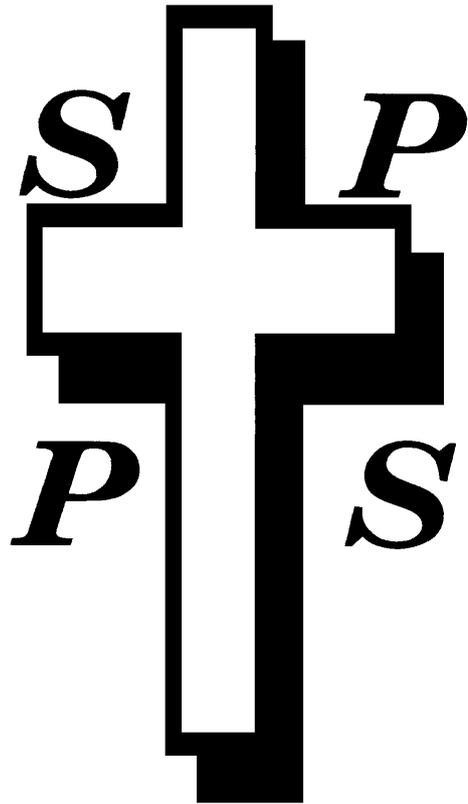


St Patrick's PS



Drugs Policy

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Rationale

For the purpose of this document the term 'drugs' includes tobacco, electronic cigarettes, alcohol, over the counter and prescribed medication, volatile substances, new psychoactive substances and controlled drugs. St Patrick's Primary 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 St Patrick's Primary School has a vital preventative role to play in combating the misuse of drugs by young people and we therefore include a Drug Education Programme in our curriculum.

St Patrick's Primary 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 several groups and agencies which must play a part in the education of young people and we should make use of their expertise where possible in the delivery of the programme.

“There is a public perception that drug misuse is mainly an issue in disadvantaged inner-city areas The misuse of drugs and other potentially harmful substances is just as much an issue in rural areas and affluent communities and educationally successful young people are just as likely to put themselves at risk as low attainers.” (DENI: Drugs: Guidance for Schools 2004/9)

All staff (teaching and non-teaching) should familiarise themselves with the information included in this policy.

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

Definitions

For the purpose of this document and in line with the guidance issued to all schools by the Department of Education (Drugs: Guidance for Schools. Circular 2004/9) 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.

For the educative purposes of this policy examples of drugs include:

- “over-the-counter” medicines, such as paracetamol.
- Alcohol, tobacco and e cigarettes
- Prescribed drugs, such as antibiotics, tranquillisers, inhalers and Ritalin.
- Volatile substances, such as correcting fluids/thinners, gas lighter fuel, aerosols, glues and petrol.
- Controlled drugs, such as cannabis, LSD, Ecstasy,
- Other substances such as amyl/butyl nitrite ('poppers') new psychoactive substances and unprocessed magic mushrooms.

What is Drugs Paraphernalia?

You may find: -

- Drugs themselves
- Cigarette papers
- Pipes, buckets, Bongs and plastic bottles
- 'Wraps', (square folds of paper which contained powder)
- Cling film, foil and small plastic bags to hold small quantities of drugs

What is a drug related incident?

A drug-related incident includes: -

- Drug-related litter on or near school premises
- Suspicion or allegations made in or out of school
- Disclosure of drug misuse taking place
- Pupils displaying symptoms of drug misuse
- Pupils or adults with drugs on school premises
- Pupils or adults taking drugs on school premises
- Pupils or adults selling drugs on school premises
- Any of the above whilst on school transport, a school trip, a school minibus or authorised school related activities.

Ethos

We aim to provide an environment where:

1. Each child is developing his/her full potential intellectually, creatively, physically, emotionally, socially, morally and spiritually in a secure, happy and caring atmosphere.
2. Each person is valued and respected and encouraged to value and respect all others.
3. We will develop a sense of belonging in, and responsibility for, our school and the wider community.

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 procedures are sensitively and consistently applied in all situations.

- To empower teaching staff through appropriate training and support to develop and deliver an effective drugs education programme.
- To provide a drugs 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.

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 Drugs Education Programme

In addition to the above:

- Deliver the school's drugs 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-ordinating the delivery of the drugs education programme.
- Co-ordinate training and induction of all staff in the procedures for dealing with incidents of suspected drug misuse.
- Be responsible for co-ordinating the school's procedures for dealing with incidents of suspected drug misuse.
- Determine the circumstances surrounding the incident
- Take possession of any substance or paraphernalia, take immediate appropriate action. Lock items safely away.
- Complete a suspected incident report form and forward to Principal – see appendix at back of this policy-drugs related incident report form
- Ensuring 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 wellbeing 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 EA
- Other staff, pupils and parents informed within the confines of confidentiality/need to know basis
- Inform teacher responsible for child protection if a procedure is invoked
- 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 copies of the reports are submitted to the Chair of the board of Governors and the designated officer within the EA as appropriate.
- Review procedures and amend, if necessary.

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.
- It is recommended that there should be a designated Governor to work with the Principal and designated teacher for drugs relation to drug related issues.

Parents/Guardians

- Support your son/daughter if they have become involved with drugs.
- 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 drugs education programme.

The Caretaker

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

A Summary of Managing Incident- roles/responsibilities is included in the appendices at the back of this document. (DENI: Drugs: Guidance for Schools in Northern Ireland)

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. This will include training provided by EA and in-school training provided by the school's pastoral care team.

The Drugs Education Programme

The drugs education programme in St Patrick's Primary School is just one part of the whole school response to drug use/misuse. The programme provides opportunities for pupils to:

- Make informed and responsible choices within the context of a healthy lifestyle, by
- Acquiring knowledge and understanding in relation to drug use/misuse.
- Identifying values and attitudes in relation to drug use/misuse.
- Developing skills to enable them to consider the effects of drugs on themselves and others.

We want to develop the pupils' self-esteem and promote positive attitudes in their relationships with others. We want to help pupils develop the skills necessary to assert themselves confidently and resist negative pressures and influences.

The programme is delivered throughout every class in the school in line with the Northern Ireland Curriculum

This will be appropriate to the pupils' age and understanding and will include:

- Information on how the body works
- Safe and unsafe substances used in home and school
- Medicines and tablets
- Personal likes and dislikes
- Being friends with others
- Learning how to say "NO"
- Dangers of use of tobacco / e-cigarettes
- Knowledge of controlled drugs and their danger to health
- Danger if drugs that are not controlled especially new psychoactive substances
- Respect and caring for oneself
- Respect and caring for others

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 St Patrick's Primary 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.

A Checklist for Handling Drug Incidents in EA Schools is included in the Appendices at the back of this policy

School rules in relation to drugs

- St Patrick's Primary School is a no-smoking building following the EA No-Smoking Policy.
- No alcohol will be consumed on the premises.
- No controlled drugs will be permitted on the premises.
- Volatile substances including cleaning materials are kept in secure locations.
- The use of Tippex, aerosols, and other potentially dangerous solvents by children, is discouraged.
- Members of staff using such solvents will ensure they are fit for purpose and used and stored with care. Health and Safety guidelines shall be followed. Refer to Health and Safety Policy.

Supporting Pupils with Medication Needs

An inclusive education policy means that most children are educated in their local mainstream schools. This may include children with complex medical needs, where several specific procedures may be required in relation to their physical health.

The school's duty of care to pupils requires that all staff act in 'loco parentis' to pupils entrusted to the school and any associated school related activities. Schools need to have in place effective management systems for medication in schools. This includes agreements about the responsibilities of parents, the school and staff to support individual pupils with medical needs.

This is not the remit of this policy, but members of the school community should be aware of any policies drawn up by the school, with reference to guidelines in relation to the administration of prescribed medication from the Departments of Education and Health and Social Services and Public Safety. The school will revise and review its procedures as more information and guidance is given to schools. At present the school will follow guidelines in the EA's Manuel – Health and Safety. Care should be taken with all medications in school,

and prescribed medication that is used outside of prescribed criteria should be handled 'as if' an illicit substance, as described under the misuse of drugs act.

Legal Responsibilities

The police will be notified in all instances where it has been alleged or suspected that a crime has been committed. Staff should consult appendix 1 Drugs: Guidance for Schools in Northern Ireland, in relation to the legal implications of being given information about a controlled drug or discovering a young person supplying a controlled drug. Contacts have been established and are maintained with the Community and Schools Involvement Officer in our local PSNI District Command Unit who has been consulted and advised us on the procedures to be followed.

'The police will always endeavour to handle all incidents promptly and with discretion, understanding and tact. A non-uniformed response will be made wherever possible, depending on the circumstances and the nature of the suspected offence.'

The local CSIO will 'be notified in every case where a pupil is found to have, or is suspected of having, controlled drugs in his/her possession, either on his/her person or in their belongings, or where controlled drugs are found on school premises.' Drugs: Guidance for Schools in Northern Ireland.

Procedures for responding to incidents of suspected drug use / misuse

All staff are aware of Appendix 2 'Recognising Signs of Drug Use'. Drugs: Guidance for Schools in Northern Ireland.

Staff will report any indications of illness/inappropriate behaviour because of suspected drug misuse to the designated teacher for drugs.

No judgement will be made until the circumstances surrounding the incident have been determined.

'Where it is considered that a pupil may have taken a substance suspected to be a drug, medical assistance should immediately be sought and the parents and police informed if appropriate.' Drugs: Guidance for Schools in Northern Ireland

As all drug related incidents will be treated on their own merits, the principal and Governors will take many factors into consideration when responding to a drug related incident.

At all times the needs of individual pupils will be considered, and appropriate interventions and mechanisms put in place.

Sanctions outlined in our Positive Behaviour Policy will be adhered to, in the event of a breach of school rules.

The sanctions imposed will be justified in terms of:

- the seriousness of the incident
- the needs of the pupil, other pupils, the school, and the community.
- Consistency with published school rules and expectations.
- Consistency with disciplinary action for breaches of other school rules.
- Suspension / exclusion will occur if the principal believes that it is in the best interests of the majority of pupils.
- Any suspension / exclusion will be considered and carried out within the terms of schemes prepared by EA

First Aid Procedures

Emergency first aid procedures will take part if someone is in difficulty as a result of misusing drugs.

Guidelines will be followed as outlined in Drugs: Guidance for schools in Northern Ireland. Section 2 page 40.

The school's position in relation to the issues of searching, detaining and confidentiality

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 possessions.

The teacher will pass on any suspected drugs and/or associated paraphernalia as soon as possible to be designated teacher who will arrange for its safe storage until it can be handed over to the local police to identify whether or not it is a controlled drug. An adult witness will be present when confiscations occur, and a record kept of the details.

'There may be cases where it is appropriate for the staff member to take immediate action. This may involve calling an ambulance, administering first aid, and / or contacting parents / guardians. In other cases, it may be more appropriate to approach the pupil quietly and establish the particular circumstances surrounding the incident and respond accordingly.'
Drugs: Guidance for Schools in Northern Ireland.

If the designated teacher for drugs receives an allegation of possession, it may be appropriate to search a pupil's desk if they have cause to believe it contains unlawful items, including controlled drugs.

Personal belongings will not normally be searched without a pupil's consent; however, the school retains the right to do so if authorised by a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

Where consent for a search of belongings is refused, and the school choose not to pursue their right to search, the pupil can be detained until the parent or police come, who do have the authority to search without consent.

If a search is made, it will be done in the presence of the pupil, a member of the S.L.T. and another responsible adult.

‘Where a pupil is suspected of concealing controlled drugs on his / her person or in their personal belongings, every effort will be made to secure the voluntary production of these substances, by asking them to turn out their pockets or schoolbags. If the pupil refuses, the parents / guardians should be contacted to deal with the situation.’ Drugs: Guidance for Schools in Northern Ireland

A member of staff will never carry out a physical search of a pupil.

‘It is illegal for a pupil to be in possession of a controlled drug. If a member of staff comes across a pupil in possession of what they believe to be a controlled drug, he / she should immediately attempt to take possession of the drug and escort the pupil to the designated teacher for drugs who will deal with the incident.’ Drugs: Guidance for Schools in Northern Ireland

Pupils will be invited to remain in school under the supervision of staff until parents / guardians and police arrive. If the pupil refuses to remain, the school cannot as a rule detain a pupil against their will.

Pupils in possession of legal drugs such as tobacco, alcohol and solvents will be dealt with under the school’s usual disciplinary procedures and parents will be notified.

It is not illegal for a pupil to possess or use other substances that are not controlled, for example alcohol, solvents, tobacco, tobacco-related products, electronic cigarettes, over the-counter medication or prescribed medication. Prescribed medication, however, may be considered a controlled substance if it has been prescribed for someone else. The teacher should make a preliminary enquiry to clarify who the medication is for. This will establish whether the school should contact the PSNI about the incident. Although some unknown substances may be new psychoactive substances, schools should treat all unknown substances as suspected controlled drugs

and respond accordingly.

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

The parent/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.

Pastoral Care

The school will make sure that parents are fully informed of school procedures in the event of suspected drug-related incidents. Every effort will be made to contact parents prior to police involvement.

There is a range of pastoral and disciplinary responses that may be put in place, and these are listed in our Positive Behaviour Policy.

Every incident will be dealt with on its own merit with the response matching the needs and seriousness of the situation.

Support strategies and/ or services

The school will endeavour to identify appropriate strategies and / or services to support children, staff, and families.

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, the Vice Principal.

No other member of staff should speak to the media.

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

Monitoring and Evaluation

St Patrick's Primary 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.

This policy and accompanying procedures will be reviewed every two years or after any incident to ensure best practice for all pupils, staff, and the whole school. Any necessary amendments will be made at this time.

The Designated Teacher for Drugs will lead the monitoring and evaluation procedures for this policy and the drugs education programme. After reviews changes shall be made as necessary.

This drugs policy is linked to other school policies of Positive Behaviour, Pastoral Care, Health and Safety, Child Protection, SENI.

Communication and Dissemination of Policy

A copy of the Drugs policy will be placed on the website and paper copies made available to those who request them.

Appendix 1

Drugs Incident Report Form

Name of Pupil _____ DOB _____

Address _____

Date of Incident _____ Reported by _____
Time of Incident _____

Location of Incident _____

First Aid given YES/NO Administered by _____

_____ Ambulance/Doctor Called

YES/NO Time of Call _____

Parent or carer informed YES/NO Date _____

Time _____

Where substance is retained _____

_____ or Date substance

destroyed or passed to PSNI _____ Time _____

PSNI informed YES/NO Date _____ Time _____

Education Authority or CCMS Designated Officer informed, as appropriate.

YES/NO Date _____ Time _____

Form completed by _____

Date _____ Position _____

Description of the Incident

Actions taken

Incident form completed by

Date _____

Appendix 2

Recognising Signs of Substance Use

What to look out for

If someone is having a bad time on drugs, they may be:

- anxious.
- tense.
- panicky.
- overheated and dehydrated.
- drowsy; or
- having difficulty with breathing.

What to do

The first things you should do are:

- stay calm.
- calm them and be reassuring, don't scare them or chase after them.
- try to find out what they've taken; and
- stay with them.

If they are anxious, tense, or panicky, you should:

- sit them in a quiet and calm room.
- keep them away from crowds, bright lights, and loud noises.
- tell them to take slow deep breaths; and
- stay with them.

If they are drowsy, you should:

- sit them in a quiet place and keep them awake.
- if they become unconscious or don't respond, call an ambulance immediately and place them in the recovery position.
- don't scare them, shout at them, or shock them.
- don't give them coffee to wake them up; and
- don't put them in a cold shower to 'wake them up'.

If they are unconscious or having difficulty breathing, you should:

- immediately phone for an ambulance.
- place them into the recovery position.
- stay with them until the ambulance arrives; and
- if you know what drug they've taken, tell the ambulance crew; this can help make sure that they get the right treatment straight away

Appendix 3

Checklist of Roles and Responsibilities

When Managing an Incident Individual staff members should

- assess the situation and decide the action.
- make the situation safe for all pupils and other members of staff, secure first aid and send for additional staff support, if necessary.
- carefully gather up any drugs and/or associated paraphernalia or evidence and pass all information or evidence to the designated teacher for drugs; and
- write a brief factual report of the incident and forward it to the designated teacher for drugs.

The designated teacher for drugs should

- respond to first aider's advice or recommendations
- inform parents or carers immediately, in the case of an emergency
- take possession of any substance(s) and associated paraphernalia found
- inform the principal
- take initial responsibility for pupil(s) involved in the suspected incident; and
- complete a Drugs Incident Report Form (see Appendix 1) and forward it to the principal.

The principal should

- determine the circumstances surrounding the incident
- ensure that the following people are informed: – parents or carers; – designated officer in the local PSNI area; – Board of Governors; and – designated officer in Education Authority or CCMS.
- consult and agree pastoral and disciplinary responses, including counselling services or support
- forward a copy of the Incident Report Form to the chairperson of the Board of Governors and the designated officer in the Education Authority or CCMS, if appropriate; and review procedures and amend, if necessary

Appendix 4

Emergency Procedures

This is the current best advice on what to do if someone is in difficulty because of misusing drugs.

- It is important to find out what they have taken as this could affect emergency aid, for example it will help the ambulance crew. Loosen clothing and call for an ambulance immediately.
- If the person has taken a depressant substance, for example solvents, alcohol, sleeping pills or painkillers, it is likely that they will be drowsy or unconscious. If the person is drowsy, it is important to try to keep them awake by talking to them or applying a cool damp cloth or towel to the back of their neck. You should not give them anything to eat or drink as this could lead to vomiting or choking.
- If they are or become unconscious, put them into the recovery position, clear their airway if blocked and keep checking on any changes to pulse and breathing rates.
- If they stop breathing, begin mouth-to-mouth resuscitation, starting with chest compressions. (If you have not been trained in CPR or are worried about giving mouth to-mouth resuscitation to a stranger, you can do chest compression-only (or hands-only) CPR). Stay with the person until the ambulance crew arrive and then tell them all the facts, including what the person has taken. This is very important as it could save his or her life.
- If the person has taken a stimulant, such as amphetamines (speed) or ecstasy, they may show various signs of distress. If the person is panicking, try to reassure them. It is important that they calm down and relax. Get them to breathe in and out, deeply, and slowly. Help them by counting aloud slowly. If they start to hyperventilate – that is they can't control their breathing – ask them to breathe in and out of a paper (not a plastic) bag, if there is one available.
- If the person has taken a hallucinogen, such as LSD, magic mushrooms, or cannabis in combination with ecstasy, they may become very anxious, distressed, and fearful.
- They may act in an unusual way. It is very important to reassure the person – tell them that you will look after them, that they are in no danger, that it is the effects of the substance and that these will soon wear off. You may want to take them to a quiet place, keep other people away and continue to reassure them. Just stay with them and talk calmly to them until the ambulance arrives