

Alcohol, drug and other substance use policy

The inappropriate use of alcohol or drugs can damage health and well-being, and have far-reaching effects on an individual's personal and working life and affect a school's ability to provide children with a safe environment. Alcohol or drug misuse can:

- result in reduced levels of attendance
- negatively affect work performance
- result in increased health and safety risks to the individual and to others.

Alcohol or drug misuse (i.e. use of non prescribed drugs) would be detrimental to the School's reputation and image. All staff are expected to present a professional image to those with whom they come into contact at all times and are expected to be in a fit and safe condition to undertake their duties and not have their work performance affected by the use of alcohol or drugs at any time.

Slimbridge School is committed to providing a safe and productive work environment and this policy is designed to support this. Ultimately, the School will attempt to balance the needs of an individual with its overriding duty to preserve the health, safety and welfare of all its staff, volunteers, visitors and contractors.

Guiding principles of the policy are:

- Staff are not permitted to consume alcohol whilst working at Slimbridge School. The exception to this principle is that staff and volunteers are permitted to drink a reasonable amount of alcohol at school events on the understanding that they must maintain professional conduct throughout. Such events include stakeholder events, working lunches with external stakeholders and internal celebrations that have the specific approval for alcohol serving. If a staff member or volunteer is unsure about what is appropriate, then the Head Teacher must be consulted prior to any alcohol being consumed.
- Possessing or supplying drugs are criminal offences and the school will take immediate disciplinary action if members of staff are convicted of drug related charges.
- Staff must notify the Head Teacher if any legal or illegal drugs or alcohol have been taken that may impair their behaviour or ability to perform their duties safely and satisfactorily.

- If driving on school business, staff must take responsibility to be within legal alcohol driving limits applicable at the time. If staff are transporting children they must not drink alcohol or take any non-prescription drugs that may affect their driving. If staff members are taking prescribed drugs that could impair their judgement, the Head Teacher must be notified.
- Staff are personally responsible for ensuring that they are free from the influence of any alcohol or drugs taken in personal time before they undertake school work.
- Staff should not, with the best of intentions, 'cover up' for a colleague when it is suspected that an individual is under the influence of drink or drugs or has a potential related problem.
- Careful consideration will be given if a staff member acknowledges the existence of a problem and/or have agreed to obtain medical help for the condition, and any such disclosure will be treated in the strictest of confidence as far as possible. However, any incident that amounts to gross misconduct will be considered a dismissible offence.
- Any parents, contractors or volunteers on site who are suspected to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs will be asked to leave the School premises. Senior staff members are aware that certain medical issues have similar symptoms to alcohol and drug use, and will ensure that the matter is dealt with sensitively.

Drugs Education Policy

Aims and objectives

We aim to equip 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 has the primary objective of helping 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 objectives of our drugs education programme are:

- to provide children with knowledge and information about illegal drugs and the harmful effects they can have on people's lives;
- to enable children to discuss moral questions related to drug taking, 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, or are aware of other people misusing drugs;
- 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;
- to show that taking illegal drugs is a moral issue, and that choices about drugs are moral choices;
- to ensure that all children are taught about drugs in a consistent manner, following guidelines that have been agreed by parents, governors and staff.

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 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 (PSHE) curriculum. The main teaching about drugs takes place in Year 6, where the children are taught about illegal drugs, 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 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 society.

The role of the head teacher

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

The head teacher 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.

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

The role of governors

The governing body has the responsibility of setting down these general guidelines on drugs education. The governors will support the head teacher 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.

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.

Monitoring and review

The Safeguarding, Welfare & Personnel committee of the governing body will monitor the drugs education policy on an annual basis. This committee will report their findings and recommendations to the full governing body as necessary, if the policy appears to need modification. The SW&P committee takes into serious consideration any representation from parents about the drugs education programme and comments will be recorded. Governors require the head teacher to keep a written record detailing the content and delivery of the drug education programme taught in the school.