

# **St Thomas à Becket Catholic Comprehensive School**

## **Drugs Policy**

Written: Summer 2002  
To Be Reviewed: Summer 2005

### **Introductory Statement**

St Thomas à Becket Catholic Comprehensive School is committed to the health and safety of its members and will take action to safeguard their well being.

The school acknowledges fully the importance of its pastoral role in the welfare of young people and its responsibility in this respect; the School, therefore, through its general ethos and reflecting the teachings of Jesus Christ, will seek to persuade those pupils who are in need of support to accept what we can offer.

We do not condone the misuse of substances by members of the school community nor the illegal supply of substances.

We believe that the school has a duty to inform and educate our pupils on the consequences of drug use and misuse; to this end, drug education forms part of our Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education (PSHCE) Programme.

Our School's values and our Catholic mission reinforce the principle of sharing the responsibility for the education of young people in our care with parents, by keeping them informed at all times. Effective communication and co-operation is essential in the successful implementation of the policy.

### **Aims and objectives of the policy**

- To ensure that all those concerned with the school understand how the school proposes:
  - a) To provide meaningful drug education for all its pupils
  - b) To deal with drug-related incidents involving members of the school community
- To provide a basis for future development of drug education inside the school
- To provide a point of reference for personnel involved in dealing with drug related incidents and/or the delivery of drug education.

### **Consultation Process**

Members of staff, the governing body illegal substances representative and the LEA Drugs Education Development department were involved.

### **The purpose of Drug Education**

We believe and support the following educational aims in respect of substance use and misuse:

- To provide accurate information about 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;
- To widen understanding about related health, social, moral and spiritual issues;
- To seek to minimise the risks that users and potential users face;
- To enable pupils to make healthy, informed choices by increasing knowledge, challenging attitudes and developing and practising skills.

### **Practical Delivery of Drug Education**

These aims are delivered through all aspects of the pupils' experiences in:

- The delivery of discreet units during the PSHCE programme. This will be seen as an integral part of a programme for a healthy lifestyle.
- The taught curriculum (particularly Religious Education, Science, PE and English; we also recognise that other opportunities for learning occur in other parts of the teaching programme);
- The informal curriculum;
- Extra-curricular activities.

### **Designated Person for Drug Education**

Mr S White working together with Miss S Wilkinson Citizenship Coordinator

### **Designated Person for Drug - related Incidents**

Mr S White Acting Deputy Head Teacher (Mr P Kiernan will deputise for the designated teacher when necessary).

### **Definition of Drugs**

The school defines drugs in the following way:-

*Prescribed:* e.g. Antibiotics,

*Legal:* e.g. Alcohol and Tobacco,

*Illegal:* e.g. Heroin; Cannabis, Amphetamines, Cocaine, Crack Cocaine.

*Over the Counter:* e.g. Aspirin, Aerosols.

Children in this school may have access to the full range of drugs described (whether legally or illegally). This policy hopes to encompass all substances, which are potentially dangerous to the health of our children.

### **Geographical Boundaries of the School**

These are seen as:

1. During the working day inside the school building and within the physical boundaries of the school grounds.
2. Out of the physical boundaries of the school but supervised by members of the school staff (e.g. on an educational visit).
3. Where pupils are moving to and from school but unsupervised by school staff and where the pupils are expected to uphold school rules and standards and where, the wearing of school uniform can identify them.

### **What is a drug related incident?**

The school will consider action on any incident reported to the designated person by any person having a connection with the school. One aim of this policy is to ensure that the guidelines for dealing with such reported incidents are clear and that the possible outcomes of drug action taken is understood by pupils, staff, parents and Governors. See Appendix 1, for more precise definitions of drug-related incidents.

### **Management of a drug-related incident:**

The flow chart (Appendix 2) provides a comprehensive summary of how the school will manage a reported incident. Appendix 3 provides a practical guide to staff on the discovery or reporting of such an incident. Included is the drug related incident form to be sent to the LEA.

### **Confidentiality**

In the case of disclosure it should be made clear to pupils by staff that absolute confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. There are some exceptional circumstances when the confidentiality may be breached and direct action may be taken. Such situations must be judged on its own merit taking into account the age of the pupils, their personal circumstances etc. If in doubt staff should consult with the designated person as to whether confidentiality should be breached. As a guide the school sees generally three situations where a breach of confidence is justified.

- a) Where there is a child protection issue.
- b) Where the life of a person is at risk.
- c) Where the law is perceived as having been broken.

### **Working with others**

The school organises the delivery of presentations by the LEA Drug Education Officer to parents and governors. We try to ensure that parents from all years are given the opportunity to attend these events. A representative from the West Yorkshire Police is also present at these presentations. The School Police Liaison Officer will coordinate with Citizenship and PHSE Coordinators in delivering illegal substance abuse information to pupils.

### **Role of Governors:**

A member of the Governing Body has the Specified Brief to oversee the drafting and implementation of this policy and to liaise with the designated person.

### **Administration of Medication to Pupils**

Parents and Pupils are advised through letters home and through their school planners that prescribed medication to be administered during school time must be brought to the medical room. A note from the parent must accompany this describing the dosage and its frequency. This ruling applies to other controlled drugs (e.g. pain killers), which children may bring into school. Pupils seen taking these drugs by staff outside the medical room are asked to report this to the designated person as a possible drug-related incident. Children who are prescribed drugs which have to be taken regularly over a long period of time (e.g. Ritalin) have special arrangements. The drugs are kept in a locked cupboard in the medical room and dispensed by Matron at the specified times. Children who use epipens (anaphylactic shock) or inhalers (asthma) or novopens (diabetes) normally carry their own medication. Details of where the pens are kept on each child are compiled.

### **Relationship to other School Policies**

This policy cannot be treated in isolation and is seen as relating closely to the Behaviour and Discipline Sex Education and PSHCE policies as well as a point of reference for drug-related work in Science, RE, PE and other subjects where the use and misuse of drugs may be part of the taught curriculum.

### **Dissemination of the Policy**

This policy will be available to all those having a working connection with the school (e.g. parents governors, clerical workers). Staff will be advised through INSET on dealing with a drug related incident.

### **Staff and other Adults in the School**

The school is non-smoking inside or within the physical school boundaries. Signs around the school are placed in appropriate places to this effect. Staff may not consume alcohol inside the school when children are attending except at the discretion of the Head Teacher (e.g. St Thomas à Becket Day). This celebration must take place inside a designated area (e.g. staff room).

Staff who are alleged to have misused substances inside the school will be dealt with in accordance with the disciplinary measures and strategies advised by the Head Teacher and Governing Bodies.

### **Use of outside agencies**

The school actively co-operates with other agencies to deliver the curriculum and support those in need; these agencies include:

- The CES and Catholic Care;
- The Local Police;
- Social Services;
- Other institutions and government offices delivering, learning and providing information;
- School Medical Officers;
- LEA Drugs Advisory Service.

We value the support given by those outside agencies and recognise the contribution they make.

### **Review and Evaluation**

This policy will be reviewed and evaluated on a two yearly basis in order to establish whether or not the aims are being met. The review will be undertaken by the designated person, the Coordinator for PSHCE along with the Head Teacher, the Governing Body, the School Council and Parents. The drug education programme will be monitored, reviewed and evaluated on an annual basis by the designated person, Coordinator for PSHCE, the Police School Liaison Officer.

## **Appendix 3**

### **Procedures to be carried out when supporting a pupil under the influence of an illegal substance**

1. There will be a designated teacher for drug related incidents who is a member of the permanent teaching staff at the school. This person is responsible to the Head Teacher.
2. Where a pupil is found by a member of staff to have been taking drugs, or to be under the influence of drugs, on the school premises, the member of staff will help the pupil to a place of safety (e.g. the Medical Room or an Office where supervision can be ensured). The member of staff will then inform the designated teacher.
3. The designated teacher will inform the Head Teacher and appropriate Head of Year.
4. Following discussion between staff (the Head Teacher, Head of Year and any other member of staff who may be able to further understand the incident or the pupil's condition) parents will be informed at the earliest opportunity by the Head Teacher.
5. The school will work with the parents and other agencies (where appropriate) to support the pupil(s) involved.
6. Permanent Exclusion is seen as a last resort as it will only transfer the problem to others.

### **Procedures for dealing with anyone in possession of illegal substances**

1. When any person is found to be dealing in illegal substances Procedures 1 – 4 above will be followed.
2. The Police will be informed and the matter will be referred immediately to the Board of Governors represented by the Chair of Governors and Chair of the Disciplinary Committee.

### **Procedures for dealing with the discovery of substances**

Where staff discover substances, which are suspected to be harmful, illegal or deserving of investigation, they should note the two circumstances in which substances may be removed:

- a) *place* – if possible, in the presence of a witness, remove the substance from where it was discovered. If this is not possible, do not leave the substance unguarded while you enlist the help of a colleague. Continue with the procedures below.
- b) *person* – when receiving or retrieving substances from a pupil, do so, if possible, in the presence of a witness. Note that we can ask the suspected person to hand over the substance/turn out their pockets but we have no power to confiscate. If the person refuses, say that

parents/police will be informed and they will have the power to confiscate. Call the designated person whichever the case. In the absence of a witness, do not be put off receiving substances or within the bounds of professional discretion, removing a suspicious substance from a pupil's possession.

**The following guidelines should be observed at all times:**

1. Remove the substance from the place. Only take from the person if he/she agrees. We have no power of confiscation (see previous section (b) and record the time, place and circumstance when the substance came into your possession.
2. Do not investigate the nature of the substance but do record its approximate size and appearance.
3. Whenever possible, have the recordings countersigned by a witness.
4. Take the substance immediately to the designated teacher who will take it to the Head teacher. Do not keep the substance on your person or in a place of safe keeping; to do so may place you at risk.
5. In the presence of the Co-ordinator, place the substance in a sealed container. You, the Co-ordinator and, if possible, a witness should sign and date the package. An official report should be completed recording the date, time and circumstances of the finding.
6. The Head Teacher may choose to arrange for the Police to remove the substance(s) from the premises or may choose to dispose of it in an appropriate way.

**Needles and Syringes**

In the event of any discovery of any equipment associated with substance use, especially needles and syringes, pupils should not be allowed to handle such items. The designated teacher must be called for and this person will decide the best way of disposing of the equipment. In the case of needles/syringes they must be placed in the sharps box, which is to be found in Deputy Head's office.

**Emergency Procedures**

Should a member of staff discover a pupil who is suffering from a drug overdose or other substance (ab)use, that member of staff will:

- Ask what has happened, if the casualty is conscious;
- Not make the casualty vomit;
- Give the conscious casualty sips of milk or water if the lips are burning;
- Place the casualty (even when conscious) into the recovery position;
- Send for the designated person who will call for medical help;
- If the casualty vomits, keep samples to send with the casualty to hospital;

- Send any container or substance sample to the hospital with the casualty;
- Be prepared to resuscitate, if necessary;
- Complete an Accident report;
- Write a separate report detailing the date, time, place and circumstances of the Emergency.

### **Legal Position**

There is no legal obligation to inform the Police although they may be able to give relevant support and advice. However, we do have to notify the Police if dealing is involved and/or a class A drug involved. The school may not *knowingly* allow its premises to be used in 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 any other information should be passed on to the Police Liaison Officer.