

Guidelines for the Delivery of Drug Education in Schools

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Delivery of Drug Education
in Schools***

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Guidance Notes

Definitions

'Drug misuse' is defined as the non-medical use of drugs that are only intended for use in medical treatment, and the use of drugs that have no accepted medical purpose. Such drugs are controlled under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 (Department of Health 1995).

There are many definitions of a drug. One commonly used definition is: 'A drug is any chemical substance which when taken changes the way the body works, or how a person thinks and feels'. This definition describes legal and illegal drugs, alcohol, tobacco and volatile substances (solvents). It is important, therefore, when delivering drug education to adopt a broad approach to substance use that incorporates all of these categories.

The Aims of Drug Education

A good well-rounded drugs education programme should aim to:

- allow pupils to develop knowledge and understanding about legal and illegal drugs, their effects and the implications of use and misuse
- provide opportunities for pupils to develop beliefs, attitudes and values about drugs
- enable pupils to develop skills which help them to make healthy choices and informed decisions about drugs, including those which allow them to resist peer pressure or peer preference
- link with other components of personal, social and health education to develop life skills and promote access to positive, health-promoting lifestyles

Effective Drug Education

Drug education in schools sits within the 3–18 curriculum, most particularly within the 5–14 health education programme and in post-14 personal and social development and health education programmes.

Every pupil requires a well-organised programme of drug education which covers the misuse of substances such as alcohol, medication, solvents and tobacco. Such a programme equips them to make informed choices and decisions about their health and provides them with information and access to lifestyles which support good health. Schools and other educational establishments, therefore, should ensure that the advice given in this document is put into practice as a matter of urgency.

An effective programme of drug education should incorporate the following principles:

- Drug education should be set within a well-organised health education programme.
- There should be uniformity and consistency in the delivery of drug education within the cluster groups.
- Drug education should start early pre-5 and should be represented at all stages in the curriculum.
- Drug education provision should be progressive, building upon prior knowledge and experience in a manner appropriate to the ages and stages of pupils.
- The development of drug education within the school should involve pupils, eg in evaluation of programmes.
- Each drug education lesson should include clear learning objectives.
- Drug education should involve pupils fully in the learning process.
- Drug education should be interactive in order to stimulate debate and discussion of issues, leading to effective decision-making by pupils themselves.

- Drug education should contribute to developing positive self-esteem in pupils.
- Drug education should involve, as appropriate, expertise from other agencies to complement the ongoing curriculum. Care should be taken to ensure that information imparted is unbiased.
- Drug education should be reviewed and evaluated regularly to inform developments and changes to further improve the provision within the school/cluster group.
- Schools should give parents information on the content and position of drug education within the curriculum and involve them fully in discussion.
- There should be opportunities to evaluate any drug education programme.

A Curriculum Model for Drug Education

Drug education should embody the same principles of consistency, coherence, continuity and progression which underpin high-quality provision in all other areas of the curriculum.

The drug education curriculum should endeavour to build on prior learning in order to develop the knowledge, skills, attitude and values associated with health. This means that pupils develop expertise in drug education as they progress through school, rather than have to cover the subject at one or two stages, so rendering the subject matter more likely to be forgotten. The progressive approach also allows the teaching emphasis to be related to the ages and stages taught and issues to be discussed in a manner appropriate to each stage of the curriculum.

This progressive approach to drug education is the basis for a phased curriculum, often referred to as the 'spiral curriculum' model. Ideas are revisited, new concepts added, and content covered appropriate to the age of the pupils.

Effective Teaching and Learning in Drug Education

Drug education should include the knowledge, understanding, skills, attitudes and values necessary to develop self-esteem and informed decision making. To be successful it must actively involve the pupils in the learning process.

The class teacher is the most appropriate person to deliver drug education and should maintain responsibility for the teaching of any programme. He/she will have built up a relationship with the pupils and be sensitive to their individual needs.

Teaching staff should consider undertaking relevant courses organised by the City of Edinburgh Education Department (refer to the *Continuing Professional Development Directory of Opportunities*) and by other agencies.

Working with external agencies can enhance and support a drug education programme as they provide a specialist knowledge and experience (refer to *The Use of External Agencies in the Delivery of Drug Education Programmes*, published by the City of Edinburgh Education Department).

Effective teaching and learning approaches should:

- establish a pupil's prior learning
- establish prevailing attitudes and values that may influence the tone and progress of the programme
- use a variety of teaching approaches to provide opportunities for pupils to be involved in the learning process
- provide pupils with the opportunity to record what they have learned
- provide opportunities for pupils to assess the development of their own learning and to the programme

Partnership with Parents and Carers

It is important to inform and consult parents, carers and school boards about drug education provision within the school. The dialogue between home and school is crucial to the success of any drug education programme.

When developing a drug education programme, schools should:

- explain why drug education is an important part of the school curriculum
- make parents, carers and school boards aware of the contents of the drug education programme
- encourage good working relationships with parents and carers which reflect the needs of both home and school
- encourage the home to support and reinforce positive health messages learned through the school's curriculum
- provide parents and carers with the opportunity to discuss appropriate teaching methods at education evenings/afternoons
- promote a shared sense of ownership of the curriculum between home and school

A Progressive Drug Education Curriculum

Health education, personal and social education and other appropriate curricular areas should ensure that all the learning outcomes identified for each of the various stages are delivered in order to provide a rigorous well-balanced drug education curriculum.

The Pre-5 Drug Education Curriculum

By the end of pre-5 education pupils should:

- be aware of their own individuality and the importance of their own and other people's feelings
- be aware of how important it is to keep all parts of the body healthy
- be able to identify hazards at home, such as household chemicals and medicines
- know that they should only take medicines from someone they trust, such as a parent, carer, or medical professional
- be able to identify hazards outside, eg general litter, broken glass, boxes, nails, holes in the ground, polythene bags
- be aware of the importance of being independent and making choices to promote their own health
- recognise the value of family, friends and other people who can be relied upon to help them

The Primary Drug Education Curriculum

The primary curriculum should follow on naturally from the pre-5 provision and further develop knowledge, understanding, skills, attitudes and values relating to drugs. It should build on what pupils already know. The use of the 'draw and write' strategy in *Confidence to Learn* (HEBS/Lothian Health Promotion) is a useful means of finding out what stage in learning pupils are at, as well as a useful base for subsequent learning in drug education.

By the end of Primary 3 pupils should:

- be aware of all the parts of the body
- be aware of ways to keep healthy through diet, physical activity, rest and personal hygiene
- be able to make choices to keep themselves safe and healthy
- be aware of the safe use of medicine, reinforcing that medicine should only be taken by the person for whom it is intended and under the supervision of parents/carers or medical professionals
- recognise their own feelings about themselves and towards others
- be able to identify the ways in which people care for them
- recognise the value of family and friends in developing healthy lifestyle choices
- be able to show simple ways of getting help and avoiding accidents
- be able to identify simple ways of dealing with potential hazards, eg pills, powders, needles and general waste

By the end of Primary 5 pupils should also:

- know and understand the effects on the body of tobacco, alcohol, solvents and the misuse of legal and illegal drugs
- recognise that cigarettes and alcohol are forms of drugs and that not all drugs are medicines
- be aware of the particular dangers of the misuse of aerosols
- know and understand what is meant by the misuse of prescriptive medicines, eg paracetamol and valium
- know that substance misuse potentially threatens health and well-being
- know the school policy regarding substance misuse by pupils
- be able to make decisions in relation to keeping healthy

- know the relationship between physical activity and health
- be aware of risks to health and safety in their community and know how to avoid such hazards, for example misuse of substances
- be able to show safe ways of dealing with risky situations, including those related to substance misuse
- be aware of the consequences of risk-taking behaviour

By the end of Primary 7 pupils should also:

- have further developed their knowledge about issues relating to legal and illegal drugs, tobacco, alcohol and volatile substances including their effects
- understand that they are responsible for the decisions they make relating to health, eg use of the range of leisure choices available to them
- know and be able to use strategies to ensure that they do not use harmful substances
- demonstrate an understanding of their own emotional needs and strengths, eg resilience
- be aware that peer and media influences can influence choices they make
- know the school policy regarding substance misuse by pupils (revisited from P5)
- be able to administer the recovery position – the school nurse could demonstrate this important and potentially life-saving position

The Secondary Drug Education Curriculum

At the secondary stages drug education will normally be part of a combined personal and social, and health education programme. It will build on the provision at the primary stages to complete young people's school education on drugs and provide them with the knowledge and expertise needed to make healthy choices and decisions about drugs as adults in the community.

By the end of S2 pupils should:

- be fully knowledgeable about the range of legal and illegal drugs, their effects, and the consequences, medical and legal, of substance misuse
- know the school policy regarding drug misuse by pupils (revisited from P7)
- know that drugs are much more likely to cause health problems when more than one is used at the same time, eg mixed with alcohol
- know that the negative effects of substances are often unpredictable or develop gradually without the user realising it
- be able to administer the recovery position (revisited from P7)
- know and understand the impact lifestyle choices can have on their health, both short- and long-term
- be able to use decision-making skills to demonstrate their ability to make positive choices about their health, eg risk assessment on substance misuse
- be aware of the law relating to drugs, tobacco and alcohol and the legal implications of their misuse
- be aware of the effects of misuse of drugs in sport, eg anabolic steroids
- show awareness of how to access local health support services, internet and helplines

By the end of S4 pupils should also:

- understand the signs and symptoms of substance misuse
- be aware of the social cost of drug substance misuse
- know that drugs have an effect on behaviour and ability to make decisions
- know the dangers and full effects on driving of taking drugs and alcohol, as well as the repercussions of losing one's driving licence due to drugs or alcohol
- be aware of the effect of convictions for drug misuse on employment prospects
- know that infection can be spread by drug apparatus, eg needles

- have developed skills of self-control, self-confidence and assertiveness to allow them to be in control of their own lives
- be aware of the value of fitness for health in adult life
- be able to offer support to their peers through personal and social education programmes promoting self-esteem and self-confidence
- be aware of sources of support and how they can be contacted (revisited from S2)
- be aware of the effects of drugs and alcohol on the individual, the family, the workplace, friends and the community

Core drug education should be completed by the end of S4, since this is the time when some pupils are eligible to leave school. By this time pupils should be equipped with the knowledge and skills they need to avoid misusing drugs.

Pupils who stay on at school after S4 should by the end of S6:

- know the dangers and full effects on driving of taking drugs and alcohol, as well as the repercussions of losing one's driving licence due to drugs or alcohol (revisited from S4)
- be aware of the effect of convictions for drug misuse on employment prospects (revisited from S4)
- know that HIV, hepatitis and other infections can be spread by sharing injecting equipment
- be aware of the responsibilities they will have to their children when they become parents, influencing them in their decisions relating to substance misuse
- be aware of the effects of drugs and alcohol on the individual, the family, the workplace, friends and the community (revisited from S4)

Useful Publications

Contact addresses and telephone numbers for the organisations mentioned below are provided on page 10.

Resources for the Curriculum

A Guide to Teaching and Learning Approaches Scottish Consultative Council on the Curriculum

A Practical Guide for Primary School Teachers Groups in Learning

Confidence to Learn HEBS

Don't Panic: Responding to Incidents of Young People's Drug Use Healthwise

Drug Education: Approaches, Effectiveness and Implications for Delivery Working Paper 1 HEBS

Drug Fax Scottish Drugs Forum

Guidelines for the Management of Drug-related Incidents in Schools City of Edinburgh Council, Education Department

Guidelines for the Management of Incidents of Drug Misuse in Schools Scottish Executive

Health Education: 5–14 National Guidelines Learning & Teaching Scotland

Health for Life Ages 4–7 Nelson

Health for Life Ages 8–11 Nelson

Health Education for Living Project Scottish Office and Strathclyde Education Department

HELP Package Scottish Office and Strathclyde Education Department*

HELP Update 98 Scottish Office and Strathclyde Education Department*

Junk (a novel) Melvin Burgess Penguin Press

Making the Most of Visitors TACADE

Not Another Drugs Pack: A Practical Guide for Developing Drug Education in the Secondary School Lothian Health

Simple Drugs: Drug Education Without Too Much Reading and Writing Healthwise

So You know Your Drugs? City of Edinburgh Council, Education Department

Taking Drugs Seriously: A Manual of Harm Minimising Education on Drugs Healthwise

The Right Choice: Guidance on Selecting Drug Education Materials for Schools SCODA

The Use of External Agencies in the Delivery of Drug Education Programmes City of Edinburgh Council, Education Department

The World of Drugs TACADE

Volatile Substance Abuse HEBS

Leaflets

Blush Fast Forward

Bolt Ya Radge Fast Forward

Drugs, Know Your Stuff Scottish Executive/Scotland Against Drugs (SAD)

Mini Drugs Cards Pack Hit Publications

The Facts of Drugs leaflet (for parents) HEBS

CD Roms

All about Ourselves Granada/Semerc (primary)

Decisions, Decisions – Substance Abuse Brighter Vision (secondary)*

De-Code HEBS

Drugsense New Media*

Drugs, Know Your Stuff SAD (Scotland Against Drugs)

Real Deal Learning & Teaching Scotland (secondary)*

*available from Learning & Teaching Scotland

Videos

Drink Talking HEBS

It's My Life HEBS

Websites

ASH (info on tobacco and smoking) www.ashscotland.org.uk

BBC Education Webguide www.bbc.co.uk/webguide

CYBERSCHOOL www.hehs.scot.nhs/cyberschool

Fast Forward www.fastforward.org.uk

HEBS www.hehs.scot.nhs.uk

Institute of Alcohol Studies www.ias.org.uk

Locate www.LocateNet.org.uk

Re-Solv (Society for the Prevention of Solvent and Volatile Substance Abuse) www.re-solv.org.uk

SAD www.sad.org.uk

Scottish Drugs Forum www.sdf.org.uk

TACADE www.tacade.com

The Drugs Resource Net www.ResourceNet.org.uk

Useful Addresses

Alcohol Focus Scotland

166 Buchanan Street, Glasgow G2 6AY, tel 0141 572 6700

City of Edinburgh Education Department

Wellington Court, 10 Waterloo Place, Edinburgh EH1 3EG, tel 0131 469 3000

Fast Forward

Positive Lifestyles, 4 Bernard Street, Leith, Edinburgh EH6, tel 0131 554 4300

Groups in Learning

10 Charlotte Street, Bristol BS1 5PX, tel 0117 942 1123

Healthwise

9 Slater Street, Liverpool L1 4BW, tel 0151 227 4415

Health Education Board for Scotland (HEBS)

Health Education Centre, Canaan Lane, Edinburgh EH10 4SG, tel 0131 536 5500

Hit Publications

Cavern Court, 8 Matthew Street, Liverpool L2 6PE, tel 0151 227 4012

Learning & Teaching Scotland

Gardyne Road, Dundee DD5 1NY, tel 01382 443600

Lothian Health

Deaconess House, 148 Pleasance, Edinburgh EH8 9RS, tel 0131 536 9009

Re-Solv (Society for the Prevention of Solvent and Volatile Substance Abuse)

30A High Street, Stone, Staffordshire ST15 8AW, tel 01785 817855

Scotland Against Drugs (SAD)

120 Bath Street, Glasgow G2 2EN, tel 0141 331 6150

SCODA

32-36 Loman Street, London SE1 0EE, tel 020 7928 9500

Scottish Drugs Forum (SDF)

3rd Floor, 28 North Bridge, Edinburgh EH1 1QG, tel 0131 220 2584

Teachers' Advisory Council on Alcohol and Drug Education (TACADE)

1 Hulme Place, The Crescent, Salford, Greater Manchester M5 4QA, tel 0161 745 8925