

Macosquin Primary School



Drugs Policy 2019

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1. Rationale

For the purpose of this document the term 'Drugs' includes tobacco, alcohol, over-the-counter and prescribed medication, volatile substances and controlled drugs. Macosquin 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. 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.

In Macosquin Primary School, we believe that the school has a vital preventative role to play in combating the misuse of drugs by young people; accordingly, we therefore include a Drugs Education Programme in our Curriculum.

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.

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. 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 programme.

Copies of the guidance on which this policy is based (Drugs: Guidance for schools in Northern Ireland) are available from the CCEA website www.ccea.org.uk, C2K and the Department of Education website www.deni.gov.uk (DE Circular 2015/23).

This policy is part of our suite of Pastoral Care and safeguarding policies:

- ❖ Child Protection Policy
- ❖ Pastoral Care Policy
- ❖ Administering Medication Policy
- ❖ ESafety Policy
- ❖ Staff Code of conduct
- ❖ First Aid
- ❖ Safe Handling/ Reasonable Force

2. Definitions

For the purpose of this document, and in line with the guidance issued to all schools by the Department of Education (2015/23), ***'Drugs' will include a substance which, when taken, has the effect of altering the way the body works or 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
- Prescribed drugs, such as antibiotics, tranquilisers, 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

At Macosquin the pupils are at the heart of our school. Our team of dedicated staff provide a positive, caring and child centred environment which recognises uniqueness and celebrates success in every child. We firmly believe that our approach will self-motivate, aiming to inspire a love of learning, unlocking the potential that lies within all our children; preparing them to be happy, successful and responsible citizens now and in the future.

*“Together as a school family, we are committed to nurturing and **motivating** our children, enabling them to reach their full **potential** and **shine**- today and in the years ahead!”*

4. Aims and Objectives

- To have a clear and agreed understanding among everyone in the school community about the implications and possible consequences of drug use/misuse.
- 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.
- To empower teaching staff through appropriate training and support to develop and deliver an effective drugs education programme.
- To provide a Drugs Education Programme which:
 - Develops pupils’ self-esteem and promotes positive attitudes in their relationships with others.
 - Gives pupils’ opportunities to develop the values, skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to make informed decisions about the use/misuse of drugs including tobacco, alcohol and volatile substances, within the context of a healthy lifestyle.
 - Helps pupils’ develop the skills necessary to assert themselves confidently and resist negative pressures and influences.
- To provide appropriate support and assistance for those pupils affected by drug-related issues.
- To inform parents of the content of this policy and the procedures to be implemented in the management of incidents of suspected drug misuse.
- To establish an environment in which the school is free from the misuse of all drugs.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

Pupils

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

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 Drugs Education Programme.
- Support your child if they have become involved with drugs.

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.
- Be aware it is not the responsibility of the individual staff member to investigate the circumstances surrounding the incident; however, he/she should deal with any emergency procedures, if necessary.
- Be aware that any information, substance or paraphernalia received should be forwarded to the Designated Teacher for drugs who may have to take immediate action.

Designated Teacher

Mrs. C. Allen

Designated Governor

Mr. D. Pavey

Teachers delivering the Drugs Education Programme

In addition to the roles and responsibilities listed above for all staff, teachers will also be required to:

- Deliver the school's Drugs Education Programme.
- 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.

The Designated Teacher for Drugs Education

- Ensure that all staff and parents are aware of, and have access to, a copy of the Policy.
- Have oversight and coordination of the planning of curricular provision in compliance with the statutory requirements including periodic update and review of the Policy.
- Liaise with other staff responsible for pastoral care in coordinating the delivery of the Drugs Education Programme.
- Be responsible for coordinating the school's procedures for dealing with incidents of suspected drug misuse.
- Coordinate training and induction of all staff in the procedures for dealing with incidents of suspected drug misuse.
- Determine the circumstances surrounding any suspected drug-related incident.
- Ensure the engagement and active participation of parents in all aspects of Drugs Education.
- Act as the point of contact for outside agencies working with the school.

The Principal

The Principal will 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:

- Ensure the welfare and well-being of the pupil(s) involved in the incident, and the rest of the school community.
- Ensure that the following people are informed (where relevant):
 - Parents/Guardians
 - PSNI – Community and Schools Involvement Officer (CSIO)
 - Board of Governors
 - Designated Officer in EA
 - Members of staff
 - Other pupils and parents (informed within the confines of confidentiality).
- 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 the Board of Governors and EA as appropriate.
- Review procedures and amend as appropriate.

The Board of Governors

- Examine and approve the completed Policy and education programme, prior to their implication in the school.
- Ensure the Policy is reviewed every two years or as necessary.
- Be fully aware of, and adequately trained to deal with, suspected incidents of drug misuse, including tobacco and alcohol, and their appropriate disciplinary response.
- 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.

The Caretaker

- Be vigilant and conduct regular checks of the school grounds for drug-related paraphernalia, and inform the Designated Teacher of Drugs, as necessary.
- Ensure the safe storage, handling and disposal of potentially harmful substances such as solvents and cleaning fluids.

6. Training and Information

All staff (teaching and non-teaching) and Governors will be provided with training to support the full implementation of this Policy, including the delivery of the Drugs Education Programme. This will be delivered by the Designated Teacher for Drugs supported by relevant EA staff who can provide advice to the school on Drugs Education.

7. The Drugs Education Programme

Content of the Drugs Education Programme

The Drugs Education Programme in Macosquin Primary School is just one part of the whole school response to drug use/misuse. The programme 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.
- Make informed and responsible choices within the context of a healthy lifestyle.

In Macosquin Primary School, Drugs Education is not seen as a one off topic but as a continuous process which involves the development of skills and attitudes, enabling pupils to make informed choices.

Effective Drugs Education takes account of not only the individual, but also the family, their peer groups, and the wider community. Where possible, the school promotes the partnership between the parent and child, when addressing drug issues.

In Northern Ireland, at Foundation Stage and Key Stages 1 and 2, the Statutory Curriculum for pupils includes, as one of the 7 key Areas of Learning – Personal Development & Mutual Understanding (PDMU). This key Learning Area provides opportunities for young people to develop their knowledge and understanding of the use, misuse, risks and effects of drugs and other potentially harmful substances, their effects on health and lifestyle.

A full outline of the 'Content of Drug Education Programme' for each Year Group is listed in the school's scheme. It should be noted that the school will aim to ensure there are opportunities for staff and pupils to consider drug-related issues from a variety of perspectives.

Pupils with Special Educational Needs may require a more individualised Drugs Education Programme. It may be more suitable for some young people to follow the teaching programme for an earlier Year Group, presented in a manner which is appropriate to their age and maturity.

Pupils will experience community preventative sessions organised by PSNI, Causeway Coast and Glens and Radar. Visitors are also invited into school to support the programme.

8. Procedures for dealing with Drug-related Incident

Fundamental to dealing with incidents of suspected drug misuse is the principle of 'in loco parentis'. Macosquin Primary School will always take the steps that would reasonably be expected of any parent to safeguard the well-being and safety of all pupils in their charge. The Board of Governors of Macosquin Primary School do not deem it appropriate to prescribe specific sanctions which should be applied to all suspected drug-related incidents. However, the following General Guidelines will be followed:

Medicines

The school recommends that parents/guardians must provide written details of any medical condition that individual pupils may have including medication they are on. Medicines must not be brought to school unless accompanied by the AM2 or AM3 Form from the parent.

Tobacco

Pupils may not smoke while on the school premises, or while engaged in school-related activities outside school. In the event of a pupil being found with cigarettes on his/her person, the cigarettes will be confiscated; the parents/guardians will be informed, and action will be taken in line with the school's Discipline Policy.

E-cigarettes are treated in the same way as ordinary cigarettes and their use is prohibited on school premises. This advice was confirmed in the DE Circular 2014/25 – ‘Encouraging a Smoke-Free and E-Cigarette Free Environment in Schools and Youth Organisations’ – issued to schools on 15 December 2014.

Alcohol

No alcohol may be brought into school by pupils for their use or consumed by them on the school premises or while on school trips. In the event of a pupil being found with alcohol on her/his person the alcohol will be confiscated; the parents/guardians will be informed, and actions will be taken in line with the school’s Discipline Policy.

Solvents

The school will ensure that potentially harmful substances are stored safely and pupils are supervised carefully in the event of them having to be used in the course of their work. The use of correction fluid and aerosol sprays will be discouraged at all times. Caretaker’s materials should be well labelled and locked in a secure cupboard. In the event of a pupil being suspected of solvent misuse, the related substance will be confiscated; the parents/guardians will be informed, and action will be taken in line with the school’s Discipline Policy.

Controlled Drugs

No controlled (illegal) substances should be brought to school or used on the school premises. In the event of a pupil found to have, or suspected of having, controlled drugs in her/his possession the law permits school staff to take possession of a substance suspected of being a controlled drug. The teacher should take the suspected drug and associated equipment and/or paraphernalia to the Designated Teacher who will arrange for its safe storage.

Staff Responsibilities in dealing with Drug related incident

Staff at Macosquin Primary School are aware of their responsibilities under the law. The Principal will notify the local Community and Schools Involvement Officer (CSIO) in every case where a pupil is found to have, or is suspected of having, controlled drugs in his/her possession, either on his/her person or in their belongings, or where controlled drugs are found on the school premises.

All possible efforts will be made by the school to inform the pupil’s parents/guardians before allowing a police interview to take place, without a parent/guardian.

Staff will consistently follow the school procedure for referral regarding serious incidents. All incidents involving controlled drugs should be reported to the Board of Governors, the Designated Officer in the EA and the PSNI. A full written ‘Factual Record of Drug related incident’ should be made.

Staff will receive training on the Emergency First-Aid procedures, including the Recovery Position. If someone is in difficulty as a result of misusing drugs they would receive First-Aid treatment from one of the designated First-Aiders until the Emergency Services arrive.

Where a pupil is suspected of concealing drugs or drug related paraphernalia, every effort will be made to secure the voluntary production of the substances. Searches should only be made with the pupil’s consent, and in his/her presence, and that of another adult witness. If a pupil is to be detained, duress should never be used. Teachers cannot, and should not, promise total confidentiality. If information concerning controlled drugs is disclosed, the staff member has to pass this on to the Designated Teacher for drugs.

Pastoral Care and Support Strategies

Pastoral Care is an essential element in our school, and the care of the child is our utmost priority. During and after any incident, it is imperative that the individual needs of any pupil(s) are addressed. This will involve the pupil(s), Principal, parents/guardians, Designated Teacher for drugs, and other appropriate staff. Communication between all parties will set the scene for early, supportive pastoral intervention.

Within our school there are a range of support strategies and/or services, which are available to young people, staff and families. All adults within the school will provide positive role models. Personal Health and Safety programmes, where appropriate, will be incorporated within the curriculum.

Outside agencies and individuals will be invited to our school to work in partnership with the school. Posters will be displayed throughout the school to encourage an open environment where pupils can communicate with staff.

The school's Designated Teacher for Drugs is available to meet with Key Stage 2 pupils who may have concerns with regards to Drugs; pupils are afforded the opportunity to discuss, in privacy, any worries/concerns they may have.

Close contact is maintained with Outside Agencies such as the EA Education Welfare Officer, EA Behaviour Support Team, Social Services and the PSNI. In some instances, either before or following a drugs incident, counselling may be identified as potentially valuable to a pupil. It may be provided on school premises or elsewhere.

Communication regarding Drug-related incident

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.

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.

A 'Guide and Checklist' on the key procedures to undertake when a Drug-related incident occurs in school, is available, and should be strictly adhered to.

Dealing with the Media

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.

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. Communication and Dissemination of Policy

- All teachers will receive a copy of the Drugs Policy
- The Policy will be available for any parent, on request

10. Monitoring and Review

The development of the school's Drugs Policy is continually ongoing, and opportunities to attend professional development courses regarding issues connected with the Policy will be afforded to all staff, and in particular to the Designated Teacher for Drugs Education.

The review of this policy document is continuous in light of guidance and advice from statutory bodies and legal requirements. The Designated Teacher for Drugs Education will advise the Principal on necessary updates/amendments to be effected to the Policy. The views of staff, parents, pupils and Board of Governors will also be sought from time to time, as part of the on-going review process, with the Policy updated as required.