

Mill Hill Primary School Drugs Policy

1 Aims and objectives

1.1 We aim to equip children with the knowledge, understanding and skills that enable them to make the sort of choices that lead to a healthy lifestyle. Our drugs education programme has the primary objective of helping children to become more confident and responsible young people. We teach children about the dangers to health posed by drug-taking, and we aim to equip them with the social skills that enable them to make informed moral and social decisions in relation to drugs in society.

Our policy takes full account of the DfES guidance 'Protecting Young People'(1999) and 'Drugs- Guidance for Schools' (2004) documentation.

1.2 The objectives of our drugs education programme are:

- to provide children with knowledge and information about illegal drugs and the harmful effects they can have on people's lives;
- to enable children to discuss moral questions related to drug taking, and so provide a safe environment for young people to share their thoughts and ideas;
- to help children become more self-confident so that they are able to make sensible and informed decisions about their lives;
- to let children know what they should do if they come across drugs, or are aware of other people misusing drugs;
- to help children respect their own bodies and, in so doing, reduce the likelihood that they will be persuaded to become involved in drug abuse;
- to show that taking illegal drugs is a moral issue, and that choices about drugs are moral choices;
- to ensure that all children are taught about drugs in a consistent manner, following guidelines that have been agreed by parents, governors and staff.

2 Organisation

2.1 We regard drugs education as a whole-school issue, and we believe that opportunities to teach about the importance of living a healthy lifestyle occur throughout the curriculum. Each class teacher answers questions about drugs sensitively and appropriately, as they occur. In routine circle-time/sharing sessions, we encourage children to discuss issues that are important to them, and we help children to be aware of the dangers of the misuse of drugs. For example, if a child raises the issue of smoking, the teacher takes time to discuss its harmful effects with the whole class. In science lessons we teach children what a drug is, and how drugs are used in medicine. We also teach them the difference between legal and illegal drugs.

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- 2.2** Drugs education is an important part of our school's personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum. The main teaching about drugs takes place in Year 5/6, where the children are taught about illegal drugs, and the dangers involved to those who take them. In teaching this course we follow the guidelines provided by the QCA, LA, and we receive advice and support from the Local Health Authority. The resources and materials that we use in these lessons are recommended either by QCA, the Health Authority or the LA. Lessons that focus on drug education form part of a sequence of lessons that are designed to promote in children a healthy lifestyle.
- 2.3** The children's class teacher teaches them drug education in normal lesson time. Sometimes the class teacher seeks support from the school nurse or another health professional. The teaching style that we use encourages children to ask questions and reflect on the dangers to health of drug misuse. Children explore issues, such as why people take drugs, and how they can avoid putting themselves in danger in the future. We give children the opportunity to talk in groups or to the whole class. We encourage them to listen to the views of others, and we ask them to explore why drugs are such a problem for society.

3 Managing drug related incidents in school and supporting children who experience drug related problems.

- 3.1** Other than the legitimate use of medicines it is against school rules for children to bring any drug onto the site. A drug related incident at this school is more likely to concern the inappropriate use of medicines or use of tobacco and alcohol by children. It is most unlikely to involve illegal drugs.

These incidents may take many forms;

- Inappropriate clothing (clothing with drug related logos or images and/or jewellery (i.e. earrings or badges in the shape of cannabis leaves or sporting pro-drug messages)
- Drug related graffiti
- Drugs being brought onto the school premises
- Suspicion/rumour or evidence of drug use (legal or illegal) or supply involving pupils
- Pupils under the influence of drugs
- Pupils making a disclosure about members of their own family to a member of the staff
- Suspicion/rumour or evidence of drug use (legal or illegal) or supply involving parents/carers

The school's response to such situations will depend on the seriousness of the incident and the circumstances in which it occurred. The school will;

- Make a careful assessment of any risks faced by our children
- Consider the use of appropriate sanctions where school rules have been broken
- Offer appropriate support to children and parents/carers from within the school and by referral to outside agencies

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- 3.2** The school believes that it is in the best interests of all concerned to inform parents/carers of any drug related incidents. The exception would include situations where the school believes that the child would be at serious risk of significant harm by it's parents/carers. As in all circumstances where a child is at risk of abuse or neglect the Child Protection procedures will be applied. In the unlikely event of a pupil requiring medical attention this would take priority over any other responses.
- 3.3** The school will take full account of of the circumstances when considering the role and involvement of the police. However, if illegal drugs are found on site the police will be informed.

4 The administration and storage of medicines

All members of staff at Mill Hill Primary School are committed to the health, safety and well-being of our children. Prescribed medicines will eb administered only on written request from parents/carers. (A book exists in the office for this purpose). Such medicines are kept in the school office or refrigerated as necessary.

5 The role of the headteacher

- 5.1** It is the responsibility of the headteacher to ensure that staff and parents are informed about this drugs education policy, and that the policy is implemented effectively. It is also the headteacher's role to ensure that staff are given sufficient training, so that they can teach effectively and handle any difficult issues with sensitivity.
- 5.2** The headteacher will liaise with external agencies regarding the school drugs education programme and ensure that all adults who work with children on these issues are aware of the school policy and work within this framework.
- 5.3** The headteacher will monitor the policy on a day to day basis and report to governors, when requested, on the effectiveness of the policy.

6 The role of governors

- 6.1** The governing body has the responsibility of setting down these general guidelines on drugs education. The governors will support the headteacher in following these guidelines. Governors will inform and consult with parents about the drugs education policy. Governors will also liaise with the LEA and health organisations so that the school's policy is in line with the best advice available.

7 The role of parents

- 7.1** The school is well aware that the primary role in children's drugs education lies with parents. We wish to build a positive and supporting relationship with the parents of children at our school through mutual understanding, trust and co-operation. In promoting this objective we will:

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- inform parents about the school drugs education policy and practice;
- answer any questions parents may have about the drugs education their child receives in school;
- inform parents about the best practice known with regard to drugs education so that the parents can support the key messages being given to children at school.

8 Monitoring and review

- 8.1** The curriculum committee of the governing body will monitor the drugs education policy. This committee will report their findings and recommendations to the full governing body as necessary, if the policy appears to need modification. The curriculum committee takes into serious consideration any representation from parents about the drugs education programme and comments will be recorded. Governors require the headteacher to keep a written record detailing the content and delivery of the drug education programme taught in the school.