



St. Thomas' CE Primary School

Drugs Education Policy

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Drugs Education Policy

St Thomas' CE Primary School school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

Research has shown that by the age of 11 many primary school children have extensive knowledge of the world of drugs. For some, this knowledge may be inaccurate and incomplete, for others it will develop through personal experience. Together research shows that up to 50% of children have tried an illegal drug by the age of 16. The figures also suggest that the first age of experimentation is decreasing and that children of primary age are exposed to opportunities to try both illegal and legal drugs. The 1995 white paper 'Tackling Drugs Together' stated that schools had an important role both in reducing the misuse of drugs and minimising their health risks.

Drugs education should contribute to:

- Increasing the safety of communities from drug related crime.
- Reducing the acceptability and availability of drugs to young people.
- Reducing the health risks and other damage related to drug misuse.

At St Thomas' CE Primary School we believe that drugs education should provide:

- Accurate information presented simply and clearly.
- Informative and accessible reading materials.
- Access to other adults besides teachers, providing they are expert and credible.
- Stimulating and enjoyable classroom tasks.
- Opportunities to develop their knowledge and understanding in a challenging and safe atmosphere where they feel secure enough to play a full and active part.

We aim to provide a consistency of approach throughout the school and to encourage children to develop knowledge and skills to make informed and responsible choices now and in later life and to stress the benefits of a healthy lifestyle. At St Thomas' CE Primary School we encourage children to develop positive attitudes and values and to ensure that Health and Safety procedures are followed when dealing with incidents/equipment related to drugs and drug use.

Welfare of pupils is paramount and procedures and policies are designed to reflect this commitment.

Objectives:

- To develop children's personal and social skills including refusal and decision making skills.
- To help children take increased responsibility for themselves and their actions.

- To encourage children to value themselves and others.
- To encourage children to help and support others.
- To encourage children to work cooperatively in active learning and group work.
- To clarify what children already know, give information to clarify facts and correct false knowledge and beliefs.
- To help children deal with the effect of media coverage of issues relating to drugs.
- To support staff in dealing with issues and incidents relating to drugs and drug use.
- To ensure all staff are aware of procedures relating to drugs and drug use at St Thomas' CE Primary School.
- To provide opportunities for pupils to acquire knowledge and identify the distinction between authorised and unauthorised drugs.
- To develop and equip pupils with the knowledge, attitudes and skills necessary to build their resilience and avoid peer group pressure or unwanted drug offers from others.
- To build pupils' decision-making skills and increased self esteem.

Definition:

At St Thomas' CE Primary School 'drugs' include any substance that affects your body. This includes socially acceptable and unacceptable drugs.

These will include:-

- Tobacco
- Alcohol
- Medicines
- Illegal substances

Teaching

Our approach to Drugs Education is one in which children are given information in the belief that increased knowledge about drugs and the risks will empower children to make informed and safe decisions. We approach this in a sensitive manner appropriate to the age and experiences of the children concerned.

Teaching is:-

- Well resourced
- Reflects the needs and experiences of pupils
- Uses a range of teaching methods including group work, discussions, videos and outside speakers
- Reinforces messages about healthy lifestyles
- Flexible and relevant
- In the context of a wider PSHE programme
- Interesting and stimulating
- Informed

Managing drug related incidents

Incidents are managed in the context of the school's commitment to:-

- The safety and welfare of all pupils and staff
- The welfare of individuals deemed to be at risk
- The law concerning drugs

The Headteacher retains the responsibility for deciding how to respond to particular incidents. This will take account of the individual concerned and whether they are a pupil, parent or member of staff.

The school's policy is that 'no individuals should be under the influence of drugs (as detailed in this policy) while on the school premises (within the school boundaries) unless a doctor's note indicates that this does not affect the individuals capacity to perform their duties, take care of children in their charge, or in the case of pupils, take part in lessons.

All incidents will be recorded on CPOMS (school system).

All members of the school community are aware of these procedures and the implications for individuals. Each incident will be dealt with on an individual basis. Young children who are deemed to be at risk will be treated in relation to the school's policy on Child Protection.