

ST MICHAEL'S MIDDLE SCHOOL
THE GOVERNING BODY'S STATEMENT ON DRUGS

STATEMENT OF POLICY

The possession or use of prohibited substances on the St Michael's site is absolutely forbidden.

Any pupil found in possession of tobacco, alcohol, drugs or solvents, or making use of them or inviting another student to do so faces immediate exclusion from school. Pupils who are caught associating with such a pupil may also be excluded. This statement of policy applies to any situation where the pupils are regarded as being in the care of the school. The school will contact the police concerning any pupil who is suspected of dealing in illegal substances.

AIMS

The governing body recognises that society subjects young people to many pressures and temptations and that their comparative affluence and youth does not completely protect St Michael's pupils from such pressures and temptations. The governing body, therefore, seeks:

- to ensure that there are educational opportunities for the pupils to acquire the knowledge and skills to make informed choices and to resist social and peer pressures;
- to provide a school environment that is made safe, secure and free of inappropriate and illegal substances.

The governing body intends that these aims be achieved through a number of different activities which are described below.

DRUGS EDUCATION PROGRAMME

All the pupils will access to a programme of drugs education. The main purpose of drugs education at St Michael's are to increase the pupils' knowledge and understanding about drugs, including the legal and health implications, and to enhance their ability to make informed choices and resist external pressures.

STAFF TRAINING

Staff training and guidance will be provided at appropriate intervals. Staff will be given the opportunity to increase their factual knowledge about prohibited substances and their effects and to improve their abilities to provide appropriate education and guidance, depending on their role in the school. The training and guidance will also help to reinforce the need for constant vigilance by all members of staff.

PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS

Parents will be informed of this statement through the prospectus on the pupil's admission to the school.

Information and advice evenings will be arranged from time to time in conjunction with other schools and external agencies.

Parents are invited to share confidential concerns or information **with** the headteacher or other members of staff as the need arises.

LIAISON WITH EXTERNAL AGENCIES/OTHER SCHOOLS

Relevant members of the teaching staff will meet with members of external agencies and teachers from other schools from time to time to exchange local information, to share examples of good practice and to offer mutual support.

ADMISSION OF EXCLUDED STUDENTS

Pupils who have been excluded from school because of their possession or use of prohibited substances are re-admitted to the school or admitted from other schools in accordance with Dorset County Council guidelines'

The governing body agreed this statement at its meeting on 16th May 2005. It will be reviewed by the headteacher every two years.

ST MICHAEL'S MIDDLE SCHOOL
SUBSTANCE MISUSE – ADVICE AND GUIDANCE TO STAFF

Smoking

Smoking is not allowed at St Michael's. Those pupils caught smoking or being with smokers (to prevent one smoker in a group confusing identification) should be challenged at the time, asked to hand over cigarettes and matches and taken to the headteacher or deputy without delay.

The no smoking policy applies to all areas of the school premises. Staff and visitors are expected to support this policy at all times.

Alcohol and solvent misuse

Pupils who appear to be under the influence of alcohol or solvents must be reported to the headteacher or deputy immediately.

Staff should not drink alcohol during school hours on school days. Alcohol may be provided on certain social occasions but this will always be in the staff room after school hours or on staff training days.

Legal drugs

The school has well established procedures for the pupils to follow when they need to bring medicines into schools. These are set out in the Health & Safety Policy document, in the section *Arrangements for First Aid and Other Medical Matters*.

Staff should ensure that all medicines brought into school for their personal use are kept in a safe place where the pupils cannot get to them.

Illegal drugs

The misuse and/or possession of illegal drugs is a very serious matter and is dealt with at the highest level by the headteacher or the deputy.

If a young person discloses substance misuse on the school premises, the member of staff involved must inform the headteacher or, in the head's absence, the deputy as soon as possible. The headteacher will decide the appropriate action with the help of the pupil's head of year. If a young person discloses substance misuse off the premises, the member of staff must again report this to the headteacher who will inform the parents and external agencies, as necessary.

Where staff discovers substances that are suspected to be harmful, illegal or deserving of investigation, the following procedures should be followed, depending if the substance is to be removed from a place or a person.

Place – if possible, remove the substance from where it was discovered in the presence of a witness. If there is no witness available, do not leave the substance where it was found while you enlist the support of a colleague or witness. Continue with the procedure below.

Person – when receiving or retrieving substances from a pupil, do so if possible in the presence of a witness. In the absence of a witness, staff should use their professional discretion, either taking the pupil to a place where a witness can be found or removing the suspicious substance from the pupil's possession.

The following guidelines apply at all times:

- Remove the substance and record the time, place and circumstances by which the substance came into your possession.

- Do not investigate the nature of the substance but do record its approximate size and appearance.
- When possible, get a witness to countersign anything that you have recorded.
- Take the substance immediately to the headteacher or, in the head's absence, the deputy. Do not keep the substance on your person or put it somewhere for safe keeping as doing so may place you at risk.
- With the head and/or deputy, place the substance in a suitable container. The headteacher and/or deputy and you sign and date the package. The headteacher completes the official report about the finding and how it was dealt with.
- The headteacher asks the local police to investigate the substance and report back on their conclusions. If the police need to take away the substance, this is first signed for by the officer involved. The headteacher will take further action depending on the police verdict.
- The headteacher is responsible for informing parents and for meeting with them to discuss and agree appropriate actions.
- Particular care must be taken if any equipment associated with substances misuse is discovered, especially needles and syringes. Pupils should not be allowed to handle such items. All equipment found must be handled by adults with utmost caution. The headteacher ensures that such materials are stored in a secure and rigid container to await collection by the appropriate service.

Any member of staff charged and found guilty of the possession or misuse of illegal drugs will face disciplinary action by the school.

Warning Signs

All members of staff need to be aware of and look out for the signs that could indicate drug or solvent misuse. These signs are not proof in themselves; many of them are a normal part of adolescence but the presence of several signs may give cause for particular concern. Warning signs in individuals can include:

- Changes in attendance and unwillingness to take part in school activities
- Decline in performance in school work
- Unusual outbreaks of temper, marked swings of mood, restlessness or irritability
- Reports from parents that time is being spent away from home, possibly with friends who are older
- Excessive spending or borrowing of money and/or stealing of money or goods
- Excessive tiredness without obvious cause
- Lack of interest in physical appearance

- Sores or rashes, particularly around the mouth or nose
- Lack of appetite
- Heavy use of scents, colognes etc to disguise the smell of alcohol or other drugs
- Wearing sunglasses at inappropriate times (to hide dilated pupils).

Warning signs in groups include:

- Regular patterns of absence
- Keeping a distance from other pupils or from supervision points
- Being the subject of rumours about cigarettes, alcohol or drugs
- Talking to strangers on or near the premises
- Stealing that appears to be the work of several people rather than that one individual
- Use of the slang associated with drug taking
- Exchanging money or other objects on a regular basis or in unusual circumstances
- Mixing with an individual who is much older than the group.

Objects that may indicate drug misuse include:

- Foil containers or cup shapes made from silver foil, perhaps discoloured by heat
- Metal tins or spoons discoloured by heat
- Pill boxes
- Plastic, cellophane or metal foil wrappers
- Small plastic or glass bottles
- Plastic bottles with plastic bags in them
- Twists of paper or straws
- Sugar lumps
- Syringes and needles
- Cigarette papers and lighters
- Spent matches
- Plastic bags or butane gas containers (solvent abuse)
- Cardboard or other tubes (heroin)
- Stamps. Stickers, transfers or other similar items
- Shredded cigarettes, home rolled cigarettes and pipes (cannabis)
- Paper (about 5 cm square) folded to form an envelope (heroin)

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