



ST. THOMAS OF CANTERBURY C OF E JUNIOR SCHOOL  
*"Realising the potential of every child within a caring, Christian community"*

## **St Thomas of Canterbury Church of England Junior School**

### **Drugs Education Policy**

#### **1 Introduction**

At St Thomas of Canterbury Church of England Junior School we believe that it is our duty to realise the potential of every child within a caring, Christian community. We know that children learn effectively in a positive supportive environment and our aim is always to create the learning environment and teach in a way that enables the children to learn.

#### **2 Rationale**

Our school believes that the misuse of drugs endangers not only our children but also affects the wider community in which we live. It is the school's responsibility to ensure the child's health and safety while in our care and we also strive to promote their personal and social wellbeing. Drug misuse undermines this and hinders the development of the young person. St Thomas' Junior School recognises that young people in today's society can be exposed to the risks associated with the drug culture that exists. The school wishes to promote the development of the 'whole person' which encompasses physical, mental, emotional, spiritual, social and environmental health; by equipping children with the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values to handle their lives effectively in the present and prepare them for adulthood. Drugs education should therefore form an integral part of the school curriculum.

#### **3 Aims and Objectives**

We aim to equip children with the knowledge, understanding and skills that enable them to make the sort of choices that lead to a healthy lifestyle. Our drugs education programme has the primary objective of helping children to become more confident and responsible young people. We teach children about the dangers to health posed by drug-taking, and we aim to equip them with the social skills that enable them to make informed moral and social decisions in relation to drugs in society.

The objectives of our drugs education programme are:

- to provide children with knowledge and information about illegal drugs and the harmful effects they can have on people's lives;
- to enable children to discuss moral questions related to drug taking, and so provide a safe environment for young people to share their thoughts and ideas;
- to help children become more self-confident so that they are able to make sensible and informed decisions about their lives;
- to let children know what they should do if they come across drugs, or are aware of other people misusing drugs;
- to help children respect their own bodies and, in so doing, reduce the likelihood that they will be persuaded to become involved in drug abuse;
- to show that taking illegal drugs is a moral issue, and that choices about drugs are moral choices;
- to ensure that all children are taught about drugs in a consistent manner, following guidelines that have been agreed by parents, governors and staff.



ST. THOMAS OF CANTERBURY C OF E JUNIOR SCHOOL  
“Realising the potential of every child within a caring, Christian community”

#### 4 Organisation

We regard drugs education as a whole-school issue, and we believe that opportunities to teach about the importance of living a healthy lifestyle occur throughout the curriculum. Each class teacher answers questions about drugs sensitively and appropriately, as they occur. In the routine circle-time sessions, we encourage children to discuss issues that are important to them, and we help children to be aware of the dangers of the misuse of drugs. For example, if a child raises the issue of smoking, the teacher takes time to discuss its harmful effects with the whole class. In science lessons we teach children what a drug is, and how drugs are used in medicine. We also teach them the difference between legal and illegal drugs.

Drugs education is an important part of our school’s personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum. The main teaching about drugs takes place in Year 5/6, where the children are taught about illegal drugs, and the dangers involved to those who take them. In teaching this course we follow the guidelines provided by the LA, and we receive advice and support from the Local Health Authority, e.g. School Nurse. The resources and materials that we use in these lessons are recommended either by the Health Authority or the LA. Lessons that focus on drug education form part of a sequence of lessons that are designed to promote in children a healthy lifestyle.

The children’s class teacher teaches them drug education in normal lesson time. Sometimes the class teacher seeks support from the School Nurse or another health professional. The teaching style that we use encourages children to ask questions and reflect on the dangers to health of drug misuse. Children explore issues, such as why people take drugs, and how they can avoid putting themselves in danger in the future. We give children the opportunity to talk in groups or to the whole class. We encourage them to listen to the views of others, and we ask them to explore why drugs are such a problem for society.

#### 5 The Range of Substances

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

As well as everyday substances such as tea and coffee, drugs include:

- alcohol and tobacco
- ‘over the counter medicines’ such as paracetamol for headaches
- prescribed drugs, such as antibiotics and tranquilisers
- volatile substances such as glues and aerosols
- illegal drugs such as cannabis, LSD and ecstasy

**The school recognises that this policy focuses mainly on illicit drugs.**

If the Headteacher has reasonable grounds to suspect that drugs are being used or supplied on the school premises, they will take appropriate steps to inform the relevant bodies in order to avoid any liability as a ‘manager or occupier’ of premises.

If staff have taken possession of a substance for the purposes of protecting a pupil from harm and from committing an offence; they should under no circumstance, try to analyse or identify it. When dealing with any suspicious substance, gloves should be worn when handling it, to avoid ingestion through the skin. The drug should be immediately stored in a safe place, and the police contacted.



ST. THOMAS OF CANTERBURY C OF E JUNIOR SCHOOL  
*“Realising the potential of every child within a caring, Christian community”*

## **6 Procedures for Handling and Reporting Incidents**

A suspected drug related incident is described as

- Suspect drugs found on the school premises
- A pupil suspected of being in possession of drugs
- A pupil found to be in possession of drugs
- A pupil suspected of being under the influence of drugs
- An adult suspected of being under the influence of drugs

When an incident occurs the member of staff involved should:

- Make the situation safe
- Send for support
- Administer first aid if necessary
- If an illegal drug is found it should be secured in a safe place until dealt with by the police
- Report the incident

The incident will be in the first instance reported to the Headteacher who will contact the police in this area. The parents will also be contacted and made aware of the situation. The incident will be recorded by the teacher involved and by the Headteacher.

All staff are made aware of the procedures and where necessary emergency procedures will be followed. If a search needs to be made the Headteacher will conduct this with an appropriate witness.

## **7 Confidentiality**

Where a child discloses to a teacher that he or she is taking drugs or knows of drug taking, the teacher should make it clear that he or she can offer no guarantee of confidentiality. However the teacher can advise the child of other sources of confidential information or advice. Children should also be encouraged to talk to their parents. A record will be made of the disclosure and the Headteacher is to be informed.

## **8 Disability Equality Scheme**

At St Thomas of Canterbury Church of England Junior School we recognise our duties and responsibilities under the Disability Discrimination Act as outlined in our Disability Equality Scheme and Action Plan. (December 2007)

It is our aim that through specific and accurate planning, resource allocation, differentiated teaching and use of adult intervention and support (where necessary), that every child, irrespective of disability, will have full access to the curriculum and feel and be enabled to participate actively in developing to their full potential their skills, knowledge and understanding. We will ensure that all ‘reasonable adjustments’ are made to help both children and adults with identified special needs and disabilities to participate in the drugs education programme.



ST. THOMAS OF CANTERBURY C OF E JUNIOR SCHOOL  
*“Realising the potential of every child within a caring, Christian community”*

## **9 The Role of the Headteacher**

It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to ensure that staff and parents are informed about this drugs education policy, and that the policy is implemented effectively. It is also the Headteacher's role to ensure that staff are given sufficient training as necessary and appropriate, so that they can teach effectively and handle any difficult issues with sensitivity.

The Headteacher will liaise with external agencies regarding the school drugs education programme and ensure that all adults who work with children on these issues are aware of the school policy and work within this framework.

The Headteacher will monitor the policy on a day to day basis and report to governors, when requested, on the effectiveness of the policy.

The above responsibilities and monitoring processes will also be delegated to the PSHE subject leader as well as the school lead for overseeing Healthy School's Award recognition

## **10 The Role of Governors**

The governing body has the responsibility of setting down these general guidelines on drugs education. The governors will support the Headteacher in following these guidelines. Governors will inform and consult with parents about the drugs education policy. Governors will also liaise with the LA and health organisations so that the school's policy is in line with the best advice available.

## **11 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 co-operation. In promoting this objective we will:

- inform parents about the school drugs education policy and practice;
- invite parents to view the materials used to teach drugs education in our school when and if appropriate;
- 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 governors about this policy or the arrangements for drugs education in the school;
- encourage parents to be involved in reviewing the school policy and making modifications to it as necessary;
- inform parents about the best practice known with regard to drugs education so that the parents can support the key messages being given to children at school.

## **12 Monitoring and Evaluation**

The School Development Committee of the Governing Body will be responsible for monitoring the drugs education policy. This committee will report their findings and recommendations to the full Governing Body as necessary, if the policy appears to need modification. The School Development Committee



ST. THOMAS OF CANTERBURY C OF E JUNIOR SCHOOL

*“Realising the potential of every child within a caring, Christian community”*

takes into serious consideration any representation from parents about the drugs education programme and comments will be recorded.

**13 Review**

**This policy will be reviewed in November 2017**

**Date: November 2013**