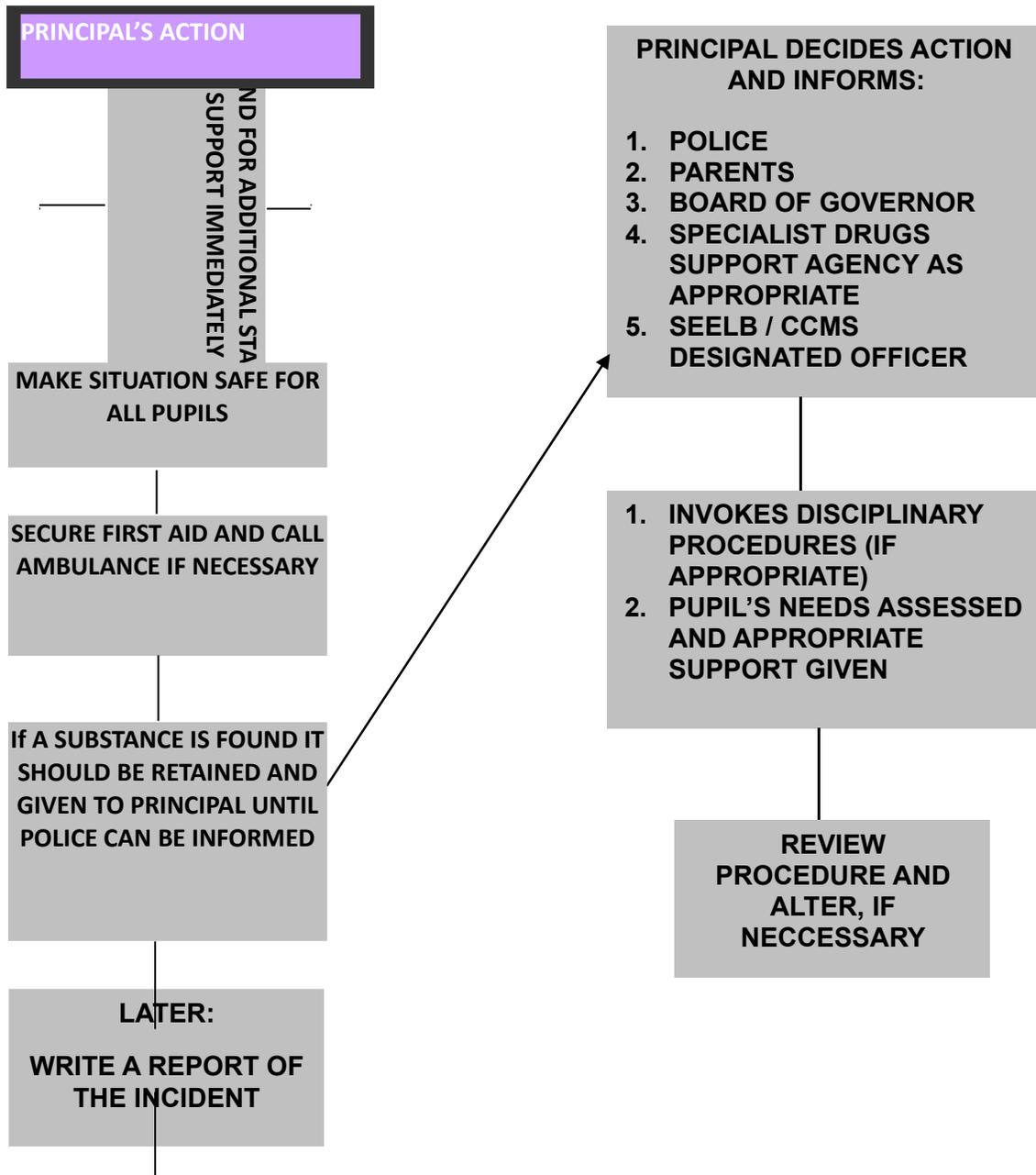
Appendix 1

TEACHER'S ACTION

**TEACHERS
ASSESSES SITUATION
AND DECIDES
ACTION, IF URGENT**



**IF PROBLEM NOT
URGENT, DISCUSS WITH
DESIGNATED TEACHER
FOR DRUGS (PRINCIPAL)**



Appendix 3

1. Name of Pupil / Young person _____ DOB _____ Address _____ School / Youth Club _____
2. Date of Incident _____ Reported by _____ Time of Incident _____ Location of Incident _____
3. First Aid given YES / NO Administered by _____ Ambulance/Doctor Called YES / NO Time of Call _____ Drug Involved (if known) _____ Sample Found YES / NO
4. Parent Informed YES / NO Date _____ Time _____ By whom _____
5. Where sample retained _____ or Date Sample Destroyed _____ Time _____ Witnessed by _____
6. Police Informed YES / NO Date _____ Time _____ By _____ Name of Station / Officer _____
7. EA Belfast Drug Education Officer Informed YES / NO Date _____ Time _____ By whom _____
8. Form completed by _____ Date _____ Position _____