The Drelincourt School



# Drugs Policy

#

**February 2022**

**Date of Review: February 2024**

**Policy on Drugs**

**Rationale**

The purpose of a drug education programme is to provide opportunities for children to acquire knowledge, understanding and skills that enable them to consider the effects of drugs and other substances on themselves and others.

The Drelincourt 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. 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. We are conscious also of the danger of the accidental misuse of dangerous substances i.e. household bleach etc.

We believe that the school has an active and preventative role to play in combating the misuse of drugs by young people and mishandling of harmful substances and we therefore include a drugs education programme as part of the statutory curriculum for Personal Development and Mutual Understanding (PDMU).

**Ethos**

The Drelincourt School provides a safe and happy environment where every pupil can develop to the very best of their ability. We want each child to remember this school as a happy place where they were nurtured, valued and inspired:

                ‘A little school for little people’

We have a responsibility for the safeguarding and child protection of the children in our care and we will carry out this duty by providing a caring, supportive and safe environment, where each child is valued for his or her unique talents and abilities, and in which all our young people can learn and develop to their full potential.

In The Drelincourt School the welfare and safety of our young children is paramount. We feel that our drugs education programme will promote that sense of wellbeing, as well as the safety and security of the pupils within our school.

This policy is based on the guidance provided by the Department of Education for Northern Ireland in the following documents:

∙ DE Circular 2015/23 Drugs Guidance

∙ CEA Drugs Guidance for Schools in Northern Ireland (Revised Edition 2015) http://ccea.org.uk/sites/default/files/docs/curriculum/area\_of\_learning/pdmu/drugs/Drugs \_Guidance\_for\_Schools.pdf

**Definition**

‘A drug is any substance which, when taken has the effect of altering the way a person behaves, feels, sees or thinks.’ Drugs include:

▪ Alcohol and tobacco;

▪ Over the counter medicines e.g. paracetamol, cough medicine;

▪ Prescribed drugs such as antibiotics, inhalers;

▪ Volatile substances e.g. glues and aerosols;

▪ Illegal drugs e.g. cannabis

Illegal and other unauthorised substances are not acceptable within the school premises including the playground. Prescribed drugs should only be brought onto the premises with the permission of the Principal and should only be administered by parents or the Principal. All bottles or boxes should be clearly labelled with the child’s name.

*(Ref: First Aid and Administration of Medication Policy)*

**Aims and Objectives**

The main objectives of our drug policy are:

* To educate children about the positive health benefits of safely and correctly administered medicines (drugs)
* To provide children with some knowledge and understanding about the harmful effects drugs can have on people’s lives;
* 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, syringes or 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 in later life.

**Roles and Responsibilities**

**The Role of the Board of Governors**

The school governors have responsibility for The Drelincourt School and will foster and support the development and on-going review of the Drugs Policy and education programme by collaborating with appropriate staff, pupils and parent / carers.

**The Principal**

In the very unlikely event that there is suspicion of a drugs misuse related incident it is the principal’s responsibility to determine the circumstances, but it is the responsibility of the PSNI to investigate any criminal or suspected criminal offence. In any suspected drug related incident, the principal should contact the parents / carers of those pupils involved. The principal must ensure that in any incident involving a controlled substance there is close liaison with the PSNI. Failure to inform the PSNI of a suspected incident involving controlled drugs is a criminal offence. It is more likely that our young children would be involved in picking up ‘drugs paraphernalia’ in the surrounding area.

After contacting the PSNI, the principal should confine her responsibilities to:

* the welfare of the pupil(s) involved in the incident and the other pupils in the school;
* health and safety during the handling, storage and safe disposal of any drug or drug-related paraphernalia, using protective gloves at all times;
* informing the Board of Governors;
* agreeing any appropriate pastoral or disciplinary response;
* reporting the incident to the EA if appropriate, for example if an incident
* is serious enough to require PSNI involvement;
* requires that a child protection procedure is invoked; or leads to the suspension or exclusion of a pupil; and
* completing a written report and forwarding a copy to the Board of Governors and the designated officer in the EA.

The Designated Teachers for Drugs are the Child Protection Designated teachers - Mrs Trew and Mrs Walker.

The designated teacher is responsible for the co-ordination for the school’s procedures for handling suspected drugs-related incidents and the training and induction of these procedures with new and existing staff. The designated teacher will act as a contact point for outside agencies that may have to work with the school or with a pupil(s). In the absence of the designated teacher a deputy will be available. It is the responsibility of the designated teacher for drugs to take possession of any substance(s) and associated paraphernalia found and complete a factual report.

All Staff (teaching and non-teaching)

Individual staff members are likely to be the first to encounter a suspected drugs related incident. It is not their responsibility to determine the circumstances surrounding the incident. However, they should deal with any emergency procedures, if necessary (see Appendix 1, 3 and 4). Any information, substance or paraphernalia received should be forwarded to the designated teacher for drugs. A brief factual report of the suspected incident should be forwarded to the designated teacher for drugs.

The Role of Parents / Carers

All parent / carers should be made aware that the school has a ‘Drugs Policy’ and how it applies to them and their children. Parents / carers form part of the consultative process. (Appendix 6)

**Curriculum**

Within the Foundation Stage/KS1 the drugs education programme in The Drelincourt School will be included in teachers’ planning and will form part of the curricular area of Personal Development and Mutual understanding (PDMU). It will also be supported by the pastoral care programme and policy throughout the school and will link with other subject areas such as Religious Educations, Health Education and PE. When available, the school will use Action Cancer and other schools programmes that target smoking and drugs, and other visitors.

The programme is a preventative one and is pupil centred, delivered through active learning. The aims of the programme give children the opportunity to:

* discuss how medicines help us to stay healthy by visiting the doctor/hospital.
* understand simple rules associated with medicines
* highlight the importance of adults giving medicine to children.
* be aware of harmful substances that may be found at home including bleach which may be identified as dangerous to drink.
* make informed choices regarding taking medicines or harmful substances

**Organisation**

At The Drelincourt School we regard health education as a whole school issue, and we believe that opportunities to teach about the importance of a healthy lifestyle occur throughout the curriculum. Drug education should not be seen as an isolated topic, but as a continuous process that involves the development of skills and attitudes enabling children to make informed choices. Effective drug education should take account of not only the child, but also the family, peer groups and wider community. A strong partnership between the school, outside agencies and parents needs to be promoted.

The majority of drug education is delivered through the Area of Learning - Personal Development and Mutual Understanding The class teacher will use Circle Time sessions, and the use of outside visitors such as the school nurse (as appropriate) to enhance this topic. Assessment is carried out using success criteria from each session that has been built into the planning. Teachers will evaluate the drug education programme to inform future planning.

**PROCEDURES FOR HANDLING AND REPORTING INCIDENTS**

**See Appendices 1,2 and 4**

A suspected drug related incident is described as:

• Suspect drugs or paraphernalia found on the school premises

• A pupil suspected of being in possession of drugs

• A pupil found to be in possession of drugs

• A pupil suspected of being under the influence of drugs

When an incident occurs the member of staff involved should:

• Make the situation safe.

• Send for support.

• Administer first aid if necessary.

• If a drug is found, gloves should be used and it should be secured in a safe place until dealt with by the police.

• Report the incident.

The incident will be reported to the designated teacher (Principal), who will contact the local PSNI. The parents will also be contacted and made aware of the situation. The incident will be recorded by the teacher involved and by the designated teacher. A ‘record of action’ form will be filled out (see Appendix 5). One copy will be sent to the Education Authority’s designated officer for Drugs Education and a copy will be retained for the school’s confidential file. The Board of Governors will also be informed.

School staff are not permitted to search pupils’ clothing or possessions. Staff may search **school property** such as lockers or desks. However, personal belongings within a desk or a locker cannot be searched without consent. **A search of pupils’ personal belongings, including school bag, coat or other items should only be made with the pupils’ consent.** Such a search should be made in presence of the pupil and another adult witness. It is acceptable to ask the pupil to empty pockets and school bags.

Where alcohol, tobacco, medicines, matches, lighters or any illegal drugs are discovered on the school premises the standard procedure will always be to confiscate and either to destroy or store in a specified location in the presence of another adult. Only legal drugs will be returned to parents.

Staff will be cautious about discharging a child to the care of an intoxicated parent/carer, particularly when the parent/carer intends to drive the child home. The Principal, will suggest an alternative arrangement for example asking another parent/carer to accompany the child home. Where the behaviour of an intoxicated parent/carer becomes abusive or violent, the Principal will consider whether the circumstances are serious enough to invoke child protection procedures or involvement of the police.

If any drug related incidents should occur, the safety and well being of the child will always be the overriding concern. Each incident will be considered taking into account the circumstances of the individual and the parents. Police and other appropriate agencies will be informed according to the needs of the individual concerned.

**EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

For the purposes of this policy, an emergency is considered to be either: • A situation in which a pupil or staff are in danger, or

• A sequence of events which require urgent attention.

 A flow chart for dealing with emergencies is contained in Appendix 1 of this policy.

 Emergency first aid and procedures carried out as per First Aid guidelines.

**Staff Policy on Smoking and Alcohol**

The Drelincourt School is a smoke (including e-cigarettes) and alcohol free zone. For further information refer to the Health and Safety Executive’s website (www.hse.gov.uk).

**Confidentiality**

Should a pupil reveal any personal drugs information, which puts them or any other pupil at risk, this must be passed on to the designated teacher / principal. Confidentiality can never be guaranteed, as we are responsible for all of the pupils in our school.

The Drelincourt School has a separate Child Protection Policy. Effective drug education may bring about disclosures of child protection issues and staff should be aware of the procedures for reporting their concerns.

**Dissemination**

The Drug Education Policy is accessible to all staff members, governors and parents/ carers. Copies are available on the school’s website and from the school office on request.

**Guidance for Confiscation and Storage of Harmful Substances**

Any confiscated drugs or drug-related items should be given to the principal for storage in the school safe and then given to the PSNI.

**Guidance on the Administration of Medication in School**

Please refer to the school policy on the Administration of Medications.

**MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

This policy will be reviewed every two years and / or after any drug related or suspected drug related incident to see if there are improvements to be made.

**Managing an Incident Appendix 1**

***Individual staff members should:***

∙ assess the situation and decide the action;

∙ make the situation safe for all pupils and other members of staff, secure first aid and send for additional staff support, if necessary;

∙ carefully gather up any drugs and / or associated paraphernalia or evidence and pass all information or evidence to the designated teacher for drugs; and

∙ write a brief factual report of the incident and forward it to the designated teacher for drugs.

***The designated teacher for drugs should:***

∙ respond to the first aider’s advice or recommendations;

∙ inform parents or carers immediately, in the case of an emergency;

∙ take possession of any substance(s) and associated paraphernalia found; ∙ inform the principal;

∙ take initial responsibly for pupil(s) involved in the suspected incident; and ∙ complete a Drugs Incident Report Form, and forward it to the principal.

***The principal should:***

∙ determine the circumstances surrounding the incident;

∙ ensure that the following people are informed:

o parents or carers;

o designated officer in the local PSNI area;

o Board of Governors; and

o designated officer in EA.

∙ consult and agree pastoral and disciplinary responses, including support; ∙ forward a copy of the Incident Report Form to the Chairperson of the Board of Governors and the designated officer in the EA; and

∙ review procedures and amend, if necessary.

**Handling Drug-Related Incidents Appendix 2**

**Finding a suspected substance or drug-related paraphernalia on or close to the school premises.** 

Unknown substance / paraphernalia found on the school premises.

 Inform the principal / designated teacher for drugs. 

Make the situation safe for pupils and staff. 

Arrange for removal of items using protective gloves. 

Bring the substance and any related paraphernalia to the 

designated teacher for drugs / principal to be stored in a secure

place. 

Contact the PSNI and hand over the substance for analysis 

ensuring that feedback will be provided to the school.

Record actions taken. 

Investigate and record how the substance came to be on the 

school premises.

Inform the EA designated officer using the Drugs Incident 

Report Form if appropriate.

Prepare a report for the Chair of the Board of Governors as 

appropriate.

**Recognising Signs of Substance Abuse Appendix 3**

The following guidance can be found in ‘CEA Drugs Guidance for Schools in Northern Ireland (Revised Edition 2015)’ page 42.

**What to look out for:**

If someone is having a bad time on drugs, they may be:

∙ Anxious

∙ Tense

∙ Panicky

∙ Overheated and dehydrated

∙ Drowsy

∙ Having difficulty breathing.

**What to do:**

The first things you should do are:

∙ Stay calm

∙ Calm them and be reassuring, don’t scare them or chase after them

∙ Try to find out what they have taken and

∙ Stay with them.

If they are anxious, tense or panicky, you should:

∙ Sit them in a quiet and calm room

∙ Keep them away from crowds, bright lights and loud noises

∙ Tell them to take slow deep breaths and

∙ Stay with them.

If they are **really drowsy**, you should:

∙ Sit them in a quiet place and keep them awake

∙ If they become unconscious or don’t respond, call an ambulance immediately and place them in the recovery position

∙ Don’t scare them, shout at them or shock them

∙ Don’t give them coffee to wake them up and

∙ Don’t put them in a cold shower to ‘wake them up’.

If they are **unconscious** or having difficulty breathing, you should:

∙ Immediately phone for an ambulance

∙ Place them in the recovery position

∙ Stay with them until the ambulance arrives and

∙ If you know what drug they’ve taken, tell the ambulance crew; this can help make sure they get the right treatment straight away.

**Emergency Procedures Appendix 4**

The following guidance can be found in ‘CEA Drugs Guidance for Schools in Northern Ireland (Revised Edition 2015)’ page 44.

This is the current best advice on what to do if someone is in difficulty because of misusing drugs.

∙ It is important to find out what they have taken as this could affect emergency aid, for example, it will help the ambulance crew. Loosen clothing and call for an ambulance immediately.

∙ If the person has taken a depressant substance, for example solvents, alcohol, sleeping pills or painkillers, it is likely that they will be drowsy or unconscious. If the person is drowsy, it is important to try to keep them awake by talking to them or applying a cool damp cloth or towel to the back of their neck. You should not give them anything to eat or drink as this could lead to vomiting or choking.

∙ If they are or become unconscious, put them into the recovery position, clear their airway if blocked and keep checking on any changes to pulse and breathing rates.

∙ If they stop breathing, begin mouth-to-mouth resuscitation, starting with chest compressions. (If you have not been trained in CPR or are worried about giving mouth-to mouth resuscitation to a stranger, you can do chest compressions only (or hands-only) CPR). Stay with the person until the ambulance crew arrive and then tell them all the facts, including what the person has taken. This is very important as it could save his or her life.

∙ If the person has taken a stimulant, such as amphetamines (speed) or ecstasy, they may show various signs of distress. If the person is panicking, try to reassure them. It is important that they calm down and relax. Get them to breathe in and out, deeply and slowly. Help them by counting aloud slowly. If they start to hyperventilate – that is they can’t control their breathing – ask them to breathe in and out of a paper (not plastic) bag, if there is one available.

∙ If the person has taken a hallucinogen, such as LSD, magic mushrooms or cannabis in combination with ecstasy, they may become very anxious, distressed and fearful. They may act in an unusual way. It is very important to reassure the person – tell them that you will look after them, that they are in no danger, that it is the effects of the substance and that these will soon wear off. You may want to take them to a quiet place, keep other people away and continue to reassure them. Just stay with them and talk calmly to them until the ambulance arrives.

**The Drelincourt School - Drugs Incident Report Form Appendix 5**

| 1. | Name of Pupil:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ DOB: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Address:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| --- | --- |
| 2. | Date of Incident:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Reported by:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Time of Incident: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Location of Incident: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| 3. | First Aid Given: YES / NO Administered by: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Ambulance / Doctor called: YES / NO Time of Call: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| 4. | Parent / Carer informed: YES / NO Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| 5. | Where substance(s) retained: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ or Date passed to PSNI: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  |
| 6. | PSNI Informed: YES / NO Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| 7. | Education Authority Designated Officer informed: YES / NO Name of EA Officer:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| 8. | Form Completed by: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Position: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |

**Appendix 6**

**The Drelincourt School - Drugs Policy - Parent’s Guide**

**AIM OF POLICY**

The programme is a preventative one and is pupil centred, delivered through active learning. The aims of the programme give children the opportunity to:

* discuss how medicines help us to stay healthy by visiting the doctor/hospital.
* understand simple rules associated with medicines
* highlight the importance of adults giving medicine to children.
* be aware of harmful substances that may be found at home including bleach which may be identified as dangerous to drink.
* make informed choices regarding taking medicines or harmful substances

**PROCEDURE**

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When an incident occurs the member of staff involved should:

* Make the situation safe.
* Send for support.
* Administer first aid if necessary.
* If a drug is found, gloves should be used and it should be secured in a safe place until dealt with by the police.
* Report the incident.

Full policy available on the school website - [www.drelincourt.org.uk](http://www.drelincourt.org.uk)