



'Every Child Matters'

# St Mary's High School Downpatrick

Principal: Mrs S Darling



Celebrating 60 Years of  
Education

## Drugs Policy

St Mary's plays an active role in helping our students to develop a healthy lifestyle. Health Education is an important aspect of the Curriculum and Pastoral provisions, reinforced in all aspects of school life where healthy attitudes are adopted by students regarding their lifestyle and lifestyle choices.

In St Mary's we strive to equip our students with the skills and knowledge necessary to make informed decisions and responsible choices in matters relating to their Health and Well Being.

The school achieved the Silver Right's Respecting School Award and this policy sits well with Article 24- 'Every child has the right to the best health possible'

### Definition of 'Healthy Schools'

"A commitment exists, through being a healthy school, to supporting healthy children, who are better able to learn and develop"

**Every School A Good School (April 2009)**

"Pupils develop relevant personal and social skills and understanding which help them to respond appropriately to situations affecting their welfare"

**'Together Towards Improvement'**

St Mary's Pastoral Programme includes a Drugs Education Programme which provides information concerning the use and abuse of drugs.

The term '**Drugs**' refers to a wide range of substances.

- **Legal Drugs** - such as alcohol, tobacco and prescribed drugs
- **Illegal Drugs** - such as cannabis, cocaine and heroin) 'Legal Highs' are misnamed as they are not regulated and there is no way of knowing what chemicals they contain and are banned also.

The promotion of positive attitudes and behaviour which would help young people resist drugs is carried out in Form Class time and also in subjects such as RE, Science and Home Economics.

The senior member of staff having overarching responsibility for drugs issues in the school is the Designated Teacher.

E cigarettes are forbidden in school. The Pastoral Programme and associated subject areas would deliver messages about the danger of drugs both legal and illegal. Support Pastoral Programmes delivered by outside agencies such as SHARHP are in place on a yearly basis

## **GUIDELINES FOR DEALING WITH DRUG RELATED INCIDENTS**

### ***On Discovery of Drugs:***

#### **Step 1**

- Remove drugs and place in secure place.
- If pupil refuses to co-operate keep her under supervision.

#### **Step 2**

- Report the discovery to a member of the Senior Management Team and the Principal.

#### **Step 3**

- Senior Staff members investigate the incident.
- Pupil(s) concerned to be interviewed separately by Senior Staff Members.
- Details to be recorded on School Incident Sheet, including date, time and location.

#### **Step 4**

- Relevant agency to be contacted regarding advice.

#### **Step 5**

- Parents informed of situation.
- Incident to be discussed with parents/guardian and pupil.
- Details of interview to be recorded.

#### **Step 6**

- Suspension for possession of drugs.
- Expulsion for selling or repeated possession of drugs.

## **RELATED INCIDENTS OUTSIDE SCHOOL**

- Report to SMT members and Principal.
- Designated Teacher for drug related incidents to speak with pupil.
- Parent/Guardian to be informed.
- Information on Advice Centres given to pupil/parent/guardian.
- Details of incident to be recorded.

## **INCIDENT INVOLVING PUPIL(S) WHO IS/ARE UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF DRUGS**

### **Step 1**

- Send for a member of the SMT or Head of Year

### **Step 2**

- Isolate the pupil

### **Step 3**

- Contact doctor, hospital, parent - as appropriate.

### **Step 4**

- Try to find out what has been taken, when taken and if the pupil has any drugs in her possession.

### **Step 5**

- Only search the pupil's school bag in the presence of a witness and with the pupil's consent.

### **Step 6**

- Inform external agencies as appropriate
- Keep record of all procedures carried out

Checks of school grounds/premises are carried out on a regular basis for signs of drug misuse which may have occurred outside school hours. If necessary, the local police will be contacted with regard to safe disposal of dangerous substances.

**Any contact with the Media will be through the Principal.**

