

DRUG EDUCATION POLICY

RATIONALE

We live in a drug orientated society. We cannot escape the fact that wherever we look, whether in the home, school, or environment there are substances freely available which are potentially harmful to young people. Prevention through drug education is a positive contribution to combating the drug problem, if carried out in a sensitive way.

“ It is the view of the government that a new emphasis on drug education and prevention be introduced to reduce the acceptability and availability of drugs for young people.”
(*Tackling Drugs Together. HMSO 1994*)

Drug education should provide pupils with opportunities to acquire knowledge and understanding about the dangers of drug misuse. It should also ensure that they are equipped with the necessary skills and attitudes to resist pressure to misuse drugs. This is a difficult area to deal with and it is important to be informed and sensitive. The purpose is not to put ideas into children's minds but to examine the circumstances, attitudes and behaviours which may eventually lead to children being involved in drug abuse.

These issues include:

- Why drugs are an integral part of the society we live in.
- Safety education
- Decision making skills
- Social and environmental factors

AIMS

1. To enable pupils to make healthy, informed choices
2. To create awareness of potentially dangerous situations concerning drug abuse
3. To provide opportunities for pupils to be equipped with the knowledge, attitude and skills they need to avoid drug misuse
4. To minimise the number of children who ever engage in drug misuse
5. To delay the onset of first use for those who do experiment at any time

6. To persuade those who are experimenting with or misusing drugs to stop
7. To enable any pupils who are misusing drugs to have concerns about their behaviour and seek help

IMPLEMENTATION

The approach is deliberately low key, interweaving drug education into broader themes. At Key Stage 2 the methodology used is mostly interactive group work appropriate to age and ability. It is important that children are given plenty of scenarios of a problem-solving nature that will enable them to explore feelings, attitudes and values. The resources used do not tell the children what is right or wrong. They will after all take their places in a society which partly endorses drugs. They may also come from families in which drugs are regularly used.

'The point at which we begin to tell the children what to do is the point at which we fail to prepare them to take control of their own lives.' (*Drugs and the Primary School Child* : TACADE/HEALTH EDUCATION AUTHORITY)

Many of the personal and social issues relating to drug education (e.g. self-esteem, decision making), are dealt with in a number of other policies (Please refer particularly to PSE and Independant Learning), and through various areas of the curriculum, using a coherant, integrated approach.

It is specifically written into topics in the following year groups:

- Year 1 - GROWTH
- Year 3 - ATTACK and DEFENCE
- Year 5 - BALANCE

CONTENT

- Know that all medicines are drugs, but not all drugs are medicines
- Know the important and beneficial part which drugs have played in society
- Know that there are over-the-counter,prescribed, legal and illegal substances and have some undrestanding of their effects.
- Know how to make simple choices and exercise some basic techniques for resisting pressure from friends or others.

RESOURCES

Material should be selected carefully to ensure it is appropriate to the age and experience of the pupils.

- Scoot and Friends - Worksheets and ideas
- Dragon's Breath - Anti-Smoking pack
- Slide Pack with notes
- Teacher Module - Information about drugs

HEALTH/SAFETY PROCEDURE

The following matters should be reported to the Headteacher without delay:

1. When a teacher suspects a child is mis-using drugs or is involved in any way in drug abuse
2. When a teacher finds evidence of mis-use of drugs
3. When illegal drugs are found on school premises
4. When a child is found in possession of illegal drugs
5. If staff become aware of possible criminal activity outside the school premises
6. The Headteacher will inform the police where necessary, follow LEA guidelines.

If a child is found to be suffering the effects of drug abuse (e.g. unconscious or drowsy) send for Headteacher immediately and take the steps set out in the attached sheet.

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