

THE ST. CHRISTOPHER SCHOOL

Academy Trust - Special School

Mountdale Gardens, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex SS9 4AW

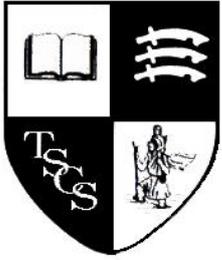
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Christopher's Cottage



A Residential Respite Care /
Sports Hall Facility

THE ST. CHRISTOPHER SCHOOL ACADEMY TRUST

DRUGS AND ALCOHOL POLICY

First written in: October 2016

THE SCHOOL CONTEXT:

The St. Christopher School Academy Trust strives to develop a positive learning community where everyone feels valued and encouraged to achieve their full potential in all aspects of life.

The school is recognised to meet the needs of children with a range of learning needs, including communication and interaction difficulties, cognition and learning difficulties, Autism and some with social emotional and behavioural difficulties. The St. Christopher School also caters for Key Stage 3 pupils (age range 11-14) and Key Stage 4 pupils (age range 14-16) who have severe Autism and/ or ADHD. Many of our current pupils could be described as having "complex learning difficulties" in that they have a combination of various difficulties. The St. Christopher School also caters for a small number of young people aged 16 – 19 who have Autistic Spectrum Disorders and/or ADHD.

Geographical Location:

The school is located in the South East of England in Leigh-on-Sea, Essex.

Introduction:

In 2015 The St. Christopher School Academy Trust became one of the first 3 'Drug Aware' Schools in Southend on Sea and the only Special school to achieve this status.

The Drug Aware initiative was a scheme initially trialled successfully in Nottingham and recently progressed into its second phase when extending to the Southend Local Authority. The scheme set out to identify where early intervention should take place, in addition increasing young people's resilience to drugs and decreasing their vulnerability.

When researching the most current national data provided by the Drug and Alcohol team; **'75% of young people never use illegal drugs, but those who do generally experiment with cannabis, with a small percentage getting access to and trying class A drugs such as cocaine. Some young people acquire 'legal highs' many of which are dangerous drugs, yet unregulated, and use them in the belief they are less risky.'** In addition when looking specifically at schools statistics gathered nationally; **'In a whole school, about 11% of at 14/15 years have tried cannabis but only 2% will use cannabis regularly. 55% have used alcohol and about 10% will get drunk regularly.'** Furthermore; **'A minority will develop problematic drug or alcohol use. Experimental drug use (including alcohol misuse) is known to peak at 14/15 years and then again at 18/21.'**

Drugs education should contribute to:

- The safeguarding of the whole school community.
- Increasing the safety of communities 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 within the whole school community

At The St. Christopher School Academy Trust we believe that Drug and Alcohol education should be:

- Informed by the diverse cohort of pupils at the school and as advised based on the drugs they are aware of or have come into contact with.
- Differentiated and delivered in a relevant and practical way considering safety and resilience to accepting or trying legal or illegal substances that could cause long term damage to physical or mental health.
- Accurate information presented simply and clearly.
- Informative and accessible.
- Stimulating and enjoyable classroom activities.
- Delivered by staff who are confident and have had relevant training.
- Opportunities to be curious in a safe and stimulating environment with access to early intervention from the Pastoral team and outside agencies wherever possible.

Objectives

- To develop children's personal and social skills including resilience and decision making skills.
- 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 encourage children to work cooperatively in active learning and group work.
- To clarify what children already know, give information to clarify facts and correct false knowledge and 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 St. Christopher School Academy Trust.
- To provide opportunities for pupils to acquire knowledge and identify the distinction between legal and illegal 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.
- To support and sign post any member of the whole school community to receive the correct drug and alcohol understanding, education and support.

Definition

At The St. Christopher School Academy Trust 'drugs' include any substance that affects your body. This includes socially acceptable and unacceptable drugs. These will include:

- Tobacco
- Caffeine
- Sugar
- Alcohol
- Medicines
- Illegal substances

Consultation

To begin with the school Health and Wellbeing team met to discuss the guidelines we had been given by the council in the form of an Action plan. It was proposed by the team that the scheme be pupil led to engage staff and keep all stakeholders enthused. Once this was agreed we discussed the content of the scheme and identified that it would only be suitable for the pupils functioning above national curriculum level one. This equated to 60% of the Secondary aged pupils. These pupils were supported whilst taking the survey as it was written for mainstream pupils and reasonable adjustments had not been addressed for pupils with SEN.

The initial statistics indicated that the resilience of our pupils was high; however that their vulnerability was also high and this was of concern. We decided to make two of our key targets to lower the pupils who were at risk of trying drugs or alcohol and maintain and improve the number of pupil's resilience. With the pupils that were unable to take the survey we identified pathways an assessment within the existing curriculum and develop a scheme of work to include the whole school demographic.

The majority of our pupils had only come into contact with caffeine, tobacco and alcohol.

We decided to focus on staff, parent and governor awareness about drugs and alcohol increasing their knowledge so they could help support colleagues and learners alike in developing their own behaviour and safety. We did this by making the whole initiative pupil led. The pupils in Year 10 formed a Drug Aware steering group and they worked with a staff member to read through and develop the action plan. They highlighted areas that we were already competent in as a school and developed list of what still needed to be done and this formed our over - arching action plan.

The pupils worked hard to develop a power point presentation which they delivered to the whole school staff, parents, carers and governors and then adapted this to deliver a Secondary school assembly. This made sure the whole school was aware of the new scheme and its objectives.

The next stage was to gather staff and parents and carers views. The staff and parents who engaged with the Drug Aware meeting gave feedback about training needs, knowledge and policy consultation. In response to this we collated the information and engaged with Marie Henderson our Drug Aware support worker to deliver training to staff, governors and be involved with the parents and carers' news and views.

The main points fed back in the consultation with staff parents and carers were:

- Identified training needs for staff.
- Consumption of any alcohol on school overnight or extended visits should be prohibited.
- Storage of alcohol for raffle or presents should be stored in a locked cupboard in the staffroom.
- Storage of any staff medication should be locked in their lockers or the medical room.
- Pupil medication should be stored and monitored by the school nurse and recorded appropriately

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, 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 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.

Our current named contact at the Drug and Alcohol Team is Marie Henderson.

The Role of Parents

As a school 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 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.

Resources

Drugs education is part of the planned PSHCE curriculum and is also delivered through the teaching of Science and through circle time. The PSHCE framework outlines the areas to be covered each year.

As already stated the work delivered around this subject will be needs led but may include education about:

- Only taking prescribed medication
- Not eating or drinking dangerous substances found around the house.
- Responding to an emergency.
- The effect of too much sugar and caffeine.
- Resilience and saying no to unwanted substances.
- Responsible choice.
- The effects of legal and illegal substances on physical and mental health.
- The law

Some resources will be taken from the Drug Aware scheme where appropriate and others taken from other accredited schemes validated by the PSHE Association.

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, within the programme for Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education (PSHCE), and enshrined in the values, which are embodied in the schools' ethos. There are links to other subjects, such as physical education, and aspects of school life, notably the spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects of the curriculum.

Teaching:

Our approach to drugs education is one which children are given information in the belief that increased knowledge about drugs and the risks 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 is:-

- Well resourced
- Reflects the needs and experiences of pupils
- Uses a range of teaching methods including group work, discussions, videos and outside speakers
- Reinforces messages about healthy lifestyles
- Flexible and relevant
- In the context of a wider PSHCE programme
- Interesting and stimulating
- Informed.
- De personalised

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.

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 Headteacher retains the responsibility for deciding how to respond to particular incidents in conjunction with the Drug coordinator. 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 (within the boundary of the external playground wall) unless a doctor's note indicates that this does not affect the individuals capacity to perform their duties, take care of children in their charge, or in the case of pupils, take part in lessons.

Monitoring, Evaluating and Reviewing:

- Senior managers are involved in monitoring and evaluation.
- Pupils, staff, parents/carers and governors are consulted and the programme and policy are modified where appropriate.
- There is ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the programme, teaching methodologies and learning outcomes to ensure that needs are met.
- Drug education is reviewed in line with current LEA and Government guidelines.

Links to Other Policies:

- **PSHCE**
- **Science**
- **Safeguarding**
- **Relationship and Sex Education.**

Policy written by Alison Paveling

(Approved by Governing Body 20/03/17)