



Blatchington Mill School and Sixth Form College

INVOLVEMENT, ACHIEVEMENT & CARE

Drugs Policy

Blatchington Mill School believes that drug use and misuse is a matter that concerns the whole community and therefore an effective school policy is one that takes a broad, considered approach, addressing the needs of young people, the school, parents and the community.

The basic aims underlying this policy are to:

- Protect as far as possible the interests of all young people within the school
- Develop positive relationships and images within the school
- Tackle those dealing drugs more severely than users
- Reinforce the educational emphasis on knowledge, awareness, self-esteem and skill development.

Blatchington Mill School recognises the fact that many young people will be presented with the opportunity to try drugs. In 2004, a survey of 1,672 14-15 year olds in 24 East Sussex and Brighton & Hove schools found that 23% of boys and 23% of girls said they had taken an illegal drug, most frequently cannabis. (*PSHE team*) In recognising this, the school is ensuring that students receive a comprehensive education in drug awareness and that should any individual young person have problems with drugs, sympathetic help and support will be made available.

All drug and alcohol education should aim to give young people the knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes to make 'informed choices' and encourage students to recognise the importance of pursuing a healthy lifestyle and keeping themselves and others safe. (*Dept for Education/SCAA 1995, DfEE/OCA 1999*)

Blatchington Mill School supports the above statement and has a commitment to the provision of a drugs education programme. The PSE course within the school has a variety of modules dealing with substance use and misuse including inputs from the local police Schools Liaison Officer. The science course incorporates some work on substance misuse in modules on healthy lifestyles and as part of upper school GCSE work. Sixth Form students are able to develop their knowledge and awareness by participating in health day events. Members of staff will use their professional judgement when individuals raise concerns or points for discussion within classroom situations. This policy applies to school organised events.

The pastoral system within Blatchington Mill allows students access to many members of staff who would be available for them as points of contact if they had problems or concerns. This may also apply to young people who are worried about substance issues. Whilst staff would not promise confidentiality on this issue, understanding would be shown and professional judgement used. Students at Blatchington Mill have access to a confidential counsellor from the Youth Advice Centre and the school also works cooperatively with local agencies to ensure that young people have access to, and the support of, these organisations, e.g. RUOK, the Alt-Ex programme, the PSHE advisory team.

A drug is any substance which, when taken into the body, affects the chemical composition of the body and how the body functions. Obviously some substances will have more serious immediate consequences than others and the school's response may reflect this.

Blatchington Mill School is a no smoking site and students must not bring smoking materials into school.

In dealing with students involved in drug related incidents or activity the school will follow the guidance for schools on drug and alcohol education updated in 2003 by Brighton & Hove and East Sussex County Council. The school will also have regard to the procedural agreement for schools and the youth services in cases of substance misuse which is an agreement made by the local councils and Sussex Police. Blatchington Mill will use a repertoire of responses incorporating counselling, support and sanctions which reflect the different kinds of drug-related situations.

Possible responses may be:

Student suspected or known to be involved in misuse of drugs/solvents/alcohol

- Involvement of pastoral staff
- School support
- Parents usually informed
- Offer of counselling
- Possible referral to YPSMS/RUOK

Student under the influence of drugs/solvents/alcohol

- Need for medical attention
- Removal from lessons
- Parents informed, collect student
- School support
- Offer of counselling, if appropriate
- Possible referral to YPSMS/RUOK
- Consider disciplinary measures which may include exclusion

Student found with suspected illegal drug

- Substance confiscated
- Police Schools Liaison Officer informed
- Parents informed
- Offer of counselling, if appropriate
- Consider disciplinary measures which may include exclusion

Student found with alcohol or solvents

- Substance confiscated
- Parents informed
- Offer of counselling, if appropriate
- Consider disciplinary measures which may include exclusion

Student found supplying any illegal drugs.**Students in possession of suspected class A drugs**

- Substance confiscated
- Police Schools Liaison Officer informed
- Parents informed
- Offer of counselling, if appropriate
- Consider disciplinary measures, likely to lead to permanent exclusion

Each drug related incident will be dealt with on an individual basis and in a considered and informed manner. The response may involve several stages, i.e.

- Investigation
- Consult with senior management to consider response and whether to inform the police
- Contact parent/carers
- Contact the LEA and any support agencies
- Consider sanctions/support
- Assist with any police investigation.

Some or all of these stages may be necessary. Fixed period exclusions may be used where appropriate and permanent exclusion is an option, particularly if supplying is involved.

CONTACT IN SCHOOL

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