

HOWITT PRIMARY COMMUNITY SCHOOL

(PART OF EMBARK ACADEMY TRUST)



DRUGS EDUCATION POLICY

June 2026

To be reviewed June 2028

Why do we have a drug education policy?

This policy aims to ensure that the approach taken on the issue of drugs is a whole-school one and is part of our commitment to, and concern for, the overall health and well-being of the whole school community. Howitt Primary Community School believes that it has a duty to inform and educate young people on the consequences of drug use and misuse.

In developing our policy and programme of study we have taken full account of the;

- Department for Education (DFE) and Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) joint guidance for schools (September 2012).
- Guidance for schools-Drug Education and incident management (October 2020).

Therefore, this policy promotes practices within the school to reinforce our vision, and to remove or discourage practices that negate them.

What is Drug education?

For the purpose of this policy and our drugs education programme, drugs are defined as: *'a substance people take to change the way they think, feel or behave.'* Our school uses the term 'drug' to include, caffeine, alcohol, tobacco, medicines, illegal drugs and other substances such as solvents.

Drugs Education is part of Personal Social Health and Economic (PSHE) Education and therefore enables pupils to develop their knowledge, skills, attitudes and understanding about drugs and appreciate the benefits of a healthy lifestyle.

Attitudes and values

- Exploring, considering and understanding attitudes and values towards drugs, drug use and drug users.
- Developing critical thinking as part of decision making.
- Learning to respect & value difference & diversity.
- Having structured opportunities for the exploration of personal attitudes and values towards drugs, drug use and drug users.
- Exploring attitudes and values towards drugs, drug use and drug users.

Personal and social skills

- Learning to manage emotions and relationships confidently and sensitively.
- Learning to manage change.
- Developing self-respect and empathy for others.

- Learning to make choices based on an understanding of difference and with an absence of prejudice.
- Learning to make informed choices.
- Exploring the risks and consequences of their own and others' actions and choices in relation to drugs, drug use & drug users.
- Learning how to recognise and avoid exploitation and abuse.
- Developing inter-personal skills
- Having opportunities to develop self-esteem.
- Learning about themselves.
- Learning about playing a positive and active role as citizens.

Knowledge and understanding

- Learning about a safe and healthy lifestyle based on accurate information.
- Learning accurate information about drugs, drug use and drug users.
- Having myths & misunderstandings about drugs, drug use and drug users dispelled.
- Learning about seeking appropriate help and advice.
- Learning about their community and the society of which they are a part in relation to drugs, drug use and drug users.
- Developing pupils' understanding of rules and laws.

How is Drug education provided?

1. Within the taught, age appropriate, PSHE programme (Health and wellbeing – physical health and mental wellbeing, keeping safe unit of work).
2. Through other curriculum areas e.g. drama, English and science.
3. Assemblies – whole school and key stage.
4. Pastoral support for pupils who experience difficulties.
5. By the provision of appropriate information through leaflets and books.
6. Delivery in response to incidents.

Teaching Methods & Resources

Continuity and Progression

Continuity and progression will be generated through the adoption of a whole school approach to the planning and delivery of clearly defined and progressive learning objectives covering knowledge, skills and understanding. All pupils will receive regular, timetabled PSHE teaching. PSHE will be taught both as a discrete subject and through other appropriate cross-curricular links.

Safe Learning Environment

PSHE is conducted in a safe learning environment through the use of ground rules and distancing techniques so that pupils are not put on the spot or expected to discuss their own personal issues in class. For example:

- Nobody (teacher or pupil) should be expected to answer a personal question.

- No one will be forced to take part in a discussion.

Active learning

Active learning methods, which involve children's full participation, will be used.

Answering and Asking Questions

In most cases teachers will attempt to answer pupils' questions and concerns in a sensitive, age and development appropriate manner. Individual teachers will use their skill and discretion in these situations and if necessary refer to the PSHE Co-ordinators, Clare Rhodes and Clare Payler, for advice and support. Teachers will also follow the following guidance:

- Teachers will establish clear parameters about what is appropriate and inappropriate in a whole-class setting.
- If a pupil's question is inappropriate to address with the whole class the teacher should acknowledge the question and attend to it later on an individual basis.
- If a question is too personal the teacher should remind the pupils of the ground rules.
- Teachers will set the tone and ensure that pupils discuss issues in a way encourages positive participation.
- Pupils may have opportunities to write down questions anonymously and post them in a question box. The teacher will have time to prepare answers to questions before the next session, and can choose not to respond to any questions which are inappropriate to address in whole class lessons.

Groupings

PSHE takes place within mixed sex classes or single gender groups as deemed appropriate and relevant, with the pupils' usual class teacher. Teaching about drugs will begin in Key Stage 1, when pupils are taught about seeing the doctor, visiting the chemist and the importance of medicines and their safe handling.

In Key Stage 2 pupils will learn that cigarettes, e-cigarettes/vaping, alcohol and medicines can affect theirs and others health and wellbeing. We will ensure that our pupils are aware of the risks associated and that for some people drugs can become a habit which is difficult to break.

Visitors

Visitors, such as a school community nurse, do at times supplement the PSHE curriculum as a planned event with the teacher present.

Resources

Teaching resources are selected on the basis of their appropriateness to pupils. At Howitt Primary Community School we use resources suggested by the PSHE Association.

Assessment

Pupils existing knowledge needs to be the starting point for all drugs work. Needs assessments are built into some lesson planning as each group may have different knowledge, experience and understanding.

The elements of drugs education that form part of the science curriculum are assessed in accordance with the requirements of the National Curriculum. The learning from the other elements of drugs is assessed as part of the PSHE Education provision and builds on existing systems.

See PSHE Education Policy.

Equal Opportunities

The school's drugs education programme of study is designed to promote the achievement of our aims and to ensure that all pupils have an equal opportunity to access them.

Pupils may have varying needs regarding drugs education depending on their circumstances and background. The school strongly believes that all pupils should have access to drugs education that is relevant to their particular needs.

To achieve this, the school's approach to drugs education will take account of:

- Ethnic and cultural diversity
- Varying home backgrounds
- Special educational needs

Pupils who are assessed to be vulnerable will receive additional drug education support e.g. one to one support and additional sessions.

Drug related incidents

We believe that drugs education is a key element in the prevention of, and part of our response to such incidents in school. Our drugs education programme is designed to support and complement the way in which we manage drugs related incidents.

Administration of medicines

Details of the school's policy on the storage and administration of medicines is contained in our Management of Medicines Policy. Our management of medicines is designed to visibly and consistently reinforce our teaching and learning objectives on the safe use of medicines.

Personnel

The PSHE co-ordinators are Clare Rhodes and Clare Payler.

The governors responsible for drugs education are Louise Lacey and Brian McBean.

Responsibilities

The headteacher will:

- ensure that all staff and parents/carers are informed about the drugs policy;
- ensure that the policy is implemented effectively;
- manage any drug related incidents;
- ensure that staff are given sufficient training, so that they can teach effectively about drugs and handle any difficult issues with sensitivity;
- liaise with external agencies regarding the school drugs education programme;
- monitor the policy on a day-to-day basis and report to governors, when requested, on the effectiveness of the policy.

The governing board will:

- designate a governor with specific responsibility for PSHE including drugs education;
- establish general guidelines on drugs education;
- support the headteacher in following these guidelines;
- inform and consult with parents and carers about the drugs education policy;
- liaise with the DfE and health organisations, so that the school's policy is in line with the best advice available;
- support the headteacher in any case conferences, or in appeals against exclusions.

Consultation & Training

At Howitt Primary Community School we are committed to ensuring that everyone involved with teaching, or supporting the teaching of drugs education receives appropriate and ongoing professional development in order to maintain whole school consistency and high standards for the children in our care.

In order for everyone to be consulted effectively it may be necessary to ensure that governors and parents/carers receive awareness training and/or information about drugs. The school ensures parents/carers are:

- made aware of the schools approach and rationale for drug education through the policy;
- involved in the planning and review of the drug education programme and policy;
- encouraged to support their child's learning at home through shared discussion.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The programme is regularly evaluated by the PSHE co-ordinators, Clare Rhodes and Clare Payler. The views of pupils and teachers who deliver the programme are used to make changes and improvements to the programme on an ongoing basis.

Confidentiality

Sensitive information is always only disclosed internally or externally with careful attention to pupils' and family's rights and needs.

Policy Development & Review

This document is freely available to the entire school community.

This policy will be reviewed every two years.

Policy Links

PSHE Education
Science
Food Technology
Physical Activity
Behaviour
Confidentiality
Safeguarding