



Harmful and Illegal Substances Policy

This policy also applies to the Early Years' Foundation Stage and Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014

Introduction

This is a governing body policy, which takes into account the governors' legal responsibilities as employers and occupants of the school premises and the guidance in the *Department's 'Drugs: Guidance for Schools'* and *10/95 Protection of Children: the Role of the Education Service*, and the guidance in the Department's *Improving Behaviour and Attendance: Guidance on Exclusions from Schools and Pupil Referral Units 2003*.

It should be read in conjunction with the school's:

- Behaviour Policy
- Anti-Smoking Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- PSHE/Science Schemes of Work

The governors are committed to ensuring that St Margaret's is a healthy school, free from the misuse of drugs and other substances. Illegal drugs should never be in school. Legal drugs are only allowed when they are medicines agreed by the Principal for use in school under the First Aid policy.

Aim

The policy aims to make clear the school's approach to the problem of harmful and illegal substances.

Definition

Legal drugs or harmful substances include common ones such as:

- Alcohol
- Tobacco
- Solvents
- Over the counter drugs
- Prescribed drugs (except those agreed by the Principal under the Administration of Medicines policy)

Illegal drugs which must never be in school include the following common ones:

- Cannabis
- Ecstasy
- Heroin
- Crack/Cocaine and LSD

Responsibilities

The Principal

The Principal has overall responsibility for the implementation of the policy, for liaison with governing body and parents, and external agencies as appropriate, and for the training and support of staff.



Drugs Education

The Principal will ensure that there is a planned drugs and harmful substances education programme as part of the PSHE programme (and other appropriate areas of the curriculum e.g. Science).

The programme will:

- Inform pupils about drugs and their effects
- Promote a positive attitude towards a healthy lifestyle
- Increase pupils' understanding of the health and social implications of the use and misuse of drugs
- Inform pupils about course of action open to them if they or people they know become, or might become, involved in drugs activity

Action to be taken in Incidents involving Misuse of Drugs

It is vitally important the staff, pupils and parents should be clear about the action that will be taken in any drug related incident.

1. Staff should ensure that all cases of misuse of drugs, or suspected misuse, are reported to the Principal (or, in his absence, another member of the SMT)
2. In all instances involving substance misuse or supply on the school's premises parents will be informed, and their co-operation sought
3. The school will consider each drug or harmful substance incident separately and consider the appropriate response, bearing in mind the circumstances of the case, and the need to balance the interests of the pupil, other members of the school and the wider community
4. However, the governors believe that it is essential that parents and pupils are clear about the normal sanction that will be applied in particular instances, as follows:
 - a) A pupil who supplies any drug or harmful substances or other solvents (whether legal or illegal, and regardless of the seriousness of the use) on the school premises will normally be permanently excluded for a first offence.

'Supply' includes retailing drug or harmful substances on the premises, communicating with a drug or harmful substance dealer on behalf of another pupil of the school, introducing fellow pupils to a drug or harmful substance dealer, and any other instance of procuring legal or illegal drug or harmful substances for him/herself or other pupils.

'Supply' includes supplying for money or free-of-charge.

Before making a decision on exclusion the Principal will ensure that satisfactory investigation has been carried out.

- b) A pupil who has any legal or illegal drug or harmful substance in her possession will normally be excluded for a fixed period for a first offence, to be determined by the Principal after considering all the circumstances of the case.

The Principal will also determine what counselling needs to be provided and/or other action needs to be taken during or after the exclusion.



For a second offence the Principal will determine whether a further fixed- term exclusion is appropriate, or whether it is appropriate to exclude permanently.

Offences outside the School

If a pupil is involved in a drug or harmful substance-related incident outside the school the Principal will assess the implications for the pupil and the school and determine the best course of action bearing in mind the interests of the pupil and the interests of the school and wider community. Exclusion would not normally be appropriate for a first outside-school offence.

Involvement of the Police

Although there is no legal duty to inform the police of any drug or harmful substance incident in the school, the governors' policy is that the Principal will determine whether to inform the Police Liaison Officer and will seek any relevant support and advice. The Principal must be mindful that the governors cannot knowingly allow the premises to be used for the production or supply of any controlled drug, or the preparation or smoking of cannabis or opium.

Where the school suspects that drug or harmful substances are being sold on the premises all relevant suspicions and information will be passed to the police.

Staff Training

All staff should know this school policy and be informed of any changes to it.

The governing body will review the policy three-yearly and will assess its effectiveness and whether any changes are necessary.

Any changes will be notified to the staff and parents.