

# **St Matthew's Church of England Primary School**



## **Drugs Education Policy**

## **St Matthew's Policy for Drugs Education**

### **Introduction**

Research has shown that by the age of 11, many primary school children have extensive knowledge of the world of drugs. For some, this knowledge may be inaccurate and incomplete, for others it will develop through personal experience. Together research shows that up to 50% of children have tried an illegal drug by the age of 16. The figures also suggest that the first age of experimentation is decreasing and that children of primary age are exposed to opportunities to try both illegal and illegal drugs. The 1995 white paper 'Tackling Drugs Together' stated that schools had an important role both in reducing the misuse of drugs and minimising their health risks.

Many pupils of primary school age have some knowledge of substances and drugs. Many older pupils (including siblings) know who to ask to obtain illegal drugs, whilst some witness drug taking by the caring adults in their lives. Pupils have knowledge of drugs through the media, street talk, and personal experience.

### **Drugs education should contribute to:**

- Increasing the safety of communities from drug related crime
- Reducing the acceptability and availability of drugs to young people
- Reducing the health risks and other damage related to drug misuse

### **At St Matthew's we believe that drugs education should provide:**

- Accurate information presented simply and clearly
- Informative and accessible reading materials
- Access to other adults besides teachers, providing they are expert and credible
- Stimulating and enjoyable classroom tasks
- Opportunities to develop their knowledge and understanding in a challenging and safe atmosphere where they feel secure enough to play a full and active part

We aim to provide a consistency of approach throughout the school and to encourage children to develop knowledge and skills to make informed and responsible choices now and in later life and to stress the benefits of a healthy lifestyle. At St Matthew's we encourage children to develop positive attitudes and values and to ensure that Health and Safety procedures are followed when dealing with incidents or equipment related to drugs and drug use.

The National Curriculum and the broader curriculum should ensure that by the end of Key Stage 2 pupils know the risks and have the knowledge and skills to resist substance and drugs misuse. The sensitive nature of drugs education can cause concern among parents. However, successful drugs education should start early. Developing pupils' life skills throughout the school is the key.

### **Aims**

- To help pupils live a healthy life style now and in the future

- To enable pupils to make healthy informed choices

## **Objectives**

- To provide opportunities for pupils to acquire knowledge and understanding about the dangers of substance and drugs misuse
- To develop and equip pupils with the knowledge, attitudes and skills necessary to avoid peer group pressures
- To enable those who are misusing substances, or who have concerns to be able to ask for help
- To enhance and build pupils' decision making skills
- To help children take increased responsibility for themselves and their actions.
- To clarify what children already know, give information to clarify facts and correct false knowledge and beliefs.
- To help children deal with the effect of media coverage of issues relating to drugs.
- To support staff in dealing with issues and incidents relating to drugs and drugs use.
- To ensure all staff are aware of procedures relating to drugs and drug use at St Matthew's Primary School.
- To provide opportunities for pupils to acquire knowledge and identify the distinction between authorised and unauthorised drugs.
- To develop and equip pupils with the knowledge, attitudes and skills necessary to build their resilience and avoid peer group pressure or unwanted drug offers from others.

## **Definition**

At St Matthew's Primary School drugs include any substance that affects your body. This includes socially acceptable and unacceptable drugs. These will include:

- Tobacco
- Alcohol
- Medicines
- Illegal substances

## **Teaching and Learning**

Our approach to drugs education is one which children are given information in the belief that increased knowledge about drugs and the risks will empower children to make informed and safe decisions. We approach this in a sensitive manner appropriate to the age and experiences of the children concerned.

In teaching drugs education teachers will use a range of teaching strategies, including role play, discussion group work, debate and circle time.

Teaching is:

- Well resourced
- Reflects the needs and experiences of pupils

- Uses a range of teaching methods including group work, discussions, videos and outside speakers
- Reinforces messages about healthy lifestyles
- Flexible and relevant
- In the context of a wider PSHE programme
- Informed and interesting.

There are two aspects to drugs education.

### **Knowledge:**

1. the role of drugs as medicines
2. that tobacco, alcohol and other drugs can have harmful effects

### **Life Skills:**

- Develop the skills of independent thinking
- Develop attitudes towards drugs which are based upon facts
- Build self esteem
- Learn to be a decision maker
- Take responsibility
- Become assertive
- Deal with peer group pressure

We do not intend to teach about the physiological effects of drugs or to sensationalise drugs at all. There should be a clear message that substance abuse and illegal drugs are very dangerous. Life skills development is the key to helping pupils become informed decisions makers.

### **Drug Education**

Drugs education is part of the Science and PSHE curriculum and Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education statutory curriculum from September 2020. There are resources available for Sandwell schools free of charge. These materials can be accessed from [www.ourguideto.co.uk](http://www.ourguideto.co.uk). These resources fulfill the aims of drug education as stated in DfES Drugs: Guidance for Schools, 02/04. We may also choose to use other educational materials but these will need to be reviewed regularly to ensure they remain relevant.

### **Staff Training**

Drug education needs to be a constant theme. This will only be possible if teachers are properly trained. Those involved in teaching drug education need opportunities to develop skills, knowledge and confidence through a programme of continuing professional development.

The Sandwell DECCA (Drug Education, Counselling and Confidential Advice) Team will provide

training for all staff. FRANK is a national organisation that can provide support to parents/carers helping to give them the skills and confidence to communicate with their children about drugs. Contact details for both of these services can be found on page 10

## **Equal Opportunities**

The school's equal opportunities policy applies to drug education. Where appropriate teaching materials will reflect the cultural and ethnic diversity of British society. We do try to avoid stereotyping in terms of gender and race. Also pupils progress is monitored to ensure no pupil is disadvantaged. The school makes every effort to respect and reflect pupils' religious beliefs and take community view into account when teaching drug education. Parents are always welcome to discuss these issues with staff.

## **Differentiation and Additional Educational Needs**

Whilst some pupils may have a fairly broad knowledge and insight into the world of drugs, there are those who have little knowledge at all. Teachers need to be sensitive to this issue and lessons planned to take account of pupils' age, experience and maturity. The needs of pupils with AEN should be taken into account by the teacher who may need to provide different resources, different activities and specific support to some pupils. Where pupils provision maps identify targets relating to their personal development, the teacher should ensure that opportunities are planned to support pupils in achieving these.

## **Breadth and Balance**

The contents and structure of our drugs education scheme of work represents a broad and balanced approach to the teaching of knowledge, skills, understanding attitudes and feelings. A variety of teaching strategies, use of external visitors, couples with a wide range of pupil centered tasks ensures breadth and balance.

## **Use of Visiting Specialists**

It is important to work closely with external agencies. Good drugs education Involves partnership, often using the services of the school's crime reduction officer, and other external agencies such as the school nursing service.

Where visitors are used to support and extend classroom teaching, they should be used to complement the school's scheme of work for drug education. In particular, a teacher should always be present and retain overall responsibility in the classroom.

## **Staff Training**

We recognise that many staff are daunted by the prospect of teaching drugs education. We therefore offer staff an ongoing programme of professional development. A good teacher of drugs education does not need to be an authority on drugs. It's the life skills aspects that are so crucial to this area of the curriculum. Most pupils want to be able to discuss drugs with a caring adult.

## **Parental Involvement**

Many parents have great concerns about drugs and as the 'first educators' of their children, most want to develop and extend their child's awareness of the world, developing towards being a responsible citizen. Parents like schools, need to assess when the time is right for their child to handle new ideas, concepts and knowledge. We welcome the opportunity to work with parents in drugs education.

## **Managing a drugs related incident**

Incidents are managed in the context of the school's commitment to:

- The safety and welfare of all pupils and staff
- The welfare of individuals deemed to be at risk
- The law concerning drugs

Some schools have in the past found a substance or drug on the premises, and in a few cases, a pupil has been found in possession of a drug. Such an incident would have implications for the school, the pupil, parents, teachers, the headteacher and the governing body.

If a pupil is found with a substance or a drug which is thought to be illegal, the following procedure will be adopted.

What to do if:

### **There is an allegation/suspicion of a drug related incident in school**

- If you hear/are told that a young person is using/in possession of drugs you need to act immediately
- Inform the school DSL and/or the headteacher or another member of staff.
- If possible have two staff present. This can be important if any allegations are made in the future.
- Talk to the young person. Are they acting out of character? Do they appear in any way intoxicated? Are they acting suspiciously?
- Point out the school policy on drugs in school and ask them to hand over the drug(s). If they refuse and you believe they have drugs on their person, point out that the police will then need to be contacted.
- Teachers can ask a pupil to turn out their pockets and search bags but should never try to do any type of physical search. This can be classed as assault.
- If doing any type of search make sure there is two staff present.
- You cannot force a young person to do anything, no matter what they are suspected of.
- Record everything on a Drug related Incident Monitoring Sheet.

### **A young person discloses something about drugs in class**

In class you may have a young person say that he/she or someone they know is using or has been using drugs. This can be problematic but a number of approaches can be used:

- Set up ground rules before the lesson starts. You might cover things such as correct names for drugs and no "street" terms, no one is expected to answer personal questions and no personal remarks are made.
- If asked a question to which an answer is not known say you don't know but you will find out. This can also be a way of showing that you know as much as the young people.
- Use the young person's experiences to add a down to earth dimension to the educating you are doing. This would depend on how confident a teacher felt about getting a positive response and not glamorising and promoting the idea of drug use. Dispel any elements of fiction that person may be saying and challenge anything that is untrue.
- Make sure that factual information is used when challenging. This can be backed up.
- If you feel you cannot do any of the above, ask the young person to be quiet as the subject they are talking about is inappropriate for the rest of the class to be listening to.
- Together arrange to speak to the young person and try to establish whether there is any truth in what they have said. Offer the relevant help if it is needed.
- As soon as possible inform the DSL.
- Record everything you have done on the Drug Incident Monitoring Sheet.

## **Confidentiality**

- The staff of St. Matthew's Church of England Primary School cannot guarantee confidentiality, and where a pupil discloses information that indicates that the pupil is at risk, the information needs to be immediately passed on to the appropriate person. (the Headteacher, DSL etc).
- Teachers do not legally have to inform parents of any disclosure unless the Headteacher has specifically asked them to. However, it is a serious step to withhold information from parents concerning their children. Any decision to withhold information must be recorded carefully and the reasons for this given.
- Staff cannot offer or guarantee absolute confidentiality. It is only in the most exceptional circumstances that schools should be on the position of having to handle information without parental knowledge. Where younger pupils are involved this will be ground for serious concern and child protection issues should be addressed.
- Record everything you have done on the Drug Incident Monitoring Sheet

## **Who should you contact, when and how?**

### **Parents**

- It would always be advised to contact parent(s)/carer(s). This would be regarded as good practice.
- When contacting it needs to be done in such a way that distress is kept to a minimum.
- A telephone call indicating an incident at school without giving specific details would be most appropriate.
- The young person should be involved as much as possible in the process of contacting any outside organisations and if possible they should take their lead in admitting their drug use to parents.

- Involve the parents as much as possible in the implementing of appropriate sanction(s) for their child.
- The offer of support to parent(s)/carer(s) may need to be offered. This is where outside organisations may play a role.
- Having parent(s)/carer(s) working in partnership with school can play an important role in ensuring a young person stays drug free at school.
- There may be legitimate grounds not to contact parents immediately if it is clear that, they may seriously over react and cause harm to the young person or the parents are believed to be directly involved in the situation causing concern.

## **Police**

- If the Police are contacted regarding a pupil that has been found in possession/suspected possession of an illegal substance the Police would respond in the following way:
- Police officers would visit the school. Following liaison with the Headteacher, or in the absence the Deputy or DSL, the Officers may arrest the pupil or alternatively make an appointment to interview that person in the presence of an appropriate adult at a Police station. In all cases the West Midlands response to drug related incidents in school would be followed. The outcome of the enquiry would result in one of the following:
- No further action
- Reprimand
- Final warning
- Charged and bailed to attend Youth Court.

If the police are contacted regarding a pupil that has been found supplying or is suspected of supplying an illegal substance the Police would respond in the following way:

- Police would visit school, promptly and discuss with the Head Teacher or DSL the appropriate action to be taken. Police may arrest but may make arrangements for the young person to be interviewed at the police station in the presence of an appropriate adult. The outcome would be as previously stated for possession.
- Schools should make Police aware if they suspect drug dealing to be occurring on or near school premises. This can be done anonymously.
- Legally school does not have to contact the Police and an incident can be dealt with in house.
- If school finds a substance that they believe to be illegal it is recommended they try to establish where it has come from. If this is not possible then the "what to do with" section should be followed.

## **Outside Organisations**

- If school feels it needs outside help it should make contact immediately
- No school is alone, the Children's Act 1989 states "Local Authorities have a duty to ensure that support services for children 'in need' are provided and should minimise unnecessary



intrusion in to family life". Support has to be provided. School does not bare sole responsibility.

- School should consider, before contacting anyone else, could an outside organisation offer anything school can't and will the young person accept help?

## **Legal Standing and Implications**

- Consult the school Headteacher/DSL before you take any action.
- It is advisable that you develop a working relationship with your School Liaison Officer. They can provide a valuable link.
- There is no legal obligation to contact the Police.
- Schools legally do not have to act if they are told a young person is using or has used an illicit drug outside of school time or has been in possession of an illicit drug outside of school time. The Secretary of State does encourage all staff to keep the best of the child paramount if any information is received about them.
- Money does not have to change hands for a young person to be dealing.
- Dealing can be defined as passing on, selling, giving away and any action that involves any type of hand over of drugs from one young person to another.
- Using is someone who is using or taking the drug(s) themselves. It does not mean that they are a drug dealer and each case should be looked at individually.
- If police come into school and wish to interview a young person the parent(s)/carer(s) must be contacted. The Head Teacher can give permission for an interview to take place if all possible efforts have been made to contact a parent(s)/carer(s). This should only happen in exceptional circumstances as it could lead to disciplinary action. It is unlikely that any interview would take place in school.
- Parent(s)/carer(s) can refuse permission for their child to be interviewed.
- An appropriate adult must be present if a child is interviewed. If this is anyone other than the person who has parental responsibility they should have undertaken training on how to fulfill this role. Without training it would not be advisable to undertake this responsibility.

## **What to do with substances**

- The most important thing to remember is to have a witness to anything you do if at all possible.
- You can dispose of a substance found. This can be difficult. It is not a good idea to flush anything in to the water system as many drugs do not dissolve fully and will pollute the system. Incineration is the only real safe way of disposal.
- You can call the police to come and collect the drug. Remember that no questions have to be answered about any of the pupils in school.
- If it is decided that the drug is to be stored the following must happen: It must be kept in a secure place (such as the safe). It must be separately packed with the time, date and place of finding/handing in. Do this with a witness.
- If school decides to dispose of the substance it should only be incinerated due to Health and Safety issues.
- School can contact Police to collect illegal substances. An Officer would call as soon as practically possible.

- Inform the Headteacher/DSL and record all you do on a Drug Related Incident monitoring Sheet.

### **What to do in a medical emergency**

- If a person is unconscious always call for medical help. Remove any immediate danger away from the person. If a hypodermic needle is still in a part of the body it is advisable to remove it due to the risk of further injury if it stays in. Place the person in the recovery position. Do not attempt to induce vomiting, get them to sit or stand and give them nothing by mouth. This would only differ if it were thought the person had fallen and there was a chance of spinal injury.
- Do not leave the person unattended. If possible shout for help. Do not leave the person with a pupil. Save any substance samples and vomit as they may be needed for analysis.
- Whilst your first priority is for the pupil(s) at immediate risk you must ensure the safety of other staff and pupils. If at all possible keep the area clear. This removes the element of risk
- If the person is conscious ask them what they have taken and how. Keep them under observation in a quiet place. Do not try to induce vomiting. If you know what drug has been used it may be necessary to give the person fluid to re-hydrate them.
- Have two staff there if possible. It makes recording more accurate, reduces stress levels and may be important in future if allegations are made.
- Any attending professional has to make record of what has been done and witnessed.
- It is vital that any information, substance samples and vomit are passed on to attending professionals. It may help to save a life.

## **Useful Organisations**

**Addaction:** One of the UK's largest specialist drug and alcohol treatment charities. As well as adult services, they provide services specifically tailored to the needs of young people and their parents. The Skills for Life project supports young people with drug misusing parents.

Website: [www.addaction.org.uk](http://www.addaction.org.uk)

**ADFAM:** Offers information to families of drug and alcohol users, the website has a database of local family support services. Tel: 020 3817 9410 Email: [admin@adfam.org.uk](mailto:admin@adfam.org.uk)

Website: [www.adfam.org.uk](http://www.adfam.org.uk)

**Alcohol Concern:** Works to reduce the incidence and cost of alcohol-related harm and to increase the range and quality of services available to people with alcohol-related problems.

Tel: 020 3907 8480 Email: [contact@alcoholconcern.org.uk](mailto:contact@alcoholconcern.org.uk)

Website: [www.alcoholconcern.org.uk](http://www.alcoholconcern.org.uk)

**ASH (Action on Smoking and Health)** A campaigning public health charity aiming to reduce the health problems caused by tobacco. Tel: 020 7404 0242 Email: [enquiries@ash.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@ash.org.uk)

Website: [www.ash.org.uk](http://www.ash.org.uk)

**Children's Legal Centre:** Free and confidential legal advice and information service covering all aspects of law and policing affecting children and young people.

Website: [www.childrenslegalcentre.com](http://www.childrenslegalcentre.com)

**Children's Rights Alliance for England:** A charity working to improve the lives and status of children in England through the fullest implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Tel: 020 3174 2279 Email: [info@crae.org.uk](mailto:info@crae.org.uk)

Website: [www.crae.org.uk](http://www.crae.org.uk)

**Drinkaware:** An independent charity that promotes responsible drinking through innovative ways to challenge the national drinking culture, helping reduce alcohol misuse and minimise alcohol related harm. Tel: 020 7766 9900

Website: [www.drinkaware.co.uk](http://www.drinkaware.co.uk)

**FRANK:** The national drugs awareness campaign aiming to raise awareness amongst young people of the risks of illegal drugs, and to provide information and advice, it also provides support to parents/carers, helping to give them the skills and confidence to communicate with their children about drugs. 24 Hour Helpline: 0300 123 3300 Email: [frank@talktofrank.com](mailto:frank@talktofrank.com)

Website: [www.talktofrank.com](http://www.talktofrank.com)

**Mentor UK:** Non-government organization with a focus on protecting the health and wellbeing of children and young people to reduce the damage that drugs can do to their lives. Email: [admin@mentoruk.org](mailto:admin@mentoruk.org)

Website: [www.mentoruk.org.uk](http://www.mentoruk.org.uk)

**National Children's Bureau:** Promotes the interests and well-being of all children and young people across every aspect of their lives. Tel: 020 7843 6000

Website: [www.ncb.org.uk](http://www.ncb.org.uk)

**Family Lives:** A charity offering support and information to anyone parenting a child or teenager. It runs a free-phone helpline and courses for parents and develops innovative projects. Tel: 0800 800 2222

Website: <http://familylives.org.uk/>

**Re-Solv (Society for the prevention of Solvent and Volatile Substance Abuse)** A national charity providing information for teachers, other professionals, parents and young people.

Tel: 01785 817885 Information Line: 01785 810762

Text/WhatsApp 07496 959930

Email: [information@re-solv.org](mailto:information@re-solv.org)

Website: [www.re-solv.org](http://www.re-solv.org)

## **Smokefree**

Website: <http://smokefree.nhs.uk>

**Youth Offending Teams:** Local Youth Offending Teams are multi-agency teams and are responsibility of the LA, who have a statutory duty to prevent offending by young people under the age of 18.

Website: <https://www.gov.uk/youth-offending-tea>