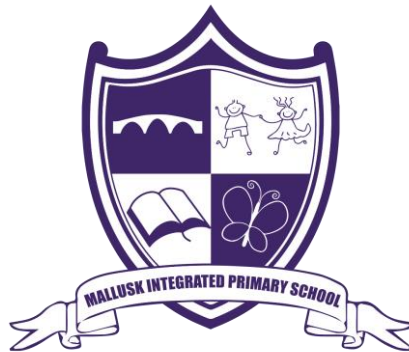


Mallusk Integrated Primary School



Drugs Policy

Implementation Date – January 2021

Review Date – January 2023

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INTRODUCTION

Rationale

At Mallusk Integrated Primary School we recognise that our children will be exposed to some form of drug at some time in their lives. We are aware of the impact of drug misuse on communities and feel we have a vital preventative role to play in combating the misuse of drugs by young people. We believe in the need for awareness programmes in our curriculum.

We recognise 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 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.

All staff (teaching and non-teaching) should familiarise themselves with the information included in this policy and further from the Designated Teacher for Drugs - Mrs Kinsella.

In drawing up our Drugs Policy we have used material from

- DENI circular 2004/9
- CCEA – Drugs Guidance for Schools in Northern Ireland
- DENI Circular 2015/23

Ethos

In Mallusk Integrated Primary School we care for and value our pupils. We strive to achieve this by:

- providing an environment where children, staff and parents feel happy and valued
- providing high levels of expectation leading children to achieve their best
- preparing children with the appropriate life skills to take their place in society.

Aims and Objectives

To provide a drug education programme which is integrated through the curriculum, relevant to the needs and maturity of the children and which develops pupils' self esteem and promotes positive attitudes in their relationships with others.

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.

To help pupils develop the skills necessary to assert themselves confidently and resist negative pressures and influences.

To provide all staff with adequate training and support to enable them to deal effectively and confidently with incidents of suspected drug misuse, and to ensure that the procedures are sensitively and consistently applied in all situations.

To establish procedures for reporting concerns if a child is suspected or known to be misusing drugs or in a situation where (s)he can be placed at risk through another person's misuse of drugs.

To provide appropriate support and assistance for those pupils affected by drug-related issues.

To keep parents informed of the policy and procedures.

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

Recognising Signs of Substance Use

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

- anxious
- tense
- panicky
- overheated and dehydrated
- drowsy
- having difficulty with breathing.

What to do

- stay calm
- calm them and be reassuring, don't scare them or chase after them
- try to find out what they've taken
- 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
- 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
- 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 into the recovery position
- stay with them until the ambulance arrives
- if you know what drug they've taken, tell the ambulance crew; this can help make sure that they get the right treatment straight away.

Definitions

We define drugs as “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”.

“Any substance” includes:

- alcohol and tobacco/ e-cigarettes
- over-the-counter medicines, such as paracetamol
- prescribed drugs, such as antibiotics, tranquillisers and inhalers
- 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
- everyday substances, including tea and coffee.

(Ref. CCEA – Drugs Guidance for Schools in NI: Appendix 10)

A drug-related incident includes:

- drug-related litter on or near school premises
- suspicions voiced or allegations made in or out of school
- disclosure of drug misuse taking place
- children displaying symptoms of drug misuse
- children or adults with drugs on premises or taking or selling.

The above will also apply on school trips as well as on school premises.

DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION

Roles and Responsibilities

All Staff

- Be alert to the possibility of drug use/misuse.
- Be familiar with the school's policy and procedures.
- Be confident in dealing with any emergency procedures if necessary. However, it is not the responsibility of individual staff members to investigate the circumstances surrounding an incident.

Teachers (in addition to the above)

- Teach awareness and understanding of drug related issues through our Themes.
- 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.
- Liaise with the designated teacher for drugs regarding any aspect of the programme/policy, as necessary.

The Principal (Designated Teacher for Drugs)

- Ensure that all staff and parents are aware of and have access to a copy of the policy.
- 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.
- Co-ordinate the drug education programme with pastoral care.
- Co-ordinate the school's procedures for dealing with incidents of suspected drug misuse.
- Determine the circumstances surrounding the incident
- Complete a suspected incident report form.
- Act as the point of contact for outside agencies working with the school.
- Ensure that members of the Board of Governors have been consulted on and have ratified the policy.

In the event of a drug-related incident

- Ensure the welfare and wellbeing of the pupil(s) involved and the rest of the school community.
- Ensure that the following people are informed (where relevant):
 - parents/guardians
 - PSNI - preferably the Community Officer
 - school governors
 - designated officer in EA
 - members of staff
 - other pupils and parents (within the confines of confidentiality).
- Agree, in consultation with the 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 reports are submitted to governors and EA as appropriate.
- Review procedures and amend when necessary.

The Board of Governors

- Examine and approve the completed policy.
- Agree, in consultation with the Principal, appropriate pastoral and disciplinary responses to suspected drug-related incidents.

Parents/Guardians

- Support their child(ren) if they have become involved with drugs.
- 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 drug education programme.

The Caretaker

- Be vigilant around school grounds for drug-related paraphernalia. Inform the designated teacher for drugs should any be found.
- Ensure the safe storage, handling and disposal of potentially harmful substances such as solvents and cleaning fluids.

The Drugs Education Programme

The drugs education programme in Mallusk Integrated Primary School is integrated into the Themes taught in World Around Us and PDMU and 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.

Procedures for Dealing with Suspected Drug-related Incidents

Fundamental to dealing with incidents of suspected drug misuse is the principle of *in loco parentis*, and the staff of Mallusk Integrated Primary School will always take the steps that would reasonably be expected of any parent to ensure the wellbeing and safety of all the pupils in their charge.

The following procedures will be followed if a suspected substance or drug-related paraphernalia is found on or close to the school premises:

- Make the situation safe for pupils and staff
- The Principal will follow EA advice in relation to searching, detaining and confidentiality
- Suspected illegal substances will be removed, using protective gloves, and will be secured in a locked filing cabinet in the Principal's office
- Contact the PSNI and hand over the substance to the police 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
- Prepare a report for the chair of the Board of Governors as appropriate
- Inform the EA designated officer using the Drugs Incident Report Form if appropriate
- Pastoral and disciplinary responses will be put in place, ensuring that the responses match the needs and seriousness of the situation
- Details of support services will be made available to pupils, staff and families
- The rights of the child will be observed at all times.

Staff will give careful consideration as to how any information relating to an incident of suspected/confirmed drug use/misuse is communicated to 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.

Confidentiality is of paramount importance in drug-related incidents and subsequent outcomes.

A pastoral / disciplinary response will 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, behaviour and the impact on the school community.

Procedures for dealing with a parent or carer who arrives at school to collect a child and appears to be under the influence of alcohol or another substance

- Discreetly detain the pupil in the classroom and
- send for the designated teacher/principal
- Ask the parent or carer to come into the school to quietly discuss the school's concerns
- Principal speaks to the parent or carer to assess the situation
- Contact another relative to come and collect the child if necessary
- Contact social services in line with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Contact PSNI if the parent or carer becomes violent, tries to forcibly remove the child or intends to drive while under the influence
- Release the pupil to the alternative relative/ their parent or carer once the principal is satisfied that it is safe to do so
- Write a detailed report of the incident including action taken
- Inform the chair of the Board of Governors as appropriate
- Inform the EA designated officer using the Drugs Incident Report Form if appropriate

Procedures for a pupil being suspected of having taken drugs/alcohol on school premises

- Make the situation safe
- Inform principal/designated teacher for drugs
- Administer first aid, if appropriate
- If pupil is in need of hospital treatment, place the pupil in the recovery position

- Stay with pupil and send someone to phone for an ambulance ensuring they return to confirm this has been done
- Inform the pupil's parents
- If the substance is still present, confiscate in front of a witness, secure and record
- Try to ascertain the substance and how much has been taken
- Contact the PSNI if appropriate
- Write a detailed report of the incident including the action taken using the Drugs Incident Report Form
- Inform the EA designated officer using the Drugs Incident Report Form if appropriate
- Decide on disciplinary/pastoral measures as appropriate for pupils and staff
- Inform the Board of Governors if appropriate
- Arrange counselling/support for affected pupils and staff

Procedures to follow if a pupil is suspected of possessing/distributing an illegal substance

- Bring the pupil along with the pupil's schoolbag and other possessions
- to the principal/designated teacher for drugs
- Phone for the PSNI
- Inform the pupil's parents or carers
- Conduct the search procedures according to the school policy
- Inform the chair of the Board of Governors as appropriate
- Arrange counselling/support for the pupil
- Write a detailed report of the incident including the action taken
- Inform the EA designated officer using the Drugs Incident Report Form if appropriate
- Take disciplinary/pastoral measures in line with relevant school policies

Procedures to be followed if a pupil is in possession of alcohol or unauthorised prescribed medication on the school premises

- Detain the pupil and contact the parents or carers
- Interview the pupil in the presence of the parents and ensure that the substance is removed from the pupil's possession
- Bring the pupil to the principal/designated teacher for drugs along with the pupil's schoolbag and other possessions
- Confiscate the substance or conduct the search procedures according to the school policy
- Keep substance in a secure location until it can be handed over to the parents/ carers/ PSNI or disposed of safely
- Inform the chair of the Board of Governors as appropriate
- Write a detailed report of the incident including the action taken
- Inform the EA designated officer using the Drugs Incident Report Form
- if appropriate
- Take disciplinary/pastoral measures in line with relevant school
- Arrange counselling/support for the pupil

Procedures for the Administration of Prescribed Medicines

Teachers will be made aware of any medical or other problem which may affect a child's wellbeing. All information will be treated confidentially. Procedures are outlined in the school's Policy for the Administration of Medication in School.

Dealing with the Media

If the school receives an enquiry from the media the caller will be referred to the Principal. 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.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Mallusk Integrated Primary School will ensure that procedures are put in place to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of all aspects of this policy.

NB: Mallusk Integrated Primary School is a smoke-free premises (see Smoke-Free Policy).

CHECKLIST FOR HANDLING DRUG INCIDENTS IN SCHOOL

This is a guide on the key procedures to undertake when a drug 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 immediately to be locked away.
- ❑ Contact the parents 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 acceptable to search school property such as 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 from all the eyewitnesses at the scene.
- ❑ All statements and phone calls should be recorded, signed and dated.
- ❑ Record all information on a school incident form, then sign and date, or ensure accurate details are given to whoever is writing the form and co-sign.

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

- Principal.
- Parents / Guardians.
- PSNI.
- NEELB Pastoral Care Advisor.
- Chairperson initially and subsequently the Board of Governors.
- The Education Welfare Officer.