



**Holy Redeemer Catholic
Primary School**

Drugs & Substance Misuse Policy

Signed by:	
Head Teacher	Christina Hall
Chair of Governors	Alan Smith
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‘Through the Holy Redeemer we seek to grow in faith and love and become great people who make a difference in our world.’

Aims

- To provide a clear statement of the school’s view on drugs education.
- To ensure a consistent approach from staff to drugs education and in the handling of drug related incidents.
- To safeguard good practice in the future.

Drug Definitions

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

- Illegal drugs-those substances listed as controlled drugs e.g. heroin, cocaine, Ecstasy, cannabis and magic mushrooms.
- Illicit drugs-include those socially unacceptable legal drugs. e.g. poppers, solvents and the underage consumption of alcohol and tobacco.
- Prescribed drugs-those given by a doctor on prescription (also known as ‘over the counter drugs’) e.g. tranquillisers, sleeping tablets and strong painkillers.

Objectives

At Holy Redeemer Catholic Primary School, we aim to equip the children with the knowledge, understanding and skills that enable them to make the sort of choices that lead to a healthy lifestyle. Our drugs education programme has the primary objective of helping children to become more confident and responsible young people. We teach children about the dangers to health posed by drug taking and we aim to equip them with the social skills that enable them to make informed moral and social decisions in relation to drugs in society.

In accordance with these values, this policy aims to set out the school’s approach to teaching and learning about drugs and [school’s] management of situations involving drugs. National guidance (DfES/92/2004) and the local Drug and Alcohol Education Guidance have informed the policy for Schools (2003).

We aim to

- To provide children with knowledge and information about legal and illegal drugs and both the beneficial and harmful effects they can have on people’s lives
- To enable children to discuss moral questions related to drug taking, and so provide a safe environment for young people to share their thoughts and ideas
- To help children to 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, or are aware of other 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.
- To show that taking drugs is a moral issue, and that choices about drugs are moral choices.
- To ensure that all children are taught about drugs in a consistent manner, following guidelines that have been agreed by parents, governors and staff.

Drugs education is a whole-school issue, and opportunities to teach about the importance of living a healthy lifestyle occur throughout the curriculum. If the need arises, class teachers will answer questions about drugs sensitively and appropriately, as they occur. In Year 6 science lessons we teach children what a drug is, and how drugs are used in medicine. Drugs education is part of our PHSE provision.

Children are encouraged to ask questions and reflect on the dangers of drug misuse. They explore issues such as why people take drugs and how they can avoid putting themselves in danger in the future. Children are given the opportunity to talk in groups or to the whole class. Circle time can be used as a forum for discussing these issues sensitively. We encourage the children to listen to the views of others, and we ask them to explore why drugs are such a problem for society.

As children move up the school, emphasis is placed on personal responsibility, and we aim to provide children with strategies to cope with potentially dangerous situations and to make sensible, informed decisions.

Drugs on School Premises

Holy Redeemer Catholic Primary School is a no-smoking site at all times. This means there will be no smoking on the premises or outside any of the school doors. Consumption of alcohol is also not permitted during the school day.

We recognise that some pupils may require medicines that have been prescribed for use during the school day. Medicines are safely stored and administered as per our Supporting Children with Medical Conditions Policy.

At Holy Redeemer Catholic Primary School, the wishes of parents are considered carefully, we try to ensure that parents are aware of how we deal with drug issues and we are available for consultation at parents' evenings to give support and advice.

Managing Drug Related Incidents At School

The first priority will always be for the safety of all, dealing with medical emergencies and securing appropriate help.

The school will employ a range of responses, so that the needs of the individual are balanced against those of the wider community. The precise response will be determined after a full and careful investigation into the exact nature of the incident. Pupils will be aware of the range of possible responses and the effect those responses may have on them.

Support for pupils, as appropriate, will be a priority, including referrals to agencies such as SPACE, Worcestershire's multi-agency substance misuse service for young people. In such cases careful attention will be given to issues of confidentiality, in line with the school's confidentiality policy.

The school nurse will be able to give advice regarding all health-related matters. The school will normally involve the pupil's parents/carers, unless this would jeopardise the pupil's safety. A full record will be made of every incident.

Discovery of Suspected Substances on School Premises

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Staff discovering substances which are suspected of being harmful, illegal or requiring further investigation should observe the following guidance:

- Consider the possible need for first aid and follow the school's first aid procedures
- If possible, remove the suspected substance from the location in the presence of a witness. If there is no witness, do not delay, remove the substance and take it to the head teacher, or Deputy.
- If a pupil is, or is thought to be, in possession of a suspect substance do not attempt to search the pupil. You may ask the pupil to voluntarily empty his or her pockets, bag, desk or locker with a witness present. You may not forcibly detain the pupil
- Do not retain the substance on your person or in a place of safekeeping for a later time, since to do this could place you at risk
- Record the time, place and circumstances of the discovery and also record the details of what was found, but do not investigate the substance
- Where drug-related paraphernalia, such as needles and syringes, is discovered, do not attempt to handle this. It should be collected by the appropriate personnel in accordance with health and safety guidelines. The head teacher must ensure that materials are placed in a secure container to await proper collection
- No entry of an incident should be made on the pupil's record until the suspected substance is confirmed by the police as being a controlled substance. If the substance is not a controlled substance, then the entry on the pupil's record will be determined by the head teacher
- There is no legal obligation to inform the police, although they may be able to give relevant support and advice. Once the nature of the substance is confirmed it is legally acceptable to dispose of the substance, typically by flushing down the lavatory. This should be witnessed and recorded
- Where a substance is confirmed as being controlled, it is the responsibility of the head teacher to notify the parents/carers concerned, and, if necessary, to consider further action, including notifying the Chair of Governors
- In circumstances where it is possible that the school premises are being used for illegal drug use, all reasonable steps must be taken to prevent this, in order to avoid contravening the law

Detailed guidance to staff regarding discovery of substances can be found in *Managing Drug-related Incidents: Guidance for Worcestershire Schools*, (Worcestershire Healthy Schools, 2007).

Working with the Police

The school is not legally obliged to involve the police regarding illegal drugs, but we will work in partnership to the benefit of the school and wider community. The school is able to seek assistance from the local policing team officer, who will give guidance on the law, the identification and disposal of substances, and whether or not the police should be more actively and formally involved in a given situation.

Confidentiality

In managing drugs, and in drug education lessons, teachers cannot and should not promise total confidentiality. The boundaries of confidentiality will be made clear to pupils. If a pupil discloses information which is sensitive, not generally known, and/or

which the pupil asks not to be passed on, the information should normally be kept confidential. Exceptions to this will be:

- When child protection issues arise
- In order to co-operate with a police investigation
- Where the pupil has agreed to be referred to an external agency

Every effort will be made to seek the agreement of the pupil before further sharing of sensitive information in the above circumstances. Where information is to be shared, this will be strictly on a need-to-know basis.