

MARYHILL HIGH SCHOOL



Drug Education Policy & Management of Drug Related Incidents Policy

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Introduction

The misuse of drugs both legal and illegal by young people can have a serious impact on their educational attainment, relationships with family and friends and their health and well-being, preventing them from reaching their full potential.

Maryhill High School plays a fundamental role in providing drug education and in creating a safe and supportive environment that enables young people to develop their knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes to drugs and drug related issues.

Drugs education is delivered at Crescent as part of the Personal & Citizenship (PACE) curriculum and fulfils the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum for Science.

Definition

For the purpose of this policy a 'drug' is a substance people take to change the way they feel, think or behave. This includes both legal and illegal substances, volatile substances (solvents), alcohol, tobacco and prescribed drugs.

The Aim of Drugs Education

The Drugs Policy forms part of the PACE schemes of work that Maryhill High School uses.

The policy is also reflected in the Every Child Matters Agenda, through enabling discussion of children's experiences and reflecting on the skills needed to stay healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve, and to make their contribution to the school and their community.

The aim of Drug Education is to provide an opportunity for students to explore and develop their knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes to drugs and drug related issues to enable them to make informed decisions.

Through the Drugs Policy and the delivery of a Drugs Awareness programme tailored to the needs of the students, it is the aim of the school to ensure that all those in its care have the best possible skills and appropriate information to enable them to make informed decisions about keeping themselves safe and choosing a healthy lifestyle.

Through this learning, the children should be able to have an understanding of the risks that they would be taking and the consequences of their actions. They need to

be aware of the dangers, but also the positive uses of drugs. To understand how drugs can affect the body, and that not all drugs are illegal, but that all drugs do have an effect on the body. To know that some foods also contain substances that can also affect these changes.

Drug education at Maryhill High School:

Increases students' knowledge and understanding and clarifies misconceptions about:

- the short and long-term effects and risks of drugs;
- the rules and laws relating to drugs;
- the impact of drugs on individuals, families and communities
- the prevalence and acceptability of drug use among peers;
- the complex moral, social, economical and political issues surrounding drugs.

Develops student's personal and social skills in order to make informed decisions to keep themselves safe and healthy, including:

- assessing, avoiding and managing risk
- communicating effectively
- resisting pressures
- finding information, help and advice
- devising problem-solving and coping strategies
- developing self awareness and self esteem

Enables students to explore their own and other peoples' attitudes towards drugs, drug use and drug users, including challenging stereotypes and exploring media and social influence.

Planning and Teaching Drug Education

Drug Education needs to be delivered in a safe, secure and supportive learning environment. Therefore it is essential that clear ground rules are negotiated with students regarding confidentiality, rights to privacy and respect and boundaries. Young people should be actively encouraged to participate in their own learning and to question and think critically.

Delivery should include a wide range of teaching and learning approaches and the core principles of these include:

- ensuring that every student succeeds through the provision of an inclusive education within a culture of high expectations

- the purpose of each lesson is made clear
- time is given for students to reflect, consolidate and apply their learning
- students are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning and to record their own progress
- building on what learners already know: structure and pace of the lesson so that students know what has to be learnt and how
- making learning vivid and real – develop understanding through enquiry, e-learning and group problem solving
- making learning an enjoyable and challenging experience – stimulate learning by matching teaching techniques and strategies to a range of learning styles
- enriching the learning experience – infuse learning skills across the curriculum
- promoting assessment for learning – make students/young people partners in their own learning.

A wide range of active learning approaches should be used to ensure that all young people actively participate.

Teachers are always best placed to take the lead role for the overall drugs programme but outside contributors play a valuable role in supporting learning. For instance School Nurse, Police and Youth Services.

Teachers also need to ensure that the resources they use are relevant, up to date and appropriate in order to meet the needs of the children in their care.

Managing Drug Related Incidents

Definition

A drug related incident is defined at Maryhill High School as any person on the premises, be it student, parent, carer or visitor, who is under the influence or in possession of intoxicating substances. It may also refer to incidents out of school which directly affect Maryhill High School students and their immediate families.

Mrs Y Skucha is the named staff member responsible for coordinating the schools response to drug incidents.

The primary concern for the school is the care and welfare of its students. The school will seek to balance the safety and security of students.

There are a number of young people in schools and other educational establishments who may require medication to be administered during the school

day. Students with medical conditions requiring this on a regular basis should be made known to all staff and members of the school community.

The school has a number of staff that have been trained as first aiders. The children know how to gain help via the Staff, and Dinnertime Supervisors.

The school will follow the law in that it permits school staff to take temporary possession of a substance suspected of being an illegal drug for the purpose of preventing an offence from being committed or continued in relation to that drug providing that all responsible steps are taken to destroy the drug or deliver it to a person lawfully entitled to take custody of it.

This will usually be performed with the assistance of the police on occasions which do not involve alcohol or tobacco, (which will be destroyed on the premises). In issues concerning drug paraphernalia the police will always be contacted.

More details of the procedure are given in an annex to this policy.

The school will involve parents/ carers in personal searches and searches of school property, but at all times with at least two members of the school staff in attendance. If necessary Police will be contacted to assist with personal searches.

Circumstances Defining Where Parents/Carers or Other Agencies Including the Police may Need to be Notified.

Maryhill High School will conduct a careful investigation to judge the nature and seriousness of each incident. The emphasis should be on listening to what people have to say and asking open-ended questions.

Issues such as confidentiality, child protection, police intervention and referral to external agencies need to be given careful attention to safeguard the needs of those involved and to ensure an appropriate response is taken. Any incident involving the misuse of drugs will take account of:

- the age and maturity of the child or young person
- any previous incidents of drug misuse by the child or young person
- which drug/s are being used/supplied
- is the drug legal or illegal
- how much is being used and how often
- how they take the drug, where, with whom
- how long has it been going on
- the child's home circumstances

- student's knowledge and understand of the school policy and rules

Any response should balance the needs of the individual with those of the wider school community, and aim to provide students with the opportunity to learn from their mistakes and develop as individuals.

Drug/alcohol related problems are rarely, if ever, isolated and are usually indicative of wider issues in a young person's life. A holistic approach is essential when assessing drug/alcohol use and other factors that are impacting on a young person's life and behaviour.

Staff have no legal obligation to report an incident involving drugs to the police. However, Maryhill High School will work in partnership with the police to outline:

- when an incident can be managed internally by the school
- when the police should be informed or consulted
- when the police should be actively involved
- when a student's name can be withheld and when it should be divulged to the police

The School will make a full record of unauthorised drug incidents. Storage of sensitive information about students or staff should be stored in accordance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998. A book for recording is kept in the Head teacher's office.

If incidents involve a child then the Child Protection Officer, will consult all relevant agencies as well as calling the parent/ carer into school to collect or discuss the student.

Where school feels it has no choice but to suspend or expel students, it will ensure that there are adequate and appropriate care pathways available to the young people and their families/carers.

Annex

Guidance for Staff

Where a young person discloses substance misuse on the premises, staff will inform the Substance Abuse Co-ordinator and, where appropriate, participate in the planning of subsequent action as described above. Where a young person discloses substance misuse off the premises, the staff member will use his or her discretion to decide on appropriate action, but will normally involve the Substance Co-ordinator. Where staff discover substances which are suspected to be harmful, illegal or deserving of investigation, they should note the two circumstances in which substances may be removed from either a place or a person:

(a) place

If possible, remove the substance from where it was discovered in the presence of a witness. If this is not possible, do not leave the substance there while you enlist the support of a colleague or student as a witness, but continue with the procedure below.

(b) person

When receiving or retrieving substances from a student, do so, if possible in the presence of a witness. In the absence of a witness, do not put off receiving substances, or, within bounds of your professional discretion, removing a suspicious substance from a student's possession.

The following guidelines should be observed at all times:

1. Remove the substance and record the time, place and circumstance when the substance came into your possession.
2. Do not investigate the nature of the substance, but do record its approximate size and appearance.
3. When possible, have the recordings countersigned by a witness.
4. Take the substance immediately to your Substance Co-ordinator, who will take it to the Head teacher. Do not keep the substance on your person or in a place of safe keeping; doing so may place you at risk.
5. In the presence of the Co-ordinator or Head teacher, place the substance in a suitable sealed container. The Co-ordinator, Head teacher, yourself and when possible, the witness, should sign and date the package. An official

report should be completed, recording the time, date and circumstances of the findings.

6. The Head teacher can choose to arrange for the Police to remove the substance from the premises or may choose to dispose of it in an appropriate way.
7. In the event of a discovery of any equipment associated with substance use, especially needles and syringes, students should not be allowed to handle such items. Adults with utmost care must handle all equipment found. The Head teacher must ensure that materials are placed in a secure and rigid container to await collection by the appropriate service.