



## **Drugs and Substance Abuse Policy**

This policy was updated in October 2021.

The policy will be reviewed in line with Local Authority and Government Guidelines, and updated every three years.

Trustee with responsibility – Lesley Carrington, Quality of Education Team

The Treehouse School

# **The Treehouse School**

## Nature, nurture and nourishment

The Treehouse School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

### **Rationale**

Research has shown that by the age of 11 many primary school children have extensive knowledge of the world of drugs. For some, this knowledge may be inaccurate and incomplete, for others it will develop through personal experience. The figures also suggest that the first age of experimentation is decreasing and that children of primary age are exposed to opportunities to try both illegal and legal drugs.

### **Aims**

The 1995 white paper "Tackling Drugs Together" states that schools have an important role both in reducing the misuse of drugs and minimising their health risks by:

- Increasing the safety of our community from drug related crime;
- Reducing the acceptability and availability of drugs to young people;
- Reducing the health risks and other damage related to drug misuse.

At the Treehouse School we believe drugs education should provide:

- Accurate information presented simply and clearly;
- Access to other adults besides teachers, providing they are expert and credible;
- Opportunities to develop knowledge and understanding in a safe atmosphere in order to discuss and question information thoroughly;
- Children with the skills to make informed choices, develop positive attitudes and values;
- Health and Safety information to deal with any incidents/equipment related to drugs and drug use.

### **Objectives**

- To develop children's personal and social skills in order to make good decisions.
- To help children take increased responsibility for themselves and their actions.
- To encourage children to value themselves and others.
- To encourage children to help and support others.
- To find out what children already know, give information to clarify facts and correct any false knowledge or beliefs.
- To help children deal with the effect of media coverage of issues relating to drugs.
- To support staff in dealing with issues and incidents relating to drugs and drugs use.
- To ensure all staff are aware of procedures relating to drugs and drug use at The Treehouse School.
- To provide opportunities for pupils to acquire knowledge and identify the distinction between authorised and unauthorised drugs.
- To develop and equip pupils with the knowledge, attitudes and skills necessary to build their resilience and avoid peer group pressure or unwanted drug offers from others.
- To build pupils' decision-making skills and increased self-esteem.

### **Definition**

At The Treehouse 'drugs' include any substance that affects your body. This includes socially acceptable and unacceptable drugs. These will include:

- Tobacco;
- Alcohol;
- Prescription Medicines;
- Illegal substances, in all forms.

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## **The role of the Director**

It is the responsibility of the Director to ensure that staff and parents are informed about this drugs education policy, and that the policy is implemented effectively. It is also the Director's role to ensure that staff are given sufficient training, so that they can teach effectively and handle any difficult issues with sensitivity. The Director will liaise with external agencies regarding the school drugs education policy and ensure that all adults who work with children on these issues are aware of the school policy and work within this framework. The Director will monitor the policy and report to Trustees, when requested, on the effectiveness of the policy.

## **The role of Trustees**

The Trustees (in particular the Learning and Teaching team) have the responsibility of setting down these general guidelines on drugs education. The Trustees will support the Director and Director of Learning and Teaching in following these guidelines. Trustees will liaise with the LA 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 cooperation.

In promoting this objective we will:

- inform parents about the school drugs education policy and practice;
- invite parents to view any 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 trustees about this policy or the arrangements for drugs education in the school;

## **Cross-curricular links**

Drug education has many cross-curricular links, with science making a particular contribution. However, the development of life skills is a theme throughout the curriculum and is well established in our values and ethos. There are links to other subjects, such as physical education, and aspects of school life, notably the moral, social and cultural aspects of the curriculum.

## **Teaching**

Our approach to drugs education is one in which children are given information in the belief that increased knowledge about drugs and the risks involved, will empower children to make informed and safe decisions. We approach this in a sensitive manner appropriate to the age and experiences of the children concerned. Teaching will:

- Be well resourced;
- Reflect the needs and experiences of pupils;
- Use a range of teaching methods including group work, discussions, videos and outside speakers;
- Reinforce messages about healthy lifestyles;
- Be flexible and relevant;
- Be interesting and stimulating and informed.

## **Outside visitors**

If outside speakers are used in any aspect of the drugs education programme, their contribution will be properly planned. They will support the work of the teacher who will meet with the speaker beforehand to plan the work and explain the school's policy on drug education. Teachers will be present and involved in all sessions and will evaluate the work afterwards. The teacher has overall responsibility for the session and the work planned.

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## **Managing drug related incidents**

Incidents are managed in the context of the school's commitment to:

- The safety and welfare of all pupils and staff;
- The welfare of individuals deemed to be at risk;
- The law concerning drugs.

The Director retains the responsibility for deciding how to respond to particular incidents in conjunction with the Deputy Director. This will take account of the individual concerned and whether they are a pupil, parent or member of staff.

The school's policy is that 'no individuals should be under the influence of drugs' (as detailed in this policy) while on the school premises unless a doctor's note indicates that this does not affect the individual's capacity to perform their duties, take care of children in their charge, or in the case of pupils, take part in lessons.

## **Procedures to follow in the following circumstances:**

### **Illegal drugs found on premises**

- Advise Director/Deputy Director
- KEEP IN A SECURE PLACE
- PHONE LOCAL POLICE TO COLLECT
- Drugs Awareness - Do not touch, sniff, handle
- The LA will be notified of all reported incidents

### **Pupils under the influence of drugs**

- Advise Director/Deputy Director
- Emergency Medical Treatment
- Investigate Possession
- Ensure child is in a safe place
- Inform parents
- Inform other agencies as necessary
- Inform LA Advisor of any incident

### **Parents/carers under the influence of drugs on school premises**

- Advise Director/Deputy Director
- Decides on one of the three options depending on the particular circumstances of each incident:
  - Asked to Leave Premises, Contact Local Police or Contact Social Services
- Inform LA Advisor of any incident
- No alcohol will be permitted to be drunk by a member of staff on school premises without the prior written permission of the Director

Any incidents are recorded in the incident monitoring log. All members of the school community are aware of these procedures and the implications for individuals. Each incident will be dealt with on an individual basis.

The school follows Oxfordshire County Council's policy for the Handling and Disposal of drug related paraphernalia.

Young children who are deemed to be at risk will be treated in relation to the school's Safeguarding Policy.