

St. Joseph's Grammar School

Scoil Ghramadaí Naomh Iósaef



Drugs Policy

Revised June 2015

Mrs A Mc Gleenan- Vice-Principal

Designated Teacher for Drugs Related Incidents

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Rationale

For the purpose of this document the term 'drugs' includes tobacco, alcohol, over-the-counter and prescribed medication, volatile substances and controlled drugs. St. Joseph's Grammar 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.

We believe that St. Joseph's Grammar School has a vital preventative role to play in combating the misuse of drugs by young people and we therefore include a Drug Education programme in our curriculum.

St. Joseph's Grammar 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.

"There is a public perception that drug misuse is mainly an issue in disadvantaged inner city areas Drug misuse is just as much an issue in rural areas and affluent communities: it extends across socioeconomic, geographical and cultural boundaries. Educationally successful young people are just as likely to put themselves at risk as low attainers." (DENI 1996/16)

All staff (teaching and non-teaching), should familiarise themselves with the information included in this policy and further copies may be obtained from the Designated Teacher for Drugs - Mrs A Mc Gleenan.

Copies of the guidance on which this policy is based are available from the Department of Education website www.deni.gov.uk

Definitions

For the purpose of this document and in line with the guidance issued to all schools by the Department of Education (**NEW CIRCULAR**) (1996/16) **drugs will include 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.**

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, tranquillizers, 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; and
- other substances such as amylbutyl nitrite (‘poppers’) and unprocessed magic mushrooms.

Ethos

St. Joseph’s Grammar School is a Catholic educational community where students are nurtured, respected and guided in accordance with the teaching of Jesus Christ. We are fully committed to academic excellence for our students. We seek to inspire and guide them to become leaders who will promote Christian values and justice in their families, the Church and the wider community.

(St. Joseph’s Grammar School, Mission Statement)

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 procedures are sensitively and consistently applied in all situations.
- To empower teaching staff through appropriate training and support to develop and deliver an effective drug education programme.
- To provide a drug 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 and responsible decisions about the use/misuse of drugs including tobacco, alcohol and volatile substances, within the context of a healthy lifestyle; and

- 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.

Roles and Responsibilities

Pupils

- Be aware of and adhere to school rules in relation to drug use/misuse, including tobacco, alcohol, over-the-counter and prescribed medication, volatile substances and controlled 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.
- It is not the responsibility of the individual staff member to investigate the circumstances surrounding an incident, however he/she should deal with any emergency procedures if necessary.
- Any information, substance or paraphernalia received should be forwarded to the designated teacher for drugs who may have to take immediate action.

Teachers delivering the Drug Education programme

In addition to the above:

- Deliver the school's drug 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 – Mrs A Mc Gleenan

- 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 (**reviewed June 2012**).
- Liaise with other staff responsible for pastoral care in co-coordinating the delivery of the drug education programme through PD and LLW.
- Co-ordinate training and induction of all staff in the procedures for dealing with incidents of suspected drug misuse.
- Be responsible for co-coordinating the school's procedures for dealing with incidents of suspected drug misuse.
- Determine the circumstances surrounding the incident
- Complete a suspected incident report form and forward to principal.
- Ensure the engagement and active participation of parents in all aspects of drug education.
- Act as the point of contact for outside agencies working with the school.

The Principal

- Ensure that members of the Board of Governors have been consulted on and ratified the policy.

In the case of incidents of suspected drug misuse:

- 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 - preferably the Community and Schools Involvement Officer (CSIO)
 - * Board of Governors
 - * Designated Officer in ELB/CCMS
 - * 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 ensuring a copy of the reports is submitted to Board of Governors, ELB/CCMS as appropriate.
- Review procedures and amend the policy in light of updated DENI guidance or training.

The Board of Governors

- Examine and approve the completed policy and education programme, prior to their implementation in the school.
- Ensure the policy is published in the school prospectus and that it is reviewed at regular intervals.
- 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.

It is recommended that **there should be a designated Governor** to work with the principal and designated teacher for drugs in relation to drug related issues.

Parents/Guardians

- Support your son/daughter 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 and conduct regular checks of 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.

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 drug education programme. This training will include induction in the school's policy and procedures for all new and long-term substitute teachers. Additionally, when appropriate, Inset training will be offered to relevant teachers in out-centres. All staff will have their training needs assessed and up-dated at least every three years. Information awareness sessions will be offered to parents/guardians.

The Drugs Education Programme

The drug education programme in St. Joseph's Grammar 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; and

- 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 St. Joseph's Grammar School will always take the steps that would reasonably be expected of any parent to safeguard the well being and safety of all the pupils in their charge.

1. Emergency First Aid Procedures

As soon as a member of staff is aware of a situation, he/she will need to determine if there is a medical emergency. If the pupil requires first aid, the member of staff should try to ascertain what substance has been ingested and if necessary, place the pupil in the emergency recovery position.

The member of staff should then send for a trained first-aid staff member and if necessary ask for the ambulance to be summoned.

The member of staff should try to stay calm and to clear the area of other pupils.

As soon as possible afterwards, the member of staff should write a report of the incident for the Designated Teacher.

2. School Rules and the Drugs Policy

The school has clear rules in relation to drugs:

1. *"Pupils are not permitted to use Tippex, other correction fluids or materials. (Please note: All public exam boards impose penalties for use of correction fluid)*
2. *The use of spray deodorants or other aerosols is not permitted.*
3. *Pupils are not allowed to smoke tobacco, drink alcohol or take noxious substances in school or on school-related activities regardless of parental attitude and in line with our anti-drugs policy."*

(St. Joseph's Grammar Positive Behaviour Policy, 2015-2016)

School Policy on Smoking

- Pupils are not allowed to smoke on school premises or on school outings
- If a pupil is caught smoking, his/her parents will be informed and a detention imposed

- If the offence is committed repeatedly, the parents/guardians will be asked to come into school to discuss the situation and further disciplinary action may be taken

3. School Guidelines for Prescription Medicines

1. Parents /Guardians will be asked to complete questions relating to pupils' health as part of the data capture information sheet on admission to school. This will include information on any medical condition or medication the pupil uses. This will be updated as required.
2. Health information collected will be collated and where it is felt to be necessary, distributed to a pupil's subject teachers. (This information will be confidential and used for professional purposes only).
3. Pupils with long term medical conditions and who require regular medication during school hours will make arrangements with the Principal and Vice-Principal.
4. All medicines kept in the school at a parents/guardians' request, including inhalers, will be stored in the general office for safety reasons.
5. Teachers and non-teaching staff **will not** distribute painkillers to pupils if they are ill.

4. Legal Responsibilities of School Personnel

1. All teaching and non-teaching staff are trained in the school's drugs policy. Long-term substitute teachers are provided with the policy at the beginning of their tenure and as part of their induction will familiarise themselves with the policy.
2. All teaching and non-teaching staff are obligated to follow the guidance set out in the policy with regard to dealing with drugs related incidents. All suspected incidents must be reported to the Designated Teacher.
3. It is not the responsibility of the school to investigate whether or not a drugs-related incident has actually occurred or not: nor is it the responsibility of school personnel to ascertain whether a substance is a drug or not. ***It is the responsibility of the Principal to contact the PSNI if there are grounds for suspecting that an incident has actually occurred:***

“Where a person has committed an arrestable offence, it shall be the duty of every person who knows or believes that the offence has been committed or they have any information, to give it to the police within a reasonable time. Failure to do so is an arrestable offence”

PSNI

The staff and pupils who were witness to a suspected incident will be required to write an account of the incident, to sign it and date it. The school will not require the pupil suspected of involvement in a drugs related incident to write a statement. By law, the police may have access to any written reports pertaining to the incident.

4. Where there is reasonable grounds for suspecting that an incident has occurred, the Principal will first attempt to contact parents/guardians before contacting the PSNI. Where it has not been possible to contact parents/guardians within a reasonable duration of time, the Principal will proceed to contact the PSNI. The Principal will not allow a police interview of any young person to take place prior to the arrival of parents/guardians.

5. Any pupil suspected of involvement in a drugs-related incident will be supervised by two members of staff in the Principal's office until the arrival of parents/guardians and police.

6. Staff/other pupils will only be informed of any confirmed incident on a need-to-know basis with regard to the confidentiality of the young person and their family.

5. Search and detention of a pupil/pupil property

If a pupil is suspected of being in possession of a substance, the member of staff present may ask the pupil to hand over the substance to them. The item/s will be given to the Designated Teacher for safe storage in an envelope which will be sealed and signed by the Designated Teacher/Principal and placed in the school safe for secure storage. Police may have access to this if a full investigation is called for.

The pupil has the right not to hand over any substance/item but this will not necessarily affect the decision to contact the police if it is still believed that there are grounds for suspecting an incident has taken place.

A member of staff may search the school's property **ONLY**. Such a search – eg: desk, locker, shelves, toilets etc should be made in the presence of the pupil and another member of staff.

If the pupil does not voluntarily turn out his/her school bag, parents and police should be contacted to deal with the situation.

A search of a pupil's personal belongings should never be made **unless with the pupil's consent, in his/her presence and in the presence of another adult witness.**
A member of staff should never carry out a physical search of a pupil.

6. School Response to Incidents of Confirmed Drug Abuse

The school recognises that a repertoire of responses is required to deal with drugs-related incidents. In addition, it is recognised that a pupil may become involved in an incident despite never having been in trouble with school authorities before. Thus the school retains the right to respond to each incident and each individual pupil's roles in any incident on an individual basis. For example, a student found to have smoked

tobacco during school hours/on school premises could expect to be treated less severely than a pupil who has been found to be dealing drugs to other pupils.

In cases where there are grounds for suspecting that a serious drugs-related offence has occurred, the Principal, with the approval of the Chairman of the Board of Governors, will suspend the pupil/s until a full investigation has been carried out.

A range of both disciplinary and pastoral responses will be considered in each case and the advice sought from relevant school-based and external personnel.

Where it is considered appropriate to suspend or expel a pupil, the procedures for same as laid down in the school's Suspension and Expulsion Policy will be followed.

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 recognizing that the future of a child or adult can be adversely affected. Confidentiality is of paramount importance in drug related incidents and subsequent outcomes.

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, the Vice-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

St. Joseph's Grammar School will ensure that procedures are put in place to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of all aspects of this policy. Information will be regularly collected from pupils and staff as part of the monitoring process, and this will then be evaluated against the aims and objectives of the policy at appropriate intervals.

Monitoring

Form teachers will evaluate the content and delivery of PD lessons which deal with risk-taking behaviour in general and drugs-related issues in particular and feed back to the Pastoral Care Manager.

Form teachers and Designated Teacher/Pastoral Care Vice-Principal will evaluate the effectiveness of any outside agencies invited into school to assist in delivery of the Drugs Education Programme.

Senior Leadership will review the effectiveness of the Drugs policy at least every three years or after training has been delivered or after any drugs-related issues arises in school.

The Designated Teacher will assess the need for staff training on the issue of drugs on an annual basis and make arrangements for same where appropriate.

The Senior Leadership and the Board of Governors of the school will undertake a full review of the policy every three years.

Communication and Dissemination of Policy

A full copy of the school's Drugs policy is available to all parents on request. A copy of the policy is included in the school prospectus and a summary of the policy is available on the school's website. The prospectus is made available to parents at the Parent Information Evenings. A summary copy of the Drugs Policy is distributed to every parent after a full review and ratification of the amended policy by the Board of Governors.

Checklist for handling suspected drug related incidents in school

This is a guide on the key procedures to undertake when a drug incident occurs in school.

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.
- Send for a first-aider.

Then in all cases:-

- Carefully gather up any drugs / paraphernalia / evidence lying around and keep safely.
- Ascertain if possible which substances / drugs have been taken and how much.
- Secure all drugs and paraphernalia and give to the Principal / Designated teacher – Mrs A McGleenan who will immediately lock them away.
- Parents will be contacted 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 the owner's permission and always in their presence if this is given. It is okay to search school property such as lockers, cupboards or desks so long as accompanied by along another member of staff and the pupil concerned as witnesses)
- Ensure all drugs are safely and securely stored making sure that this is witnessed by another adult and recorded and placed in the school safe.
- Gather details and data from all the eye-witnesses at the scene.
- All statements and phone calls should be recorded, signed and dated.
- The Designated Teacher to ensure complete and accurate accurate details are recorded and kept safely.
- Ensure the ELB incident form is filled in and returned to the Advisor for Pastoral Care.
- Ensure that you follow all the procedures in the Schools Drugs Policy.

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

- Principal and Designated Teacher.
- Parents / Guardians
- PSNI (CSIO or Uniform Branch)
- ELB Pastoral Care Advisor (and CCMS if appropriate).
- Chairperson initially and subsequently the Board of Governors.

- The Education Welfare Officer.
- No media statements, only the Principal should do this.
- Other pupils, parents and staff are only told on a need-to-know basis.

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 and undesirable behaviour and the impact on the school community. Therefore a full repertoire of responses will be considered by the Principal in each case where they may arise.