



**St. Mary's Grammar School, Belfast**

**MISUSE OF DRUGS POLICY**

**June 2017**



# St Mary's Grammar School

## Misuse of Drugs Policy

This policy is set in the context of the ethos of the school and relevant school policies integral to pastoral care and in consideration of Department of Education, CCMS, CCEA and EA guidelines on the misuse of drugs. In implementing this policy we are guided by the recommendation made in the Department of Education Circular 1992/3 on the "Misuse of Drugs:

**" In the event of illegal drug misuse being suspected or identified, schools, colleges and youth organisations should immediately notify the parents of the young people involved and as soon as possible, contact the local PSNI Drugs squad personnel so that investigations into the sources of and trafficking in illegal drugs can be expedited."**

### **Aims of the policy**

- to promote and maintain the safety and well-being of all pupils
- to provide a drugs education programme for staff and pupils
- to bring clarity and consistency to the way staff approach the subject of drugs
- to bring about confident, effective management of all drug-related matters impacting on the well-being of our pupils.

### **The Pupils' Needs**

The needs of pupils involved in drug related incidents must be considered after action has been taken to preserve the safety and well-being of the school population.

This will include offering support through the pastoral system and referral, as appropriate, in order to ensure a caring response to pupils in distress.

### **Parents and Carers**

At St. Mary's the wishes of parents/carers are carefully considered and we try to ensure parents/carers are aware of how we deal with drug issues. Parent/carer involvement in relation to concerns about drugs or drug related incidents is encouraged and where appropriate, they are routinely contacted when the school has evidence of involvement of pupils in the misuse of drugs.

The school's drugs policy is available on request from the school office.

**Mrs Fiona Crookes, Vice Principal, is the teacher designated to have specific responsibility in matters involving drugs.**

**Mrs Amanda Barr, Senior Teacher, assumes the responsibility when the designated teacher is absent or unavailable.**

**This policy is applicable to all members of the school community on school premises and extends to those members at all external events organised by the school (school trips, award ceremonies, festivals etc.)**

### **Definition of drugs**

A drug is any substance which, when taken, has the effect of altering the way a person behaves, feels, sees or thinks. The definition of drugs therefore includes:

- illegal drugs, such as cannabis, LSD, ecstasy, amphetamine sulphate (speed) and magic mushrooms, poppers etc.
- alcohol and tobacco
- prescribed drugs
- volatile substances such as solvents, aerosols, correcting fluids etc
- over the counter medicine.

The drugs education programme should focus primarily on the range of substances detailed above and should be tailored to meet the needs of the various year groups.

## **Drugs / Tobacco / Alcohol on the school premises.**

Pupils are not permitted to be in possession of, or use alcohol, tobacco, solvents, any illegal drugs, or paraphernalia for use of same, at any time.

## **Definition and Management of Prescribed Medicines**

Prescribed drugs or medicines are those substances prescribed by a doctor for use by a particular patient to manage or cure a condition. These may include:

**Inhalers (asthma);  
Epi-pens;  
Antibiotics.**

- In accordance with Health and Safety at Work regulations, the above are stored in a First-Aid cabinet in the school office. The parent/guardian must provide written permission for their son to use such medication.
- The pupil administers his own medication with appropriate supervision. In an emergency Epi-pens may be administered by those staff who have received prior training.
- All authorisation forms for the above procedures are held in the school office. Mary McGurk in the office updates all health and medical records. The school nurse is also aware of all pupils on long-term medication.
- Where appropriate, teachers are informed if a pupil is on medication.

The following members of staff are trained in First Aid:

J McGarry, K Robinson, R Herron, J Carron, C Mc Donnell, C Clarke, B Mc Comb.

## **Definition Of Solvents**

The range of substances known as solvents is extensive and includes:

Aerosol sprays (hairsprays, air fresheners);

Butane gas (cigarette lighter fuel);

Solvent-based adhesives and glues;

Dry-cleaning fluids;

Paint and paint thinners;

Correcting fluid;

Nail varnish remover;

Petrol;

Other volatile substances or vapour produced by a substance that may be deliberately inhaled for its intoxicating effect, (laboratory gas supplies).

## **Management of such substances within the school:**

### **Science Department**

All solvents are stored as recommended by CLEAPS and fulfil legal requirements. Solvents are stored in locked, metal, fireproof cabinets in the prep rooms and can be accessed by the technician employed in each department, or by the senior technician. Neither teaching staff nor pupils have access. Solvents are supplied to the teaching laboratories in volumes ordered for specific practicals. Any excess is collected by the technician for storage or disposal as per legislature.

Laboratory gas supplies are operated by a main switch in the building which is fitted with an alarm system. The supply to each laboratory is controlled by a switch which must be unlocked by a teacher before use.

### **Technology Department**

As in the Science department all solvents are locked in fireproof cabinets. All glue and other adhesives are kept locked in a cupboard in the prep room. Access to any of the above items is limited to the technician and teaching staff. Such substances are used only under the close supervision of the teacher in charge of the class.

### **Workshops and Garage**

Paint and paint thinners are stored in the painter's workshop, which is kept locked during the day when the painter is working in other parts of the school.

Petrol, diesel and oil for the various school vehicles is stored in tanks or cages which are locked and may only be accessed by appropriate personnel. All maintenance areas are out of bounds to pupils at all times.

All above facilities should be checked by the school Health and Safety officer on a regular basis.

### **Cleaning**

All cleaning fluids should be risk assessed before use in the school and are kept locked in designated storerooms. Graffiti remover is available from the caretaker or science technicians and is also kept in locked cupboards in the prep rooms

## **Responding to drug related incidents.**

- The Principal is the person responsible for dealing with all arrangements and information regarding all suspected, identified or rumoured cases of drug misuse in the school.
- He/she will be assisted in this by the Senior Leadership Team and Head of Pastoral Care / Designated Teacher who, where appropriate, shall oversee the provision of support for the students involved.
- Where incidents arise, no member of staff should deal with parents, the police, outside agencies, or the press without contacting the Principal and being delegated by him/her to do so.
- Staff should be aware of the procedures outlined in this policy's appendices relating to:
  - Procedures to follow when a drug incident occurs
  - Drug Record Form
  - Pupils suspected of possessing/distributing an illegal substance.
  - Pupils suspected of having taken drugs in school.
  - Finding a substance on the school premises.

**Flowcharts and a guidance checklist of our procedures are available in the Appendices but in brief:**

- Where possible and appropriate conduct a search.
- A member of staff may conduct a search of a pupil's desk area if he/she has reasonable grounds to believe it contains unlawful items. Such a search should be made in the presence of the pupil and another witness (adult).
- Where a pupil is suspected of concealing controlled drugs on their person or in their personal belongings, every effort should be made to secure the voluntary production of any unlawful substances, for example, by asking them to turn out their pockets or schoolbags.
- **Searches of the person should never be carried out by a member of staff**
- Where there are reasonable grounds to suspect that an offence is being, or has been committed, staff may detain a pupil, using reasonable means, until the police arrive. In such an event the teacher should not remain alone with the pupil and duress should never be used.

# Outcomes of Drug Related Incidents.

**At all times our caring ethos and individual circumstances will inform our decision-making**

❑ **Pupils found to be selling illegal drugs.**

Following thorough investigation [by an internal school process](#), where it has been proven that pupils have sold or attempted or intended to sell illegal substances within the school, the school's expulsion procedures will normally be initiated as a matter of course. Parents/carers will be encouraged to and assisted in seeking professional counselling for the pupil.

❑ **Pupils caught possessing and/or distributing illegal drugs (with or without charge).**

Following thorough investigation [by an internal school process](#), where pupils are caught in possession and/or distributing illegal drugs (with or without charge), a period of suspension will normally ensue. In effect, this will act as a final warning. On the pupil's return to school both he and his parents/carers will be informed that in the event of a further recurrence the school's expulsion procedures will normally be initiated as a matter of course. This final warning will be made in writing and verbally to the pupil and his parent/carers and a record kept. Parents/carers will be encouraged to and assisted in seeking professional counselling for the pupil.

❑ **Pupils caught in possession and/or distribution of Drug Related Paraphernalia (with or without charge).**

Following thorough investigation [by an internal school process](#), where pupils are caught in possession and/or distributing Drug Related Paraphernalia (with or without charge), a period of suspension will normally ensue.

In effect, this will act as a final warning. On the pupil's return to school both he and his parents/carers will be informed that in the event of a further recurrence the school's expulsion procedures will normally be initiated as a matter of course. This final warning will be made in writing and verbally to the pupil and his parent/carers and a record kept. Parents/carers will be encouraged to and assisted in seeking professional counselling for the pupil.

❑ **Pupils caught taking drugs inside of school.**

Following thorough investigation [by an internal school process](#), where pupils are caught taking drugs inside of school, parents/carers will be informed. Appropriate action will be taken as deemed necessary and this may involve a period of suspension.

In effect, this will act as a final warning. On the pupil's return to school both he and his parents/carers will be informed that in the event of a further recurrence the school's expulsion procedures will normally be initiated as a matter of course. This final warning will be made in writing and verbally to the pupil and his parent/carers and a record kept. Parents/carers will be encouraged to and assisted in seeking professional counselling for the pupil.

❑ **Pupils who are part of a group involved in a drug incident inside of school.**

Such incidents will be investigated [by an internal school process](#) to establish if they were clearly aware of the use or intended use of drugs in the incident. If so, parents will be informed and appropriate action will be taken as deemed necessary and this may involve a period of suspension.

In effect, this will act as a final warning. On the pupil's return to school both he and his parents/carers will be informed that in the event of a further recurrence the school's expulsion procedures will normally be initiated as a matter of course. This final warning will be made in writing and verbally to the pupil and his parent/carers and a record kept. Parents/carers will be encouraged to and assisted in seeking professional counselling for the pupil.

❑ **Where the school becomes aware that pupils have taken illegal substances outside of school.**

Such incidents will be investigated and appropriate action will be taken as deemed necessary.

❑ **Any incident involving the misuse of drugs will be dealt with and recorded in confidence.**

❑ **The involvement of the media in any drug related incident will be dealt with by the Principal.**

- \* **A continual review of sanctions may be required in light of the possible reclassification of cannabis. Guidance will be available in the forthcoming document ‘Misuse of Drugs’ from DENI.**

### **Drug Education**

- In line with the school’s ethos, the drug education programme concentrates on drug prevention and on providing support and guidance for those who are in danger of substance abuse and who seek help.
- Drug education is an integral element in the school’s pastoral programme as well as a key educational entitlement.
- It is delivered as an integral part of the school’s PSHE (Personal, Social and Health Education) programme, and is also delivered elsewhere in the curriculum.
- The school’s drug education programme focuses on the wide range of drugs – including alcohol, tobacco and solvents, as well as illegal substances – introduced at appropriate stages and seeks to develop a culture of empowerment through which students at St. Mary’s will be educated in a holistic fashion about all aspects of drugs in society today.
- The drug education programme utilises an extensive range of resources, modified to best suit the school’s particular needs. It also uses, as an integral part of the programme, agencies such as Resolve, Falls Community Council and Youth Com (The Down And Connor Youth Commission). Guest speakers and facilitators who have expertise in the area of drug education are also invited into the school.
- While drug education programme is important, the school’s drug education programme is, at all times, underpinned by and aims at the formation, development and nurturing of those positive values that will enable students to resist the drug culture that exists in society today.

### **Aims**

The drug education programme seeks:

- to make students aware of the danger of drugs – to themselves, their families, the school community and the wider society.
- to create an understanding of the social forces behind the drug culture and to enable students to make life-enhancing choices about how they lead their lives.
- to equip students with the social skills and self-confidence to make informed life choices.

### **Training**

- All school staff should receive drug awareness training to enable them to identify and respond to any drug incident on the school campus.
- SLT should consistently assess the quality and effectiveness of training received and regularly review the need for awareness raising and/or INSET.
- This should include those trained in First Aid for Drugs Misuse.
- The Governors should identify one of their number to lead on drugs issues.
- Consistent provision for awareness raising related to drugs should be made available to Governors, teaching and ancillary staff.

### **Relevant Personnel**

- **Principal** - **Mr J. Martin**
- **Designated Teacher** - **Mrs F. Crookes**

## **Procedures to undertake when a drug incident occurs in St. Mary's**

### **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.

#### **Then in all cases:-**

- Carefully gather up any drugs / paraphernalia / evidence lying around and keep safely.
- Ascertain which substances / drugs have been taken and how much.
- Secure all drugs and paraphernalia and give to the Principal / Designated teacher immediately, and lock them away.
- Contact the parents 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 permission. It is okay to search school property such as lockers, cupboards or desks)
- Ensure all drugs are safely and securely stored or destroyed, making sure that this is witnessed by another adult and recorded.
- Gather details and data from all the eye-witnesses at the scene.
- All statements and phone calls should be recorded, signed and dated.
- Record all information on the school's official incident form and sign and date
- Ensure that you follow all the procedures in the school's Drugs Policy.

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

- Principal and Designated drug teacher.
- Parents / Guardians
- PSNI (CSIO or Uniform Branch)
- Chairperson initially and subsequently the Board of Governors.
- 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 needs to 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 behaviour and the impact on the school community.

**St. Mary's Grammar School****Drug Incident Record**

<b>Name &amp; Class of Pupil</b>		
<b>Date &amp; Time of Incident</b>		
<b>Location of Incident</b>		
<b>Staff involved</b>		
<b>First Aid given?</b>		<b>Ambulance /Doctor called?</b>
<b>Drug involved?</b>		<b>Sample found?</b> <b>Sample destroyed?</b>
<b>Parents informed?</b>	<b>When?</b>	<b>By whom?</b>
<b>PSNI informed?</b>	<b>When?</b>	<b>By whom?</b>
<b>Pupil sanction?</b>		
<b>This form completed by:</b>	Name: _____ Date: _____ Countersigned by: _____ Date: _____	

**PUPIL SUSPECTED OF POSSESSING / DISTRIBUTING AN ILLEGAL SUBSTANCE.**

NO

YES

WILL THE PUPIL BE CO-OPERATIVE?

Detain the pupil. Contact Designated Teacher & Principal

Bring the pupil to the Designated Teacher / Principal along with his possessions.

Inform the parents.

Inform the parents

Conduct search procedures as per school guidelines

If anything is found contact the PSNI.

Write a detailed report of the incident including any action taken

Initiate disciplinary action, if necessary.

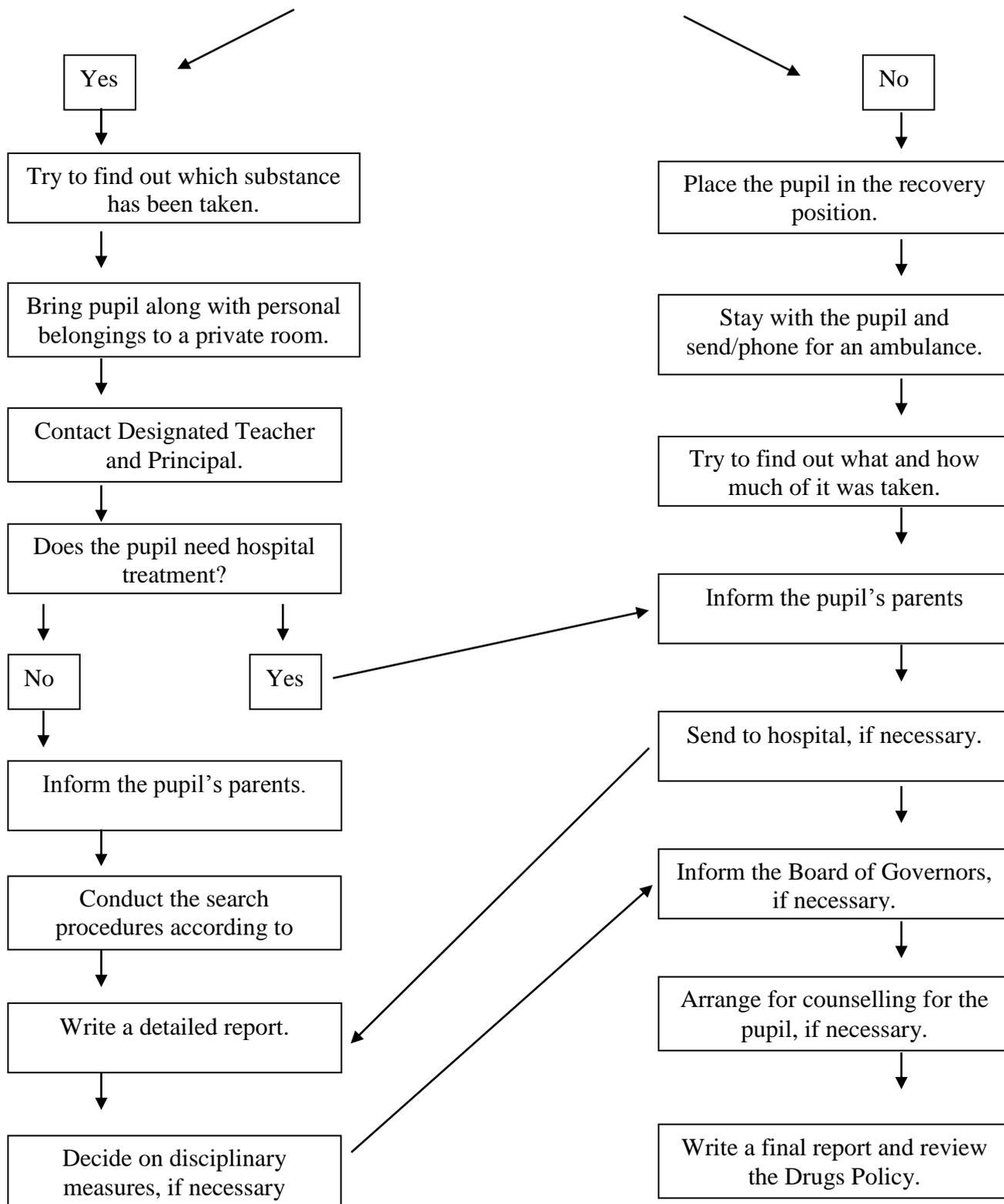
Inform the Board of Governors, if necessary.

Offer guidance

**PUPIL SUSPECTED OF HAVING TAKEN DRUGS IN SCHOOL**

Send for person trained in First Aid and for Form Teacher.  
 Make judgement on pupil's condition.  
 Medical, or drug related?

**IS THE PUPIL CONSCIOUS?**



**FINDING A SUBSTANCE ON THE SCHOOL PREMISES**

