

Drugs Education Policy

Aims and Objectives

OUR SCHOOL OPERATES A NO SMOKING POLICY IN SCHOOL AND THROUGHOUT THE SCHOOL GROUNDS.

At Thriplow we equip our children with the knowledge, understanding and skills that enable them to make the sort of choices that lead to a healthy lifestyle. Our drugs education programme, which includes teaching on alcohol and tobacco, has *this* primary objective of helping all children to become more confident and responsible young people. We teach children about the dangers to health posed by drug-taking, and we aim to equip them with the social skills that enable them to make informed moral and social decisions in relation to drugs in society. The Cambridgeshire “Staying Safe” PSHCE programme, and visits from the Cambridgeshire Life Education Bus are designed to do just this.

The objectives of our drugs education programme are:

- to provide children with age appropriate knowledge and information about illegal drugs and the harmful effects they can have on people’s lives;
- to enable children from the earliest age to discuss moral questions related to drug taking, which includes the safety of medicines, and so provide a safe environment for young people to share their thoughts and ideas;
- 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 in a “Dogs and Rugs” type scenario, or are aware of other people misusing drugs. In the scenario of dogs and rugs children from 4-11 years are asked to imagine that they have found a bag containing a packet of white “stuff” and asked what they should do with it.
- 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. They are asked to consider what they place into their bodies and encouraged to make decisions about “Saying No” to something they are uncomfortable with;
- to show that taking illegal drugs is a moral issue, and that choices about drugs are moral choices, particularly within the Christian ethos of our school.
- to ensure that all children are taught about drugs in a consistent manner, following guidelines that have been agreed by parents, governors and staff and integrated within our Curriculum map for PSHCE..

2 Organisation

We regard drugs education as a whole-school issue, and we believe that opportunities to teach about the importance of living a healthy lifestyle in our Health Promoting School occur throughout the curriculum. Each class teacher answers questions about drugs sensitively and appropriately, as they occur. In the routine circle-time sessions, we encourage children to discuss issues that are important to them, and we help children to be aware of the dangers of the misuse of drugs. For example, if a child raises the issue of smoking, the teacher takes time to discuss its harmful effects with the whole class. In science lessons we teach children what a drug is, and how drugs are used in medicine. We also teach them the difference between legal and illegal drugs.

Drugs education is an important part of our school's personal, social and health education (PSHCE) curriculum. The main teaching about illegal drugs takes place in Years 5/ 6, where the children are taught specifically about these, and the dangers involved to those who take them. In teaching this course we follow the guidelines provided by the LEA, and we receive advice and support from the Local Health Authority. The resources and materials that we use in these lessons are recommended either by the Health Authority or the LEA. Lessons that focus on drug education form part of a sequence of lessons that are designed to promote in children a healthy lifestyle.

The children's class teacher teaches them drug education in normal lesson time. Sometimes the class teacher seeks support from the school nurse or another health professional. The teaching style that we use encourages children to ask questions and reflect on the dangers to health of drug misuse. Children explore issues, such as why people take drugs, and how they can avoid putting themselves in danger by valuing themselves, raising self esteem and encouraging them to say "no" when needed in the future. We give children the opportunity to talk in groups or to the whole class. We encourage them to listen to the views of others, and we ask them to explore why drugs are such a problem for our society.

3 The Role of the Headteacher

It is the responsibility of the headteacher to ensure that staff and parents are informed about this drugs education policy, and that the policy is implemented effectively. It is also the headteacher's role to ensure that staff are given sufficient training, so that they can teach effectively and handle any difficult issues with sensitivity.

The headteacher will liaise with external agencies regarding the school drugs education programme and ensure that all adults who work with children on these issues are aware of the school policy and work within this framework. She will arrange a LEA drugs education evening for parents every few years to raise the issues, the latest of these in February 2007.

The headteacher will monitor the policy on a day to day basis and report to governors, when requested, on the effectiveness of the policy.

4 The Role of Governors

The governing body has the responsibility of setting down these general guidelines on drugs education. The governors will support the headteacher in following these guidelines. Governors will inform and consult with parents about the drugs education policy. Governors will also liaise with the LEA and health organisations so that the school's policy is in line with the best advice available.

5 The Role of Parents

The school is well aware that the primary role in children's drugs education lies with parents. We wish to build a positive and supporting relationship with the parents of children at our school through mutual understanding, trust and co-operation. In promoting this objective we will:

- inform parents about the school drugs education policy and practice;

- invite parents to view the materials used to teach drugs education in our school;
- answer any questions parents may have about the drugs education their child receives in school;
- take seriously any issue which parents raise with teachers or governors about this policy or the arrangements for drugs education in the school;
- encourage parents to be involved in reviewing the school policy and making modifications to it as necessary;
- inform parents about the best practice known with regard to drugs education so that the parents can support the key messages being given to children at school.

6 Monitoring and Review

The Policy and Curriculum Committee of Thriplow's governing body will monitor the drugs education policy every three years. This committee will report their findings and recommendations to the full governing body as necessary, if the policy appears to need modification. The policy and curriculum committee of the governors takes into serious consideration any representation from parents about the drugs education programme and comments will be recorded.

Signed:

Date January 2007

To be reviewed Jan 2010