

FRIENDS' SCHOOL LISBURN



POLICY ON DRUGS EDUCATION

1 AIMS

Drugs Education in Friends' School is seen as a component of Personal, Social and Health Education.

Specific aims are:

- To provide pupils with the skills and knowledge necessary to make informed choices about the use of drugs and illegal substances;
- To provide information for parents on the provision made by the School for educating pupils on the implications of drug abuse;
- To provide information and clear guidelines for teachers.

2 OUTCOMES

As outcomes of drugs education:

Pupils should

- Have access to information about the misuse of drugs;
- Understand that drugs should not be brought into School, nor should they be in a pupil's possession when the pupil is in School uniform or when the pupil is taking part in any School approved activity, including School visits and trips;
- Be aware of the consequences of drugs misuse.

Members of Staff should

- Be familiar with the School procedures for dealing with an incident of the use of illegal substances.

Parents should

- Be aware of information given to pupils through the drugs education programme;
- Expect to be contacted in the event of an incident of drug misuse in which their child is involved;
- Be aware that dealing with a case of drug misuse is both a matter for the School and for other agencies such as PSNI and the South Eastern Education and Library Board.

3 IMPLEMENTATION

The School will implement this policy:

- Through a programme of Drugs Education involving PSHE, topics in programmes of study and inputs from outside agencies;
- Through staff alertness to signs of drug misuse by pupils;
- Through rigorous investigation of cases - or suspected cases - of drug misuse by pupils. (A copy of School Procedures is attached.)
- Through contact and involvement with agencies related to the field of drugs abuse;
- Through periodic provision of information to parents.

SANCTIONS

While efforts will be made to educate pupils on the effects of drug misuse, disciplinary measures will continue to be necessary. Co-ordination of these is the responsibility of Vice-Principal (Pastoral), as the designated member of staff. In brief, the following will apply in the event of a case of drugs misuse.

- 1 Substances believed to be illegal will be confiscated and passed to PSNI.
- 2 Parents will be informed as soon as possible.
- 3 PSNI will be informed.
- 4 Action taken will include the possibility of suspension.
- 5 Governors will consider expulsion in the case of pupils caught in possession of illegal drugs or substances with intent to supply.

CONCLUSION

The school is aware of the risks and dangers to which young people may be exposed through the availability of drugs and similar substances. Our pastoral responsibility commits us to playing a role in helping to combat the misuse of drugs and to providing support for those at risk. In dealing with issues arising, we seek to balance the welfare of the pupil, the ethos of the school and our responsibility to the community. The spirit of this policy is intended to be both educative and preventative.

Revised August 2003



PROCEDURES: Incidents of drug, substance misuse involving pupils.

N.B. The rights of young people and their parents must be borne in mind in following these procedures.

A. A member of staff discovering a pupil using illegal drugs or suspecting the illegal use of drugs must:

1. consider the medical condition of the pupil and take appropriate action;
2. confiscate any substance which appears suspicious;
3. inform the Principal or Vice-Principal (Pastoral);
4. record details in writing and submit to the Principal or Vice-Principal (Pastoral);

B. The Vice-Principal (Pastoral) is the Designated Member of Staff and is responsible for informing the Principal who will initiate appropriate action. This will include:

- i) contacting parents as soon as possible;
- ii) investigating the details of the case;
- iii) liaising with outside agencies, including PSNI and SEELB;
- iv) ensuring that appropriate sanctions are applied and support made available.

C. The following points should be noted:

1. A pupil disclosing to a member of staff that he/she is using or has used illegal drugs, **should not be promised confidentiality**. It is School policy to contact parents in the event of such disclosures.
2. Each case will be treated individually. Therefore, a variety of responses may be taken in dealing with instances of drug abuse. However, they will all be directed by the terms and spirit of school policy and procedures.

D. SANCTIONS/ACTION

1. The Board of Governors will consider expulsion in the case of pupils caught supplying or being in possession of illegal drugs or substances with intent to supply. Details will be forwarded to PSNI.
2. Pupils caught in possession of illegal drugs or substances for their own use will be given a suspension (up to the maximum of three weeks).
3. Pupils admitting to use of illegal drugs or substances will be offered support and counselling through appropriate agencies.