

Heald Place Primary School



Every Child a
Confident Learner

Drugs and Alcohol Educational Policy

September 2025

Aims and objectives

1.1 As a rights respecting school the Drugs and Alcohol Education Policy aims to support the UN Convention on the rights of a child.

- Article 3 – The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all decisions and actions that affect children.
- Article 24 – Every child has the right to the best possible health. Governments must provide good quality health care, clean water, nutritious food and a clean environment and education on health and well-being so that children can stay healthy. Richer countries must help poorer countries achieve this.

1.2 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 and Alcohol Education Policy has been crafted using the DfE and ACPO drug advice for school. The policy 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 alcohol consumption, and we aim to equip them with the social skills that enable them to make informed moral and social decisions in relation to drugs and alcohol in society.

1.3 The objectives of our Drugs and Alcohol Education Policy are:

- To provide children with knowledge and information about illegal drugs and alcohol, and the harmful effects they can have on people's lives;
- To enable children to discuss moral questions related to drug taking and alcohol consumption, 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 and alcohol, or are aware of other people misusing drugs and alcohol;
- To help children respect their own bodies and, in so doing, reduce the likelihood that they will be persuaded to become involved in drug or alcohol abuse;
- To show that taking illegal drugs and consuming alcohol is a moral issue, and that choices about drugs and alcohol are moral choices;
- To ensure that all children are taught about drugs and alcohol in a consistent manner, following guidelines that have been agreed by parents, governors and staff.

Organisation

2.1 We regard Drugs and Alcohol 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 P4C/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, from Year 3 onwards, the children consider the dangers of smoking, yet if a child in a younger age group raises the issue of smoking, the teacher takes time to discuss its harmful effects in an age appropriate manner 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. When discussing smoking, teachers will discuss the harmful effects of chewing khat, a substance that is in use within the Asian and Somali communities and deemed to be illegal in the UK in 2014. The warnings around smoking shisha pipes will also be discussed, as this is covered by the UK smoking ban. It is illegal to smoke pipes inside cafes and bars. The warning and research around the effects of vaping will be discussed at this point.

2.2 Drugs and alcohol education is an important part of our school's personal, social and health education (PSHCE) curriculum. The teaching and learning about Drugs and Alcohol Education follows the IMatter materials provided by Manchester Healthy Schools and made bespoke for our school. All children across the school complete a unit of work based on the theme, "Keeping Safe". The children are taught about illegal drugs, and the dangers involved to those who take them. Lessons that focus on Drug and Alcohol Education form part of a sequence of lessons that are designed to promote in children a healthy lifestyle.

2.3 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 and alcohol misuse. Children explore issues that are age appropriate, 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 and alcohol are such a problem for society.

2.4 If the issues of smoking, alcohol or drugs are affecting a parent or carer and consequently impacting on the well-being of the child(ren), support from the Designated Safeguarding Lead will be offered.

2.5 It has been agreed that, as a school, Heald Place is a no smoking campus. Thus staff as well as parents and carers must not smoke on the premises.

2.6 Manchester Healthy Schools have provided schools with IMatter materials to support the delivery of teaching and learning in PSHCE for Y1-6. We will support children in developing their awareness of healthy eating through the topic, "Keeping safe". Team members from Manchester Healthy Schools will also facilitate Continuing Professional Development to keep staff subject knowledge up-to-date.

2.7 Children may use authorised drugs in school. Parents and carers must present at the school office and sign permission forms to allow school staff to administer authorised drugs, eg. Inhalers for asthma or prescribed medication.

2.8 The priority for the school is to ensure the health and safety of the school community, working with children, parents and carers to signpost them to support as appropriate. Children can follow the typical self-referral procedures to Chatterbox and thereafter gain access to therapeutic support.

2.9 Any incidents relating to illegal drugs (paraphernalia or use of) would be passed to the Designated Safeguarding Officer who would follow the appropriate procedures.

2.10 Advice on searching and confiscations can be found in [Screening, searching and confiscation; advice for head teachers, staff and governing bodies](#). If it is decided that a search is necessary, whether or not anything is found, CPOMS would be used to make a record of the person searched, the reason for the search, the time and the place, who was present and note the outcomes and any follow-up action. Where the member of teaching staff finds other substances which are not believed to be controlled drugs these can be confiscated where a member of teaching staff believes them to be harmful or detrimental to good order and discipline. This would include new psychoactive substances or 'legal highs'. If school staff are unable to identify the legal status of a drug, it should be treated as a controlled drug.

The role of the Headteacher

3.1 It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to ensure that staff and parents are informed about this Drugs and Alcohol Education Policy, and that the policy is implemented effectively. It is also the Headteacher's role to ensure that staff are given sufficient training, so that they can teach effectively and handle any difficult issues with sensitivity.

3.2 The Headteacher, PSHCE Leader and Lead Professional for Safeguarding 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.

3.3 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 role of governors

4.1 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/carers about the Drugs and Alcohol 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.

The role of parents/carers

5.1 The school is well aware that the primary role in children's drugs and alcohol education lies with parents/carers. We wish to build a positive and supporting relationship with the parents/carers of children at our school through mutual understanding, trust and co-operation. In promoting this objective we will:

- Inform parents/carers about the school drugs and alcohol education policy and practice.
- Invite parents/carers to view the materials used to teach drugs and alcohol education in our school.
- Answer any questions parents/carers may have about the drugs and alcohol education their child receives in school.
- Take seriously any issue which parents/carers raise with teachers or Governors about this policy or the arrangements for drugs education in the school.
 - Encourage parents/carers to be involved in reviewing the school policy and making modifications to it as necessary. Policies will be found on the school website.
- Inform parents/carers about the best practice known with regard to drugs education so that the parents/carers can support the key messages being given to children at school.

5.2 Any parents/carers presenting at school under the influence of drugs or alcohol should understand that this is a safeguarding concern and may result in the school following our Safeguarding Policy and making a referral to Children's Services. Police could be informed, consulted or actively involved if it was decided that the parent/carer was not fit to care for their child at that time.

5.3 Schools are not required to inform parents before a search takes place or to seek their consent to search their child. Teaching staff would inform the individual pupil's parents or guardians where alcohol, illegal drugs or potentially harmful substances are found. Complaints about searching should be dealt with through the normal school complaints procedure.

5.4 Parents/carers may be signposted to support services including:

Change, grow, live www.changegrowlive.org

Achieve recovery services www.gmmh.nhs.uk/achieve

Working with the Police

6.1 The Designated Safeguarding Lead should liaise with the police and agree a shared approach to dealing with drug-related incidents.

J. Crossley

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