



ST PHILIP HOWARD CATHOLIC SCHOOL

DRUGS POLICY

Approved:

March 2018

For review:

March 2021

Substance use/misuse

The school makes it quite clear that possession of/dealing in illicit substances is regarded as a serious offence and will be dealt with accordingly. This prohibition applies not only during the school day, but also when pupils are travelling to and from school. Colleagues becoming aware of any offences in this connection should refer the matter immediately to the appropriate Head of Year, or to any member of the leadership team.

Policy statement: drug education/drug abuse

In keeping with the ethos of a Catholic Christian school and as part of its care for the welfare of its pupils, the school has a duty to inform and educate young people on the consequences of drug use and misuse. Care of our bodies as temples of the Holy Spirit is a vital part of Christian education. The school takes a pro-active stance on this matter, believing that health education is a vital part of the personal and social education of every pupil.

The school believes and supports the following educational aims in respect of substance use and misuse:

1. To enable pupils to make healthy, informed choices by increasing knowledge, challenging attitudes and developing and practising skills.
2. To increase understanding about the implications and possible consequences of use and misuse.
3. To widen understanding about related health and social issues, eg crime, HIV and AIDS, damage to family life.
4. To enable any pupils who are misusing substances or who have concerns about the misuse of substances to seek help and appropriate support and to persuade them to stop.

Guidelines

1. These aims are fulfilled through aspects of the pupils' experience in the taught curriculum mainly in RE, Citizenship and Science. Other opportunities to reinforce learning will occur in other parts of the teaching and pastoral programme. The school actively co-operates with other agencies such as Community Police, Social Services, LA and Health and Drug Agencies to fulfil its commitment to drugs education and to deal with incidents of substance use and misuse.
2. Where a member of staff suspects a pupil to be involved in the misuse of drugs the Head of Year should be informed as soon as possible. Following discussion with the Pupil Support Manager, appropriate further action will be decided upon. This would normally involve careful monitoring of the pupil and discussion with parents/guardian/pupil. The Pupil Support Manager will inform the Headteacher
3. If a pupil is found to be involved in substance misuse or supply on the premises, the Headteacher should be informed. The parents/guardians will be contacted at the earliest possible opportunity. The police liaison officer will be contacted for advice and support.
4. If a young person admits to the misuse or supply of substances off the premises the teacher should inform the Pupil Support Manager. The Headteacher will be informed and the parents contacted. The police liaison officer will be contacted for advice and support.
5. The school will consider any substances incident individually and recognises that a variety of response will be necessary to deal with incidents. In each case, it will seek to balance the interests of the pupil involved, the other school members and the local community.

Guidance on recognising the signs of drug and solvent misuse.

Warning signs

Early detection of drug misuse is extremely important. Teachers need to be vigilant. The signs listed below may indicate that individuals or groups of individuals are misusing drugs. Their presence alone is not conclusive proof of drug or solvent misuse; many of them are a normal part of

adolescence, but the presence of several signs together may point to a need for greater vigilance.

Warning signs in individuals

- Change in attendance and being unwilling to take part in school activities.
- Decline in performance in school work.
- Unusual outbreaks of temper, marked swings in mood, restlessness or irritability.
- Reports from parents that more time is being spent away from home, possibly with new friends or with friends in older age groups.
- Excessive tiredness without obvious cause.
- No interest in physical appearance.
- Sores or rashes especially on the mouth or nose.
- Lack of appetite.
- Heavy use of scents, colognes etc to disguise the smell of drugs.
- Wearing sunglasses at inappropriate times (to hide dilated or constricted pupils).

Warning signs in groups

- Regular absence on certain days eg the day young people receive state benefit.
- Keeping at a distance from other pupils, away from supervision points.
- Being the subject of rumour about drug taking.
- Talking to strangers on or near school premises.
- Stealing which appears to be the work of several individuals rather than one person, eg perhaps to shoplift solvents.
- Use of drugtakers' slang.
- Exchanging money or other objects in unusual circumstances.
- Associating briefly with one person who is much older and not normally part of the peer group.