



St. Mary's College

Preparatory School

Drugs Policy

Date Written: August 2016

Reviewed: September 2023

Drugs Policy **(This policy includes EYFS Reception, KS1 and KS2)**

This policy has been written in consultation with staff and governors of The Prep and with due regard to the school's mission statement:

Our Mission is to provide an independent Catholic education for boys and girls of all faiths aged 0-18; to provide individual challenge towards holistic and balanced development, service and achievement for life and beyond; and to try to show our Faith by the way we live, showing care and consideration for each other, those around us and the environment.

1 Introduction

Pupils are entitled to a school environment free of pressure to take drugs. The pressures and influences are all around us. The School itself must be a drug free zone. Parents are entitled to assume that the School will not be an arena for offering or pushing drugs. For children, drugs can impact on their education, their relationships with family and friends and prevent them from reaching their full potential.

The School's aims are to:

- educate pupils on the dangers of the illicit use of drugs;
- develop refusal skills and independence of character to say "no";
- make the School Community a "no go" area in relation to illegal drugs;
- reflect the School's commitment to responsible citizenship and health.

This policy aims to provide a framework to realise the School's aims. This policy applies at all times when pupils are on School premises or off School premises while on School activities, such as School trips, on work experience, on the way to or from School or on any occasion outside School life where the good name of the School is damaged. This policy is written with reference to guidance <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/drugs-advice-for-schools> and should be read in conjunction with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 and the School's Safeguarding Policy.

2 Aims and objectives

The aims of this policy are to:

- clarify the school's approach to drugs, for staff, pupils, governors, parents, and to clarify the legal requirements and responsibilities;
- give guidance to staff on the school's drugs education programme;
- safeguard the health and safety of pupils and staff in our school;
- enable staff to manage drug-related incidents properly.

3 Terminology

The term 'drugs' is used throughout this policy to refer to all drugs:

- all illegal drugs (those controlled by the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971);
- all legal drugs, including alcohol and tobacco, and also volatile substances (those giving off a gas or vapour which can be inhaled);
- all medicines, whether over-the-counter or on prescription.

4 The Prep statement

The Prep believes that the presence of unauthorised drugs in our school is not acceptable and accordingly is strictly prohibited.

We want our school to be a safe place for us all to work, and the presence of unauthorised drugs represents a threat to our health and safety.

5 Responsibilities

The Headmaster will:

- ensure that staff and parents are informed about this drugs policy;
- ensure that the policy is implemented effectively;
- manage any drug-related incidents;
- ensure that staff are given sufficient training, so that they can teach effectively about drugs, and handle any difficult issues with sensitivity;
- liaise with external agencies regarding the school drugs education programme;
- monitor the policy on a day-to-day basis, and report to governors, when requested, on the effectiveness of the policy.

The governing body will:

- support the Headmaster in following these guidelines;
- inform and consult with parents about the drugs education policy;
- support the Headmaster in any case conferences, or in appeals against exclusions.

Staff are required to:

- be vigilant at all times about the possible use or supply of drugs in the School community or in accordance with this policy;
- report any suspicions about drug use or supply to the Headmaster immediately;
- attend such training sessions on the provision of drugs education or the management of drugs in the Prep community as they are reasonably required to attend from time to time;
- support this policy and the approach taken by the Prep towards the provision of drugs education and management of drugs in the Prep community.

6 Objectives of drugs education

Drugs education should enable pupils to develop their knowledge, attitudes and understanding about drugs, and to appreciate the benefits of a healthy lifestyle, relating this to their own and others' actions. It should:

- build on knowledge and understanding;
- provide accurate information, and clear up misunderstandings;
- explore attitudes and values, and examine the risks and consequences of actions relating to drugs;
- develop pupils' interpersonal skills, their understanding of rules and laws, and their self-awareness and self-esteem;

- ensure that all children are taught about drugs in a consistent manner, following guidelines that have been agreed by parents, governors and staff.

7 Drugs education

We regard drugs education as a whole-school issue, and we believe that opportunities to teach about the importance of a healthy lifestyle occur naturally throughout the curriculum, but especially in science, PSHE, RE and PE.

Teaching about drugs will begin in Key Stage 1, when pupils are taught about seeing the doctor, visiting the chemist, and the importance of medicines and their safe handling.

In Key Stage 2, pupils will learn that alcohol is the most widely used drug, and that its dangers can be overlooked. We will ensure that our pupils are aware of the risks associated with drinking. We teach pupils that smoking is a minority habit, and encourage them to consider its effects and risks.

We recognise that learning is most effective when it addresses the development of knowledge, attitudes and skills together, and when teaching and learning are active. We use a variety of teaching styles that are characterised by active learning. We find out what the children know already, we pose dilemmas, and we get the children to discuss choices. Wherever possible, the information we give is visually reinforced. We use drama, role-play or ICT to demonstrate various strategies and scenarios. In short, we seek to engage our pupils. We give them the opportunity to talk to groups or to the whole class. We encourage them to listen to the views of others, and we ask them to explore why drugs are such a problem for society.

We aim to teach all pupils about drugs, however different their attainment levels, and however diverse their requirements.

Drugs education takes place during normal lesson time. Sometimes, a class teacher will seek support from the school nurse or another health professional. In teaching this course, we follow the DfES guidelines. The resources and materials that we use are recommended by the Health Authority. Lessons that focus on drugs education form part of a sequence of lessons that are designed to promote a healthy lifestyle.

8 Drugs at school

Where children have medical needs, parents must give us details of the child's condition and medication. Parents will bring the medication to school in a secure, labelled container. Records will be kept of all medication received and given. Emergency medication may be stored securely in the classroom or office (for anaphylaxis or asthma); other drugs will be stored securely in the office. Please refer to the Medicines Policy.

Solvents and other hazardous chemicals must be stored securely, to prevent inappropriate access, or use by pupils. Teachers are cautious with older, solvent-based Tippex, with aerosols, with glues and with board-cleaning fluids.

Legal drugs are legitimately in school only when authorised by the Headmaster. Smoking is not permitted anywhere in the school and smoking paraphernalia should not be brought onto the school premises.

Alcohol to be consumed at community or parents' events will be stored securely beforehand. To sell alcohol, we must be licensed under the Licensing Act 2003.

9 Drugs incidents

Any incident involving unauthorised drugs in school is most likely to involve alcohol, tobacco or volatile substances, rather than illegal drugs.

The first priority is safety and first aid, i.e. calling the emergency services and placing unconscious people in the recovery position. An intoxicated pupil does not necessarily represent a medical emergency, unless unconscious or otherwise in apparent danger.

Any drug suspected of being illegal will be confiscated and stored securely, awaiting disposal; these precautions must be witnessed and recorded. Staff should not taste unknown or confiscated substances.

The Headmaster will decide whether the police need to be called or whether the school will manage the incident internally.

A full record will be made of any incident.

The Headmaster will conduct an investigation into the nature and seriousness of any incident, in order to determine an appropriate response.

10 The role of parents

The school is well aware that the primary role in children's drugs education lies with parents. We wish to build a positive and supporting relationship with the parents of our pupils, through mutual understanding, trust and cooperation. To promote this objective, we will:

- inform parents about the school drugs policy;
- answer any questions that parents may have about the drugs education that their child receives in school;
- take seriously any issue which parents raise with teachers or governors about this policy, or about arrangements for drugs education in the school;
- encourage parents to be involved in reviewing the school policy, and making modifications to it as necessary;
- inform parents about the best practice known with regard to drugs education, so that the parents can support the key messages being given to children at school.

When an incident concerning unauthorised drugs has occurred in school, and a pupil is involved, we will inform the parents, and explain how we intend to respond to the incident.

Staff will be cautious about discharging a pupil to the care of an intoxicated parent, particularly when the parent intends driving the pupil home. Staff will suggest an alternative arrangement. The focus will be the pupil's welfare and safety. Where the behaviour of an intoxicated parent repeatedly places a child at risk, or the parent or carer becomes abusive or violent, staff should consider whether the circumstances of the case are serious enough to invoke child protection procedures, and possibly the involvement of the police. Staff will report any such incidents to the Designated Person or Deputy Designated Person for Safeguarding.

11 Monitoring and review

The Headmaster will monitor the drugs policy on an annual basis. If the policy appears to need modification, then he will report its findings and recommendations to the full governing body. The Headmaster takes into serious consideration any representation from parents about the drugs education programme, and comments will be recorded. Governors require the Headmaster to keep a written record detailing the content and delivery of the drugs education programme taught in this school.