Wincanton Primary School

Drugs Awareness Policy

Approved by the Headteacher on **1st December 2023**

Propose Date of Future Review **1st December 2025**

Signed Graeme Wilson. Headteacher

Purpose of the policy

- To support the school's endeavour to maintain the safety and well-being of all pupils, staff and visitors
- To clarify legal responsibilities, entitlements and obligations
- To support all the members of the school community by providing clear guidance and procedures on drug related issues to ensure clarity and consistency
- To develop a whole school approach to drug education in the context of the school curriculum

We will actively discourage the use of illegal substances, alcohol or tobacco and the misuse of glue, solvents, prescribed and over-the-counter medicines. We acknowledge the importance of our pastoral role in the welfare of young people and through the general ethos of the school, will seek to enable pupils needing support to come forward.

Inclusive definition of drugs

We define a drug as a substance that, when taken into the body, changes the way we feel, the way we perceive things, and the way our body works. This definition includes illegal substances and also legal substances such as alcohol, tobacco, solvents and medicines.

Ethos

Drug education in our school aims to enable pupils to make healthy informed choices by increasing their knowledge, exploring a range of attitudes towards drug use and developing and practising decision making skills. The children will be taught against national and local guidelines for good practice and is appropriate to the age and experience of our pupils.

Rationale/key principles

It is our aim to help all pupils to be able to take their place safely in a world where a wide range of drugs exists. We recognise that some drugs have beneficial effects, but also that every drug has potential harm. For this reason, all drugs need appropriate and responsible care and management. In order to be able to make informed choices, staff and pupils need to understand the nature of drugs, their social status, their uses and effects.

Content

It is felt that drug education should start at least two to three years before the likely age of experimentation. Drug issues will be reinforced throughout the child's education, matching their increasing understanding and maturity.

Key Stage 1

Children should be introduced to ideas about how to keep healthy and the role of drugs as medicines.

Key Stage 2

Children should be introduced to the fact that whilst all medicines are drugs, not all drugs are medicines. They should also begin to be aware of the harmful effects on health of abuse of tobacco, alcohol and other drugs.

In line with these proposals drug education will be taught as part of the PSHE programme. This will be either within class topics or be specifically taught as and when appropriate.

The drug education programme will provide opportunities for pupils to:

- explore attitudes and values around drug misuse.
- practise decision making skills.
- become aware of peer pressure.
- develop assertiveness skills.
- consider the consequences of risk taking.
- learn how to access sources of help and information.
- emphasise the benefits of a healthy lifestyle.
- evaluate media messages on drug use.

PROCEDURES

- Medical emergencies

If an individual is unconscious, is having trouble breathing, is seriously confused or disorientated, has taken a harmful toxic substance or is otherwise at immediate risk of immediate harm medical help will be sought and first aid given if required. The priority will be the pupil's safety.

- Suspicious Behaviour

Behaviour that could indicate involvement with drugs should also be logged so that patterns of behaviour can be observed and concerns acted upon where necessary, following up to date safeguarding procedures.

- Finding substances

If a substance or equipment thought to be either illegal or harmful is discovered it should be removed to a place of safe keeping in the presence of a witness from the teaching staff. If the substance is known or suspected to be illegal the police must be informed. If a substance is found on a pupil the above procedure should be followed and the incident recorded (safeguarding Cause for Concern forms) including:

- the date and time of the find or retrieval
- the size and appearance of the substance
- the names of those concerned
- the action taken

Any equipment associated with drug misuse should be handled with care, recorded and in the case of such items as needles and syringes, they should be placed in a secure and rigid container for collection by the appropriate authority. If these are found on a pupil, the pupil's parents will be informed.

MANAGING DRUG RELATED INCIDENTS

Pupils, staff and visitors to the premises are made aware of the school's drug policy.

Routine arrangements

- **Medicines**

The school has a procedure for the administration of medicines that must be followed for everyone's safety. (See Medical Policy)

- **Alcohol**

No alcohol will be consumed during the course of a normal school day. Alcohol is not permitted on the school premises except by the permission of the Headteacher. Any adult or child under the effects of alcohol will be asked to leave the premises for the safety of the whole school.

- **Tobacco**

The school and its grounds are no smoking areas at all times. Pupils are not permitted to bring to school smoking materials, including matches and lighters. In the interests of health and safety, should a pupil be found in possession of any of these on school premises, they will be confiscated.

- **Solvents**

The school will ensure that potentially hazardous substances are stored safely, and pupils will be supervised if it is necessary that they come into contact with them in the course of their work.

Pupils are not permitted to be in possession of products such as solvents and aerosols. (only exception permitted is aerosol Ventolin / any other approved medicines administered in the presence of an adult and stored in a locked medicine cupboard.)

- **Illegal drugs**

No illegal drugs are allowed to be brought on to, or used on school premises. To protect the health and safety of the school community regular checks will be made of the site to ensure that drug paraphernalia, particularly needles and syringes, are cleared away safely and legally.

Incidents

A drug related incident may include any of the following:

- Finding drugs, or related items on school premises
- Possession of drugs by an individual on school premises
- Use of drugs by an individual on school premises
- Supply of drugs on school premises
- Individuals disclosing information about their drug use
- Rumours or reports of drug possession supply or drug use.

Guiding principles

The school is aware of its legal responsibilities in regard to drug related incidents and in responding to them. The School's first responsibility is for the welfare of the individual, balanced with the need to protect the community as a whole.

The Headteacher will normally be responsible for coordinating the management of drug related incidents, offering sources of support and liaising with outside agencies.

The school acknowledges the importance of its pastoral role and will support all concerned in ensuring the well-being of its pupils. Parents will be encouraged to become involved as much as possible in order to achieve a successful drugs education programme.

Finding Drugs

If children are found in possession of tobacco, alcohol, glue, solvents or prescribed or over-the counter medicines, parents will be informed and appropriate steps taken.

In an emergency arising from an incident involving abuse, the well-being of the pupil is paramount.

In all instances:

- separate the child involved from the rest of the group.
- decide and implement the next best step in terms of the child's welfare.
- inform parents.
- Supply of illegal substances

It is an offence to produce or supply any controlled drug on school premises. The police will be involved in such circumstances.

- **Returning articles which have been confiscated**

Articles confiscated and not required by the police must be returned to parents. They will be informed in writing within 24 hours of articles confiscated and an explanation given as to why it is inappropriate to return the article to the child. It will be made clear that there is a time limit of one week for the items to be recovered or they will be disposed of by the school.

- **Recording**

All incidents will be recorded within 24 hours.

- **Confidentiality**

Complete secrecy can never be promised to a pupil, though information given in confidence will not generally be disclosed to anyone else. If a pupil chooses to disclose that they are using a drug without medical authorisation, particularly when seeking support, this information will not be used against them notwithstanding any illegal / controlled substances. However action will be taken to ensure that the pupil comes to no serious harm if this is considered a significant risk.

STAFF TRAINING AND SUPPORT

We recognise the need for staff to receive appropriate training to support their work in delivering the school programme of drug education and dealing appropriately with incidents should they arise.

The Headteacher, or other appropriate member of staff, will try to organise training related to the identified needs of staff as required.

All staff need to understand and support the rationale and aims of drug education and be aware of the legal implications and their responsibilities.