

*Lisnagarvey High School
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**LISNAGARVEY HIGH SCHOOL
DRUGS EDUCATION POLICY**

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INTRODUCTION

Lisnagarvey High School is a caring, health promoting school which believes that the self-worth of the individual is of great importance and therefore we do not tolerate the misuse of drugs in the school.

Our school believes that the misuse of drugs endangers not only our pupils 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 well-being. Drug misuse undermines this and hinders the development of the young person.

In today's society there is no one who will not be exposed to, and use, some sort of drug at some time in their lives. Drugs misuse is beginning to affect many communities in Northern Ireland including our own community. We cannot afford to be complacent or think that our pupils are not at risk and we must help them to live safely in a drug using society.

The policy provides a focus for the school to consider how drug education should be implemented and developed within the curriculum, and outlines the roles, responsibilities and legal duties of key staff. From a wider perspective, it gives parents and the local community for involvement in drug issues.

DRUGS EDUCATION IN CONTEXT

'The role of schools in relation to drugs issues is two-fold: prevention and protection. The responsibility is exercised through drugs education programmes. A main objective is that students should develop their knowledge and understanding of the use, misuse, risks and effects of drugs and other potentially harmful substances; and they should develop a critical awareness of the relevant personal, social and economic implications'.

'For the protection of young people, school authorities need to be aware of the drugs scene within the whole school community and to put in place a drugs education policy which will set out how the school will fulfil all its responsibilities in relation to drugs.'(DENI: Guidance for Schools 2004)

'The purpose of a Drugs Education Programme is to provide opportunities for young people to acquire knowledge, understanding and skills which enable them to consider the effects of drugs and other substances on themselves and on others. It enables them to make informed and responsible decisions about the use of such substances within the context of a healthy lifestyle.' (DENI Misuse of Drugs - 1996)

RATIONALE

Lisnagarvey High School recognises that young people in today's society are exposed to the risks associated with the drug culture which exists. Young people are challenged by the changing and sometimes conflicting values of society, which places demands on them to make informed and responsible choices.

The school wishes to promote the development of the 'whole person' which encompasses physical, mental, emotional, social and environmental health; by equipping pupils with the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values to handle their lives effectively in the present and prepare them for adulthood. Lisnagarvey High School does not condone the misuse of drugs but recognises that there has been a considerable increase in the abuse of drugs in recent years in Northern Ireland.

Research cites personal inadequacy, a lack of self esteem and peer pressure as the main reasons for drug misuse among young people. This places a responsibility on the school to 'better prepare young people for adult life.' (Education Reform (NI) Order 1989)

Drugs Education should therefore form an integral part of the school curriculum. All staff (teaching and non-teaching), should familiarise themselves with the information included in this policy and further copies may be obtained from the Designated Teacher for Drugs (Miss C Johnston). Copies of the guidance on which this policy is based ('Drugs: Guidance for Schools in Northern Ireland') are available from the Department of Education website www.deni.gov.uk.

THE RANGE OF SUBSTANCES - WHAT IS A DRUG?

Lisnagarvey High School's Policy on Drug Education covers any substance under the DENI definition:

'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;
- Paracetamol for headaches and other 'over the counter medicines';
- Prescribed drugs, such as antibiotics, tranquillisers, inhalers and Ritalin;
- Volatile substances such as correcting fluids/thinners, gas lighter fuel, aerosols, glues and petrol;
- Illegal drugs such as cannabis, LSD, ecstasy, amphetamine sulphate (speed), magic mushrooms, heroin and cocaine.

The school recognises that the policy focuses mainly on illicit drugs. Procedures for handling alcohol and tobacco misuse as well as handling prescribed medicines and volatile substances are found in Appendix 1.

AIMS & OBJECTIVES OF THE POLICY

- To have a clear and agreed understanding among everyone in the school community about the implications and possible consequences of drug use/misuse.
- To provide all staff (teaching and non-teaching) with adequate training and support to enable them to deal effectively and confidently with incidents of suspected drug misuse, and to ensure that the procedures are sensitively and consistently applied in all situations (this may be delivered by Lisburn YMCA).
- To empower teaching staff through appropriate training and support to develop and deliver an effective drug education programme.
- To provide a successful drug education programme.
- To provide appropriate support and assistance for those pupils affected by drug-related issues.
- To inform parents of the content of this policy and the procedures to be implemented in the management of incidents of suspected drug misuse.
- To establish an environment in which the school is free from the misuse of all drugs.

LHS DRUGS EDUCATION PROGRAMME

The delivery of this Policy is mainly through Learning for Life and Work, Religious Education, Science and the Insync Programme at KS3 level. As a school we understand that there are opportunities for considering drug-related issues from a variety of perspectives. A life skills approach to drug prevention is essential and within school where pupils are taught about raising self-esteem, self confidence and assertiveness to prepare them for making informed decisions about drug use; the main focus being on knowledge, social skills, attitudes and values.

In addition to the drug education provided within the curriculum, the school offers counselling and support for pupils to explore their own attitudes and values as well as an opportunity to discuss any drug related problems they may have. This is generally done through the Pastoral Care/Counselling System within the school and the pupils are informed that confidentiality cannot always be guaranteed.

THE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE DRUG EDUCATION PROGRAMME

The school's Drug Education Programme is grounded in the following aims and objectives:

AIMS

- To promote positive attitudes towards personal health
- To develop self-discipline and self-respect
- To build pupils' self esteem
- To develop decision-making skills which may delay or prevent the onset of experimentation
- To inform pupils of the effects of drug abuse, and the risks involved
- To help pupils to understand how they can influence their peers
- To develop knowledge and understanding of themselves and others as individuals

OBJECTIVES

Drug Education should enable pupils to develop a knowledge and understanding about drugs and drug issues, as well as the skills needed to cope with challenges they will encounter.

Pupils should be able to:

- Understand their own personality, needs, abilities and interests
- Understand the process of reasoning required to make informed choices
- Explore their own attitudes towards drugs and drug issues
- Develop coping strategies to deal with peer pressure
- Develop a competence in challenging attitudes and patterns of behaviour associated with drug misuse
- Develop self-discipline
- Understand what is meant by 'a drug' and the definition of 'addiction'
- Understand how some drugs affect the body
- Be aware of the benefits of healthy lifestyles
- Recognise potential drug exploitation and how to take avoiding action
- Be aware of the current drug culture and the effect of advertising campaigns

These objectives are closely linked with our school policy on Pastoral Care and they should not be seen in isolation.

THE DELIVERY AND ORGANISATION OF THE DRUG EDUCATION PROGRAMME

Drug Education is a whole staff issue. Lisnagarvey High School ensures that staff are regularly updated with changes in the curriculum and changes to the policy, which have an effect on their delivery of the curriculum; where possible staff should receive in-service training on drug issues.

Key Stage 3

This programme is organised by the Personal Development Co-Coordinator (Miss C Johnston). Within the Insync Programme pupils will study;

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Self-Esteem & Positive Attitude• Knowledge and Attitudes to Drugs• Categories of Drugs• What Motivates People to Take Drugs?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What is a Drug?• Health and the Impact of Drugs• The Effects of Specific Drugs on the Body• Knowledge & Understanding
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Key Stage 4

This programme is organised by the Head of Learning for Life & Work (Mrs L Smyth) who oversees its implementation. Examples of sub-themes are;

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Positive Relationships• Peer Pressure• Legal & Illegal Drugs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Alcohol• Nicotine• A Healthy Lifestyle	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mental Health• Physical Activity• SHAHRP Programme (YMCA)
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ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

PUPILS

- Pupils must be aware of and adhere to school rules in relation to drug use/misuse, including tobacco, alcohol, over-the-counter and prescribed medication, volatile substances and controlled drugs.

STAFF

- Be alert to the possibility of drug use/misuse.
- Be familiar with the school's procedures in the handling of suspected drug-related incidents.
- It is not the responsibility of the individual staff member to investigate the circumstances surrounding an incident; however he/she should deal with any emergency procedures if necessary.
- Any information, substance or paraphernalia received should be forwarded to the designated teacher for drugs who may have to take immediate action.

TEACHERS DELIVERING THE DRUG EDUCATION PROGRAMME

- Deliver the school's drug education programme.
- Try to create an atmosphere in the classroom in which pupils can freely contribute to discussion, safe in the knowledge that the comments, ideas and feelings of the group are valued.
- Support pupils in their class if necessary.
- Liaise with the designated teacher for drugs regarding any aspect of the programme/policy, as necessary.

THE ROLE OF THE DESIGNATED TEACHER FOR DRUG RELATED INCIDENTS (MISS C JOHNSTON)

- Ensure that all staff and parents are aware of and have access to a copy of the policy.
- Be responsible for co-ordinating the school's procedures for dealing with incidents of suspected drug misuse.
- Receives any substance found in school and determines the circumstances surrounding the incident.
- Liaison with the Principal on any drug related incident.
- Regularly updating staff on the policy and the procedures for dealing with a drug related incident.
- Co-ordinate training and induction of all staff in the procedures for dealing with incidents of suspected drug misuse.
- Liaison with the staff who have responsibility for Pastoral Care and delivery of the Drug Education Programme.
- Liaison with outside agencies in relation to drug related incidents.
- Reviewing and updating the school Drug Education Policy, when required.

THE PRINCIPAL

- Ensure that members of the Board of Governors have been consulted on and ratified the policy.
- In the case of incidents of suspected drug misuse:
- Ensure the welfare and well-being of the pupil(s) involved in the incident and the rest of the school community.
- Ensure that the following people are informed (where relevant):
 - Parents/Guardians
 - PSNI - preferably the Community/Youth Diversion Officer
 - Board of Governors
 - Designated Officer in ELB
 - Members of staff
 - Other pupils and parents informed within the confines of confidentiality
- Agree, in consultation with the Board of Governors, appropriate pastoral and disciplinary responses in relation to the incident, including counselling services/support.
- Retain written records of the incident and ensuring a copy of the reports are submitted to Board of Governors, ELB/CCMS as appropriate.
- Review procedures and amend.

THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS

- Examine and approve the completed policy and education programme, prior to their implementation in the school.
- Ensure that a summary of the policy is published in the school prospectus and that it is reviewed at regular intervals.
- Be fully aware of the school policy and procedures in respect of incidents of drug misuse, including tobacco and alcohol, and their appropriate disciplinary response.

- Agree in consultation with the principal appropriate pastoral and disciplinary responses in relation to suspected drug related incidents. The Chairman of the Governors, or his nominee, will work with the principal and designated teacher for drugs in relation to drug related issues.

THE CARETAKER

- Be vigilant around and conduct regular checks of school grounds for drug-related paraphernalia. Inform the designated teacher for drugs should any be found.
- Ensure the safe storage, handling and disposal of potentially harmful substances such as solvents and cleaning fluids.

LINKS WITH PARENTS, THE COMMUNITY AND THE POLICE

Parents play a vital role in the prevention of drug misuse. Parents are encouraged to play an active role in homework tasks, and discuss drug issues with their child whenever possible. Parents are also aware of the school's procedures for dealing with drug related incidents.

Parents should support the school in the development and implementation of this policy, including the school's procedures for handling incidents of suspected drug misuse and the drug education programme.

The school endeavours to work closely with the local community to help reduce the number of drug related incidents.

Lisnagarvey High School has developed good working relationships with the local police. This helps to ensure that if a drug related incident is reported, it will be dealt with in a professional and discrete manner, and in keeping the best interests of the child concerned in mind.

PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH SUSPECTED DRUG RELATED INCIDENTS

The incident will be in the first incidence reported to the Designated Teacher (Miss C Johnston) and then to the Principal, who will contact the Juvenile Liaison Officer/Youth Diversion Officer from the PSNI in the Lisburn area.

The parents will also be contacted and made aware of the situation. The incident will be recorded by the teacher involved, the Designated Teacher and the Principal; the Board of Governors will also be informed.

The school will at all times give careful consideration as to how any information relating to an incident of suspected/confirmed drug use/misuse is communicated to staff, pupils and parents/guardians.

The parents/guardians of the pupil(s) directly involved in an incident of suspected drug use/misuse will be informed of the incident recognising that the future of a child or adult can be adversely affected. Confidentiality is of paramount importance in drug related incidents and subsequent outcomes.

School staff are not permitted to search pupils' clothing or possessions. However, it is acceptable to ask the pupil to empty pockets and school bags. Staff may search school property such as lockers or desks.

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 is 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
- If an illegal drug is found it should be secured in a safe place until dealt with by the Police
- Report the incident

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

For the purpose of this policy, an emergency is considered to be either:

- A situation in which a pupil or staff is in danger
- A sequence of events which requires urgent attention

CONFIDENTIALITY

The spirit of confidentiality is of primary importance to those who work professionally with young people in a trusting and secure environment. However the legal requirements of drug legislation will mean that in certain circumstances there will be a change in the convention of confidentiality. The Children (Northern Ireland) Order (1995) makes it clear that the welfare of the young person is paramount and therefore confidentiality must be included.

Where a pupil discloses to a teacher that he or she is taking drugs, the teacher should make it clear that he or she can offer no guarantee of confidentiality. However the teacher can advise the pupil of other sources of confidential information or advice. Pupils should also be encouraged to talk to their parents.

DEALING WITH THE MEDIA

If the school receives an enquiry from the media, the caller should be referred only to the Principal. When responding to the media, the privacy of the pupil should be respected, they are only to give short, factual statements, and the concluding statement should be positive, and reassuring. No further comments should be given.

OUTSIDE AGENCIES

Lisnagarvey High School may use outside agencies to help delivery the drug education programme if the teacher ensures that the following criteria are met:

- The content and delivery of the programme has been jointly agreed
- The programme and methods of delivery are consistent with the aims and objectives outlined in this policy
- The Principal has given his approval for the use of the outside agency
- The staff from the agency have been vetted in relation to Child Protection

MONITORING AND EVALUATING

Lisnagarvey High School will ensure that procedures are put in place to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of all aspects of this policy. The school Drug Education Policy is periodically reviewed to reflect changing circumstances and trends in drugs use. The policy is available to parents if they request it and is partly in the school prospectus.

PROCEDURES FOR HANDLING ALCOHOL MISUSE

The school premises are an alcohol free zone. The school does not allow any alcohol to be brought onto or consumed in school premises. This applies to visitors, staff and pupils.

Adults breaking this rule will be referred to the Principal directly.

Pupils will be dealt with under the school's Discipline Policy.

PROCEDURES FOR HANDLING TOBACCO MISUSE

The school is a restricted environment with no one being permitted to smoke on the school premises. Adults breaking this rule will be advised by other members of staff. Pupils breaking this rule will be dealt with under the school's Discipline Policy; this also applies to E-Cigarettes.

THE MANAGEMENT OF PRESCRIBED MEDICINES

At the start of the school year, parents must complete a medical form indicating any medical illness their child has. The parent is also advised that the school will not, as a matter of course administer medicine to a pupil. If an emergency arises, the parent will be contacted and permission sought if necessary.

If a pupil needs to bring a prescribed medicine into school, the following guidelines must be adhered to:

- A letter from the parent/telephone call explaining the nature of the illness and the dosage required must be sent with the pupil.
- The pupil must immediately give the medicine to the General Office.
- Mrs Harrison (SENCO) deals with those pupils with Special Educational Needs and keeps the General Office informed of any medications prescribed (these medicines are also kept in the General Office).
- The General Office must store the medicine in a secure place (First Aid Box) and ensure that only the pupil, for whom the medicine is prescribed, takes the medicine.

THE MANAGEMENT OF SOLVENTS

Pupils are not permitted to bring solvents or aerosols into school. This includes Tippex fluid and pens, Tippex thinners, glue, marker pens and spray deodorants. Pupils are permitted to bring felt tip pens to school.

All members of staff are responsible for the safe storage and usage of solvents in their classroom. Where possible they should be locked away when not in use. This includes white board markers, glues and paints. The cleaners and caretakers should also ensure that their stores are locked when not in use and that solvents are held in a secure place.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS OF TAKING ILLEGAL DRUGS?

Physical Risks - These depend on the type and strength of the drug, the amount taken, where and how it's taken and the person taking it. There are a range of effects including a change in heart rate and blood pressure, exhaustion, collapse, and in a few cases, death. Physical dependence occurs when the body actually wants the drug. If the drug is not provided, withdrawal symptoms will occur, e.g. stomach cramps, sweating, sleeplessness or anxiety.

Psychological Risks - Effects include a reduction in self-confidence, feelings of inability to cope, anxiety and panic. These feelings can be quite mild or extremely frightening and can continue for several days after use. In some cases lasting psychological damage takes place, especially if there are any underlying mental health problems. Psychological dependence occurs when a person has a strong need to keep taking the drug in order to cope with life.

Social Risks - These include difficulties with family and friends and poor performance and difficulties at school, college or work. Drug taking can lead to involvement in anti-social activities, such as 'joy-riding'. Users may also make unwise decisions concerning, for example, their sexual behaviour.

Legal Risks - These include being convicted of a drugs offence. Young people may also be convicted of being involved in petty crime to fund their drug taking. The resulting criminal record can affect a young person's life in many ways, including future job prospects and travel to certain countries.

RECOGNISING DRUG ABUSE

It is very difficult to tell when a young person first tries drugs or only takes them occasionally. Many of the 'signs' are just like the normal signs of growing up, e.g. being moody or distant. It's important that you don't jump to the wrong conclusions.

Possible indicators:

- sudden and regular changes of mood
- loss of appetite
- gradual loss of interest in school, hobbies, sport, friends
- increased evidence of lying or other secretive behaviour
- money or other objects around the house 'going missing' (including the young person's formerly 'treasured possessions')
- unusually tired
- unable to sleep at night
- sudden appearance of new 'friends'; bouts of talkative, excitable and overactive behaviour

It's unlikely that you will find any actual drugs, but you may come across possible evidence of drug use. These include:

- cigarette papers
- 'wraps' (square folds of paper which may have contained powder)
- cling film, foil and small plastic bags used to package small quantities of drugs
- syringes