

Knockloughrim Primary School



Drugs Policy

Reviewed December 2020

Renewal Date 2022

Introduction/ Rationale

Knockloughrim Primary School recognises that drug misuse has an impact on all communities within Northern Ireland. We believe that we have an important role to play in enabling children to make informed and responsible decisions and helping them to cope in an increasingly drug-tolerant society.

We recognise that children are exposed to drugs at a much earlier age through the media, siblings, friends etc. We accept, despite our best efforts, that some of our pupils may at some time use or experiment with drugs. Through a preventative Drugs' Education programme, we endeavour to help our children and young people to say no and not to give in to peer pressure.

Therefore, the over-riding aim of our Drugs Education Programme is to acquire and develop skills, knowledge and understanding within a young person to live a drugs free life in a drug-orientated society.

The aim of this policy is to ensure a consistency of approach across the wider school family, including parents, all staff and visitors to our school.

Drugs – a Definition

- A drug is any substance which, when taken, alters the way a person behaves, feels, sees or thinks.
- Illegal drugs are those substances listed as controlled drugs.
- Illicit drugs include socially unacceptable legal drugs e.g. solvents, magic mushrooms and underage consumption of alcohol and tobacco.
- Prescription drugs are those which are issued on prescription by a doctor.

Aims of this Drug Policy

- To provide a clear statement, reflecting the school's view on drug education.
- To ensure a consistency of approach by all staff (and visitors to the school), ensuring that everyone is delivering the same programme.
- To ensure each staff member is aware of the correct procedure to deal with a drug related incident.
- To safeguard good practice in the future.

Aims of Drug Education Programme

- To promote positive attitude towards personal health.
- To inform pupils of the effects of drug use and abuse.
- To help pupils acquire skills to manage the pressures of the youth culture they live in.
- To develop skills of decision making, problem solving and analysing and disseminating information.
- To help pupils build up self-esteem.
- To create a climate where pupils feel comfortable to discuss his/her drug use.
- To encourage a participative approach in which pupils are actively involved.
- To encourage a healthy and critical respect for all substances taken into the body.

- To develop skills to empower pupils to take responsibility for their own health and safety.

Roles and Responsibilities

Board of Governors

The Board of Governors supports the development and on-going review of the Drugs Policy and education programme within our school.

Principal

It is the Principal's responsibility to determine the circumstances of all incidents. It is the responsibility of the PSNI to investigate any criminal offence. In any suspected drugs-related incident, the Principal should make every effort to contact the pupil's parents. The Principal should ensure that in any incident involving a controlled drug, there is close liaison with the PSNI. After contacting the PSNI, the Principal should confine his responsibilities to the welfare of the pupil(s) involved in the incident, the other pupils in the school and the handling, storage and safe disposal of any drugs/drugs related paraphernalia. This will include informing the Governors, agreeing any pastoral/disciplinary response, reporting the incident to the Education Authority and if appropriate, completing a written report and forwarding a copy to the Governors and the designated officer within the Education Authority.

Designated Teacher

- Overseeing and co-ordination of the planning of curricular provision.
- Co-ordination of the school's procedures for handling drugs-related incidents
- Training of all staff.
- Contact point for outside agencies.
- Take possession of any substance and associated paraphernalia found in the event of a suspected incident and complete a factual report.

Staff

- Deal with any emergency procedures if necessary.
- It is NOT their responsibility to determine the circumstances surrounding the incident.
- Forward any information, substance or paraphernalia received to the designated teacher.
- Complete a brief factual report of the suspected incident and forward to designated teacher.

Overview of our Drugs Education Programme

Drugs Education will be taught through a programme within the Personal Development and Mutual Understanding area of the curriculum. All teaching staff will be responsible for delivering the Drugs Education Programme. We may at times invite an outside agency to assist.

The main aim of our programme is to discourage the use of drugs. However, we recognise that counselling provision may be necessary in the case of drug usage. Outside agencies may have to be contacted to assist and provide advice.

We believe that it is most important that a pupil-centred approach is used when delivering the programme. We recognise that initially, we need to assess the knowledge and experience our pupils have of drugs and use this as a baseline. In an effort to develop critical thinking skills, a variety of teaching methodology will be used, including group work, role play, games, etc. Primary 7 will take part in the Bee Safe programme delivered by PSNI.

Monitoring and Evaluating of Drugs Education Programme

Teachers will monitor the teaching of the programme within their class. Evaluation will be carried out through teacher and pupil evaluations including oral feedback from pupils and parents. The questionnaires accompanying the EA's Drug File will also be used. The Policy will be reviewed every three years and appropriate changes made where necessary. However, it will be immediately reviewed after a drug-related incident. Staff will be made aware of any local/neighbourhood trends in drugs culture.

Use of Outside Agencies

The school will periodically use other individuals and outside agencies to support the delivery of the Drugs Education Programme. The activities which the outside agency is to undertake will complement the school's programme. Pupils will be prepared for such a visit and the teacher will be present during the lesson.

Staff and Visitor use of Alcohol and Tobacco

The school is a smoke and alcohol free zone. (Refer to Appendix 5 'Drugs and Alcohol in the Workplace Guidance')

Communication of Policy

A copy of the policy is available online from the school website, <https://www.knockloughrim.org/> or may request a copy from the School Office. Any agency working in our school will be offered/ emailed a copy policy so that they are clear about their role within our school.

Procedures for Drug Related Incident

- Finding a substance on the school premises – see Appendix 1
- Pupil suspected of having taken drugs in school – see Appendix 2
- Pupil suspected of possessing/distributing drugs – see Appendix 3

Searching of a pupil

The child's own property can NOT be searched. However, school property used by the pupil can be searched. Pupils can be asked to empty their school bags and turn out their pockets. The PSNI will be informed if they refuse. If a teacher suspects possession of drugs, PSNI is to be contacted immediately. We recognise that the Principal can only determine the circumstances, he/she can NOT investigate – that is the role of PSNI. In the event of an emergency, i.e. pupil's health is at risk; their possessions may be searched to aid

treatment, in the case of hospitalisation. Any substance found must be kept for identification. Witnesses must be present.

Schools Response to Drug-Related Incident – Disciplinary Measures

The Principal retains responsibility for deciding how to respond to the incident, taking account of the individual needs of the pupil(s) concerned (e.g. the age of the pupil, level of involvement, is this a first offence etc.) Bearing these needs in mind, an appropriate intervention and/or support mechanism will be put in place. The disciplinary measure will differ depending on possession of drugs or supplying of drugs.

Confidentiality

Teachers or visitors to the school cannot and should not promise confidentiality. Any information concerning controlled drugs or any criminal activity disclosed to a member of staff must be passed on to the designated teacher who then follows the correct procedures.

Emergency First Aid Procedures

Appendix 4

Drugs Incident Report Form

Appendix 5

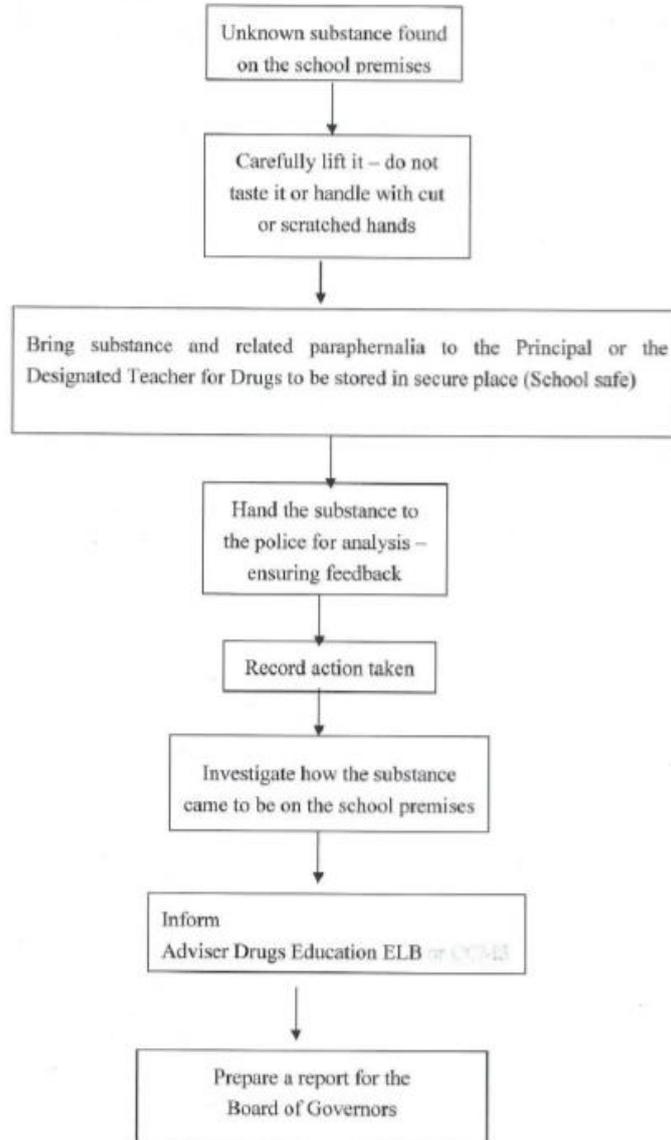
Storage, Handling, and Disposal of Harmful and Hazardous Substances.

The management and use of solvents will be closely supervised in this school. Any pens or correction fluids containing solvents will be kept in a secure place i.e. in the teacher's desk drawers. The teacher or classroom assistant will dispatch any materials during lessons and supervise their use. These will then be collected, counted and stored appropriately.

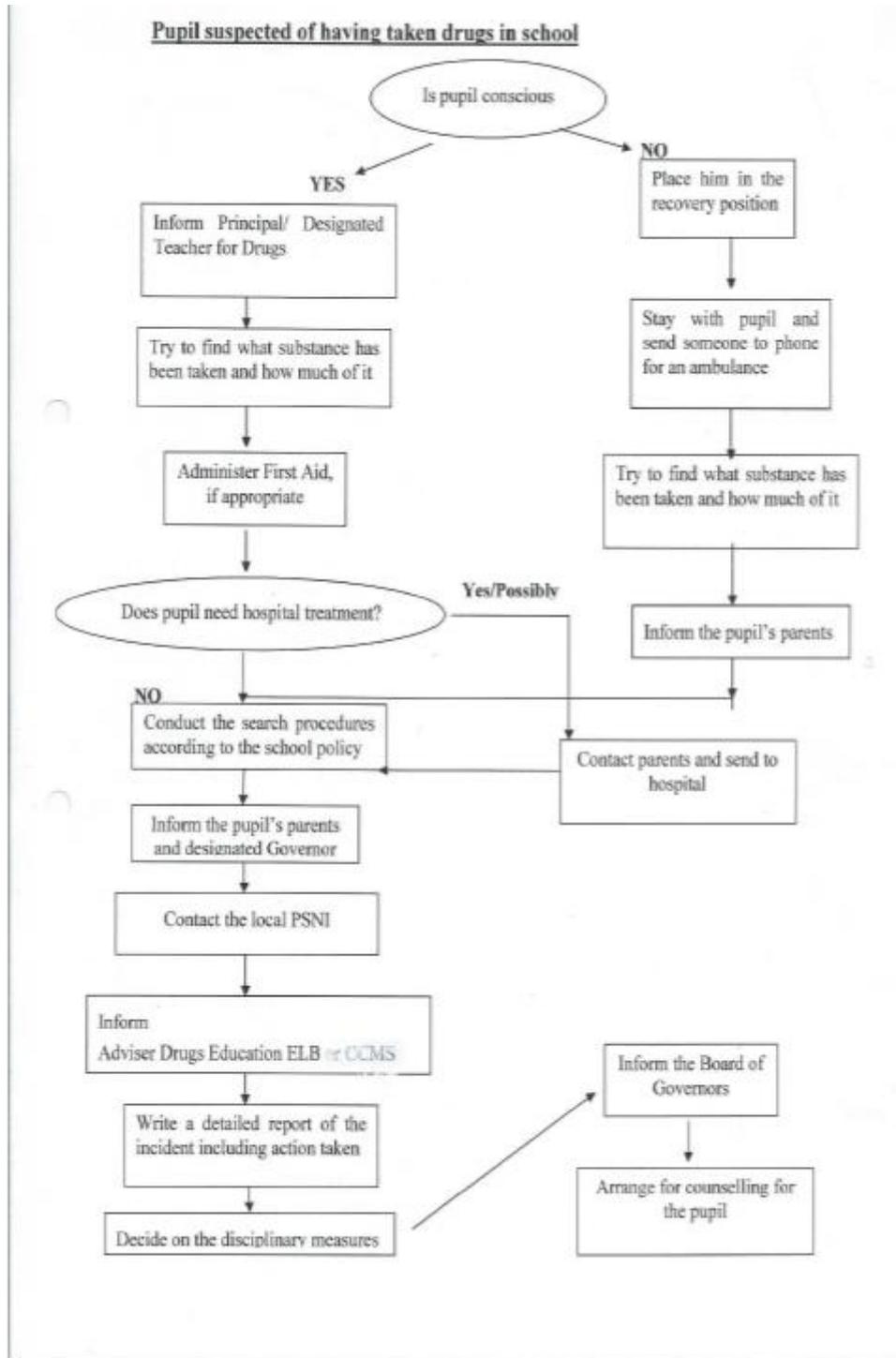
The caretaker must ensure the safe storage of all cleaning substances. He/she must ensure that all substances used are in their original containers and clearly labelled.

APPENDIX 1

Finding a substance on the school premises



APPENDIX 2



APPENDIX 3

Pupil suspected of possessing/distributing an illegal substance



APPENDIX 4

Emergency Procedures

The following is the current best advice of what to do if someone is in difficulty as a result of misusing drugs.

Reproduced from 'Illicit Drug Use in Northern Ireland – A Handbook for the Professionals' (2000) with the kind permission of the Health Promotion Agency for Northern Ireland.

- It is important to find out what has been taken as this could affect emergency aid, for example it will help the ambulance crew.
- If the person has taken a depressant drug, for example, solvents, alcohol, sleeping pills, painkillers, it is likely that they will be drowsy or unconscious. If the person is drowsy, it is important to try to keep them awake – by getting them to walk if possible, talking to them, or applying a cool damp cloth or towel to the back of their neck. They should not be given anything to eat or drink as this could lead to vomiting or choking.
- If they are or become unconscious, put them into the recovery position, clear airway if blocked, loosen clothing and call for an ambulance immediately. Keep checking on any changes to pulse and breathing rates.
- If they stop breathing, begin mouth-to-mouth resuscitation. Stay with the person until the ambulance crew arrive, and then tell them all the facts, including what the person has taken. This is very important as it could save his or her life.
- If the person has taken a stimulant, such as amphetamines (speed) or Ecstasy, they may show various signs of distress. If the person is panicking try to reassure them. It is important that they calm down and relax. Get them to breathe in and out, deeply and slowly. Help them by counting out loud slowly. If hyperventilation occurs – that is they can't control their breathing – get them to breathe in and out of a paper bag – if there is one available (not a plastic bag).
- If the person has taken LSD, they should be supervised in a darkened, quiet room to avoid sensory stimulation.
- If the person has taken a hallucinogen, such as LSD, magic mushrooms, or cannabis in combination with Ecstasy, they may become very anxious, distressed and fearful. They may act in an unusual way. It is very important to reassure the person – tell them that you will look after them, that they are in no danger, that it is the effects of the drugs and that the effects will soon wear off. You may want to take them to a quiet place, keep other people away, and continue to reassure them. Just stay with them and talk calmly to them. This may take a long time depending on amount taken. If they show no signs of becoming calmer or they become hysterical, take them to hospital – explain calmly to the person what is happening – this will help decrease any feelings of panic.

APPENDIX 5

Drugs Incident Report Form

Name of Pupil _____ Class _____

Address _____

Date/time of Incident _____

Reported by _____

First Aid given by _____

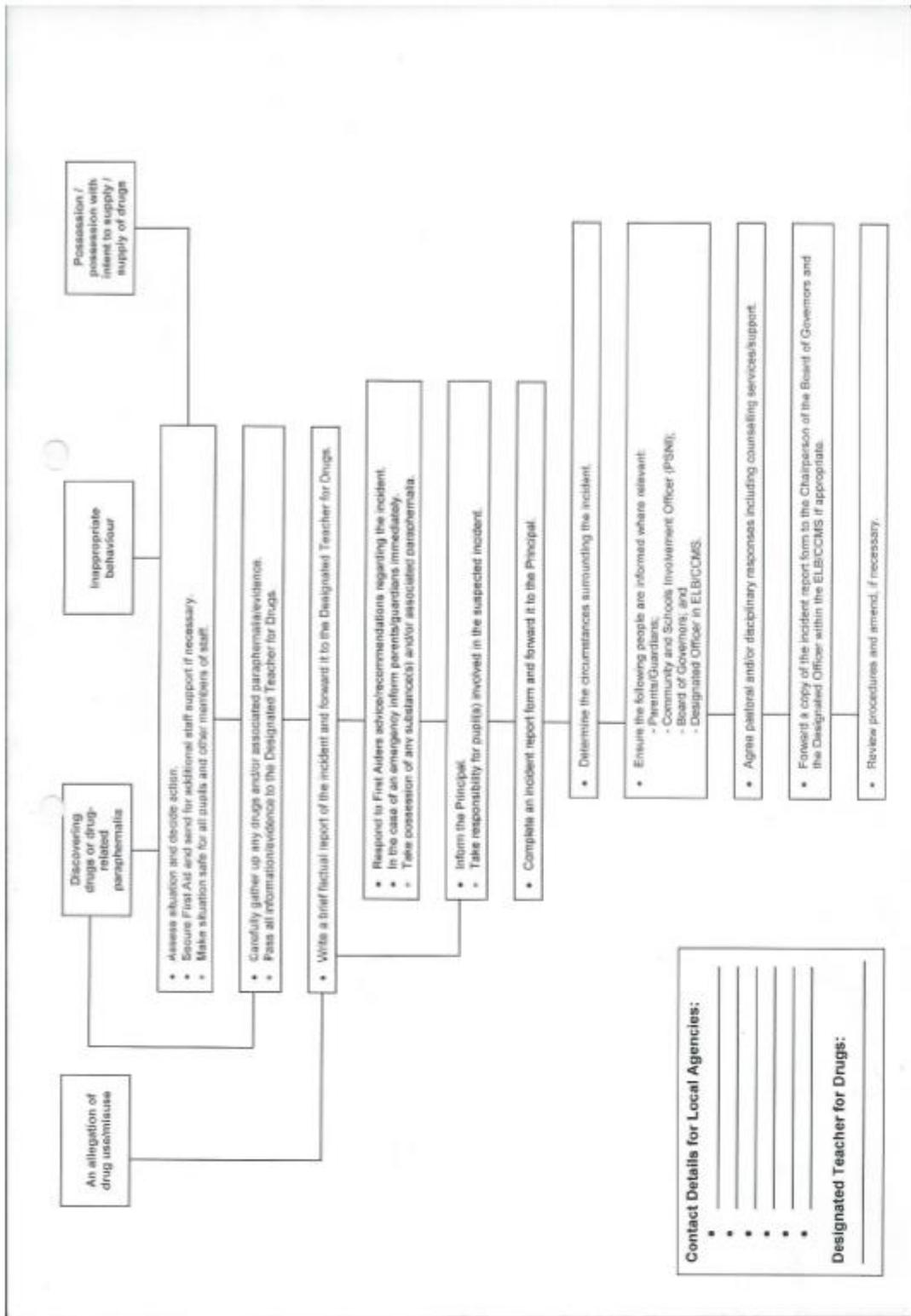
Details _____

Police Informed _____

NEELB informed _____

Disciplinary/pastoral/other response

Details _____



Contact Details for Local Agencies:

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Designated Teacher for Drugs:
