

The Unity of Titchmarsh, Warmington and Nassington Schools

Substance Misuse Education Policy

Aims and objectives

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 substance misuse education programme 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 substance misuse, 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 other substances in society.

The objectives of our substance misuse education programme are:

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

Organisation

We regard substance misuse 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 substances (including medicines) sensitively and appropriately, as they occur. In 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 substances. For example, if a child raises the issue of smoking, the teacher takes time to discuss its harmful effects with the whole class. In science lessons we teach children what different substances are, and how drugs are used in medicine. We also teach them the difference between legal and illegal substances.

The role of the Executive Headteacher

It is the responsibility of the Executive Headteacher to ensure that staff and parents are informed about this substance misuse education policy, and that the policy is implemented

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effectively. It is also the Executive 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 SCARF PSHE programme also covers issues and provides resources for all three schools to use.

The Executive Headteacher will liaise with external agencies regarding the school substance misuse 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 Executive Headteacher will monitor the policy 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 substance misuse awareness. The governors will support the Executive Headteacher in following these guidelines. Governors will inform and consult with parents about the substance misuse 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

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

- inform parents about the school substance misuse education policy and practice;
- answer any questions parents may have about the substance misuse education their child receives in school;
- take seriously any issue which parents raise with teachers or governors about this policy or the arrangements for substance misuse 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 substance misuse so that the parents can support the key messages being given to children at school.