

St. John the Baptist Primary School

Bunscoil Eoin Baiste






Drugs Policy

1. RATIONALE

- 1.1 For the purpose of this document the term 'drugs' includes tobacco, alcohol, over-the-counter and prescribed medication, volatile substances and controlled drugs.
- 1.2 St John the Baptist primary school does not condone the misuse of drugs but recognises that there has been a considerable increase in the abuse of drugs in recent years in Northern Ireland.
- 1.3 Drug misuse appears to be affecting an ever-younger population and the so-called "recreational" use of drugs can lead to a dangerous acceptance of illegal and harmful drug misuse as part of everyday life.
- 1.4 In St John the Baptist Primary School we believe that this school has a vital preventative role to play in combating the misuse of drugs by young people and we therefore include this as part of our PDMU curriculum.
- 1.5 This school sees its role as that of a caring community committed to the physical, mental, social, emotional, moral and spiritual health, safety and well-being of our pupils and staff.
- 1.6 We want our pupils to make informed and responsible decisions about drugs by increasing their knowledge and by developing in them appropriate values, attitudes and skills.
- 1.7 However, we recognise that drug misuse is a whole- community issue and that schools alone cannot solve the drugs problem; the school is only one of a number of groups and agencies which must play a part in the education of young people and we make use of their expertise where possible in the delivery of the curriculum.
- 1.8 Copies of the guidance on which this policy is based (Drugs: Guidance for schools in Northern Ireland) are available from the Department of Education website www.deni.gov.uk (Circular 2004/09).

2. DEFINITIONS

- 2.1 For the purpose of this document and in line with the guidance issued to all schools by the Department of Education (2004/09) **drugs will include any substance which, when taken, has the effect of altering the way the body works or the way a person behaves, feels, sees or thinks.**
- 2.2 As well as everyday substances such as tea and coffee, drugs include:
 -  Alcohol and tobacco
 -  "Over-the-counter" medicines, such as paracetamol
 -  Prescribed drugs, such as antibiotics, tranquillisers, inhalers and Ritalin

- ⦿ Volatile substances, such as correcting fluids/thinners, gas lighter fuel, aerosols, glues and petrol
- ⦿ Controlled drugs, such as cannabis, LSD, Ecstasy, amphetamine sulphate (speed), magic mushrooms (processed), heroin and cocaine
- ⦿ Other substances such as amyl/butyl nitrite ('poppers') and unprocessed magic mushrooms.

3. ETHOS

- 3.1 It is our Mission at St John the Baptist Primary School to serve our community and enhance its social and educational well-being through the provision of a warm, caring, secure and effective Catholic School. We believe this will enable our children to maximise their individual potential for academic, spiritual, personal and social development and help prepare them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.

4. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 4.1 To have a clear and agreed understanding among everyone in the community about the implications and possible consequences of drug use/misuse.
- 4.2 To provide all staff (teaching and non-teaching) with adequate training and support to enable them to deal effectively and confidently with incidents of suspected drug misuse, and to ensure that the agreed procedures are consistently and sensitively applied in all situations.
- 4.3 To empower teaching staff to deliver an effective drugs education programme through PDMU lessons in order to develop pupil's self-esteem and promote positive attitudes in their relationships with others.
- 4.4 To give pupils opportunities to develop the values, skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to make informed and responsible decisions about the use/misuse of drugs including tobacco, alcohol and volatile substances, within the context of a healthy lifestyle.
- 4.5 To assist pupils to develop the skills necessary to assert themselves confidently and resist negative pressures and influences.
- 4.6 Alcohol and tobacco issues
- 4.7 To inform parents of the content of this policy and the procedures to be implemented in the management of incidents of suspected drug misuse.

4.8 To establish an environment in which the school is free from the misuse of all drugs.

5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1 Pupils

- Be aware of and adhere to school rules in relation to drug use/misuse, including tobacco, alcohol, over-the-counter and prescribed medication, volatile substances and controlled drugs.



5.2 Parents/Guardians

- Support the school in the development and implementation of this policy, including the school's procedures for handling incidents of suspected drug misuse and the teaching of the PDMU Curriculum.
- Support your son/daughter if they have become involved with drugs.
- Accept financial responsibility for any medical treatment needed with regards to their child's drug misuse.

5.3 All Staff (Teaching and Non-Teaching)

- Be alert to the possibility of drug use/misuse.
- Be familiar with the school's procedures in the handling of suspected drug-related incidents.
- It is not the responsibility of the individual staff member to investigate the circumstances surrounding an incident, however he/she should deal with any emergency procedures if necessary.
- Any information, substance or paraphernalia received should be forwarded to the designated teacher (Mrs Coleman) for drugs who may have to take immediate action.

5.4 Teachers delivering lessons through PDMU

In addition to the above:

- Deliver Drugs Education lessons through PDMU.
- Try to create an atmosphere in the classroom in which pupils can freely contribute to discussion, safe in the knowledge that the comments, ideas and feelings of the group are valued.
- Support pupils in their class if necessary.
- Liaise with the designated teacher for drugs regarding any aspect of the

programme/policy, as necessary.

5.5 The Designated Teacher for Drugs Education

- ① Ensure that all staff and parents are aware of and have access to a copy of the policy.
- ① Have oversight and co-ordination of the planning of curricular provision in compliance with the statutory requirements including periodic update and review of the policy.
- ① Liaise with other staff responsible for pastoral care in co-ordinating the delivery of the drug education programme.
- ① Be responsible for co-ordinating the school's procedures for dealing with incidents of suspected drug misuse (**see also Appendices 1 - 4**).
- ① Co-ordinate training and induction of all staff in the procedures for dealing with incidents of suspected drug misuse.
- ① Determine the circumstances surrounding any suspected drug-related incident.
- ① Complete a suspected incident report forms (**see Appendices 2 - 4**) and forward to the Principal/EA
- ① Ensure the engagement and active participation of parents in all aspects of drug education.
- ① Act as the point of contact for outside agencies working with the school.

5.6 The Principal

- ① Ensure that members of the Board of Governors have been consulted on and duly ratified the Drugs policy. In the case of incidents of suspected drug misuse, the Principal will:
 - ① Ensure the welfare and well-being of the pupil(s) involved in the incident and the rest of the school community.
 - ① Ensure that the following people are informed (where relevant):
 - * Parents/guardians
 - * PSNI - Community and Schools Involvement Officer (**CSIO**)
 - * Board of Governors (**see Appendices 2 & 3**)
 - * Designated Officer in EA (**see Appendix 4**)
 - * Members of staff
 - * Other pupils and parents informed within the confines of confidentiality
- ① Agree, in consultation with the Board of Governors, appropriate pastoral and disciplinary responses in relation to the incident, including counselling

services/support. Retain written records of the incident and ensure a copy of the report is submitted to Board of Governors and EA as appropriate.

- Review procedures and amend as appropriate.

5.7 The Board of Governors

- Examine and approve the completed policy and education programme, prior to their implementation in the school.
- Ensure the policy is published in the school prospectus and that it is reviewed at regular intervals.
- Agree in consultation with the principal appropriate pastoral and disciplinary responses in relation to suspected drug related incidents.
- Designate a Governor to work with the Principal and designated teacher for drugs in relation to drug-related incidents.

5.8 The Caretaker

- Be vigilant around and conduct regular checks of the school grounds for drug-related paraphernalia, and inform the designated teacher for drugs as appropriate.
- Ensure the safe storage, handling and disposal of potentially harmful substances such as solvents and cleaning fluids.



6. DRUGS EDUCATION LESSONS

- 6.1 Drug education lessons in St John the Baptist Primary School is just one part of the whole school response to drug use/misuse. The curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to:
- ✓ acquire knowledge and understanding in relation to drug use/misuse;
 - ✓ identify values and attitudes in relation to drug use/misuse;
 - ✓ develop skills to enable them to consider the effects of drugs on themselves and others; and
 - ✓ make informed and responsible choices within the context of a healthy lifestyle.

7. PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH SUSPECTED DRUG RELATED INCIDENTS

- 7.1 Fundamental to dealing with incidents of suspected drug misuse is the principle of *'in loco parentis'*, and the school will always take the steps that would reasonably be expected of any parent to safeguard the well-being and safety of all the pupils in their

charge.

- 7.2 Pupils are not permitted to be in possession of or use alcohol, tobacco, matches, lighters, solvents or any illegal drugs at any time. Any found will be confiscated and only returned to parents. Parents will be informed as a matter of course.
- 7.3 If any member of staff, teaching or non-teaching is aware of a pupil involved in the misuse of drugs the information will immediately be passed on to the designated teacher (Mrs Coleman) and the principal (**see Appendices 1 & 2**). They will assess the situation and inform parents and police if necessary.
- 7.4 If any pupil is found in possession of an unauthorised drug, it will be confiscated and held in the school safe until parents have been informed. If the substance is suspected to be an illegal drug it will be passed on to the police and a careful record kept. The Principal will be informed and will take the lead in deciding how to respond further. Each situation will be judged individually. Parents will normally be informed and other outside professionals such as EA, P.S.N.I and GP will be consulted as appropriate. A careful investigation will be undertaken by the designated teacher for drugs (Mrs Coleman) to try to determine the source of any drug and the involvement of any other pupils. Careful records will be kept.
- 7.5 If any pupil is thought to be under the influence of a drug, medical help will be sought at once and first aid given if required by the teacher(s) trained in first aid. In addition, routine enquiries to try to find out what drug is involved, its source and whether any other pupils are involved will be undertaken. The priority will be pupil's safety.
- 7.6 If a pupil is thought to be in possession of a harmful substance, they will be invited to hand it over directly to the designated teacher for drugs (Mrs Coleman) or the Principal. If the pupil is un-cooperative, they will be asked to remain in the school office until a parent or carer arrives. In the event that the parent or carer is unavailable the school will have to contact the police who have the authority to search the pupil. **In no circumstances will a member of staff search the person or belongings of a pupil.**
All incidents will be handled with the highest level of confidentiality by all concerned, however staff cannot promise children "they will not tell" as information may need to share with others to resolve an incident. Rumours or suspicions will be fully and promptly investigated by the designated teacher.
- 7.7 The range of sanctions used for rule breaking will be similar to those for other transgressions and will depend on the nature and gravity of the offence. Exclusion will only be considered in serious circumstances.
- 7.8 A range of support services are available to children and families which include:
N.S.P.C.C Bronagh Muldoon *Tel028 8224 8929*
National Drugs Helpline 0800 776600
Health Promotion Agency for Northern Ireland 028 9031 1611
Children's Safety Education Foundation 0161 477 5122

- 7.9 The school will at all times give careful consideration as to how any information relating to an incident of suspected/confirmed drug use/misuse is communicated to staff, pupils and parents/guardians.
- 7.10 The parents/guardians of the pupil(s) directly involved in an incident of suspected drug use/misuse will be informed of the incident recognising that the future of a child or adult can be adversely affected. Confidentiality is of paramount importance in drug related incidents and subsequent outcomes.

8. DEALING WITH THE MEDIA

- 8.1 If the school receives an enquiry from the media the caller will only be referred to the Principal or, in the absence of the Principal, a designated nominee – the Vice Principal/Designated Teacher. (Mrs Coleman).
- 8.2 When responding to the media the privacy of the pupil(s), his/her family and/or any staff members will be respected at all times.

9. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

- 9.1 The school will ensure that procedures are put in place to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of all aspects of this policy. Information will be collected from pupils and staff as part of the monitoring process, and this will then be evaluated against the aims and objectives of the policy at appropriate intervals.
- 9.2 This policy will be reviewed every two years and following a drugs related incident. The review will take account of, and reflect recent changes in the circumstances and trends in drug use. Staff, governors and parents will be asked to comment and provide feedback on the policy and any comments forwarded will be considered when reviewing the policy.

10. COMMUNICATION AND DISSEMINATION OF POLICY

- 10.1 This policy will be issued to all staff and governors. An annual information leaflet will be distributed to parents and they will be made aware of how to access the full policy.
- 10.2 The policy is also available on request to any other person from the wider community who expresses an interest.

11. CHECKLIST FOR HANDLING SUSPECTED DRUG RELATED INCIDENTS IN SCHOOLS

This is a guide on the key procedures to undertake when a drug-related incident occurs in schools.

1. Ensure the safety of the individual pupil involved, of other pupils, yourself and other staff. On finding a situation with a suspected substance: -

- Get help immediately from another adult.
- Assess situation, to see if this is a life-threatening situation or not.

If an emergency: -

- If necessary contact an ambulance.
- Put person under the influence of the drugs in the recovery position.
- Ensure airways are cleared.
- Remove any other bystanders from the immediate vicinity.



Then in all cases: -

- Carefully gather up any drugs / paraphernalia / evidence lying around and keep safely.
- Ascertain which substances / drugs have been taken and how much.
- Secure all drugs and paraphernalia and give to the Principal / designated teacher for drugs immediately, and lock them away.
- Contact the parents/guardians as soon as possible.

2. Ensure all incidents are properly investigated and recorded: -

- Never accuse pupils of drug dealing/possession; these are alleged illicit substances until substantiated by the PSNI.
- Conduct search procedures according to school policy. (**Never search personal belongings without permission.** It is okay to search school property such as lockers, cupboards or desks).
- Ensure all drugs are safely and securely stored or destroyed, making sure that this is witnessed by another adult and recorded.
- Gather details and data from all the eyewitnesses at the scene.
- All statements and phone calls should be recorded, signed & dated.
- Record all information on official incident form and sign and date, or ensure accurate details are given to whoever is writing the form and co-sign.
- Ensure an incident form is filled in and forwarded to the EA, as appropriate and follow all the procedures in the school's Drugs Policy.

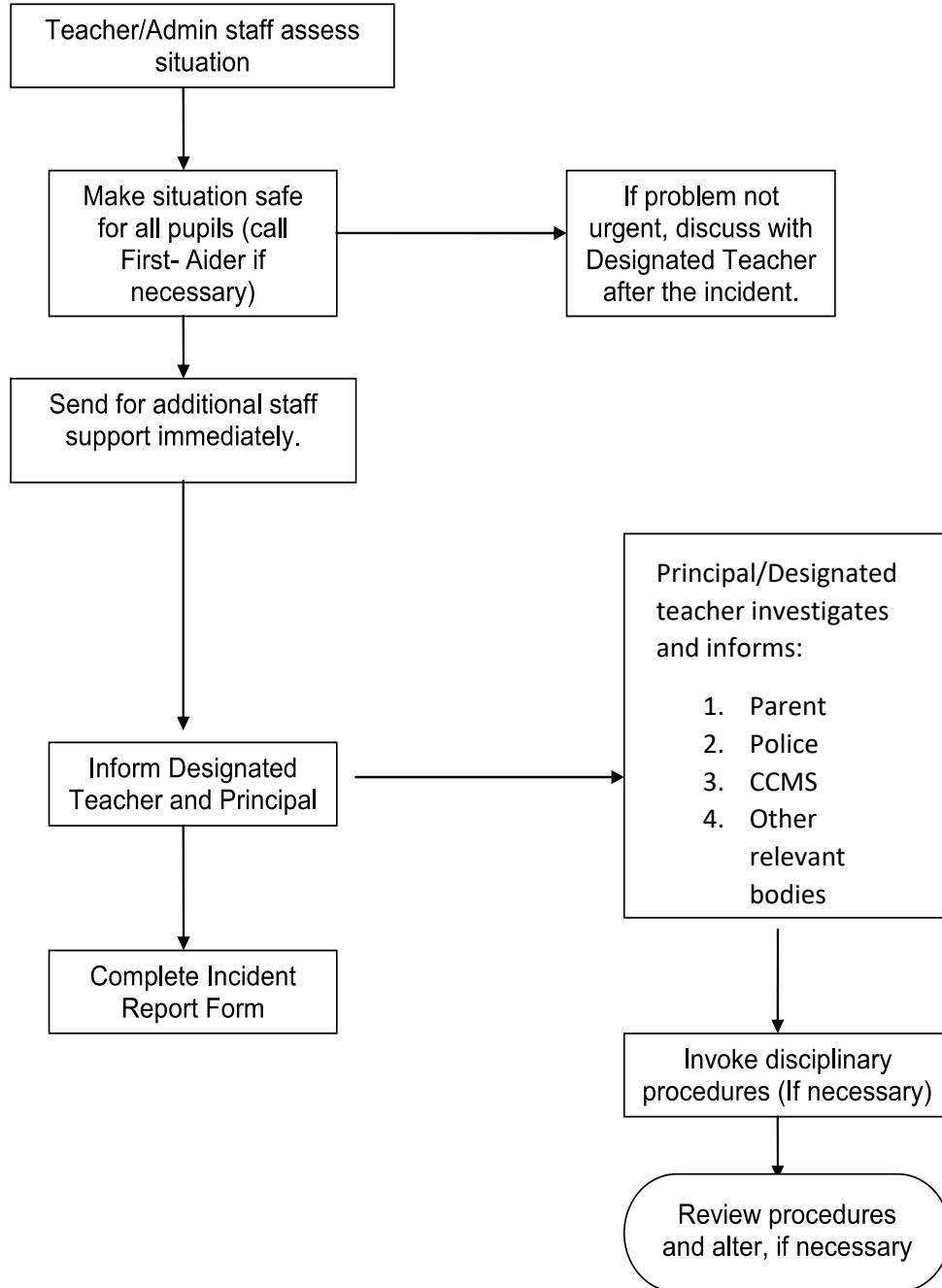
3. Ensure appropriate individuals and agencies are informed and contacted as needed: -

- Principal and designated teacher for drugs
- Parents / guardians
- PSNI (CSIO)
- CCMS and EA
- Chairperson initially and subsequently the Board of Governors
- The Education Welfare Officer
- No media statements, only the Principal should do this
- Other pupils, parents and staff are only told on a need-to-know basis



A PASTORAL / DISCIPLINARY RESPONSE NEEDS TO BE MADE BY THE SCHOOL, BALANCING THE NEED FOR COMPASSION AND THE PUPIL'S WELFARE WITH THE NEED TO SEND A CLEAR MESSAGE ABOUT ILLEGAL ACTIONS AND BEHAVIOUR AND THE IMPACT ON THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY.

Misuse of Substance Flowchart



Drugs and Substance Misuse Incident

Report Form

(Form to be completed by Teacher involved in Incident)

Nature of Incident:

Date: _____ Time: _____ Venue: _____

Pupil(s) involved:

Teacher Response:

Substance given to Principal/Designated Teacher: Yes

NO

Report to Designated Teacher: Yes NO

Report to Principal: Yes NO

Signed: _____ Date: _____

School Record and Checklist

(To be completed and held as record by Principal / Designated Teacher)

Date:

Nature of Incident:

Substance in secure storage: _____ (please tick)

Staff involved:

Report from staff attached: _____ (please tick)

Name of Pupil(s) involved:

Year:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Informed (Circle as appropriate):

- Parent/Guardian
- Safeguarding Team
- Relevant staff
- Police
- Board of Governors
- CCMS
- Other relevant agencies

Action plan for pupil support in place:

Signed:

Principal/Designated Teacher

Appendix 4

FAO CCMS/Relevant bodies

Name of School: _____

Address: _____

Telephone No: _____

Date: _____

Principal: _____

Contact Teacher: _____

Details of Incident:

Substance (if identified): _____

I have completed the checklist outlined in Appendix 3:

Signed: _____

Date: _____