

Riverside Primary School

Drugs Policy

September 2025 - 2028

Reviewed without changes



DRUG EDUCATION POLICY

This policy outlines the aims for the teaching of, and learning about, drugs and their misuse at Riverside Primary School.

The definition of a drug

The term drug is used to refer to any psychotropic. When addressing drug education and the management of incidents and situations involving drugs (including the management of medicines), school drugs policies are recommended to encompass all drugs, which include:

- Volatile (sniffable) substances (e.g. petrol, alkyl nitrites, butane, aerosols).
- Over-the-counter and prescription medicines (e.g. paracetamol, cough medicines, antibiotics, tranquillisers, steroids).
- Drugs available online.
- Alcohol (e.g. wines, spirits and liqueurs).
- Tobacco (e.g. cigarettes and cigars).
- So-called legal drugs, especially psychoactive substances.
- Illegal drugs, sometimes called controlled drugs (e.g. opium, cannabis, heroin, LSD, ecstasy etc.)

Aims

The school believes that drug education is most successfully delivered as part of the science programme (factual information) and through the personal, social and health education curriculum which deals with the health, safety, moral and related aspects of drug use and misuse. Drug education programmes using fear arousal techniques or simply providing basic information about drug abuse will not of themselves change pupils' behaviour. The most successful education programmes emphasise information and social skills' approaches, such as peer resistance, as well as improvement in self-esteem and self-awareness.

The school, therefore, aims in its drug education programme to:

- Promote and encourage life skills, particularly those related to healthy living.
- Employ a range of teaching methods, such as feedback, role-playing and skill rehearsal, discussion and group work, structured games, active learning techniques and the use of outside speakers, in addition to information and knowledge programmes, thereby avoiding fear-raising tactics.
- Build upon and ensure the accuracy of previously learned knowledge both formal and gained in the playground and from home.
- Address the pupils' needs at each stage of their development taking account of their background and environment.

- Involve the parents as and when appropriate in our drug education programme, having careful regard for parents who take drugs other than on medical prescription or advice.
- Promote self-esteem and help the children to make decisions about their health and development.

Effective drug education enables pupils to:

- Improve their self-esteem and confidence.
- Make informed choices and decisions.
- Develop personal initiative and be able to take responsibility for their actions.
- Recognise personal skills and qualities in themselves and others for coping with external and/or peer group pressures.
- Develop assertiveness in appropriate situations.
- Maintain and develop good friendships and relations with adults, including parents and carers.
- Develop the motivation to succeed personally and in the community.

Organisation and planning

The statutory element of drug education is within the National Curriculum Science orders. This means that at key stage 1, pupils should be taught about the role of drugs as medicines. At key stage 2, pupils should be taught about the effects on the human body of tobacco, alcohol and other drugs, and how these relate to their personal health.

In the unlikely event of a drug related incident, the school will firstly discuss the case with staff most closely involved with the child, tell the parents, and then institute a support programme, involving the policy and external agencies as appropriate. In exceptional circumstances permanent exclusion may be the final outcome.

In addition to the national curriculum programmes of study, we make sure our pupils have learned about the following.

Key stage 1

Knowledge and understanding

- School rules relating to medicines.
- Basic information about how the body works and ways of taking care of it.

Looking after the body

- The role of medicines (both prescribed and over-the-counter) in promoting health and the reasons people use them.
- Understanding that all drugs can be harmful if not used properly.
- Simple safety rules about medicines and other substances used in the home, including solvents.
- Consideration of alcohol and tobacco, their general effects on the body and on behaviour.

- People who are involved with medicines (such as health professionals, pharmacist, shopkeepers).
- People who can help children when they have questions or concerns.

Skills

- Communicating feelings such as concerns about illness and taking medicines.
- Following simple safety instructions.
- When and how to get help from adults.

Attitudes

- Valuing one's body and recognising its uniqueness.
- Attitudes towards medicines, health professionals and hospitals.
- Attitudes towards the use of alcohol and cigarettes.
- Responses to media and advertising presentations of medicines, alcohol and smoking.

Key stage 2 – healthy humans

Knowledge and understanding

- School rules relating to medicines, alcohol, tobacco, solvents and illegal drugs.

Looking after the body

- More detailed information about the body, how it works and how to take care of it.
- Different types of medicines (both prescribed and over-the-counter), legal and illegal drugs including their form, their effects and their associated risks.
- Introduction to the law relating to the use of legal and illegal drugs.
- People who can help children when they have questions or concerns.
- Dangers from handling discarded syringes and needles.

Skills

- Identifying risks and coping with peer influences and pressures to do wrong.
- Communicating with adults (non-judgemental).
- Decision-making and assertiveness in situations relating to drug use.
- How to make informed choices about health.
- Giving and getting help to other pupils and from adults.
- Safety procedures when using medicines.

Attitudes

- Valuing oneself and other people.
- Attitudes and beliefs about different drugs and people who may use or misuse them.

- Responses to media and advertising presentations of alcohol, tobacco and other le.g.al drugs.
- Taking responsibility for one's own safety and behaviour.

PSHE

Key stage 1

In developing a healthy, safer lifestyle pupils will be taught:

- How to make simple choices, which improve their health and well-being.
- That all household products, including medicines, can be harmful if not used properly.
- Rules for and ways of, keeping safe, including basic road safety, and about people who can help them to stay safe.

Pupils' breadth of opportunity will be increased by being taught the knowledge, skills and understanding to meet and talk with people (e.g. Police officers, the school nurse) who can give help and advice.

Key stage 2 – healthy humans

In developing a healthy, safer lifestyle pupils will be taught:

- What makes a healthy lifestyle, including the benefits of exercise and healthy eating, what affects mental health, and how to make informed choices.
- That bacteria and viruses can affect health and those following simple, safe routines can reduce their spread.
- Which commonly available substances and drugs are le.g.al and ille.g.al, their effects and risks? To recognise the different risks in different situations and then decide how to behave responsibly, including sensible road use, and judging what kind of physical contact is acceptable or unacceptable. There will be a lesson on safety with medicines that teaches children that medicines that make them better can also be dangerous.
- That pressure to behave in an unacceptable or risky way can come from a variety of sources, including people they know, and how to ask for help and use basic techniques for resisting pressure to do wrong.
- School rules about health and safety, basic emergency aid procedures and where to get help.

Pupils' breadth of opportunity will be increased by being taught the knowledge, skills and understanding to:

- Participate (e.g. in the school's decision making process, relating it to democratic structure and processes).
- Make real choices and decisions (e.g. about issues affecting their health and well-being such as smoking).
- Meet and talk with people (e.g. people who work in the school and neighbourhood, such as community police officers).
- Consider social and moral dilemmas that they come across in life.

- Find information and advice (e.g. through help lines).

The role of the co-ordinator

The role of the drug education co-ordinator (PSHE Co-ordinator) is to develop the planning, implementation and evaluation of drug education throughout the school. The specific responsibilities are:

- To advise the head teacher and governing board on the future development of drug education.
- To plan, write and keep under review policy documents/guidelines incorporating the requirements of the national curriculum, QCA documents and DFE circulars and other outside bodies such as the Alcohol Education Trust, the Drug Education Forum etc.
- To be responsible for the implementation of the policy documents and to monitor the development of drug education throughout the school, with particular regard to continuity, achievement, assessment and progression.
- To ensure that the teachers are following the school policy/scheme (for this subject area) and ensure that appropriate learning outcomes and activities are planned for.
- To observe and support in the classroom in the area of drug education (as time allows).
- To be available to liaise with/advise colleagues in the field of drug education within the time available.
- Where appropriate, to plan and lead workshops to enable staff to tackle the teaching of drug education with confidence.
- To control, evaluate and requisition equipment as required for the implementation of policy documents.
- To promote interests and understanding in drug education with staff and parents.
- To keep up-to-date with current developments in the field of drug education in primary education through reading, courses, visits, etc.
- To be aware of and promote appropriate use of ICT in the field of drug education.
- To encourage and foster equal opportunities for all children in the field of drug education.

Assessment

Gathering of information about how pupils are progressing in this area of work will largely be done through informal observation, although some marking of work and formal observation will be involved for the science part of the national curriculum.

Equal opportunities

All children have the right to equal opportunities in drug education, regardless of their background, race, gender or intellectual ability. The school is aware of the need to promote a positive image of drug education to both girls and boys. All resources are checked to ensure that this equal opportunity policy is reflected in materials available to children.

Drug education and children with special educational needs

When teaching drug education, it is essential to provide appropriate learning experiences for the full range of pupils. Children who are experiencing difficulties with, for example, language and mathematical skills or social/emotional and physical problems, are likely to experience a variety of difficulties with drug education activities. These may include one or more of the following:

- Understanding resource materials provided.
- Unfamiliar language and vocabulary used.
- Understanding information or instructions given.
- Problems with recording.
- Expressing concepts verbally.
- Lack of concentration/motivation.
- Inability to co-operate in group work situations.
- Difficulties related to physical handicap.

Drug education teaching requires careful planning and sensitivity. For pupils with learning difficulties, it is helpful to repeat activities in a range of new situations as they often find it difficult to transfer what they have learnt and need enrichment activities.

Guidelines on the use of resources:

- Where worksheets are used, text should be kept to a minimum.
- Pictorial rather than written cues should be used.
- Work should be standardised, with gradual introduction of new instructions and vocabulary.
- There should not be too much information on any worksheet.

The bank of available resources, at different difficulty levels, on a variety of topics, will assist class-teachers in their work with children who have learning difficulties.

Health and safety

Health and safety regulations in class-based lessons apply as for any other subject. When working with tools, equipment and materials, in practical activities and in different environments, including those that are unfamiliar, pupils should be taught:

- About hazards and risk control.
- To recognise hazards, assess consequent risks and take steps to control the risks to themselves and others.
- To use information to assess the immediate and cumulative risks.
- To manage their environment to ensure the health and safety of themselves and others.
- To explain the steps they take to control risks.

Review

The curriculum committee will evaluate the policy and report to the governing board on a regular basis.

Review Date: September 2025 (Due to the update of RSE curriculum)