



Introduction

The aim of the Substance Abuse Policy is to acknowledge and clarify the school's role in Drug Prevention and Drug Education and ensure it is appropriate to pupils' needs. The policy will provide information about procedures in response to any drug-related incident and provide guidance to teachers, support staff and outside visitors. It needs to be considered in conjunction with the Code of Conduct, other relevant policies, and appropriate appendices.

Saint Cecilia's does not tolerate the misuse of drugs, alcohol and tobacco by members of the school, nor the illegal supply of these substances.

Saint Cecilia's is committed to the health and safety of its members and will take action to safeguard their well-being.

Saint Cecilia's acknowledges the importance of its pastoral role in the welfare of young people, and through the general ethos of the school will seek to support individual pupils appropriately.

In response to shared concerns at a local and national level, and as part of the 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. This 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.

Fundamental to our school's values and practice is the principle of collaborating with parents/carers, by consulting with them. Effective communication and co-operation is key to the successful implementation of this policy.

Whilst we acknowledge that the number of young people who use and misuse substances is rising, it is important to recognise that a large number of young people are choosing not to use or misuse substances. We will continue to support their differing needs.

Definition

Drugs are those that are Legal, such as alcohol, tobacco and solvents, available over the counter, and Prescribed Drugs and Illegal Drugs such as cannabis, ecstasy, heroin, crack/cocaine and LSD. At Saint Cecilia's, we all believe that the possession and use of drugs in school, or during the school day, is unacceptable. All the drugs covered in this policy are not permitted to be bought, sold, or otherwise obtained on school premises or during the school day. This policy is taken to include school premises, both buildings and grounds, and those circumstances where it is obvious a pupil has a connection with the school, for example when wearing school uniform or travelling to and from school. The policy also applies to off-site activities, visits and school trips, including those abroad. These rules also apply to adults working at, and for, the school. Individual exceptions may be made for pupils who need to take prescribed medicines, where appropriate.

Aims

- To encourage pupils to make healthy, informed choices by increasing knowledge, challenging attitudes and developing and practising skills
- To provide accurate information about the abuse of substances
- To increase understanding about the implications and possible consequences of use and misuse
- To encourage an understanding for those experiencing, or likely to experience, substance abuse/misuse
- To widen understanding about related health and social issues, e.g. sex and sexuality, crime, HIV, and AIDS
- To seek to minimise the risks that users, and potential users, face
- To help to enable young people to identify sources of appropriate personal support.

The Roles of the Headteacher and Governing Body

The Head Teacher takes overall responsibility for the policy and its implementation, for liaison with the Governing Body, parents, LA and appropriate outside agencies. At Saint Cecilia's, the Leadership Team will be responsible for ensuring that all drug related incidents are recorded. The Headteacher will ensure that all staff dealing with substance misuse issues are adequately supported and trained.

Procedures

In instances involving substance misuse or supply on the premises, and following discussion between staff members who know the pupil well, parents will be informed at the earliest opportunity by the Head Teacher. The school and the parents can then work together to support the young person involved.

If a pupil admits to a member of staff to using or supplying substances off the premises, the Leadership Team will be informed. They will inform the Headteacher, who may inform the parents. There is no legal obligation to inform the Police, though they may be able to give relevant support and advice. However, a school cannot knowingly allow its

premises to be used for the production or supply of any controlled drug. Where it is suspected that substances are continuing to be sold on the premises, details regarding those involved and as much information as possible will be passed to the Police.

The Governing Body will be involved in substance education and substance-related incidents in the same manner as any other matter concerning the direction of the school.

Saint Cecilia's will consider each substance incident individually, and recognise that a variety of responses will be necessary to deal with incidents. The school will consider very carefully the implications of any action it may take. It seeks to balance the interests of the pupil involved, the other school members and the local community. Breaches of the school's Behaviour Policy will lead to support and interventions from the Leadership Team, but where no improvement is made, despite support, exclusion may be considered, but only as a last resort.

The Delivery of Drugs Education

These aims are fulfilled through aspects of pupils' experiences in the taught curriculum, the informal curriculum and through opportunities for extra-curricular activities. We deliver the taught curriculum mainly through PSHE, but other opportunities to reinforce learning will occur in other parts of the teaching programme, the mentoring system, and assemblies.

The Role of Other Agencies

The school actively co-operates with other agencies such as the Police, Social Services, LA, the Connexions service, the Education Welfare Service, and the Youth Offending Team to deliver its commitment to drugs education and to deal with incidents of substance use and misuse.

Media

The Head Teacher will take responsibility for liaison with the media. As the issue of substance misuse is an emotive one, and is likely to generate interest from the Local and National Media, the school will take appropriate advice and guidance from the LA Press Office and Legal Department as necessary.

Medical Emergencies

The procedures for an emergency apply when a pupil is at immediate risk of harm. If a member of staff suspects a pupil is under the influence of a drug on school premises, or a pupil admits to being under the influence, the incident will be treated as a Medical Emergency. The main responsibility for any member of staff is any pupil at immediate risk, but the well-being and safety of others is also a priority. If in any doubt, all members of staff must call a First Aider via Reception, passing on any information available, and alert the Leadership Team. The First Aider will then assess the situation and decide whether further medical help is required.

Medicines in School

Parents/carers of any pupil on Prescribed Medication must supply the school with written information on usage and dosage.

Confidentiality

While there is no legal duty to pass on confidential information to other agencies, where there is a probability that a pupil is 'at risk of significant harm,' there is a moral duty to pass on such information. It is possible that pupils may wish to talk to staff about their concerns on issues related to substance abuse/misuse. In such cases, staff must inform pupils that they may not be able to treat the information received confidentially. If a pupil is considered not to be 'at risk of significant harm,' confidentiality may be granted, but only in extreme cases, and only by the Deputy Headteacher or another member of the Leadership Team. Information on substance abuse/misuse will be passed on to the Deputy Headteacher who will recommend an appropriate course of action.

Whole School Involvement

All members of the school community will be encouraged to work together to put this policy into practice. Pupils will be actively consulted and encouraged to take responsibility for their own actions. Parents/carers and governors will be involved through consultation. Other agencies will also be asked to support the work of the school and to work co-operatively with us.

References to Other Relevant Policies

The Substance Abuse Policy makes reference to the following policies:

- The Teaching Learning Policy
- Child Protection Policy and Procedures
- Equality Policy
- Anti-Smoking Policy
- The Behaviour Policy