

# Newton Hill Community School



## Drugs, Tobacco and Alcohol Education Policy

Updated October 2011

## **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 drugs 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 drugs, tobacco and alcohol and we aim to equip them with the social skills that enable them to make informed moral and social decisions in relation to drugs in society.

The objectives of our drugs, tobacco and alcohol education programme are:

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

## **Organisation**

We regard drugs, tobacco and alcohol 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 drugs, tobacco and alcohol sensitively and appropriately, as they occur. In the routine 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 drugs, tobacco and alcohol. 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 a drug is, and how drugs are used in medicine. We also teach them the difference between legal and illegal drugs.

Drugs, tobacco and alcohol education is an important part of our school's personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) curriculum. The main teaching about drugs, tobacco and alcohol will start in Year 5, where the children are taught about illegal drugs, tobacco and alcohol and the dangers involved to those who use them. In teaching this course we follow the guidelines provided by the LA, and we receive advice and support from the Local Health Authority. Lessons that focus on drug, tobacco and alcohol education form part of a sequence of lessons that are designed to promote in children a healthy lifestyle.

The children's class teacher teaches them drug education in normal lesson time. We also utilise support from the school nurse, the healthy schools team or another health professionals. The teaching style that we use encourages children to ask questions and reflect on the dangers to health of drug, tobacco and alcohol misuse. Children explore issues, such as why people take drugs, smoke and drink and how they can avoid putting themselves in danger in the future. We give children the opportunity

to talk in groups or to the whole class. We encourage them to listen to the views of others, and we ask them to explore why drugs, tobacco and alcohol are such a problem for society.

### **The Role of Parents**

The school is well aware that the primary role in children's drugs, tobacco and alcohol 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 drugs, tobacco and alcohol education policy and practice;
- invite parents to view the materials used to teach drugs, tobacco and alcohol education in our school;
- answer any questions parents may have about the drugs, tobacco and alcohol 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, tobacco and alcohol 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, tobacco and alcohol education so that the parents can support the key messages being given to children at school.

### **Monitoring and review**

The curriculum committee of the governing body on an annual basis will monitor the drugs, tobacco and alcohol education policy. This committee will report their findings and recommendations to the full governing body as necessary, if the policy appears to need modification. The curriculum committee takes into serious consideration any representation from parents about the drugs, tobacco and alcohol education programme and comments will be recorded.