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Drug Education

All schools must teach about drugs, alcohol and tobacco as part of the science curriculum.

Many secondary schools also discuss the issues in their Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHEE) programmes.

Teachers only talk about what is appropriate for the different age groups and learning ability.

Research shows educating young people about drugs can help delay the onset of them experimenting.

Drugs

Schools have a responsibility to provide drug education and consider their response to drug misuse. Drug education should include illegal drugs, medicines, alcohol, tobacco and volatile substances such as glue and gasses. Teachers only talk about what is appropriate for the different age groups and learning ability.

Drug, alcohol and tobacco education is a part of science lessons in the National Curriculum –

5 to 7 year olds learn about the role of drugs as medicines;

7 to 11 year olds learn that alcohol, tobacco and other drugs can have harmful effects;


11 to 14 year olds learn how the misuse of solvents, tobacco and other drugs affects health;

14 to 16 year olds learn about the effects of solvents, tobacco, alcohol and other drugs on body functions.

This represents the statutory minimum. Schools are advised to use the non-statutory frameworks for Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education and Citizenship as the context for developing drug education further.

Do any parents have concerns about their child learning about drugs? What are they?


Some parent's worry that teaching them their child about drugs will make them want to go out and try it. However, research shows that educating young people about drugs can help **delay** the onset of them experimenting or progressing from experimental to problematic drug use.

 *Colleges and other Further Education settings are not under any obligation to provide drug education to their students but many choose to do so. This maybe delivered in a class room setting but usually through campaigns and health fairs.*

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Drug education should not only deliver the facts but also:

- Enable young people to develop skills to recognise and manage risk and to resist pressures relating to drugs use.
- Explore their own attitudes and opinions towards drugs in order to consider the consequences of their decisions.
- Help them to appreciate the benefits of a healthy lifestyle, relating this to their own and others' actions.



Drugs


Telling children and young people to “just say no” to drugs is not enough. They should be encouraged to reject drugs because they believe that's the right thing to do, not just because they have been told to say no.

They need a great deal of information if they're to come to sensible decisions about drug misuse. But information alone is not enough. Young people also need skills to help them resist and deal with pressure to experiment with drugs, and they need positive attitudes towards living healthy lives.

Young people should also feel good about the choices they make to not take drugs. Remember, the majority of young people choose not to do it despite what other young people or their friends may say.

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Ask your school or college for more details on what drug education they provide and become familiar with their policy for dealing with drug related incidents.




Drugs

Schools are encouraged to draw up drug education policies.

The purpose of a policy is to clarify the legal requirements and responsibilities. It will clarify the schools approach to drugs for all staff, pupils, governors, parents/carers, external agencies and the wider community.

A policy will also enable staff to manage drugs on school premises, and any incidents that may occur, with confidence and consistency, and in the best interests involved.

Ask your school for more details on what drug education they provide and become familiar with their policy for dealing with drug related incidents.

 *Colleges and other Further Education Settings should also have a drug policy which will also give clear guidelines on how they support students and staff with drug related issues.*