

## Policy on Drug Education in The Edron

The vast majority of the information contained in this policy is taken from the DES booklet: *Drugs: Guidance for schools*

(Throughout this document, the term **drugs** refers to all drugs including medicines, volatile substances, alcohol, tobacco and illegal drugs)

Drug education is a major component of drug prevention. Drug prevention aims to:

- Minimize the number of students engaging in drug use
- Delay the onset of first use
- Reduce the harm caused by drugs
- Enable those who have concerns to seek help

Students will develop their **knowledge, skills, attitudes** and **understanding** about drugs and appreciate the benefits of a healthy lifestyle, relating this to their own and others' actions. Drug education should take account of pupils' views so that it is both appropriate to their age and ability and relevant to their particular circumstances. Pupils will be given the skills to make informed choices.

Drug education should:

- Increase pupils' knowledge and understanding and clarify misconceptions about:
  - The short and long term effects and risks of drugs
  - The rules and laws relating to drugs
  - The impact of drug use on individuals, families and communities
  - The prevalence and acceptability of drug use among peers
  - The moral, social, emotional and political issues surrounding drugs
- Develop pupils' personal and social skills to make informed decisions and keep themselves safe and healthy, including:
  - Assessing, avoiding and managing risk
  - Communicating effectively
  - Resisting pressures
  - Finding information, help and advice
  - Devising coping strategies
  - Developing self awareness and self esteem
- Enable pupils to explore their own and other peoples' attitudes towards drugs and drug users, including challenging stereotypes and exploring media and social influences.

The school must set realistic aims, which are consistent with our values policy, the laws of Mexico as well as the age and maturity of the students. Drug education should start in Primary and carry through to year 13.

Issues concerning drug education in the school:

- It must involve the whole community
- It must be part of a well-planned PSE programme
- It must be delivered in a supportive environment, where pupils feel able to engage in open discussion and feel confident to ask for advice where necessary
- It must go hand in hand with the policy on managing drug incidents in the school
- All staff must have adequate access to training and support
- It must be supported by consistent messages from families – and relevant heads of school must tackle those who do not support the policy.

### Drug education in Primary

At KS1 pupils should learn about being safe with medicines and household substances and the basic skills for making healthy choices and following safety rules.

At KS2 pupils should learn about the effects and risks of alcohol, tobacco, volatile substances and basic skills to manage risky situations. They should learn about how to make informed choices about their health, how to resist pressure to do wrong and to take more responsibility for their actions.

### Drug education in Secondary

At KS3 pupils should learn more about the effects and risks of drugs and the laws relating to drugs. They should learn the skills to recognise and manage risk and resist pressures. They will continue to develop skills to make healthy lifestyle choices and learn where to go for help and advice.

By the time students reach KS4/5 pupils they will have built on their knowledge and will continue to learn more about the effects of drug misuse on family, friends, community and society. They will gain greater understanding through clarifying their opinions and attitudes in discussions and debates and considering the consequences of their actions.

### Planning for drug education – issues to consider:

- Pupils' existing knowledge and understanding, which can be identified through
  - Drawing and writing activities
  - Circle time
  - Surveys
  - discussion
- Trends in local and community drug use
- Pupil diversity and experience
- Confidentiality issues
  - It is **IMPERATIVE** that students feel they can approach adults in school, but it must be made clear that confidentiality cannot necessarily be guaranteed

- Pupils who might require regular medication
  - If known, students should not be stigmatized
  - Responsible management of prescribed drugs can be addressed
- Pupils whose parents may be drug or alcohol users
  - This should be dealt with sensitively
  - Students can be given coping mechanisms and can be told how and where to seek support
- Pupils who might be vulnerable to drug misuse
- Students with concerns about friends who may be using drugs
  - Students can be told how and where to go to express concerns
  - Confidentiality issues should be raised here

Possible PSE activities:

Research	brain storming	case studies	discussions
Creative writing	outside visits	outside visitors	reading
Drama	questionnaires	games	posters
Peer education	videos	role play	media

Cross-curricular opportunities for drug education – to be addressed as and when appropriate

- English/Spanish – group discussion and interaction, information texts, literature and media work
- Maths – handling data, interpreting and discussing results
- ICT – use of the Internet to find information, exchanging and sharing information, presentation of findings
- Drama – exploring and developing skills through role play
- Music/Art – exploring the use of drugs in popular culture
- Geography/Economics – drugs and the economy
- PE – fitness and health

There should be sufficient lesson time for learning to take place, as well as opportunities for pupils to actively participate, reflect and consolidate their learning.

## Appendix 1: Drugs of particular significance and their relevance to the Edron

### Alcohol

- Alcohol is readily available and generally socially acceptable – hence the particular problem we face as a school in our education programme concerning alcohol.
- The number of 11-15 year olds consuming alcohol has increased in Mexico, but the problem of binge drinking is on the significant increase.
- With this in mind, educating pupils about the effects of alcohol and how to reduce alcohol related harm (drink driving, unsafe sexual practices etc) should be a priority for the school.

### Tobacco

- Worldwide, smoking is the single greatest cause of preventable illness and early death.
- As a school, our emphasis should be on providing information and developing attitudes and skills which help students not to take up smoking and supporting those who want to stop.
- Issues regarding smoking as a method of weight control or making someone appear more grown up should also be explored.

### Cannabis

- Cannabis is the most widely used illegal drug worldwide, with use increasing sharply with age.
- Its continued classification as an illegal substance reflects the associated health risks and the school has a responsibility to emphasise the illegal status of the drug, despite the fact that it is tolerated as ‘harmless’ by many.

### Volatile Substances

- This is the deliberate inhalation of substances such as glue, lighter fuel or aerosols.
- They are generally responsible for more deaths in young people than illegal drugs (especially in boys).
- We must be aware of the correlation between the use of volatile substances and vulnerable students.

### Class A drugs

- These include cocaine, crack, ecstasy, heroine and magic mushrooms. Use of these drugs is rare in young people although our particular community is probably vulnerable to the use of cocaine.
- Use of cocaine is on the increase in Mexico and, significantly, attitudes towards it's use are also changing to it becoming an accepted recreational drug
- Students need to be made aware of drug paraphernalia and how to be safe around it.

### Prescription drugs

- The fastest growing area of drug misuse and sometimes the easiest to get hold of.
- Parents have a particular responsibility in this area.
- Prescription drugs seem to especially easy to get hold of in Mexico.

## Appendix 2: Staff support and training

In The Edron, The Head of Secondary will have overall responsibility for all drug issues in the school. This responsibility should include overseeing drug education and the management of drug incidents. Support will be offered from a range of appropriate colleagues. It also recommends that PHSE should be taught by specialist teams where possible.

It is essential that all staff have a general drug awareness and a good understanding of the school's drug and other related policies. This awareness should include first steps in managing drug incidents and identifying and responding to pupils' needs.

Regular refresher courses must be provided for existing staff and all new teachers should be made explicitly aware of the drug policies.

Professional development must include drug education. Activities could include:

- Team teaching or teaching observing other skilled members of staff
- Dissemination of lessons learned in school
- In-house training courses using outside experts or videos
- Specialist training courses

### Appendix 3: the involvement of parents

Parental involvement plays a crucial role in preventing problem drug use. Young people are more likely to avoid or delay drug use if:

- Family bonds are strong
- There is strong parental monitoring and clear family rules
- They can talk openly with parents without fear of judgment or punishment

The school should ensure that parents are:

- Made aware of the our approach and rationale for drug education
- Involved in the planning and review of the drug education programme and policy – through open evenings, newsletters, ‘espacio para padres’
- Given information about their child’s drug education and school rules in relation to drugs
- Encouraged to support their child’s learning at home
- Able to access information about drugs and local and national sources of help