

## **SUBSTANCE USE AND MISUSE POLICY**

### **Definition**

By drugs we mean any substances, excluding food, which, when used brings about change in the user. Changes can include altered perceptions, feelings, moods and behaviour. Drugs can thus include medicines, tobacco, alcohol, solvents used as drugs, 'poppers' and illegal substances including, for example, cannabis, amphetamines, ecstasy, heroin and cocaine. This broad definition recognises that whilst some drugs may be regarded as helpful, (e.g. medicines) and some perceived as 'socially acceptable', all of them have the potential to be harmful. (See also Smoking Policy).

### **The School's Stance Towards Drugs**

- The school condones neither the misuse of drugs, including alcohol and tobacco, by members of the school, nor the illegal supply of these substances.
- The school is committed to the health and safety of its members and will take action to safeguard their well-being.
- The school acknowledges the importance of its pastoral role in the welfare of young people, and through the general ethos of the school, will seek to persuade students in need of support to come forward.

### **Drug Education Programme** (see relevant Schemes of Work)

The rationale for drug education e.g. "We live in a world / society / community where drugs of all descriptions are available and accessible from medicines, tobacco and alcohol to substances which are illegal. We recognise that the choices and decisions that individuals make about the role of any drugs in their lives result in consequences not only for themselves but also for families, friends and the wider community.

In response to our shared concerns at a local and national level, we wish to state that as part of its care for the welfare of its students the school believes it has a duty to inform and educate young people on the consequences of drug use and misuse. The school takes a pro-active stance on this matter, believing that health education is a vital part of the Personal and Social Education of every student.

Fundamental to our school's values and practice is the principle of sharing the responsibility for education of young people with parents, by keeping them informed and involved at all times. Effective communication and co-operation is essential to the successful implementation of this policy.

We believe and support the following educational aims in respect of substance use and misuse:

- to enable students to make healthy, informed choices by increasing knowledge, challenging attitudes and developing and practising skills
- to provide accurate information about substances
- to increase understanding about the implications and possible consequences of use and misuse, i.e. health, social, legal and economic.
- to encourage an understanding for those experiencing or likely to experience substance use
- to widen understanding about related health and social issues, e.g. sex and sexuality, crime, HIV and AIDS
- to seek to minimise the risks that users and potential users face
- to enable young people to identify sources of appropriate personal support

These aims are fulfilled through aspects of the students' experiences in the taught and informal curriculum. We deliver in the taught curriculum mainly through PSE, Citizenship, Careers, Science and English areas, but other opportunities to reinforce learning will occur in tutorial sessions and other parts of the teaching programme. The school actively co-operates with appropriate outside agencies such as Community Police, LEA and Health and Drug Agencies to deliver its commitment to Drugs Education and to deal with incidents of substance use and misuse. The school has worked closely for several years with Community Education delivering a peer education

programme. This involves training Post 16 students who then work with Year 7 and Year 8 students. Visitors who support the school will be informed of the values held within this policy.

## **Staff Roles and Responsibilities**

### **Roles of the Headteacher and Governing Body**

The Headteacher takes overall responsibility for the policy and its implementation, for liaison with the Governing Body, parents, LEA and appropriate outside agencies.

The Headteacher or a Senior Teacher will take responsibility for liaison with the media. As the issue of substance misuse is an emotive one, and is likely to generate interest from the local and national media, the school will take appropriate advice and guidance from the LEA and County solicitors to ensure that any reporting of incidents remains in the best interests of the young people, their families and the school.

Training and education for teachers, support staff, parents, governors and others will be provided by the school using appropriate agencies thus enabling staff to identify potential risks for drug related incidents and manage them confidently, competently and with consistency.

Members of the Leadership and Management Team and Achievement Leaders/ Achievement Support Assistants will have general responsibility for handling the daily implementation of the policy.

The Governing Body will be involved in substance education and substance related incidents in the same manner as any other matter concerning the direction of the school, i.e.

1. The Curriculum and Standards Committee may consider substance education and report to the whole Governing Body.
2. The Governors' Staff and Student Sub-committee will review any fixed term exclusions of more than five days in total in any term or if the student loses the chance of taking a public examination. The parents have a right of appeal to the Governors' Staff and Student Appeals Sub-committee.
3. The Governors' Staff and Student Sub-committee will review any permanent exclusion. The parents may make representation to the LEA.
4. The Governing Body will monitor, review and evaluate the Policy on Substance Use and Misuse.

The Achievement Leaders have responsibility for co-ordinating the drug education programme.

### **Substance misuse on the premises**

The school will consider each substance incident individually and recognise that a variety of responses will be necessary to deal with incidents. The school will consider very carefully the implications of any action it may take. It seeks to balance the interests of the student involved, the other school members and the local community. The following examples are included as guiding principles. Records will be kept of all incidents on individual students' files.

(This is not meant to be an exhaustive list of possible situations.)

Situation	Action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student smoking (tobacco) on or near school premises. Subsequent smoking offence.</li> </ul>	<p>Letter home to parents (Y7 - Y11). Student in detention. Letter home to parents. One day working under close supervision. (See Smoking in School policies)</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unsubstantiated rumour regarding drug misuse or student identified as having experimented with illegal drugs or the equipment associated with drugs.</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>School will contact parents so they can make further investigations.</li> <li>Student/parent to be offered advice, information, support and counselling as appropriate.</li> </ol>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student seen in possession or strongly suspected of being in possession of an illegal drug.</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A member of staff with an adult witness will attempt to secure the <b><u>voluntary</u></b> production of any unlawful substances, e.g. by asking to turn out pockets. <b>NB</b> Law permits school staff to take temporary possession of any substance suspected of being a controlled drug. Staff should not attempt to analyse or taste an unidentified substance.</li> <li>Parents will be informed.</li> <li>Police will be called in to deal with the situation: if student has refused to voluntarily turn out pockets etc, police may carry out search. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• any substance taken into temporary possession by school should be handed to the police who will be able to identify whether it is an illegal drug.</li> <li>• If an illegal drug is found, police advice on the situation closely considered.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Situation may result in fixed term or permanent exclusion.</li> <li>Student/parent to be offered advice, information, support and counselling as appropriate.</li> </ol>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student seen supplying or strongly suspected of supplying an illegal drug.</li> </ul>	<p>As for “possession” above except that if the supplying of illegal drugs is confirmed, this may lead to a longer fixed term or permanent exclusion.</p>

Situation	Action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student found under the influence of drugs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. First aid administered/ambulance called.</li> <li>ii. Gather information from peers.</li> <li>iii. Collect any vomit in a polythene bag and hand it to ambulance/paramedics.</li> <li>iv. Parents informed.</li> <li>v. Incident report to police and discussed with them.</li> <li>vi. Situation may result in a fixed term exclusion.</li> <li>vii. Student/parent to be offered advice, information, support and counselling as appropriate.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Illegal drugs or equipment associated with drugs found on school premises.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. School will inform police.</li> <li>ii. Internal enquiry/investigation with appropriate students.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School made aware of possible illegal drug misuse outside school premises which may put students at risk.</li> </ul>	<p>School will inform police.</p>