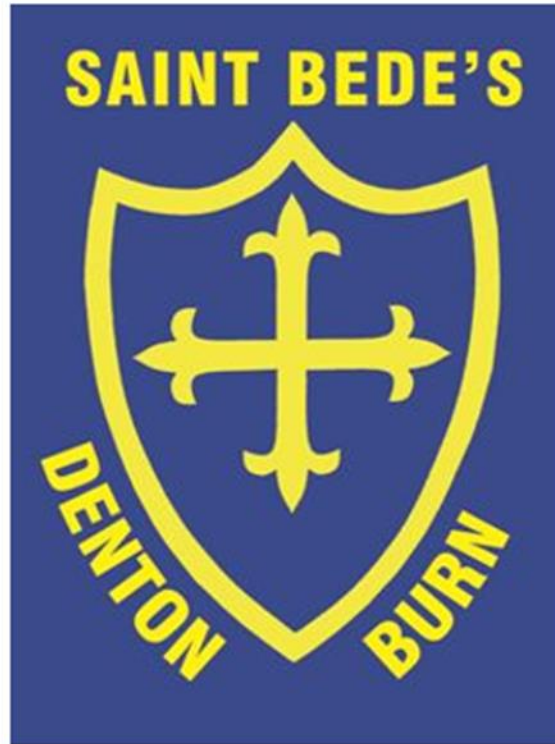


St Bede's Catholic Primary School



*As one
we learn together,
play together,
pray together,
as one*

Drugs and Substance Abuse Policy

Date reviewed: September 2025
Date of next review: September 2026



Aims and objectives

The aims of this policy are to:

- clarify the school's approach to drugs, for staff, pupils, governors, parents or carers, and to clarify the legal requirements and responsibilities;
- give guidance to staff on the school's drug and substance misuse education programme;
- safeguard the health and safety of pupils and staff in our school;
- enable staff to manage drug-related incidents properly.

Terminology

The term 'drugs' is used throughout this policy to refer to all drugs:

- all illegal drugs (those controlled by the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971);
- all legal drugs, including alcohol and tobacco cigarettes and vapes), and also volatile substances (those giving off a gas or vapour which can be inhaled);
- all medicines, whether over-the-counter or on prescription.

Rationale

The policy assists our aim to further the well-being of the pupils at St Bede`s Catholic Primary School. As alcohol, tobacco and illicit substances are part of young peoples lives we believe that it is right and proper to ensure the curriculum covers drugs education as much as possible (through the Science and RSE/PSHE Curriculum).

We want our school to be a safe place for us all to work, and the presence of unauthorised drugs represents a threat to our health and safety. We are committed to health and safety and will take appropriate steps to safeguard the wellbeing of members of the school against substance misuse. We acknowledge the importance of our pastoral role in the welfare of our pupils, and through the general ethos of the school, will seek to educate all pupils and will facilitate support for any pupil who needs it.

Drug related incidents may be connected with pupils themselves, with their parents or carers, or with some other person. The drug use that is of concern may not take place within the school, or in the immediate neighbourhood of the school`s building, but in another setting where it is nevertheless having an impact on the children.

The majority of pupils will go through their school life without being involved in any incident of drug misuse. However, where such incidents occur, ensuring the safety and welfare of all of the pupils is of paramount importance.

Responsibilities

The Headteacher will:

- ensure that staff and parents/carers are informed about this drugs policy;
- ensure that the policy is implemented effectively;
- manage any drug-related incidents;
- ensure that staff are given sufficient training, so that they can teach effectively about drugs, and handle any difficult issues with sensitivity;
- liaise with external agencies regarding the school drugs education programme;
- monitor the policy on a day-to-day basis, and report to Governors, when requested, on the effectiveness of the policy.



The Local Governing Committee (LGC) will:

- designate a Governor with specific responsibility for drugs education (Link Governor for Safeguarding);
- establish general guidelines on drugs education;
- support the Headteacher in following these guidelines;
- inform and consult with parents/ carers about the drugs education policy;
- liaise with the Local Authority (LA) and health organisations, so that the school's policy is in line with the best advice available;
- support the Headteacher in any case conferences, or in appeals against exclusions.

Objectives of drugs education

Drugs education should enable pupils to develop their knowledge, attitudes and understanding about drugs, and to appreciate the benefits of a healthy lifestyle, relating this to their own and others' actions. It should:

- build on knowledge and understanding;
- provide accurate information, and clear up misunderstandings;
- explore attitudes and values, and examine the risks and consequences of actions relating to drugs;
- develop pupils' interpersonal skills, their understanding of rules and laws, and their self-awareness and self-esteem;
- ensure that all pupils are taught about drugs in a consistent manner, following guidelines that have been agreed by parents/carers, governors and staff.

Drugs education

We regard drugs education as a whole-school issue, and we believe that opportunities to teach about the importance of a healthy lifestyle occur naturally throughout the curriculum, but especially in science, RSE/PSHE and citizenship, RE and PE. There are also opportunities in circle time.

Teaching about drugs will begin in Key Stage 1, when pupils are taught about seeing the doctor, visiting the chemist, and the importance of medicines and their safe handling.

In Key Stage 2, pupils will learn that alcohol is the most widely used drug, and that its dangers can be overlooked. We will ensure that our pupils are aware of the risks associated with drinking. We teach pupils that smoking or vaping is a minority habit, and encourage them to consider its effects and risks. We also teach pupils about the dangers of volatile-substance abuse, because of the high risk of accidental death, especially for first-time and occasional abusers.

We acknowledge that by the time pupils are in Year 6, some of them may have had some experiences with drugs already, so we must help to equip pupils to handle risky situations, before they actually meet them.

We recognise that learning is most effective when it addresses the development of knowledge, attitudes and skills together, and when teaching and learning are participative and active. We use a variety of teaching styles that are characterised by active learning. We find out what the children know already, we pose dilemmas, and we get the children to discuss choices. Wherever possible, the information we give is visually reinforced. We use drama, role-play or IT to demonstrate various strategies and scenarios. In short, we seek to engage our pupils. We give them the opportunity to talk to groups or to the whole class. We



encourage them to listen to the views of others, and we ask them to explore why drugs are such a problem for society.

We aim to teach all pupils about drugs, however different their attainment levels, and however diverse their requirements. We recognise that pupils with special educational needs may be more vulnerable, that different communities have different attitudes towards drug abuse, and that some pupils may have drug-abusing parents or carers.

Drugs education takes place during normal lesson time. Sometimes, a class teacher will seek support from the school nurse or another health professional. In teaching this course, we follow the DfE and LA guidelines. The resources and materials that we use are recommended either by the Health Authority or by the LA. Lessons that focus on drugs education form part of a sequence of lessons that are designed to promote a healthy lifestyle.

Drugs at school

Pupils may not bring prescribed medication into school. Parents/ carers may visit the school in the lunch break to bring and administer prescribed medication themselves, by prior arrangement. (see Managing Medication in School Policy)

Where children have medical needs, parents/ carers must give us details of the pupil's condition and medication. Parents and carers will bring the medication to school in a secure, labelled container. Records will be kept of all medication received and given. Emergency medication may be stored securely in the classroom (for anaphylaxis or asthma); other drugs will be stored securely in the school office or locked refrigerator. (See Managing Medicines in School Policy)

Solvents and other hazardous chemicals must be stored securely, to prevent inappropriate access, or use by pupils. Teachers are cautious with solvent-based Tippex, with aerosols, with glues and with board-cleaning fluids.

Members of staff who smoke or vape must keep their tobacco and matches or lighters secure. Smoking is not permitted anywhere in the school or the school grounds. (See No-Smoking Policy)

Alcohol to be consumed at community or parents' events will be stored securely beforehand. To sell alcohol, we must be licensed under the Licensing (Occasional Permissions) Act 1983.

Drugs incidents

An incident involving unauthorised drugs in school is most likely to involve alcohol, tobacco, vapes or volatile substances, rather than illegal drugs.

The first priority is safety and first aid, i.e. calling the emergency services and placing unconscious people in the recovery position. An intoxicated pupil does not represent a medical emergency, unless unconscious.

Pupils suspected of being intoxicated from inhaling a volatile substance will be kept calm.

Any drug suspected of being illegal will be confiscated and stored securely, awaiting disposal; these precautions must be witnessed and recorded. Staff should not taste unknown or confiscated substances.

Legal but unauthorised drugs or medicines will also be confiscated, and will be returned to parents or carers; the school may arrange for the safe disposal of volatile substances. Staff may take temporary possession of a substance while waiting for the required disposal / hand over (dependent on the severity of the substance). Any seizure will be logged and the substance lodged safely until disposal / hand over takes place. In exceptional circumstances, e.g. while on an educational visit with no access to a safe place to hold a substance, and solely



to reduce the risk of, or prevent harm to, the pupil or staff involved or others, staff may legally dispose of drugs. However, wherever possible the substance will be retained for use as evidence or in case it is required for analysis for medical purposes. Such actions will be witnessed, recorded and subsequently reported to the relevant authorities.

Where a pupil is suspected of concealing an unauthorised drug, staff are not permitted to carry out a personal search, but may search pupils' bags, trays, etc.

The Headteacher will decide whether the police need to be called or whether the school will manage the incident internally.

A full record will be made of any incident.

The Headteacher will conduct an investigation into the nature and seriousness of any incident, in order to determine an appropriate response.

The role of parents and carers

The school is well aware that the primary role in pupil's drugs education lies with parents/ carers. We wish to build a positive and supporting relationship with the parents/carers of our pupils, through mutual understanding, trust and cooperation. To promote this objective, we will:

- inform parents/ carers about the school drugs policy;
- invite parents/ carers to view the materials used to teach drugs education in our school;
- answer any questions that parents/ carers may have about the drugs education that their child receives in school;
- take seriously any issue which parents/ carers raise with teachers or Governors about this policy, or about arrangements for drugs education in the school;
- encourage parents/ carers to be involved in reviewing the school policy, and making modifications to it as necessary;
- inform parents/ carers about the best practice known with regard to drugs education, so that the parents/carers can support the key messages being given to children at school.

When an incident concerning unauthorised drugs has occurred in school, and a pupil is involved, the Headteacher will inform the parents/ carers at the earliest opportunity, and explain how we intend to respond to the incident. The will allow the school along with the parents/ carers to work together to support the pupil involved.

Staff will be cautious about discharging a pupil to the care of an intoxicated parent, particularly when the parent intends driving the pupil home. Staff will suggest an alternative arrangement. The focus will be the pupil's welfare and safety. Where the behaviour of an intoxicated parent repeatedly places a child at risk, or the parent/ carer becomes abusive or violent, staff should consider whether the circumstances of the case are serious enough to invoke child protection procedures, and possibly the involvement of the police.

Monitoring and review

The safeguarding link Governor, along with the Headteacher, will monitor the implementation of the drugs and substance abuse policy on an annual basis. If the policy appears to need modification, then recommendations will be made to the full Local Governing Committee (LGC). Governors require the Head Teacher to keep a written record detailing the content and delivery of the drugs education programme taught in this school.

