



St. Comgall's Primary School
23 Brunswick Road
Bangor
Co. Down
BT20 3DS

St Comgall's PS, Bangor Drugs Policy

St Comgall's Primary School is committed to the development of each pupil's full potential in a climate of joy, challenge, co-operation and celebration.

Our educative community is centred on Christ so that his values and Gospel message pervade the whole life of the school and we recognize the importance of close links with the home, the parish and the wider community.

RATIONALE

It is accepted that children have become more aware of drug-related issues through television, pop music and children's magazines and through mixing with older children.

We believe in St Comgall's Primary School that it is the role of the school to have a policy and drugs' programme in place that will delay and prevent the onset of drug use amongst its pupils. Recent research has shown that such education does indeed prevent some children from experimenting with drugs.

We also feel it is important to prepare children for the move to post-primary education and recognize the invaluable input that the Church and parents can give in fulfilling these roles.

DEFINITION

A drug is any substance which, when taken, has the effect of altering the way a person behaves, feels, sees or thinks.

This policy will address the use of legal, illicit and illegal drugs.

- Alcohol and tobacco
- 'Over-the-counter' medicines, such as Paracetamol and prescribed drugs such as antibiotics etc
- Illicit substances, such as correcting fluids/thinners, gas lighter fuel, aerosols, glue and petrol and Poppers (amyl/butyl nitrate)
- Illegal /controlled drugs, such as Cannabis, LSD, Ecstasy, Amphetamine Sulphate (speed), Magic Mushrooms, Heroin and Cocaine

AIMS OF THE DRUGS POLICY

The aim of this policy is to ensure a consistent approach among staff towards any drug-related issue, to develop an effective partnership with parents and to provide a clear statement as to how any incident should be addressed. It is hoped that this policy will ensure our children acquire the knowledge, understanding and skills to help them realize the benefits of a drug-free lifestyle and



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cope with any issues that might rise. The central tenet of the policy will be to deliver an appropriate preventative programme of guidance and education.

DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

(a) Board of Governors:

- Support the development and on-going review of the drugs policy and programme.
- Ensure a summary of the policy is published in the school prospectus
- Ensure they are fully aware and adequately trained to deal with any drug related incident including alcohol and tobacco.
- Ideally have one member of the Board is specifically trained in drugs-related issues.

(b) The Principal: will:

- Determine (not investigate) all incidents involving drugs. (The PSNI will investigate)
- Contact the parents and or guardians of any pupils involved in any drugs-related incident.
- Ask pupils voluntarily to turn out his/her belongings in the presence of a witness. Teachers will not search a person or personal property.
- Liaise closely with the PSNI
- Inform the Board of Governors about the incident and
- Agree with them any appropriate pastoral or disciplinary measures to be taken
- Store or dispose of any drug or drug related paraphernalia
- Report the incident to CCMS and EA.

(c) Designated Teacher: Miss Anne Higgins (Designated Teacher) will:

- Liaise with other bodies in relation to agencies working in the school (PSNI, counselling groups, Social services, FamilyWorks NI etc.)
- Co-ordinate the NSPCC Keeping Safe Programme incorporating themes related to; My Body, healthy Relationships & Being Safe.
- Organise pupil events and training through appropriate agencies.
- Co-ordinate school's procedures for handling any drug-related incident in school
- Receive any substances found in school
- Liaise with other staff on drugs matter

Recognise the need for staff training re first-aid skills necessary to cope with a pupil under the influence of drugs

Ensure all staff are aware of emergency procedures and implementing the other parts of the policy.

- Ensure that an effective programme of study is being taught. Following any incident the teacher may wish to amend the programme.

(d) All other staff:

- To be trained in emergency procedures
- To be able to take control of any drug related issue, if they are the first to become involved.

STAFF TRAINING:



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Staff will be trained as appropriate/required by EA staff, the Designated Teacher or other responsible agencies. All staff teaching and non-teaching will be trained in drugs awareness and what to do if drugs or drug related items are found.

OVERVIEW OF THE DRUGS EDUCATION PROGRAMME

At present, Drugs Education and Health Education are entwined as both involve the teaching of similar skills in the personal and social development of the young person. Drugs Education forms part of Personal Development (PDMU) in the NI Curriculum. It will also continue to fit in with other areas of the curriculum, such as R.E., WAU and Literacy.

Some aims of our programme are:-

To inform children of the effects of drug abuse and provide accurate and up to date information on drugs and their effects on health

To establish skills and behaviour which enable children to communicate effectively, assert themselves and take responsible decisions

To help pupils acquire skills in managing peer pressure

To create a climate where pupils feel happy to discuss drugs.

To build up the self-esteem and confidence of our children

To help our children to identify and understand the pressures and influences which could have a serious consequence for their health and well-being

To ensure progression and continuity in knowledge and understanding, matching these to the age, maturity and circumstances of the pupils concerned

Staff will follow a preventative approach to the Drugs Education Programme while employing active, pupil-centred teaching methods where appropriate.

STAFF USE OF DRUGS

St Comgall's Primary School is a smoke and alcohol free zone. For issues relating to staff use of alcohol and tobacco we refer them to "Drugs and Alcohol in the Workplace" or the Alcohol and Drug Misuse Policy (TNC 2005/5).

COMMUNICATING THE POLICY TO PARENTS AND OUTSIDE AGENCIES

A copy of the school's Drug Policy is available to parents by request, is referred to in Pastoral Care Policies and available on the school's website.

Parents/Carers and pupils are welcome to provide feedback and comment at times of review or as apt.

All outside agencies will be made aware of the policy to ensure that what they offer is part of the ongoing drugs programme and is always appropriate.

MANAGEMENT ISSUES



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PROCEDURES:

All staff will be aware of and consider the EA's guidelines and legal requirements on drug-related incidents i.e.-

1. Where a substance on the school premises (Appendix 1)
2. Where a pupil is suspected of possessing/distributing an illegal substance (Appendix 2).
3. Where a pupil suspected of having taken drugs in school (Appendix 3)

If a substance is found on the school premises or it has been alleged or suspected that a pupil has a controlled drug in their possession, it is a statutory requirement that the **PSNI is informed**.

DISCIPLINARY MEASURES

The school views any drug-related incident as very serious and disciplinary measures will reflect this. However, it can not be appropriate to prescribe specific sanctions as the principal will take into account a range of factors before deciding how to respond to any such incident. Some examples of these might be: -

- Age of pupil
- What was the motivation?
- Was there peer pressure?
- Is it a first or subsequent offence?
- Quantity of drug
- Is the drug legal/illegal?

At all times we will consider the needs of individual pupils and support mechanisms will be put into place, such as appropriate counselling from EA or other appropriate agency.

Parents are expected to support the aims of the school throughout the implementation of any aspect of the school's policy in deciding disciplinary matters. It is emphasised that all measures taken will be for the **long term benefit of the pupil as well as the protection of other pupils**.

DETAINING A PUPIL

If a pupil is uncooperative and the member of staff has reasonable grounds to suspect that the s/he has in their possession or has taken an illegal drug, then the teacher can ask the child to remain until the parents come or use reasonable force to detain the child as they have a duty of protection as a result of being ***in loco parentis***.

Any search will be done in the presence of another member of staff.

SEARCHING

Where a teacher may have reasonable grounds for suspicion, they may search any property belonging to the school, e.g. a cupboard or desk. They may ask a child to turn out the contents of a bag or pocket and with the pupil's consent, may search these in the presence of the pupil and another adult. If the pupil refuses, the police and parents will be called.

***Only members of the PSNI have the right to carry out a physical search of any pupil.**

CONFIDENTIALITY



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Teachers can not and should not promise total confidentiality. These boundaries should be made clear to the pupils. In the case of information revealed about controlled drugs, this must be passed on to the designated teacher for drugs. Any visitor to the school must also follow these directions. Where a pupil seeks help with regard to drugs, the matter will be handled discretely and sensitively with the intention that the pupil receives help either from an appropriate counselling service, EA or from another appropriate agency.

SOME PROCEDURES FOR USING OUTSIDE AGENCIES

- Input must be part of the school's drugs programme.
- The teacher will undertake preparation for and follow up activities.
- The teacher will always be present in the room when a visitor is taking the class.
- The agency should be aware of the drugs' policy and adhere to it
- The agency should have a clear set of Learning Intentions for the lesson.
- Resources should be appropriate.
- Pupils and teacher will carry out evaluation of the lesson.
- Any evaluations carried out by the visitor should be available to the teacher
- Any criminal activity revealed to either teacher or visitor must be passed on to the designated teacher

GUIDANCE ON THE MANAGEMENT OF SOLVENTS/HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES

St. Comgall's Primary School is fully aware of the potential dangers of substance abuse. The use of solvents will always be kept to a minimum and the school will follow the advice and guidance of EA re appropriate type, use and storage of such substances, which may be required in school, include adhesives, aerosols, cleaning and degreasing agents.

The management of recommended substances should involve sensible and safe usage by teacher and pupils.

- Small amounts made available
- Distribution from a central point
- Counting of returned equipment
- Safe storage with limited access.
- Pupils will not be allowed to bring in any substance that could have an intoxicating effect

The caretaker and cleaners will also be made aware of their responsibilities.

Where solvents have to be kept in school for cleaning purposes, the following guidelines will be strictly adhered to:

- All solvents necessary will be stored securely and will be properly supervised.
- The store should be locked when not in use
- All substances should be clearly labelled and in their original containers.

GUIDELINES ON THE ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICINES

This school feels that it is the role of the parent to administer both on-going and occasional medicines.

However, where this is impractical, teachers may give their consent in administering medicine.



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- On-going illnesses which need the administration of drugs, sometimes life-saving, **must** be accompanied by written permission from the parent, giving precise instructions and information regarding the illness and medicine.
- The storage of such medicine should be in a locked cupboard or secure place accessible only to teachers.
- A record of drugs administered will be kept and witnessed by another adult.
- Inhalers should remain in the possession of the child where appropriate
- In the event of an emergency, appropriate medical attention should be sought
- Parents should send in only enough medicine for that day.
- In the event of a teacher agreeing to administer medicine, they will be trained accordingly.
- Written permission must be given to the teacher by the parent regarding administration of medication on school trips

***Reference: Medication Policy**

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

REVIEW OF POLICY AND PROCEDURES

The responsibility to ensure the monitoring and evaluation of the Drugs Policy rests with the Designated Teacher. This will be carried out on a two yearly basis. However, it will be reviewed immediately following any incident and any weaknesses remedied.

Review and evaluation will take place as part of our school development plan, in response to future initiatives and in the light of any drug related incident.

Policy completed by C Hunter & A Higgins – ratified April 2015

Policy last reviewed:	April 2018 – C Hunter & A Higgins	(No Additions)
Review Due:	2019/20 – completed October 2019 (No Additions/Amendments)	C Hunter / A Higgins
Review Due:	2021/22	



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Emergency Procedures

Upon finding a casualty with suspected drug use

1. Send for a designated first aider
2. Ring 999
3. Try to find out what has been taken. This will help the emergency crew.
4. If a depressant drug (alcohol, solvents, sleeping pills or painkillers) has been taken, they will feel drowsy. Keep them awake by getting them to walk or by applying a cool damp cloth to the back of their neck
5. Do **not** give anything to eat or drink.
6. If unconscious, put in recovery position, clear airways and call an ambulance immediately
7. If they stop breathing, begin mouth-to-mouth resuscitation. Stay until ambulance arrives and inform them of the facts. **Keep talking!**
8. If a stimulant (Amphetamines or ecstasy) has been taken, the person will be distressed. It is important they remain calm and relaxed. Get them to breathe in and out slowly. If hyperventilating occurs, get them to breathe in and out of a **paper bag**.
9. If LSD or hallucinogen has been taken, keep them in a darkened, quiet room to avoid sensory stimulation. They should be supervised at all times and kept reassured that the effects will wear off and they are in no danger.



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