

St Matthew's CE (Aided) Primary School and Nursery Centre

Drugs and substance abuse policy

'To provide quality education for our children in a happy and secure Christian environment, encouraging pupils to achieve their full potential academically, spiritually and socially'.



Date of policy creation:	Persons responsible for creation:	Approved by:	Date of policy review:
13.09.2024	L. Burns	To be approved by the governing body	September 2025

This policy sets out St Matthew's approach to drug education and how we will respond to drug related incidents within the responsibilities of the school. This policy has links with the following school policies: PSHE, Health and Safety, The Administration of Medicines and Confidentiality.

To whom does the policy apply?

This policy applies to all of the following people when they are on the school premises: pupils, staff, parents/carers and visitors.

Breaches of this policy by any of those mentioned will be dealt with by the Head teacher/Governing body. This policy also applies to pupils and staff when off-site when staff act in loco parentis, this includes all educational visits. Although the school is not responsible for pupils travelling to and from school we will work with parents and / or other agencies should any problems be identified. The school is responsible for pupils during break and lunchtimes and this policy applies during these times. It also affects the use of school premises after normal school hours. Organisers of any after school events should be made aware of the policy and their responsibility to implement it.

Definition of a drug

For the purpose of this policy the following definition of a drug will apply: "a substance people take to change the way they feel, think or behave." This broad definition allows for the inclusion of all medication, legal/illegal drugs (including alcohol and tobacco), volatile substances (see also the school's Health and Safety Policy and COSHH Policy) and all over the counter and prescription medicines.

Overall Aims of the Policy

- To provide a framework for effective drug education;
- To provide systems for dealing with drug related incidents within the school environment;
- To ensure that the school's drug education programme reflects the aims and values of the school and its Governing Body.

Roles and responsibilities

Governors

As part of the governors' responsibilities for the management of the school, the governors have agreed this policy. They will continue their involvement through regular evaluation of it.

Head Teacher

The Head teacher takes overall responsibility for providing a safe place of work for all staff and pupils and as such takes responsibility for this policy, its implementation, and for liaison with the Governing Body, parents/carers, LA and appropriate outside agencies in the event of a drug related incident. Pupils who are suspected of being at risk from drugs will be supported and monitored with assistance from relevant agencies such as ESWs, Child Protection Officers, and police.

PSHE Coordinator

The co-ordinator together with the Head Teacher has a responsibility for supporting other members of staff in the implementation of this policy. The PSHE coordinator will provide a lead in the dissemination of information relating to drug education. They are responsible for identifying and providing good quality resources and in-service training. The PSHE coordinator is Jessie Barfield. The Head teacher, Deputy Head, SENDCo or Pastoral Manager are the first point of contact for advice/support in dealing with a drug-related incident.

Parents and Carers

Parents and carers are encouraged to support the school's drug education programme. They are responsible for ensuring that guidelines relating to medication in school are followed (see Administration of Medicines Policy). Parents/carers have the right to be informed of any incident that could result in potential harm to their child. This can be a very sensitive issue for parents, and therefore, it will be handled with care and consideration. The Head Teacher will consider if there are any special circumstances, which may temper this right. The child protection service may be contacted in the first instance and advice sought (see school's Safeguarding Children policy/procedures). All Staff Drug prevention is a whole school issue. All staff, both teaching and non-teaching, should be aware of the policy and how it relates to them should they be called upon to deal with a drug related incident. This includes lunchtime supervisors and the site manager and cleaning staff. If they have any queries or training requirements these should be made known to the PSHE Coordinator or to the Head Teacher.

The caretaker regularly checks the school premises – any substances or drug paraphernalia found will be recorded and reported to the Head Teacher and dealt with in accordance with this policy. Equal Opportunities Statement Drug education will be provided to all pupils with consideration of any particular needs (see Equal Opportunities policy).

DRUG EDUCATION

Aim of Drug and Alcohol Education

The aim of teaching children and young people about alcohol and other drugs is to support them in making informed choices, delaying first substance use and preventing the development of harmful patterns of substance use in adulthood. This can impact upon an individual's quality of life and future aspirations. Effective teaching about alcohol and other drugs through PSHE and Science education is one key element of prevention work. However, in order to achieve its aims, this teaching should be implemented as one aspect of a wider whole-school approach.

What Drug and Alcohol Education looks like at St Matthews C of E Aided Primary School.

The Department for Education (DfE)'s statutory guidance for Health Education at primary phase requires that pupils be taught the facts and risks associated with drug, alcohol and tobacco use. At St Matthews, alongside the statutory requirements, teaching about how to manage social influence, pressure and risk is vital in promoting pupils' ability to navigate the situations in which they may encounter substances. It also contributes to safeguarding, by providing pupils with the knowledge, understanding, attributes, skills and strategies to keep themselves healthy and safe. Teaching about drugs and alcohol is integrated within a planned PSHE education curriculum where it enhances – and can be enhanced by – teaching in other topic areas. For example, lessons on mental health and emotional wellbeing will include teaching healthy coping mechanisms and the importance of seeking support and help. Drugs and alcohol education is also part of the statutory science curriculum. In Year 6 Drugs and Alcohol education is also taught through the STAR project.

Teaching programme, strategies and resources

Drug Education is delivered through the PSHE programme by class teachers in whole class or group situations using a broad variety of teaching and learning strategies. It is also taught via one off events such as Wellbeing Week and the STAR project via the Science National Curriculum.

The PSHE coordinator will review the drug education provision on an annual basis through discussion with the teachers involved with the delivery of the programme and the school council. Where the teaching and learning includes issues, which may be sensitive staff and pupils will work within clearly understood and applied ground-rules from the PSHE Association Guidance. Special Educational Needs Children registered as having Special Educational Needs have the same right to good drug education as any other pupil and will be taught alongside all other pupils.

Use of Visitors and outside agencies

Visiting facilitators can enhance the delivery of drugs education and some pupils do respond better if they perceive the deliverer to be an 'expert' rather than their 'normal' teacher. However, visitors will only be used in the programme if they can offer an expertise, an approach or pupil response which cannot be achieved by the teachers. Where visitors and outside agencies are involved, their contribution must have been planned as part of an overall programme of Drug Education. Their contribution should complement the teaching already taking place in the school.

DEALING WITH DRUG-RELATED INCIDENTS

This section provides a framework for dealing with incidents surrounding the use, suspicion of use, and finding of drugs and substances.

Parents/carers have the right to be informed of any drug-related incident that affects their child. An exception to this is when the child is deemed 'at risk' and Family Connect has been contacted. In this case, it is up to Family Connect to decide the course of action.

Staff should be aware that if they -

- a) fail to act in a drug-related incident or
- b) allow drug use to continue on school premises,

They could contravene the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971. It should be noted that if the preservation of a confidence a) enables criminal offences to be committed, or b) results in serious harm to the pupil's health and welfare, criminal proceedings could ensue.

Unauthorized Substances

No substances are to be brought into the school premises unless authorised by the Head Teacher or through the agreed protocol for the use of medicines on the school premises. This includes alcohol, tobacco (including vapes), volatile substances and medicines. This applies to anybody using the building regardless of age or whether they are staff or pupils of the school. Pupils found in violation of this section of the school policy, on school premises, will be dealt with in the following way:

- Parents will be contacted by the relevant teacher. Parents' support will be sought in stressing to the pupil how the use of unauthorised substances in school is a serious breach of school rules.

- A suitable sanction will be considered. The severity of the sanction will depend upon various factors such as the age of the pupil, the circumstances of the incident, whether it is a pupil's first offence and whether it affected other pupils.
- The substance and associated paraphernalia such as matches or lighters found in a pupil's possession in school will be confiscated. They will be placed in a labelled envelope and kept securely until parents are able to collect them.

What to do in the event of finding a drug/unauthorized substance or suspected illegal substance.

1. Take possession of the drug/substance and inform the Head Teacher, or if not available a senior member of staff.
2. In the presence of a witness the article should be packed securely and labelled with the date, time and place of discovery.
3. The package should be signed by the person who discovered it and stored in a secure place.
4. Police should be contacted immediately, and arrangements should be made to hand the package over to them. Staff should not attempt to analyse or taste any found substance. In the event of discovering a hypodermic needle the incident should be recorded and the following procedure should be followed in order to protect all persons:

EXTREME CARE SHOULD BE TAKEN

1. Do NOT attempt to pick up the needle.
2. Cover the needle with a bucket or other container.
3. If possible, cordon off the area to make it safe.
4. Inform the Head Teacher or senior member of staff.
5. Contact Environmental Health.

What to do in the event of finding or suspecting a pupil is in possession of a drug.

1. Request that the pupil hand over the article(s). Staff can ask pupils to turn out pockets or bag's, but cannot demand that this happens.
2. Having taken possession of the substance/paraphernalia, the procedure should be followed as above.
3. Pupils should be placed in isolation until the matter has been investigated.
4. Parents should be contacted as quickly as possible. If a pupil refuses to hand over articles a search may be required – it should be noted that:
 - Teachers can search school property, i.e. cupboards and trays without permission.
 - Following the guidance from 'Searching, Screening and Confiscation Advice for schools July 2022' if school deem it necessary can search pupils or personal possessions'.
 - Also in line with 'Searching, Screening and Confiscation Advice for schools July 2022' an authorised staff member carrying out a search can confiscate any item that they have reasonable grounds for suspecting:
 - poses a risk to staff or pupils;
 - is prohibited, or identified in the school rules for which a search can be made (see paragraphs 2-3); or
 - is evidence in relation to an offence.
 - Controlled drugs must be delivered to the police as soon as possible unless there is a good reason not to do so. In these cases, the member of staff must safely dispose of the drugs. In determining whether there is a good reason to dispose of controlled drugs, the member of staff must have regard to the following guidance.

Procedures for dealing with a child suspected to be under the influence of a drug or substance.

Stay calm, place child in a quiet area.

Do not leave them unsupervised; seek medical advice from a First Aider.

If the child is drowsy or unconscious place them in the recovery position, loosen tight clothing and attempt to establish what the child has taken.

Any suspected substances should travel with child if removed for treatment.

Vomit should be safely collected where possible and also taken with the child (for analysis).

Procedures for dealing with Parents/carers under the influence of drugs on the school premises.

Staff should attempt to maintain a calm atmosphere.

If staff have concern regarding discharging a pupil into the care of a parent/carer attempts should be made to discuss alternative arrangements with the parent/carer, for example requesting another family member to escort the child home.

The focus of the staff must be the maintenance of the pupil's safety and welfare, as opposed to the moderation of the parent's behaviour.

Where the behaviour of the parent/carer immediately places the child at risk of significant harm or repeated behaviour places the child at risk or the parent/carer becomes abusive or violent, staff should consider whether to invoke child protection procedures and/or the involvement of the police.

The Head Teacher must Complete a Drug Related Incident Form recording the nature of the incident and the subsequent action taken by the school.

When to contact the police

There is no legal obligation for the school to contact the police when a drug incident or offence has been discovered. Contacting the police is at the Headteacher's discretion. Any information about illegal sales of drugs including alcohol and tobacco will be reported to them. In the event of a drug-related incident in the school, the school would cooperate with the police should they wish to search premises.

In the event of a serious incident the police may request to interview pupil(s). Parent(s)/carer(s) must be notified. They may refuse to give consent or prefer the interview to take place in their own home, in which case the police will make arrangements. Parents/carers may give authority to a responsible adult, e.g. a teacher to be present during the interview.

Dealing with the Media

If there has been a drug-related incident, the LA will be informed. Advice will be given by the LA on dealing with enquiries from the media in order to protect the interests of the child and the school.

Consequences

In normal circumstances parents will be contacted. If the Head Teacher assesses that the situation is a child protection issue then Family Connect will be contacted in the first instance. This school does not condone drug misuse. However, in deciding an appropriate sanction must consider the interests of the child balanced against the best interests of the whole school community. Whilst exclusion is a possible sanction (fixed or permanent) it would only be considered as a last resort. A range of responses may also be considered that may include:

- a pastoral support programme;

- referral to an appropriate agency;
- home-school contract;
- behaviour support plans;
- a managed move;
- fixed term exclusion;
- permanent exclusion.

Consideration should be given to:

- the age of the pupil;
- whether one pupil or a group of pupils is involved;
- whether there is evidence of particular peer pressure;
- whether it is the pupil's first offence.

Telford Stars are the providers of the specialist drug and alcohol service in Telford and Wrekin. They offer specialist support for those struggling with drug and alcohol misuse.

Contact Details =

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