



Drugs and Substance Misuse Policy

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Next Review – September 2024

The Acorn Federation

Drugs and Substance Misuse Policy

Aims and Objectives of the Policy

The Acorn Federation aims to equip our children and staff with the knowledge, understanding and skills that enable them to make the sort of choices that lead to a healthy lifestyle. We teach children about the dangers to health posed by drug taking and to equip them with the social skills to make informed moral and social decisions in relation to drugs in society. We are committed to the health, safety and general well-being of all the members of our school community.

This policy takes account of DFES Drugs: Guidance for Schools Ref: DFES/0092/2004 and the National Drugs Strategy.

This policy applies to the whole school community, working on the premises during the school day, after school and the evenings. It also applies to school day trips and residential visits.

Please read this policy in conjunction with other policies: PSHE, Science, Child Protection, Medicines, Health and Safety and Behaviour.

Drugs Education in Context

The core aim at the Acorn Federation, is to promote the development of the 'whole child' which encompasses physical, mental, emotional, social and environmental health; by equipping pupils with the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values to handle their lives effectively in the present and prepare them for adulthood. Drugs education should therefore form an integral part of the school curriculum.

We are committed to the health and safety of our school community and will take action to safeguard their wellbeing. Therefore, a life skills approach to drug prevention is essential and within the programme, pupils are taught about raising self-esteem, self-confidence and assertiveness to prepare them for making informed decisions about drug use, the main focus being on knowledge, social skills, attitudes and values. This will encourage them to appreciate the benefits of a healthy lifestyle and relate this to their own actions, both now and in their future lives.

The Range of Substances

A drug is any substance which, when taken, has the effect of altering the way a person behaves, feels, sees or thinks. As well as everyday substances such as tea and coffee, drugs include,

- Alcohol and tobacco
- Over the counter medicines' such as paracetamol for headaches
- Prescribed drugs, such as antibiotics and tranquilisers
- Volatile substances such as glues and aerosols
- Illegal drugs such as cannabis, LSD and ecstasy

The school recognises that this policy focuses mainly on illicit drugs. Procedures for handling prescribed medicines is outlined in the school Medicines policy. If the Head Teacher has reasonable grounds to suspect that drugs are being used or supplied on the school premises appropriate steps will be taken to inform the relevant bodies in order to avoid any liability as a 'manager or occupier' of premises. If staff have taken possession of a substance for the purposes of protecting a pupil from harm and from committing an offence; they should under no circumstance, try to analyse or identify it. Staff should wear gloves when handling it, to avoid

possible ingestion through the skin. The drug should be immediately stored in a safe place, and the police contacted.

Procedures for Handling and Reporting Incidents

A suspected drug related incident is described as:

- Suspect drugs 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
- An adult visitor or staff suspected of being under the influence of drugs

If an incident occurs the member of staff involved should:

- Make the situation safe
- Send for support
- Administer first aid if necessary
- If an illegal drug is found it should be secured in a safe place until dealt with by the police
- Report the incident

Any incident must be reported to the Headteacher who will contact the police. The parents will also be connected and made aware of the situation. The incident will be recorded and held on file in the Headteacher's confidential records.

Confidentiality

If a pupil discloses to an adult that he or she is taking drugs, the adult should make it clear that he or she can offer no guarantee of confidentiality. However, the adult can advise the pupil of other sources of confidential information or advice. Pupils should also be encouraged to talk to their parents. A record will be made of the disclosure (Child Protection 'Record of Concern') and the Head Teacher and Designated Lead for Safeguarding is to be informed. The matter will be treated as a potential safeguarding matter, and the parents contacted in the first instance.

Drugs Education within the Curriculum

We regard drugs education as a whole-school issue and we believe that opportunities to teach about the importance of a healthy lifestyle occur naturally throughout the curriculum, but especially in science, PSE, RE and PE. There are also opportunities in circle time.

Teaching about drugs will begin in Key Stage 1, when pupils are taught about seeing the doctor, visiting the chemist and the importance of medicines and their safe handling. In Key Stage 2, pupils will learn that alcohol is the most widely used drug and that its dangers can be overlooked. We will ensure that our pupils are aware of the risks associated with drinking. We teach pupils about the dangers of smoking and habit forming, and encourage them to consider its effects and risks. We also teach pupils about the dangers of volatile-substance abuse, because of the high risk of accidental death, especially for first-time and occasional abusers.

We recognise that learning is most effective when it addresses the development of knowledge, attitudes and skills together when teaching and learning are participative and active.

We endeavour to:

- Use a variety of teaching styles that are characterised by active learning
- Find out what the children know already
- Use drama, role-play or ICT to demonstrate various strategies and scenarios

- Encourage pupils to listen to the views of others, and we ask them to explore why drugs are such a problem for society.

Drugs education takes place during normal lesson time. Sometimes, a class teacher will seek support from the school nurse or another health professional. In teaching this course, we follow the DfE and LA guidelines. The resources and materials that we use are recommended either by the Health Authority or by the LA. Lessons that focus on drugs education form part of a sequence of lessons that are designed to promote a healthy lifestyle.

Drugs at School

Where children have medical needs, parents and carers must give us details of the child's condition and medication. Parents and carers will bring the medication to school in a secure, labelled container. Records will be kept of all medication received and given. Emergency medication is stored securely in the School Office.

Solvents and other hazardous chemicals must be stored securely, to prevent inappropriate access, or use by pupils. Aerosols, glues (other than PVA) and board-cleaning fluids are used sparingly in school, and must be handled and stored carefully by all members of staff. Legal drugs are legitimately in school only when authorised by the Headteacher and are stored in a locked cupboard.

Alcohol to be consumed at community or parents' events will be stored securely beforehand. To sell alcohol, we must be licensed under the current licensing act.

Drugs Incidents

An incident involving unauthorised drugs in school is most likely to involve alcohol, tobacco or volatile substances, rather than illegal drugs. The first priority is safety and first aid, i.e. calling the emergency services and placing unconscious people in the recovery position. An intoxicated pupil does not represent a medical emergency, unless unconscious. Pupils suspected of being intoxicated from inhaling a volatile substance will be kept calm; chasing can place intolerable strain on the heart, thus precipitating sudden death.

Any drug suspected of being illegal will be confiscated and stored securely, the police will be notified to determine an appropriate method of disposal. These precautions must be witnessed and recorded by either the Headteacher or senior teacher. Staff must not taste unknown or confiscated substances.

Legal but unauthorised drugs or medicines will also be confiscated, and will be returned to parents or carers; the school may arrange for the safe disposal of volatile substances. Where a pupil is suspected of concealing an unauthorised drug, staff are not permitted to carry out a personal search, but may search pupils' bags, trays, etc.

The Headteacher will notify the police and take advice as to how to proceed further. A full record will be made of any incident and the Headteacher will conduct an investigation into the nature and seriousness of any incident, in order to determine an appropriate follow-up response. The Chair of Governors will be informed of any drug incident that should occur. The Local Authority are also notified of any drug incidents in school each term.

The Caretaker ensures that the grounds are kept clear of any dangerous substances / objects. He / She checks the grounds regularly and ensures that they are safe. Any glass / bottles are removed quickly and safely. Discarded needles would be disposed of via a sharps container. Any unknown substances will be given to the police, or disposed of on their advice in the presence of witnesses.

All staff however are encouraged to be vigilant around the school grounds, particularly close to the main entrances. Pupils should not pick up any such materials.

The Role of parents and carers

The school is well aware that the primary role in children's drugs education lies with parents and carers. We wish to build a positive and supporting relationship with the parents / carers of our pupils, through mutual understanding, trust and cooperation.

To promote this objective, we will:

- Inform parents or carers about the school drugs policy;
- Answer questions that parents and carers may have about the drugs education that their child receives in school;
- Take seriously any issue which parents and carers raise with teachers or governors about this policy, or about arrangements for drugs education in the school;
- Inform parents and carers about the best practice known with regard to drugs education, so that the parents/carers can support the key messages being given to children at school.

When an incident concerning unauthorised drugs has occurred in school, and a pupil is involved, parents or carers will be informed with an explanation of how the school intends to respond to the incident.

Staff will be cautious about discharging a pupil to the care of a parent / carer who appears to be under the influence of drugs / alcohol, particularly when they intend to drive the pupil home. Staff will inform the Headteacher when this happens.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Schools and education are continually changing. Consequently, it is necessary to regularly review the school practices and with it, this Drugs & Substance Misuse Policy so that we can take account of new research, advice or other related developments.

APPENDIX 1

Support Agencies

- **Talk To Frank** - 0800 776600
www.talktofrank.com
- **Drinkline** – 0800 9178282
www.alcoholconcern.org.uk,
- **ADFAM** – 020 7 928 8898
Waterbridge House, 32-36 Loman Street, London. SE1 0EH.
The national organisation for the families and friends of drug users
www.adfam.org.uk
- **Drugscope** – 020 7928 1211
Waterbridge House, 32 - 36 Loman Street, London SE1 0EE.
DrugScope is a UK charity that conducts research in the drugs field and provides drugs information to professionals and the public.
www.drugscope.org.uk
- **Release – 0207 729 5255**
388 Old Street, London, EC1V 9LT
Also, Drugs in Schools Helpline by RELEASE - 0345 366666
www.release.org.uk
- **RE-SOLV** – 0808 800 2345
30a High Street, Stone, Staffordshire, ST15 8AW
The Society for the Prevention of Solvent Abuse
www.re-solv.org/
- **Childline** – 0800 1111.
Studd Street, London. N1 0QW
www.childline.org.uk

APPENDIX 2 – Definition of a drug and information about drugs of misuse.

A drug is any substance which, when taken into the body, affects the chemical composition of the body and how the body functions. All medicines are drugs but not all drugs are medicines.

Therefore, drugs include legally controlled substances such as: Caffeine, alcohol, tobacco, solvents, amyl nitrate (poppers), as well as substances used for medical purposes, whether sold over the counter or prescribed, such as: antihistamines, antibiotics, tranquillisers and illegal substances such as: cannabis, ecstasy, heroin, cocaine, LSD

Possession of some prescription-only medicines, such as Temazepam and Ritalin, is illegal under the Misuse of Drugs Act if no prescription is held.

These lists are not definitive and there may be some overlap of the categories.

Substance	Effects	Risks	Legal Position
Tobacco	Relaxation, headache, bad breath, reduced appetite	Bad cough, cancer, heart attack, breathless	Illegal to sell to anyone under 16
Alcohol	Relaxation, lose inhibitions, loss of control, vomiting, violence, drowsiness	Liver damage, impairs decision making and judgement	Illegal to sell to anyone under 18 (as a general rule).
Cannabis / marijuana	Lack of co-ordination, related heart rate increase, happy loss of inhibitions, can cause panic	Long term may cause lung disease and psychotic illness. Loss of memory, impaired judgement	Class C. Illegal to grow or supply
Solvents / gas	Facial rash, stomach cramps, lack of co-ordination, aggressive behaviour, weird visions, headaches, light headed, relaxing	Death from asphyxiation or heart seizure. Psychological dependence. Choking on vomit. Possible damage to lungs, kidneys, liver, heart and central nervous system	Illegal to sell to under 18s knowing it will be abused
Amphetamines	Initially energetic and confident, but anxiety and restlessness can follow	High doses can produce delirium, panic, paranoia or depression, heart failure, damaged blood vessels	Class B. Illegal to possess or supply (unless prescribed)
MDMA / Ecstasy	Increased energy and colour perception, feelings of well-being, increased thirst, head and muscle ache	Can lead to anxiety, panic, insomnia, hypothermia and dehydration. Some evidence of liver damage	Class A. Illegal to possess or supply

Substance	Effects	Risks	Legal Position
LSD	Hallucinogenic effects, including intensified colours and sounds, or even out of body experiences. Effects are dependent on the strength of the dose.	Difficult to identify strength of dose. Experiences can be emotionally disturbing (bad trip) leading to anxiety. Flashbacks can occur.	Class A. Illegal to possess or supply.
Hallucinogenic mushrooms / magic mushrooms	Similar to LSD experience	Main risk is picking and eating a poisonous mushroom by mistake	Class A if processed - cooked, dried or made into tea
Amyl Nitrate	Blood vessels dilate causing a rushing sensation to head, lose balance, increased energy. May enhance sexual pleasure. Effects are short lived.	Vomiting, shock, unconsciousness, heart attack, dizziness, headache, palpitations	Currently no legal restrictions on use or supply
Anabolic Steroids	Increase strength, speed, aggression and competitiveness. Enables more intensive training for longer.	Restriction on growth, spinal problems, menstrual abnormalities, voice changes, increase in hair growth	Possession for personal use not illegal. Supply is illegal, with Class C penalties.
Heroin	Euphoria, reduced anxiety and pain levels. Slow heart rate and breathing. Can cause constipation. Appetite loss.	Highly addictive. Difficult to identify strength of dose and what it is mixed with. Danger of overdose. Injecting causes abscess and other infections including septicemia and HIV	Class A. Illegal to possess or supply.
Cocaine/ Crack	Feelings of exhilaration, strength and well-being. Decreased hunger, indifference to pain and fatigue. Effects relatively short term.	Comedown can bring on depression, anxiety and fatigue. Excessive doses may cause death from respiratory or heart failure. Long term use may lead to paranoid psychosis.	Class A. Illegal to possess or supply.

