Substance & Alcohol Misuse Policy

Signed by
Chair of Governors

Agreed by the Governing Body on 27th June 2016

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Rationale

Our core purpose is to enable all students to learn and achieve. To facilitate this:

- The school is committed to the health and safety of its members and will take action to safeguard their well-being.
- The school does not condone the misuse of drugs or alcohol by members of the school or the illegal supply of these substances.
- The school acknowledges the need to be aware and sensitive to the fact that some children may be living with drug-using parents/carers.
- The school acknowledges the importance of its pastoral role in the welfare of young people.

Purposes

The school has a drug and alcohol policy which clearly sets out how we coordinate and deliver drug education, manage drugs within the school boundaries and during school times and respond to alcohol and drug-related incidents.

Guidelines

- (Ref: CCC Appendix 1, Guidance for Schools on Drug Education and Managing Drug Related Incidents).
- Psychoactive Substances Act 2016

Roles and Responsibilities

School

- The school has a duty to inform and educate younger people on the consequences of the use of illegal drugs and of drug/alcohol use and misuse.
- Students are provided with opportunities to be equipped with knowledge, attitudes and skills they need to avoid misuse of drugs/alcohol and use of illegal drugs.
- The school aims to foster a general ethos in which students who are using illegal drugs, or misusing drugs/alcohol/have concerns, will feel able to seek help and support.
- Ensure that the school is a safe and secure environment for all its members.
- Staff are expected to be vigilant concerning the possible presence of drugs and alcohol on school premises and possible symptoms of illegal drug/alcohol use and take appropriate action.
- School will provide in-service training to ensure the staff have up to date knowledge and information.
- The school has a responsibility to make parents/carers aware of the Policy on the Use of Illegal Drugs and Alcohol.
- The school should have a support framework in place should any student seek or need professional help.

Parents/Carers

- To actively support the school's Code of Conduct.
- To support their children and the school in their efforts to deal with any incidents of illegal drugs and alcohol misuse.

Students

- While in school the students have the responsibility of not being under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol.
- Students should be supportive of their peers if under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol and report it appropriately.
- Students should carefully consider the consequences of illegal drug and alcohol use on themselves and others.

APPENDIX 1

INTRODUCTION

This policy has been written with due regard to DofE Circular 4/95 'Drug Prevention and Schools', and subsequent legislation and advice.

The policy has been written in consultation with:
- a variety of school staff,
- the School Nurse
- the Governing Body

- ❖ The school condones neither the use of illegal drugs or alcohol by students of the school, nor the illegal supply of these substances.
- ❖ The school is committed to the health and safety of its students and will take action to safeguard their well being.
- ❖ The school acknowledges the importance of its pastoral rôle in the welfare of young people and will support students to come forward for help.
- ❖ The school acknowledges the importance of its educational rôle and will seek to deliver a drug education programme to enable students to make healthy informed choices.

Our school approach will:
- ❖ Increase **knowledge**
- ❖ Challenge **attitudes**
- ❖ Develop and practise **skills**
- ❖ Offer **support, help** and **guidance**

CURRICULAR

The school believes that it has a duty to inform and educate young people on the consequences of the use of illegal drugs and of drug and alcohol use and misuse. Work at regular intervals throughout their school career in PDC, Science and Physical Education (PE) will ensure that:
- ❖ our students have the opportunity to acquire knowledge and understanding about the dangers of drug and alcohol misuse and illegal drug use
- ❖ our students are provided with accurate information about drugs and alcohol
- ❖ our students have the opportunity to develop an understanding of related health and social issues, eg sex and sexuality, crime, HIV and AIDS.

The question of illegal drugs, drug and alcohol use and misuse may occur incidentally in any lesson: teacher response should be pro-active and informed by this policy.

PASTORAL

The pastoral work of the school will ensure that:
- ❖ our students are provided with opportunities to be equipped with the knowledge, attitudes and skills they need to avoid misuse of drugs and alcohol and use of illegal drugs

- ❖ our students' decision-making life skills are enhanced
- ❖ our students are able to identify sources of appropriate personal support
- ❖ the risks to users and potential users are minimised.

The school aims to foster a general ethos in which students who are using illegal drugs, or misusing drugs or alcohol, or who have concerns, will feel able to seek help in and through the school, but also aims to ensure that the school is a safe and secure environment, for all its members.

SCHOOL STAFF

The school believes that a well informed school staff is central to the education and wellbeing of our students. The school's work with regard to in-service training will ensure that

- ❖ our school staff are aware of the existence of this Policy on Use of Illegal Drugs and Alcohol and its implications for them in their work
- ❖ our school staff are aware of the signs of illegal drug and drug and alcohol misuse as detailed in the contents of Appendix 1: Drug or Solvent Misuse – Recognising the Signs.
- ❖ our school staff are aware of their duty to inform Student Services of any concerns about an individual student
- ❖ our school staff are aware of their duty to report to Leadership the presence of any objects that may indicate illegal drug, drug and alcohol use and to ensure their legal disposal
- ❖ our teachers are well informed and well prepared for the delivery of relevant PDC, Science and PE sessions.
- ❖ our teachers are well informed on guidelines for dealing with a student who is intoxicated or seriously affected by illegal drug use.

Staff are expected to be vigilant concerning the possible presence of drugs and alcohol on school premises and concerning the possible symptoms illegal drug use, drug and alcohol misuse in students.

INDIVIDUAL INCIDENTS

The school believes that, as with all matters of student behaviour and pastoral care, instances involving illegal drug and drug and alcohol misuse are best dealt with on an individual basis with due regard given to all relevant circumstances. A variety of responses will be necessary, with the school balancing the interests of the individual, other school members and the local community. However the school's response will be within these parameters:

- use of illegal drugs during the school day or on any school activity will always lead to an exclusion (the length of which will be dependent on individual circumstances).
- use of illegal drugs during the school day or on any school activity will always be reported to the police
- use of alcohol during the school day or on any school activity will always lead to an exclusion (the length of which will be dependent on individual circumstances)

- suspicions about illegal drug use and alcohol use during the school day will always be notified to parents
- permanent exclusion will always be considered in the case of any student bringing illegal drugs and alcohol in to school for the use of another student.

The Headteacher will take responsibility for liaison with the police and the media.

WHOLE SCHOOL

The school recognises that the prevention of illegal drug use and drug and alcohol misuse should be seen as a whole-school issue and that each staff member, both teaching and non-teaching, has a part to play. All staff have a significant impact on the readiness of our students to adopt responsible attitudes and behaviour in relation to drugs and alcohol.

DRUG EDUCATION PROGRAMME

The school believes that an appropriate Drug Education Programme is an essential part of the curriculum for our students.

This is largely delivered through PDC and the main components are currently:

- Smoking
- Alcohol
- Drugs
- Choices
- Risk taking

APPENDIX 2

Drug or Solvent Misuse; Recognising the Signs
(Reproduced from DFE/Welsh Office Booklet,
"Drug Misuse and the Young – A Guide for the Education Service", 1992)

Warning Signs

1. Early detection of drugs misuse is extremely important. If a young person's drug misuse is identified at an early stage, it is easier for action to be taken to prevent his or her further misuse of drugs. Therefore teachers need to be vigilant, particularly when they are in charge of activities which take groups of young people away from the school premises. Research has shown that first experiments with drugs by young people almost always involve a substance provided by a friend.
2. The signs listed in Tables 1 and 2 may indicate that individuals or groups of young people are misusing drugs. **Their presence alone is not conclusive proof of drug or solvent misuse: many of them are a normal part of adolescence,** but the presence of several signs together may point to a need for greater vigilance. Table 3 lists equipment which, if found in certain circumstances, might also give grounds for concern.

Table 1
Warning Signs in Individuals

- Changes in attendance, and being unwilling to take part in school activities.
- Decline in performance in school work.
- Unusual outbreaks of temper, marked swings of mood, restlessness or irritability.
- Reports from parents that more time is being spent away from home, possibly with new friends or with friends in older age groups.
- Excessive spending or borrowing of money.
- Stealing money or goods.
- Excessive tiredness without obvious cause.
- No interest in physical appearance.
- Sores or rashes especially on the mouth or nose.
- Lack of appetite.
- Heavy use of scents, colognes etc to disguise the smell of drugs.
- Wearing sunglasses at inappropriate times (to hide dilated or constricted pupils).

Table 2
Warning Signs in Groups

- Regular absence on certain days.
- Keeping at a distance from other students, away from supervision points (eg groups who frequently gather near the gate of a school playground or sports field).
- Being the subject of rumours about drug taking.
- Talking to strangers on or near the premises.
- Stealing which appears to be the work of several individuals rather than one person (eg perhaps to shoplift solvents).

- Use of drugtakers' slang.
- Exchanging money or other objects in unusual circumstances.
- Associating briefly with one person who is much older and not normally part of the peer group.

Table 3
Objects that may indicate Drug Misuse

- Foil containers or cup shapes made from silver foil, perhaps discoloured by heat.
- Metal tins.
- Spoons discoloured by heat.
- Pill boxes.
- Plastic, cellophane or metal foil wrappers.
- Small plastic or glass phials or bottles.
- Twists of paper.
- Straws.
- Sugar lumps.
- Syringes and needles.
- Cigarette papers and lighters.
- Spent matches.
- Plastic bags or butane gas containers (solvent abuse).
- Cardboard or other tubes (heroin).
- Stamps, stickers, transfers or similar items.
- Shredded cigarettes, home-rolled cigarettes and pipes (cannabis).
- Paper (about 2 inches square) folded to form an envelope (heroin).
- Plastic bottles with pipes attached (bongs).
- Drink cans punctured with holes.
- Corners of plastic bags, twisted.
- Insides of Kinder eggs.

APPENDIX 3

Response to Drug-related Incidents

Written notes from anyone involved in an incident to do with use of illegal drugs or alcohol during the school day should be made as soon as is possible and passed on to Student Services in the first instance.

Emergencies

This involves emergency situations where a person is highly incapacitated or unconscious as a result of drug or alcohol use.

Staff with first aid qualifications should be called and the person not left alone. The person should be placed in the recovery position and an ambulance called. The parents should be informed. An assessment of the incident needs to be started immediately, including finding out what has been taken and evidence gathered.

Intoxication

This involves intoxication/being under the influence of drugs.

The person needs to be removed to a quiet room and not left alone. It is important to ascertain what he or she has taken from a medical and safety point of view. A senior member of staff should be called and a first aider. The person should be helped to calm down and medical assistance sought if necessary.

If someone is intoxicated (stoned) but is conscious.

1. Deal with the situation calmly and talk to the child in a firm but friendly manner – do not provoke them.
2. Remove the child from the situation and from other young people.
3. Ensure that another adult is informed.
4. Take the child to a quiet and well ventilated room.
5. Try to find out what the child has taken, how much and when (friends will be a good source of information).
6. Seek medical advice.
7. Don't confront the child, or attempt to counsel them whilst intoxicated.
8. Don't give them anything to eat or drink.
9. Continually check that the child is conscious and walk them around to ensure that they remain so (if they become unconscious, follow procedure above).
10. Remain with the child until they "come down".
11. Contact the parents and ensure that the child is collected, or taken home by an adult.
12. Record the incident.

NB. In most cases the young person's health will not be in any great danger and they will recover with something like a hangover, however if there is any doubt as to the welfare of the young person, a doctor or ambulance should be called at once.

Discovery/observation
The person needs to be approached and the substance confiscated if possible. Teachers cannot make intimate physical searches of students or enforce a bag search without a student's permission, but need to encourage students to voluntarily produce the substance. Students can be asked to surrender the substance or asked to "turn out their pockets" in front of the teacher. A student's bag should be taken for safekeeping if it is felt that there is something in the bag which may cause harm. It would be useful for other staff to be present as a witness so that actions can be verified later. A senior member of staff should be called and the person(s) involved questioned. Where appropriate, written statements should be taken from any witnesses to events.

If a substance is found in a school and is suspected of being an illegal drug, it should be handed to the Head or, if that is not possible e.g. on a residential school trip, to a police officer.

Disclosure
When a student discloses to a member of staff that he/she has been using illegal drugs out of school, or that they are concerned about someone else's illegal drug use (friend, parent, sibling), Student Services must be informed.

Teachers need to be non-judgemental and caring and show concern for the student's welfare. Students need to know that teachers cannot promise total confidentiality if further support is to be considered such as referral to a drug service or counselling service. Total confidentiality is maintained at all times in drug and counselling services.

Suspicion/rumour
This involves suspicion/rumour about illegal drug use, drug dealing or drug problems.

Staff need not act quickly on the basis of rumours. However if there is a suspicion, the situation will need to be monitored before a decision is made to question the student(s) involved. Student Services should be informed of concerns.

Incidents occurring on school journeys
These will generally follow the same procedures as for incidents on school premises.

Safe disposal of injecting equipment
Injecting equipment (needles and syringes), will need to be disposed of safely, because of the risk of "needle stick" injuries, possibly putting a teacher/child at risk of Hepatitis (and only a negligible risk of transmitting HIV). It is important that someone dealing with disposal should pick up the syringe by the barrel and use something to push the needle on to card/paper so as to avoid touching the needle. Any teacher finding such equipment should inform a member of Leadership Team. Care should be taken to ensure that no one has access to such equipment while help is sought and the situation made safe.

Contacting Parents

This will be done by Student Services or members of the Leadership Team.

Most parents may be shocked to learn about their child's involvement with illegal drugs. Their knowledge of drugs and the issues that surround them may be patchy, sensational and based on information gleaned from the media. It is likely that they will imagine the worst possible scenario and think about dependent use. However, some parents may have an involvement with illegal drug use themselves.

Great care should be taken when informing parents about illegal drug incidents and the potential danger to the child should not be overstated. An explanation of the levels of illegal drug use will help and encourage a joint assessment of the scale of the problem, enabling an appropriate response.

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