

Coleraine College



Misuse of Substances (Drugs) Policy

2015

Reviewed and updated: Januray 2022

Rationale

We believe that Coleraine College has a vital preventative role to play in combating the misuse of drugs by young people and we therefore include drug education as part of our Personal Development (PD) programme. We want our pupils to make informed and responsible decisions about drugs by increasing their knowledge and by developing in them appropriate values, attitudes and skills. However, we recognise that drug misuse is a whole community issue and that schools alone cannot solve the drugs problem; the school is only one of a number of groups and agencies which must play a part the education of young people in and we make use of their expertise where possible in the delivery of the PD programme.

All staff (teaching and non-teaching), should familiarise themselves with the information included in this policy and further copies may be obtained from the Designated Teacher for Drugs (Mme SJ Skobel).

The Policy is set within the context of the School's:

- Positive Behaviour Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Anti-Smoking Policy

The policy covers any substance under the Department of Education definition below:

A drug is any substance which, when taken, has the effect of altering the way the body works or the way a person behaves, feels, sees or thinks.

Drugs therefore include:

- Alcohol and tobacco/smoking related products*
- Over the counter medicines' such as paracetamol
- Prescribed drugs, such as antibiotics, tranquillisers, inhalers and Ritalin
- Volatile substances such as glues, solvents, cleaning products and aerosols
- Controlled drugs such as Cannabis, LSD, Ecstasy, 'Magic Mushrooms' and Mephedrone
- Other substances such as Amyl/Butyl Nitrate ('poppers'), including other 'legal highs'.

* The School regulations concerning tobacco and e-cigarettes are set out in the school's Anti Smoking Policy. Regulations regarding misuse of alcohol can be found in appendix 1.

A fuller description of what constitutes controlled drugs and offences related to controlled drugs are set out in Appendix 2

Administration of Prescribed Medication

The College will not administer any medicines to pupils except:

- to retain and administer as necessary an epi-pen for any pupil liable to suffer allergic reactions in accordance with that pupil's Health Care Plan. The epi-pen dosage will only be administered by those staff trained to do so
- to allow pain relief e.g. paracetamol or ibuprofen but only where the written permission of parents/guardians has been obtained
- to allow pupils to take, under supervision, prescribed medication which must be taken during school hours and where the permission of parents/guardians has been obtained .All prescribed medicines remain the responsibility of the parent and should a child require taking such, it is the responsibility of the parent to inform the school in writing accordingly.

Aims

The aims of this policy are:

- To ensure that a consistent approach to drugs-related issues is adopted by all members of the school community
- To outline how drugs education is implemented within the curriculum
- To set down the procedures to be followed when dealing with specific incidents of suspected drug misuse
- To define the roles and responsibilities of the Principal and staff

Drugs Education in the Curriculum

'A drugs education programme is just one part of a whole school response to drug misuse. It should provide opportunities for pupils to acquire the knowledge, understanding and skills to enable them to consider the effects of drugs on themselves and others, and to make informed and responsible choices within the context of a healthy lifestyle' (Drugs: Guidance for Schools in Northern Ireland CEA 2004)

The drug education programme in Coleraine College is just one part of the whole school response to drug use / misuse. The programme provides opportunities for pupils to:

- To promote positive attitudes and healthy choices in relation to personal health.
- To develop self-discipline and self-respect and understand the effects of drugs misuse on others.
- To build pupils' self-esteem.
- To develop decision-making skills which may delay or prevent the onset of experimentation.
- To acquire knowledge in relation to drugs use/misuse and the effects on the body of legal and illegal substances and the risks and consequences of their misuse.
- To identify values and attitudes in relation to drug use / misuse
- To develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of themselves and others as individuals.

In Coleraine College the taught programme of Drugs Education is set within the Personal Development (PD) strand of Learning for Life and Work. Opportunities for drugs education also arise across the curriculum. In subjects such as English, Religious Education, Physical Education, Biology or Home Economics.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Board of Governors

- Examine and approve the completed policy before its implementation in the school.
- Ensure that the policy is made available to relevant stakeholders and that it is reviewed at regular intervals.
- Be fully aware of the school policy and procedures in respect of incidents of drug misuse, including tobacco and alcohol, and their appropriate disciplinary response.
- Agree in consultation with the Principal appropriate pastoral and disciplinary responses in relation to suspected drug related incidents.

The Chairman of the Governors, or their nominee, will work with the Principal and Designated Teacher for Drugs Incidents in relation to drug related issues.

The Principal

- Ensure that members of the Board of Governors have been consulted on and approve this policy.
- Ensuring pupils' welfare
- Handling, storage and safe disposal of any drug/drugs related paraphernalia.
- Determining the circumstances surrounding incidents
- Contact with the parent / guardian of pupil/s involved (within the confines of confidentiality)
- Agreement on the appropriate pastoral / disciplinary response in liaison with the Vice Principal (Pastoral) and the Board of Governors.
- Liaison with the PSNI (preferably the Community and Schools Involvement Officer/CSIO) , the EA Designated Officer and Board of Governors.
- Retain written records of the incident and ensuring a copy of the reports are submitted to Board of Governors, EA as appropriate.
- Review procedures and amend.

The Designated Teacher for Drugs Incidents

The Designated Teacher is the Vice-Principal (Pastoral), Mme SJ Skobel. The role involves:

- Oversight of co-ordination of planning of curricular provision
- Implementing procedures as outlined in this policy for dealing with an incident involving the misuse of drugs
- Receiving any substance and associated paraphernalia found in School
- Regularly updating staff on the policy and the procedures for dealing with a drug related incident
- Liaison with the Principal on any drug related incident and with other staff responsible for pastoral care
- Liaison with outside agencies
- The induction of new staff and training of existing staff as appropriate

Members of staff (teaching and non-teaching)

- Members of staff should be familiar with the School procedures for dealing with an incident of the use of suspected drug misuse.
- All staff should be vigilant to drugs related incidents and the presence of drug-related paraphernalia.
- Specifically, in respect to role of the Buildings Supervisor, ensure the safe and restricted storage, handling and disposal of potentially harmful substances such as solvents and cleaning fluids.

Parents / Guardians

- Support your son / daughter if they have become involved with drugs.
- Support the school in the development and implementation of this policy, including the school's procedures for handling incidents of suspected drug misuse and the drug education programme.

Procedures to be followed when dealing with specific incidents of suspected drug misuse

This is a guide on the key procedures to undertake when an incident of drug misuse occurs in school*.

A suspected drug related incident is described as:

- Suspect drugs or paraphernalia found on the school premises
- A pupil suspected of being in possession of drugs
- A pupil found to be in possession of drugs
- A pupil suspected of supplying drugs
- A pupil found to be supplying drugs
- A pupil suspected of being under the influence of drugs

*Please note the above covers any instance of involvement in a suspected drug related incident on the School site, or when in school uniform, or when taking part in any school approved activity, including sporting fixtures, school visits and trips.

When an incident occurs the member of staff involved should:

- Ensure the safety of the individual pupil involved, of other pupils, yourself and other staff.
- Send for support from another adult
- Ascertain if the situation constitutes an emergency and if required follow first aid procedures and if necessary contact an ambulance (providing as full a picture of the incident as possible, including details of substances involved). In an emergency, it is appropriate to remove bystanders from the immediate vicinity to limit distress.
- In all cases: Secure any drugs/associated paraphernalia found and pass to the Principal or Vice Principal for storage in a safe place until dealt with by PSNI. If the drug has to be destroyed, do so in the presence of a witness after recording amounts and type of drug.
- Report the incident to the Designated Teacher for Drugs Education/Vice Principal Pastoral (if not available, report directly to the Principal).
- The Designated Teacher will report to the Principal, who will first contact parents to make them aware of the situation and then contact the PSNI Community and Schools Involvement Officer (CSIO).
- An Incident Report Form will be completed, and a copy sent to the EA Designated Officer and a copy retained for the School's confidential file. (Appendix 3)
- The Chair of the Board of Governors will be informed.
- There should be no statements given to the media. This will be coordinated by the Principal.
- Respect confidentiality: other pupils, parents and staff are only informed on a need-to-know basis.

Advice When Investigating Incidents of Drugs Misuse

- Avoid accusing pupils of drug dealing / possession; these are alleged illicit substances until substantiated by the PSNI
- Conduct search procedures according to school procedures. (Never search personal belongings without permission. It is appropriate to search school property e.g. rooms, cupboards or desks)
- Gather details and data from all the eye-witnesses at the scene
- All statements and phone calls should be recorded, signed and dated;
- Securely retain all emails pertaining to the situation for further investigation
- Record all information on an official incident form and sign and date, or ensure accurate details are given to whoever is writing the form and co-sign if required

Sanctions

If a drug related incident occurs, it will be treated with the utmost seriousness. The disciplinary response made will be dependent upon the circumstances of the incident. It is also the duty of the School to provide appropriate pastoral support.

In brief, the following will apply in the event of a case of drugs misuse:

- Parents will be informed as soon as possible
- The PSNI will be informed in the case of controlled drugs (preferably through the Community and Schools Involvement Officer) and may be informed in the case of any other drug, depending on the circumstances.
- Disciplinary action taken will include the possibility of suspension
- Governors will consider expulsion in the case of pupils where there is intent to supply.
- External agencies may be involved to provide counselling and other programmes of support

Fundamental to dealing with incidents of suspected drug misuse is the principle of 'in loco parentis', and Coleraine College will always take the steps that would reasonably be expected of any parent to safeguard the wellbeing and safety of all the pupils in their charge. The school will always give careful consideration as to how any information relating to an incident of suspected / confirmed drug use / misuse is communicated to staff, pupils and parents / guardians. The parents / guardians of the pupil(s) directly involved in an incident of suspected drug use / misuse will be informed of the incident recognising that the future of a child or adult can be adversely affected.

Dealing with the media

If the school receives an enquiry from the media the caller will only be referred to the principal or, in the absence of the principal, a designated nominee. When responding to the media, the privacy of the pupil(s), his / her family and / or any staff members will be respected at all times.

Conclusion

The school is aware of the risks and dangers to which young people may be exposed through the availability of drugs and similar substances. Our pastoral responsibility commits us to playing a role in helping to combat the misuse of drugs and to providing support for those at risk. In dealing with issues arising, we seek to balance the welfare of the pupil, the ethos of the school and our responsibility to the community. The spirit of this policy is intended to be both educative and preventative.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Procedures are put in place to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of all aspects of this policy.

APPENDIX 1: SCHOOL REGULATIONS CONCERNING ALCOHOL

The regulations concerning alcohol apply to all pupils when on the School site, when in school uniform, or when taking part in any school approved activity, including sporting fixtures, school visits and trips. An educative, preventative approach, rather than a disciplinary approach, is preferred, but sanctions will also be applied to any pupil in breach of regulations concerning alcohol.

Alcohol: pupils are not permitted to possess or consume alcohol, or to supply another pupil with alcohol when on the School site, when in school uniform, or when taking part in any school approved activity, including sporting fixtures, school visits and trips. The priority of any member of staff becoming aware of alcohol being consumed by a pupil will be to ensure the safe care of the pupil. In addition, in the event of a member of staff becoming aware of any incident involving alcohol, he or she will:

- Remove the alcohol from the scene;
- Report the incident as soon as possible to the Principal or Vice Principal (Pastoral) as the Designated Teacher for Drugs within School;
- The Principal or Vice Principal, having established the details of the incident, will inform parents and decide on the sanctions to be applied and other measures to be taken. The particular circumstances of the incident will determine the response and accompanying sanctions.

APPENDIX 2: MAIN TYPES OF CONTROLLED DRUGS BY CLASS

The Misuse of Drugs Act (1971) Principal drugs include:

- Class A Opium; Heroin/methadone; Cocaine/Crack; LSD; Ecstasy; Magic mushrooms (processed);
- Class B drugs prepared for injection.
- Class B Amphetamines e.g. Ritalin, Barbiturates, Codeine, mephedrone, Cannabis resin and Cannabis herb.
- Class C Mild amphetamines; Anabolic steroids; Benzodiazepines (minor tranquillisers eg temazepam, diazepam); Some stimulant, anti-depressant and anti-obesity medicines; Cannabis resin; Cannabis herb; GHB (Gammahydroxy butyrate)

Offences under the Misuse of Drugs Act include;

- Possession – to be knowingly in possession of a relatively small quantity of a controlled drug for personal use
- Possession with intent to supply another person a controlled drug – possessing a larger quantity of a drug or packaging it in a way that indicates it is going to be supplied to others
- Supplying another person a controlled drug – giving or selling drugs to someone else, including friends
- Supplying or offering to supply drug paraphernalia – this includes equipment for smoking cannabis or crack cocaine (extract from Drugs: Guidance for Schools in Northern Ireland CEA 2004)

The local CSIO must be informed in every case where a pupil is found to have, or is suspected of having, controlled drugs in his/her possession, either on his/her person or in their belongings, or where controlled drugs are found on the school premises. In circumstances where the misuse of 'legal highs', solvents, alcohol or prescription medication is suspected, while there is no legal obligation to notify the police, it is the policy of the School that, if considered appropriate, the local CSIO is informed.

APPENDIX 3: INCIDENT REPORT FORM

1. Name of Pupil / Young person _____ DOB _____

Address: _____

School: _____

2. Date of Incident _____ Reported by: _____

Time of Incident _____ Location of Incident _____

Further details

3. First Aid given YES / NO Administered by _____

Ambulance/Doctor Called YES / NO Time of Call _____

Drug Involved (if known) _____ Sample Found YES / NO

Further Details

4. Parent Informed YES / NO Date _____ Time _____

By whom _____

5. Where sample retained _____ or

Date Sample Destroyed _____ Time _____

Witnessed by _____

6. Police Informed YES / NO Date _____ Time _____

By _____ Name of Station / Officer _____

7. EA Drug Education Officer Informed YES / NO Date _____

Time _____ By whom _____

8. Form completed by _____ Date _____

Position _____

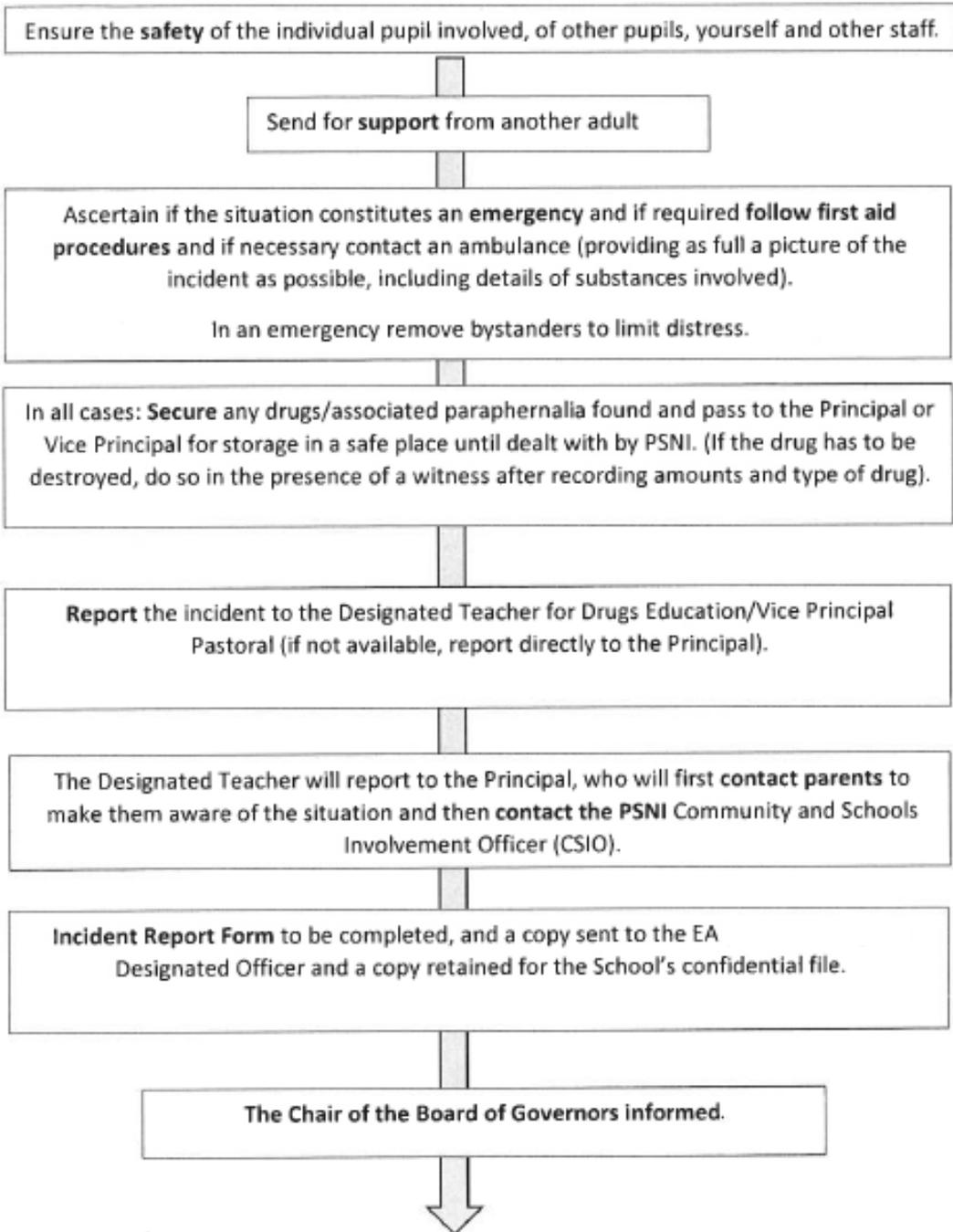
Principal _____ Dated _____

***Advice When Investigating Incidents of Drugs Misuse**

Fundamental to dealing with incidents of suspected drug misuse is the principle of 'in loco parentis', and Coleraine College will always take the steps that would reasonably be expected of any parent to safeguard the wellbeing and safety of all the pupils in their charge.

- i. Avoid accusing pupils of drug dealing / possession; these are alleged illicit substances until substantiated by the PSNI
- ii. Conduct search procedures according to school procedures. (Never search personal belongings without permission. It is appropriate to search school property e.g. rooms, cupboards or desks)
- iii. Gather details and data from all the eye-witnesses at the scene
- iv. All statements and phone calls should be recorded, signed and dated;
- v. Securely retain all emails pertaining to the situation for further investigation
- vi. Record all information on an official incident form and sign and date, or ensure accurate details are given to whoever is writing the form and co-sign if required

APPENDIX 4 PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH A SUSPECTED DRUG INCIDENT



Please note: no statements given to the media. This will be coordinated by the Principal.

Respect confidentiality: other pupils, parents and staff are only informed on a need-to-know basis.