

Drugs and Substance Misuse Policy

Overton School

Approved by:	Omar Salahuddin, Principal
Last reviewed on:	26/08/20
Next review due by:	25/08/21

All reasonable measures are used to reduce or prevent children from obtaining drugs or substances which may harm them. If it is known or suspected that children are obtaining products which may harm them, strategies are adopted to reduce or prevent it.

Introduction

In the UK, it is not known generally how many children are using drugs. However children will encounter drugs from various sources, one may be finding their parents or older siblings using drugs, or in the neighbourhood or as part of youth culture in terms of experimentation. It is our policy that staff must help young people avoid taking drugs and provide them with an understanding and education of the associated risks both in health terms and the legal framework.

We are committed to enhancing the health and welfare and safety of all young people we look after. We do not condone the possession, use or supply of illegal drugs. It is our view that all staff should receive drug awareness training and be aware of our drug policy. All staff must have a basic understanding of substance misuse as part of their professional training, and the need to create strategies to minimise the risks associated with drugs.

All children who are vulnerable to drug misuse should be identified and have in their Care Programme identified needs to enable them to receive on-going support. This policy is part of our strategy to meeting children's overall needs and improving outcomes for them. It is vital that when a young person is misusing legal or illegal drugs this is identified in their *Health Care Assessment, Looked After Review and Case Planning* process so they receive support and appropriate interventions. We are committed to reducing the risks associated with the misuse of drugs.

Curriculum

Drugs education is addressed through relevant aspects of the Science and PHSE curriculum and is a whole school issue involving all staff thereby ensuring a coherent approach. The Drugs Education programme aims to encourage students to be aware of external pressures and look at strategies enabling the individuals to take responsibility for their own decisions thereby reflecting the importance of self-esteem. Students will learn an understanding of the effect and nature of drugs and their possible effects on the user linked to an understanding of the law in relation to drugs and drug taking.

Pastoral Approach

Factors that will be considered are:

The age of the student concerned

Whether incidents occurred inside or outside our school

The nature of the drug

Whether the student involved is using or dealing in illegal substances

Where a student is suspected of being involved in the use / abuse of substances, or is associating with others who might bring him/her into contact with illegal drugs, the Deputy Head will meet with the Principal to inform him of the nature of the concerns. The Head teacher will subsequently make immediate contact with the pupil's parents to make them aware of the causes for concern. Parents will be reminded of the School's policy on drugs. Where appropriate, the Head teacher will contact the police. At all times, reference will be made to relevant guidance related to the management of Drug related incidents in schools. All personnel will have training and specific responsibility to ensure consistent application of this policy within Overton School. The Head teacher must be *informed* immediately of any drugs related matters. Individual staff must pass on concerns as outlined above and NOT attempt to deal with incidents on their own.

The outline of the dangers of drug involvement will embrace:

The physical dangers involved in consuming certain substances

The legal dangers of committing what amounts to criminal acts

The social dangers of involvement with the criminal drug fraternity

Definition

Drugs and Substances are defined as any substances that, when introduced to the body, create a change in perception and/or mood. They can also affect how the body functions - which may have a harmful effect upon a child. This includes: Alcohol, Cigarettes, Tobacco, Aerosols, Gas, Glue, Magic Mushrooms (Amanita), Petrol, Solvents and all controlled substances such as Amphetamines, Barbiturates, Cannabis, Cocaine, Hallucinogens, Hashish and Narcotics.

Purchasing/obtaining drugs or substances – general

All reasonable measures must be used to reduce or prevent children from obtaining drugs or substances which may harm them. If it is known or suspected that children are obtaining products which may harm them, whether off the streets, from dealers or traders of any kind, the manager/carer/parent and social worker must be informed and strategies adopted to reduce or prevent it. If the problem persists or is serious, relevant specialists or bodies, including Trading Standards or the Police, should be informed. Any response should balance the needs of the individual and aim to give them, depending upon their Care Programme, the opportunity to learn from their mistakes. The response should not just focus on the drug incident, all factors should be considered and proactive strategies put into place.

Cigarettes and tobacco

Children:

In the case of children within our care, we will endeavour to help them give up smoking or at the very least reduce their dependence on it. Children under the age of 16 are not permitted to smoke unless she/he was habituated to smoking before being admitted to the school (evidence for this being provided via the child's file/Social worker etc.) and that: She/he is engaged in a programme, in accordance with medical advice, as appropriate to remove the habit.

The child has written permission to smoke and take part in such a reduction programme from the Social Worker and parents (if applicable).

All of the above information should be clearly recorded in the young person's Care Programme. Where a child is over 16 and they are an established smoker, they should still be discouraged and supported to give up and, where possible, be engaged in a programme of reduction or as a minimum have an agreed daily limit regarding their level of smoking, which will continue to be controlled by staff. Smoking should only take place in the designated smoking area, and steps should be taken to ensure that all visitors to the school are also clear about the location of smoking areas. Pupils should be discouraged from smoking collectively as this can lead them to associate smoking with an enjoyable social occasion. Staff must not buy cigarettes on behalf of any pupils within our care.

In areas where smoking is permitted, other pupils who do not smoke should be discouraged from using or standing around the area. Pupils should be encouraged to keep the designated smoking area clean and tidy, but ultimately staff should check the area daily to ensure it remains clean and tidy. Information and guidance leaflets should be available, so that children and staff can be appropriately informed about the dangers of smoking.

Staff/Carers

Staff are not permitted to smoke on the school site. Staff must never give children cigarettes.

Alcohol

All schools should be alcohol free zones; alcohol should not be brought or kept on the premises. Staff are not permitted to bring alcohol into the school or consume it whilst on duty and should not arrive at work under the influence of alcohol. Where it becomes evident (or staff suspect) that a child has indulged in alcohol, a range of responses are relevant given variations in the severity and extent of the abuse. These options are outlined below:-

Offering fluids – water, squash

Periodic monitoring – i.e. 10 minutes, ½ hour, hourly, etc.

Contacting health professionals for advice

Hospitalisation for day patient or overnight stay, etc.

Staff should never simply ignore a child who appears drunk. Staff should always inform managers /carers /parents /social workers of an episode of alcohol abuse, and significant or serious incidents should be recorded in great detail on Incident Report forms. Where staff find alcohol based products either in the possession of a pupil or within the school, then this should be destroyed. It is not permissible to give beer or spirits back to children on the premise that they will take it home.

Aerosols, Gas, Glue, and Petrol

Solvent use is not illegal but it is illegal for a shopkeeper to sell solvents to anyone under 18 if they know they are intended for abuse. Head teachers must ensure that aerosols, gas, glue, petrol and similar substances are only used for the purpose for which they were designed; and that all reasonable measures are taken to restrict their use, especially where there are children who are known to pose a risk to themselves or others if they have access to them. Where children are assessed as capable of retaining aerosols or other similar substances, the arrangements for safe storage and use must be outlined in individual Care Programmes.

Controlled drugs or substances

Controlled drugs are categorised into three classifications, classes A, B and C. Controlled drugs are included in each of the classes according to the potential for harm they are thought to present to individuals and to society at large. Only those controlled drugs prescribed by a medical practitioner may be permitted in any school. The school has a separate medication policy for this purpose.

Prevention and Planning

The senior leadership team must ensure that information, guidance and advice on the risks associated with harmful drugs and substances are available to all pupils.

Additionally, any child known or suspected to be at risk of participating in drug or substances misuse activities must be provided with the following:

targeted relevant information, guidance and advice to help reduce or prevent such risks;

strategies for managing the risk, outlined in the Child's Care Programme

The strategy should state whether, and in what circumstances, the Police will be notified.

Emergency

If it suspected that a child is misusing harmful drugs or substances (see next paragraph) and no strategy exists to reduce or prevent the behaviour, the Carer/parent and relevant social worker(s) should be contacted and an agreement reached on how to proceed; this will include whether the Police will be notified. Suspicions may be aroused by the following:

Drugs or associated paraphernalia found in the school.

A child demonstrates through their behaviour or actions age inappropriate knowledge of drugs.

A child is found in possession of drugs or known associated paraphernalia.

A member of staff has information about illegitimate drugs being supplied in the area near the school or at the young person's home.

A child discloses that they or a member of their family is using drugs.

If there are immediate risks which make it impractical to contact the Carer/parent or social worker, staff should take what actions are immediately necessary then inform the carer/parent and social worker(s) at the first opportunity. If a child is at risk or requires First Aid/Medical attention, staff should apply first-aid procedures, and notify the Head teacher/Designated Deputy as soon as possible. However, staff must not compromise or delay the process of getting medical help by doing so. If in any doubt, call medical help. If there is a risk of serious harm, injury or of a serious criminal offence and staff are unable to manage safely, the Police should be notified. Staff should always assess the situation and if a medical emergency, send for medical help and ambulance. Before assistance arrives, if the person is conscious:

Ask them what has happened and to identify any drug used

Collect any drug sample and any vomit for medical analysis

Do not induce vomiting

Do not chase or over-excite them if intoxicated from inhaling a volatile substance

Keep them under observation, warm and quiet If the person is unconscious:

Ensure that they can breathe and place in the recovery position

Do not move them if a fall is likely to have led to spinal or other serious injury which may not be obvious

Do not give anything by mouth

Do not attempt to make them sit or stand

Do not leave them unattended or in the charge of another child

Notify parents / carers

For needle stick (sharp) injuries:

Encourage wound to bleed. Do not suck. Wash with soap and water. Dry and apply waterproof dressing

If used/dirty needle seek medical advice immediately

When medical help arrives, pass on any information available, including vomit and any drug samples.

Notify parent/carer/social worker immediately. No further action, beyond making the situation safe and attempting to confiscate harmful drugs or substances, should be taken without a Head teacher / Designated Deputy's authorisation, preferably in consultation with the relevant social worker.

However, the staff should undertake the following if the Head teacher is not available within a reasonable timescale

Legal but potentially harmful substances such as cigarettes, alcohol, aerosols, gas, glue, and petrol should be put in a safe place out of the reach of children or disposed of safely. With regard to controlled substances and any associated materials or paraphernalia staff must:

Take possession, preferably with a second adult present.

Seal the sample in a plastic bag obtained from the Police for that purpose (where possible).

Immediately notify the Head teacher.

Store it in a secure container with access limited to the two members of staff only.

Arrange for the drugs/substances to be taken to a Chemist or handed to the Police for destruction.

Reporting the matter to the Police beyond this (e.g. notifying them of the name of the child involved) is a matter which the Head teacher should decide upon in consultation with relevant social worker(s) - taking account of the principles and procedures outlined here.

Record all details, including the date and time of possession, on an Incident Report.

Disposal of Drug Paraphernalia

If needles or syringes are found, they should be placed in a sturdy container using gloves. Used needles should not be disposed of with domestic waste.

All paraphernalia should be sealed and disposed of following taking the advice from the Head teacher.

Recording and Notifications

Recording

A record of events/actions must be kept in daily records. If an incident occurs e.g. property is damaged or someone is assaulted, relevant Incident, Accident or other records must be completed.

Notifications

The Head teacher and pupil's Social Worker must be notified without delay but within 1 working day. The social worker should decide whether to inform the child's parent(s) and, if so, who should do so. If any Notifiable Event occurred, the Head teacher must notify other managers and agencies as required in . It will also be necessary for the Head teacher to conduct a Management Review as set out in In undertaking the management review and assessing the need to revise the child's [Care Programme], the following should be taken into consideration:

What does the young person have to say?

Is this a one off incident or long term situation?

Is the drug legal or illegal?

What quantity of drug was involved?

Is the young person knowledgeable and careless or reckless as to their own or others safety and how was the drug being used?

Where does the incident appear on the scale from possession of a small quantity to supply for profit?

If supply of illegal drugs is suspected, was it to buy for others or organised habitual supply?