***INTRODUCTION***

The school Drugs Education Policy is a statutory document, in accordance with DENI guidelines: Misuse of Drugs – A Guidance for Primary Schools 1996. The policy follows the guidance given in the EASER Drug Education Policy Document.

Young children are exposed to messages about drug use from an early age. The messages they receive from television and the media tend to glamorise the use of drugs. They are likely to have seen parents or older brothers and sisters smoking, drinking or taking pills and medicines. Some children may have already tried alcohol or cigarettes and taken prescribed medicines or other drugs. Inevitably older children want to pass on their knowledge and experiences in an effort to try to influence younger children; these experiences are likely to include their experiments with drugs.

In Old Warren Primary School Primary School we believe that we have a primary responsibility for the care, welfare and safety of the pupils in our care and we carry out this duty through our Pastoral Care Policy and Child Protection which aim to promote the pupils’ personal and social well-being. We also are aware that young people in today’s society are exposed to the risks associated with the drug culture that exists.

We also have a duty to uphold the law in respect of the misuse of drugs. The relevant authorities will always be informed if abuse is suspected or confirmed.

The policy provides a focus for the school to consider how drugs education should be implemented and developed within the curriculum, and outlines the roles, responsibilities and legal duties of key staff. The policy forms an integral part of our existing health education and personal and social education programmes, and the drug education programme complements this.

The policy draws specific attention to:

* Procedures for handling suspected incidents of drug abuse on the premises
* The designated staff with responsibility for drug issues
* The place of drugs education within the curriculum
* Links with parents, the community and PSNI
* The management of solvents and other prescribed medicines in school

Old Warren Primary School recognises that there are chemical substances that help the body by sustaining life or healing illness. The DENI definition of a drug is ‘any substance which, when taken, has the effect of altering the way a person behaves, feels sees or thinks’

The school recognises that this policy focuses mainly on illicit drugs.

Procedures for handling alcohol and tobacco misuse and the handling of prescribed medicines and volatile substances are outlined in Section 3

The school will make every effort within its resources to protect its pupils from any such substances or persons attempting to ‘push’ such substances through being vigilant and through our education programme.

***2. DRUGS EDUCATION IN CONTEXT***

Drugs Education is specifically included within other Programmes of Study, and this is covered under Appendix 2

The aims of our programme will include:

* The promotion of positive attitudes towards personal health
* The provision of information on the effects of drug abuse
* The practice of skills and behaviours that would enable pupils to communicate effectively, assert themselves and take responsible decisions
* Activities designed to build up the self esteem and confidence of the pupils
* Opportunities to help pupils identify and understand the pressures and influences which could have a serious consequence for their health and well being
* Progression and continuity of knowledge and understanding matched to the age, maturity and circumstances of the pupils

***2.2 DRUGS EDUCATION CO-ORDINATOR***

The Drugs Education Co-ordinator is­­­­­­­­­­­­­ Mr S Campbell. His responsibilities include:

* Implementing the programme throughout the school
* Liaison with other members of staff on drugs matters
* Organization of staff awareness and training
* Ensuring that relevant staff are aware of emergency procedure with regard to First Aid
* Reviewing the policy and related drugs education programme every two years

***2.3 DESIGNATED TEACHER FOR DRUG RELATED INCIDENTS***

Mr Campbell is responsible for the co-ordination of the arrangements to deal with individual cases of suspected or actual drug misuse. His role includes:

* Implementing procedures as outlined in this policy for dealing with an incident
* Receiving any substance found in school
* Liaison with the principal on any drug related incident
* Regularly updating staff on the policy and the procedures for dealing with a drug related incident
* The induction of new staff as appropriate
* Liaison with the drug education co-ordinator and staff who have responsibility for pastoral care and delivery of the drug education programme
* Liaison with outside agencies in relation to drug related incidents
* Reviewing and updating the school drug policy, when required

***3 PROCEDURES FOR HANDLING AND REPORTING INCIDENTS***

A suspected drug related incident is described as

* Suspect drugs found on the school premises
* A pupil suspected of being in possession of drugs
* A pupil found to be in possession of drugs
* A pupil suspected of being under the influence of drugs

When an incident occurs the member of staff involved should:

* Make the situation safe
* Send for support
* Administer first aid if necessary
* If an illegal drug is found it should be secured in a safe place until dealt with by the police
* Report the incident

The incident will be in the first incidence reported to the principal, who will contact the juvenile liaison officer from the police in this area. The parents will also be contacted and made aware of the situation. The incident will be recorded by the teacher involved and by the designated teacher. A ‘record of action’ form will be filled out. (Appendix 3) One copy will be sent to the EASER designated officer for Drug Education and a copy will be retained for the school’s confidential file. The Board of Governors will also be informed.

All staff are made aware of the procedure, which follow the guidelines issued by The Department of Education 1996 in the document ‘Guidelines on Handling Suspected Incidents of Drug Misuse on School Premises’. This is outlined in Appendix 2 of this policy.

***3.1 EMERGENCY PROCEDURES***

For the purposes of this policy, an emergency is considered to be either:

* A situation in which a pupil or member of staff is in danger, or
* A sequence of events that requires urgent attention.

***Detention***

If a pupil is not co-operative, s/he may be detained as appropriate if the pupil is in possession of, or is deemed on reasonable grounds to have taken, an illegal substance

***Search***

School staff are not permitted to search pupils’ clothing or possessions. However, it is acceptable to ask the pupil to empty pockets and school bags. Staff may search school property such as lockers or desks. If a pupil is unconscious then the school reserves the right to search his/her belongings and the designated teacher will attempt to find what substance has been taken in order to facilitate First Aid and inform the relevant medical authorities.

***3.2 CONFIDENTIALITY***

Confidentiality cannot be guaranteed and any teacher in possession of criminal knowledge is legally bound to inform the police. Where a pupil discloses to a teacher that s/he is taking drugs, the teacher should make it clear that s/he can offer no guarantee of confidentiality. However the teacher can advise the pupil of other sources of confidential information or advice. Pupils should also be encouraged to talk to their parents.

***3.3 DISCIPLINARY MEASURES***

The school views drug related incidents seriously. In the event of any pupil being in possession of or being under the influence of drugs in school, or attempting to intimidate, coerce or encourage other pupils to become involved, that pupil will be automatically suspended. Further punishment and counselling may be arranged as required in consultation with the SEELB and/or Board of Governors.

***3.4 DEALING WITH THE MEDIA***

If the school receives an enquiry from the media, the caller should be referred only to the principal.

When responding to the media, the privacy of the pupil should be respected, they are only to given short, factual statements, and the concluding statement should be positive, and reassuring. No further comments should be given.

***3.5 PROCEDURES FOR HANDLING ALCOHOL MISUSE***

The school premises are an alcohol free zone. The school does not allow any alcohol to be brought onto or consumed in school premises. This applies to visitors, staff and pupils.

An exception may be made for events organized and strictly controlled by the PA as part of a fund raising activity e.g. wine and cheese. Adults breaking this rule will be referred to the principal directly.

Pupils will be dealt with under the school’s discipline policy.

***3.6 PROCEDURES FOR HANDLING TOBACCO MISUSE***

The school is a restricted environment with no one being permitted to smoke on the school premises.

***3.7 THE MANAGEMENT OF SOLVENTS***

A solvent will be determined as any volatile, strong smelling substance, such as adhesives, aerosols, tippex thinners, nail varnish remover, cleaning agents, corrective fluids, gas lighter fuel, petrol or petrol based solutions, which may be inhaled for its intoxication effect. Such substances, whilst in use in school shall, if possible, be stored in a locked cupboard or other such area as is deemed by the teacher to be not easily accessible to pupils.

During lessons, materials such as glue will be the responsibility of the class teacher, who will ensure that adequate care is taken in the distribution, use and collection of these materials.

Pupils will not be allowed to carry or use aerosol deodorants while under school supervision. Where a deodorant is appropriate, only a roll-on one will be permitted.

The school reserves the right to ban any brand of felt tip pens, glues, etc., which it feels are unsuitable for children.

The security of cleaning materials will be a matter for the caretaker and will be carried out as directed in section 9 of the ‘Health and Safety in Education Manual for Principals and Governors’ (1996).

***3.8 THE MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION OF PRESCRIBED MEDICINES***

Teachers and other staff of this school have no contractual obligation to administer medicines and any agreement so to do can therefore only be a voluntary act. A teacher agreeing to administer medicines at the request of parents and who complies with the procedures embodied in this policy is acting within the course of his/her employment and in such circumstances where s/he has acted in good faith, will receive the full support of EA SER, The Board of Governors and the Principal and will not be legally or financially liable.

At the start of the school year, parents must complete a medical form indicating any medical illness their child has. The parent is also advised that the school will not, as a matter of course administer medicine to a pupil. If an emergency arises, the parent will be contacted and permission sought if necessary.

Parents are responsible for the administration of medicines to their children and no child who is unwell should be sent to school.

Where a pupil needs to bring a prescribed medicine into school, either because they are suffering from chronic illness or allergy, such as diabetes or asthma, or because they are recovering from a short term illness and are undergoing a course of treatment needing antibiotics then the following guidelines must be adhered to:

* A letter from the parent explaining the nature of the illness and the dosage and timing required must be sent with the pupil. If possible, a medical statement from a medical practitioner or specialist should support this. Information on where the parent can be contacted in case of any difficulties should also be supplied.
* Only the minimum dosage required should be supplied and any details regarding storage e.g. refrigeration included.
* The pupil must immediately give the medicine to their class teacher
* The class teacher must store the medicine in a secure space and ensure that only the pupil for whom the medicine is prescribed, takes the medicine.

The school will not accept responsibility for the administration of medicines to pupils:

* Where some technical or medical knowledge or expertise is required and appropriate training has not been given
* Where intimate contact is necessary
* Where any aspect of administration is crucial to the welfare of the child except in cases of emergency e.g. Epi-Pens for severe allergic reactions.

***4 THE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE DRUGS EDUCATION PROGRAMME***

The school’s drugs education programme is grounded in the following aims and objectives:

***4.1 AIMS***

* To promote positive attitudes towards personal health.
* To develop self-discipline and self-respect.
* To build pupils’ self esteem.
* To develop decision-making skills which may delay or prevent the onset of experimentation.
* To inform pupils of the effects of drug abuse, and the risks involved.
* To help pupils to understand how they can influence their peers.
* To develop knowledge and understanding of themselves and others as individuals.

***4.2 OBJECTIVES***

Drugs Education should enable pupils to develop a knowledge and understanding about drugs and drug issues, as well as the skills needed to cope with the challenges they will encounter.

Pupils should be able to:

* Understand their own personality, needs, abilities and interests.
* Understand the process of reasoning required to make informed choices.
* Explore their own attitudes towards drugs and drug issues.
* Develop coping strategies to deal with peer pressure.
* Develop a competence in challenging attitudes and patterns of behaviour associated with drug misuse.
* Develop self-discipline.
* Understand what is meant by ‘a drug’ and the definition of ‘addiction’.
* Understand how some drugs affect the body.
* Be aware of the benefits of healthy lifestyles.
* Recognise potential drug exploitation and how to take avoiding action.
* Be aware of the current drug culture and the effect of advertising campaigns.

***5 THE DELIVERY AND ORGANISATION OF THE DRUGS EDUCATION PROGRAMME***

The drugs education programme is addressed through cross curricular themes and PSHE at KS1 and science and PSHE at KS2. P.7 pupils benefit from lessons specifically designed to raise awareness of drugs and their dangers and discourage their use.

***5.1 OUTSIDE AGENCIES***

The School may use outside agencies to help deliver the drug education programme if the teacher ensures that the following criteria are met:

* The content and delivery of the programme has been jointly agreed.
* The programme and methods of delivery are consistent with the aims and objectives outlined in this policy.
* The principal has given his approval for the use of the outside agency.
* The staff from the agency has been vetted in relation to Child Protection.

At present the school utilizes the services of the Lisburn PSNI Community and Schools’ Involvement Officer.

***LINKS WITH PARENTS, THE COMMUNITY AND THE POLICE***

Parents are encouraged to play an active role in homework tasks. The Drugs Education programme is available to all parents upon request.

The school endeavours to work closely with the local community to help reduce the number of drug related incidents.

The school has developed good working relationships with the local police. This helps to ensure that if a drug related incident is reported, it will be dealt with in a professional and discrete manner, and in keeping the best interests of the child concerned in mind. Community and schools’ Involvement Officer offer advice and support when it is needed.

***7 MONITORING AND EVALUATING***

The school drug education policy will be periodically reviewed to reflect changing circumstances and trends in drugs use. The programmes of study for drug education will be developed and reviewed and any changes deemed necessary are implemented.

The policy is available to parents if they request it and is also available on the school’s website. This information is provided in the school prospectus.