



# **DRUGS & ILLEGAL SUBSTANCES POLICY**

**UPDATED JULY 2008**

## Consultation History

<b>Governors/staff/parents/students</b>	<b>Date</b>
Executive (Leadership Group)	
Students Committee	
Full Governing Body	
Next Review of Policy	October 2011

# **The Ridgeway School & Sixth Form College**

## **Drug and Illegal Substance Policy 2008**

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# The Ridgeway School & Sixth Form College

## Drug and Illegal Substance Policy

### Linked Policies

Behaviour Policy, Curriculum Policy (linked with PHSE & C) and the Child Protection Procedures; Health, Safety and Welfare; Security. Confidentiality

### Definitions and Terminology

A **drug** is defined as being: “A substance people take to change the way they feel, think or behave.” (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime).

Throughout this policy drug refers to:

- All legal drugs, including alcohol, tobacco, volatile substances and “poppers”
- All illegal drugs (those controlled by the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971) – this includes cannabis, ecstasy, cocaine, amphetamines, heroin, LSD, magic mushrooms and ketamine.
- Prescribed medicines – including Ritaline, tranquillisers and antidepressants
- Over-the-counter medicines

**Drug misuse** is defined as:-

“...the taking of a substance which harms or threatens to harm the physical or mental health or social well-being of an individual, or of other individuals, or society at large, or which is illegal. Within this definition can be placed the use of legal substances such as alcohol, solvents, the use of prescribed medicines and the taking of illegal drugs.” (adapted from the Royal College of Psychiatrists 1987 – County Child Protection Guidelines).

## Aims

As a school we recognise that some drugs have a beneficial effect, but also that all drugs have the potential for harm. The school has therefore developed this policy in line with government guidance to ensure that the whole school community will have knowledge of drug and alcohol related issues and how the school will provide education and intervention around these issues. It is clearly linked to the Every Child Matters agenda.

## Objectives

This policy outlines how The Ridgeway School will ensure that:

- Pupils will receive an education that enables them to grow up confidently, knowledgeably, competently and safely in a drug using world
- Pupils get consistent messages about living a healthy lifestyle which includes physical, emotional and mental health
- Pupils are consulted on the drug education provision so that it remains relevant to their needs.
- Staff and pupils are able to understand the nature of drugs, their social and legal status, their uses and effects
- Pupils have the knowledge, understanding and skills to make informed choices
- All staff, pupils and parents/carers are aware of the schools policy on social occasions that occur within the school
- All drug related issues are treated with appropriate and responsible care and management
- Drug related incidents are addressed throughout the school in a consistent manner
- All staff, pupils and parents/carers are aware of the school's legal and statutory obligations, including those around safeguarding children (child protection)
- All staff have access to training and support that enables them to contribute to education on drug issues
- All members of the school community are included within this policy as part of the whole-school approach to drugs
- All staff, pupils and parents have access to information on local services that support young people and families

## **Procedures**

### **A. Drugs Education**

The aims of drug education are to:

Increase pupils' knowledge and understanding and to clarify their misconceptions about:

The short and long term risks of drugs

- The rules and laws relating to drugs
- The impact of drugs on individuals, families and communities
- The prevalence and acceptability of drug use among peers
- The complex moral, social, emotional and political issues surrounding drugs

Develop pupils' personal and social skills to make informed decisions and keep themselves safe and healthy, including:

- Assessing, avoiding and managing risk
- Communicating effectively
- Resisting pressures
- Finding information, help and advice
- Devised problem solving and coping strategies
- Developing self awareness and self esteem

Enable pupils to explore their own and other people's attitudes towards drugs, drug use and drug users, including challenging stereotypes and exploring media and other influences.

The provision is as follows:

(links to National Curriculum programmes of study are indicated in each case)

Year 7	Dangers of smoking and activities to encourage effective decision-making. Basic facts and laws including school expectations (rules) on alcohol and smoking.  <i>Links to POS:</i>  <i>Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE): 2b, 2d</i>
Year 8	Drug Awareness  <i>PSHE: 2b, 2d</i>
Year 9	Role of drugs in society – how the abuse of alcohol, solvents and other drugs affects health. Emergency first-aid. Support agencies.  <i>PSHE: 2a, 2d, 2e, 2h</i>  <i>Citizenship (Ct): 1f</i>
Year 10	Legal and human rights and responsibilities. Criminal justice system.  <i>Ct 1a, 1f</i>
Year 11	Case studies and debates on drug issues  <i>PSHE 2a, 2e, 3j</i> <i>Ct 1c</i>

There is also reference to drugs education in the science curriculum.

Provision will be made for any pupils absent either from a presentation or a lesson in which significant information has been delivered. A summary of the information is given to the pupils in this extra lesson.

## **B. Pupil Welfare and Support**

It is recognised that problems with drug use can affect any young person and may include:

- Accidental exposure to a substance or drug equipment (e.g. discarded needles)
- Parental or sibling drug misuse – it is recognised that drug misuse within the family can have a major impact on a child or young person
- Experimental or recreational use of a drug leading to problems such as accidents or assaults while under the influence, becoming involved with an older drug using group
- Developing a dependency on a drug, either physical or psychological
- Health related problems, either immediate such as collapse or unconsciousness, or longer term such as effects on breathing.
- Mental and emotional health problems, including depression and anxiety.
- Exclusion from their peer group, negative effects on relationships and friendships.
- Difficulties with behaviour at school leading to exclusion
- Involvement in criminality and/or anti-social behaviour

A young person's own drug use can be:

- The main cause for concern
- A symptom of a deeper more complex difficulty
- One of a number of inter-related issues or concerns

Following actions to preserve safety, the health and emotional needs of pupils will be considered. This will include offering support through the pastoral system to ensure a caring response to pupils in distress. Interventions will be considered if the school feels that any pupil is showing signs which indicate particular risks of, or from, involvement with drugs, whether their own or their parents. Such intervention could include consultation with parents and other agencies, possible case conference and subsequent referral to services that can provide early interventions either within the school setting or externally.

## **Vulnerable Young People**

Young people having difficulties in their lives are more likely to begin drug use at an early age, more likely to become involved in using or supplying drugs, and more likely to be in households where parents/carers have drug problems.

Risk factors for young people include:

- Being looked after/in care
- Chaotic home environment
- Unstable accommodation or homelessness
- Parents/carers or siblings having drug problems and/or mental health problems
- Behavioural disorders
- School truants/refusers
- Exclusion from school
- Traumatic experiences such as abuse, neglect, bereavement, loss and family break-up
- Exploited through prostitution
- In contact with mental health and criminal justice systems
- Friendships with anti-social or older peers

Pupils living with associated risk factors will receive on going support through the schools pastoral care system. Their welfare will be monitored regularly, and the school will be represented whenever possible at any multi-agency meetings, such as Local Preventative Groups (LPGs) or Child Protection conferences.

## **Confidentiality**

Complete confidentiality can never be promised to a pupil, though information given in confidence will not be disclosed to any one else unless appropriate. If a pupil discloses that they are using a drug without medical or parental authorisation, the safety of the young person will be the priority. Action will be taken to ensure the pupils comes to no serious harm, which may include one-to-one drug education, sharing information with parents/carers, the school nurse and other external services.

Disclosure of parental drug use will be treated sensitively, with consideration for the parent's confidentiality and safeguarding children (child protection) procedures.

## **Pupils with Medical Needs in School:**

In accordance with Swindon Borough Council policy, the school supports inclusive education. For those pupils with specific medical needs that may require treatment, staff will receive regular training, a record of which will be kept in the School Medical File.

Pupils will not be given medication by any staff without specific written consent from the parent/carer. Written consent will be renewed six monthly where medication is required long-term.

Prescribed medication must be delivered to the school office and will be logged in the medications book and stored in a locked cupboard. Emergency medications such as Asthma inhalers and Epi-pens will be logged in and kept by the class teacher in the classroom in a designated box.

The log-book will be a written record of the time of administration, name of medicine, dose given, and pupil's name. Administration of medicines will be by (name of role with responsibility for Medical Needs in School).

Children on long-term medical care will have an Individual health Care Plan drawn up according to school procedures. Staff will receive training about emergency treatment.

## **First Aid Procedures:**

Any pupil assessed to be under the influence of a substance will be closely monitored and be given first aide/medical intervention if necessary.

Following advice from the DfEE on First Aid in Schools (1998) this school provides adequate and appropriate equipment and facilities for providing first aid.

## C. Responding to Incidents (See also Appendix – Wiltshire Guidance)

If a drugs related incident is suspected it is essential that certain procedures are followed. Searches are subject to the following procedures and safeguards:

- the consent of the pupil should always be sought for a search of personal property only, e.g. bag, pencil case, (if consent is not given, the parents should be contacted and asked to persuade the child to give consent to the search or the police should be called for a search to take place);
- assuming consent is granted, a second (adult) person as a witness should always be present during any form of search activity;
- any search activity should always be conducted in such a way as to minimise potential embarrassment or distress;
- school property (e.g. locker) may be searched without the pupil's consent, although it is good practice to seek and gain consent;
- when a pupil is suspected of concealing illegal or other unauthorised drugs, **it is not appropriate for a member of staff to carry out a personal search;** this includes the searching of outer clothing and inside pockets; instead, every effort should be made to persuade the individual pupil to hand over the concealed substance;
- where the individual pupil refuses and the drug is believed to be illegal, and the school wishes to pursue the matter and proceed along formal lines, the police must be called; the police are permitted to conduct a personal search if they believe a crime has been committed, or to prevent harm to themselves or others following an arrest; it is acceptable to ask a pupil to remain in a secure area whilst waiting for the arrival of the police.

Whilst it is not acceptable to touch or handle pupils the exception is in cases where "reasonable force" is merited, e.g. if the pupil is a danger to him or herself as a result of a drugs overdose.

## **Taking Possession of and Disposal of Suspected Illegal Drugs**

It is permissible in law for the school to take temporary possession of a substance suspected of being an illegal drug for the purposes of preventing an offence from being committed or continued in relation to that drug, providing that all reasonable steps are taken to destroy the drug or deliver it to a person lawfully entitled to take custody of it.

The substance is handed to the Deputy Headteacher (Pupil Development) who, with a second adult witness present, seals the sample in a plastic bag and records the date and time of the seizure/find and details of the witnesses present.

The police are contacted. If the police are informed of the name of a pupil in possession of an illegal drug and they decide to take formal action, interviews or arrests should only take place in school in exceptional circumstances; under normal circumstances the police should make arrangements for a pupil to attend a local police station accompanied by an appropriate adult for interview.

Parents/carers are informed, unless this would jeopardise the safety of the pupil.

### **Parents under the Influence:**

A parent attending the school under the influence should be regarded as a Safeguarding Children (Child Protection) concern, and appropriate action to safeguard the young person should be taken if necessary. This may include:

- **Arranging for another parent know to the young person to look after the young person**
- Arranging for the young person to remain in school until a responsible adult can collect them, i.e. the named contact on the emergency contacts list
- Contact Police to report incident if parent is abusive, aggressive or threatening to young person, staff or other members of the school community.
- Safeguarding Children (Child Protection) Officer to contact Social Services and make referral if appropriate
- Arranging an appointment for the parent to meet with school staff to discuss concerns and strategies for any future incidents

The safety of the young person is paramount, and staff must follow the schools Safeguarding Children (Child Protection) Policy and Procedures.

## **Use of School Premises for Illegal Drug Taking**

The School recognises that it has a legal responsibility to ensure that it does not knowingly allow its premises to be used for the consumption or supply of illegal drugs. Wherever possible appropriate action will be taken, which may include reporting to the police incidents of drug paraphernalia being found on the school premises.

The school will liaise with the police and co-operate fully if the police decide to investigate further incidents where the premises are thought to be used out of normal hours for drug taking.

**See Appendix 2 – flow-chart of Finding and Disposing of Drug Paraphernalia**

### **Drug Related Incidents Off Site:**

Any drug related incident that occurs off-site, ie a school day or residential trip will be dealt with by attending staff and reported to the School Drugs Co-ordinator at the earliest opportunity for recording. The School Drugs Co-ordinator will then co-ordinate an investigation and decide on appropriate action.

### **Dissemination of Policy:**

This policy will be disseminated via:

- School handbook
- Parents evenings
- School website
- Staff training events
- In class education
- Assemblies
- School council forum
- Healthy school status work
- Teachers network project

## **D. Sanctions (see Appendix A for classification table and local statement on reclassification of cannabis)**

If a pupil is found to be in possession of an illegal drug or substance, the sanctions are:

- A fixed period exclusion is used for any pupil found in possession of Class B or C drugs. The term will depend upon the seriousness and circumstances of the offence. There are occasions when a period of exclusion is used for further investigation into an incident. Return to school will be conditional on parental acceptance of an individual social education programme. This might include counselling, referral to an external agency, working through a drug education work-pack, etc.
- A permanent exclusion will be considered for any pupil found in possession of Class B or C drugs on more than one occasion.
- A permanent exclusion will be considered for any pupil found in possession of Class A drugs (first offence).
- A permanent exclusion will be considered for any pupil found to be 'dealing' drugs of any category in school - i.e. selling, sharing, distributing, etc.

The policy and procedures apply at all times of the school day, including journeys to and from school and on all educational visits.

### **Role of Staff if there are Suspicions of Drug Abuse**

Staff are encouraged to report any suspicion that a pupil they teach may be using drugs or harmful substances. This is recorded by the head of year and appropriate action taken, e.g. further vigilance of the pupil concerned, an informal discussion with the pupil, discussion with parents, referral to the school nurse. Care is taken in such cases to avoid using language that appears to accuse a pupil of illegal activity, rather the emphasis is on suspicion and speculation, showing care for the pupil.

## **E. Links with Outside Agencies Including Support to Help Pupils with Drugs Problems**

The school maintains good working relationships with the local police and the school nurse to ensure regular communication of information and matters of concern about pupils involved in drugs and the use of harmful substances.

Pupils who are known to use drugs or harmful substances are referred to the school nurse for an appropriate decision on the best course of action, e.g. further referral to a specialist agency. The role of the school nurse is to act as the professional agency with the best knowledge of where to refer a pupil.

## **F. Involvement of Parents**

Parents are consulted on the drugs policy.

Meetings for parents are held in the evenings prior to any presentations to pupils, e.g. from the Royal Navy/LA Drugs Adviser to discuss the issues and content that will be presented.

Except in very rare circumstances where there may be a risk to the pupil under the terms of The Children Act, parents are informed of any drugs related incident concerning their own child in school.

When a pupil who has a drugs problem seeks help from a member of staff, usually a tutor, discretion and professional judgement is used as to how best to involve parents. Again, except in very rare circumstances where there may be a risk to the pupil under the terms of The Children Act, parents are always informed of the referral, but the pupil's circumstances are taken into account to determine how this is done. In the event of such rare circumstances occurring, the guidelines of the school's child protection procedures are followed. The options are:

- a. the parents are contacted immediately
- b. the pupil is given the chance to speak to his or her parents first
- c. an outside agency, e.g. the school nurse is asked to meet with the parents

## **G. Smoking**

Smoking is banned in school. It is also banned on all educational visits, on school buses, in the areas immediately in the vicinity of the school and on all journeys to and from school.

Any pupil found smoking is always punished with a detention and parents are informed. A more severe punishment is issued if any pupil is found to be smoking in toilets.

A register of known smokers is kept. Parents are informed that the school has sufficient evidence for their child to be included on the register and help is sought to deter the smoking habit. The services of a local National Health Cessation Group Clinic are used to help pupils addicted to smoking to cease the habit.

## **H. Alcohol**

Alcohol is banned in school.

Any pupil found in possession of alcohol, or found to be drinking, or under the influence of alcohol is punished severely, usually through the use of an exclusion.

## **I. Responsibilities**

The Deputy Head (Pupil Development Manager) is responsible for monitoring and reviewing all aspects of the policy and procedures. The Pupil Development Manager is the school's drugs coordinator, the role recommended by SCODA (Standing Conference on Drug Abuse).

The team leader of PSHE & C is responsible for delivering drugs education in the curriculum.

## **J. Monitoring**

The policy is reviewed and updated every two years by the Pupils Committee.

The curriculum content and strategies for delivery are reviewed annually by the Team Leader PSHE & C.

Details of all drugs-related incidents are recorded on Reports Manager and thus data is available for all incidents.

The drug education delivered is evaluated as being of an appropriate standard to achieve National Healthy School Status.

The schools drugs policy is assessed as of an appropriate standard to achieve National Healthy School Status.

Comments and observations from pupils, staff, parents/carers, governors and supporting services are considered when reviewing this policy or when planning drug education within the curriculum.

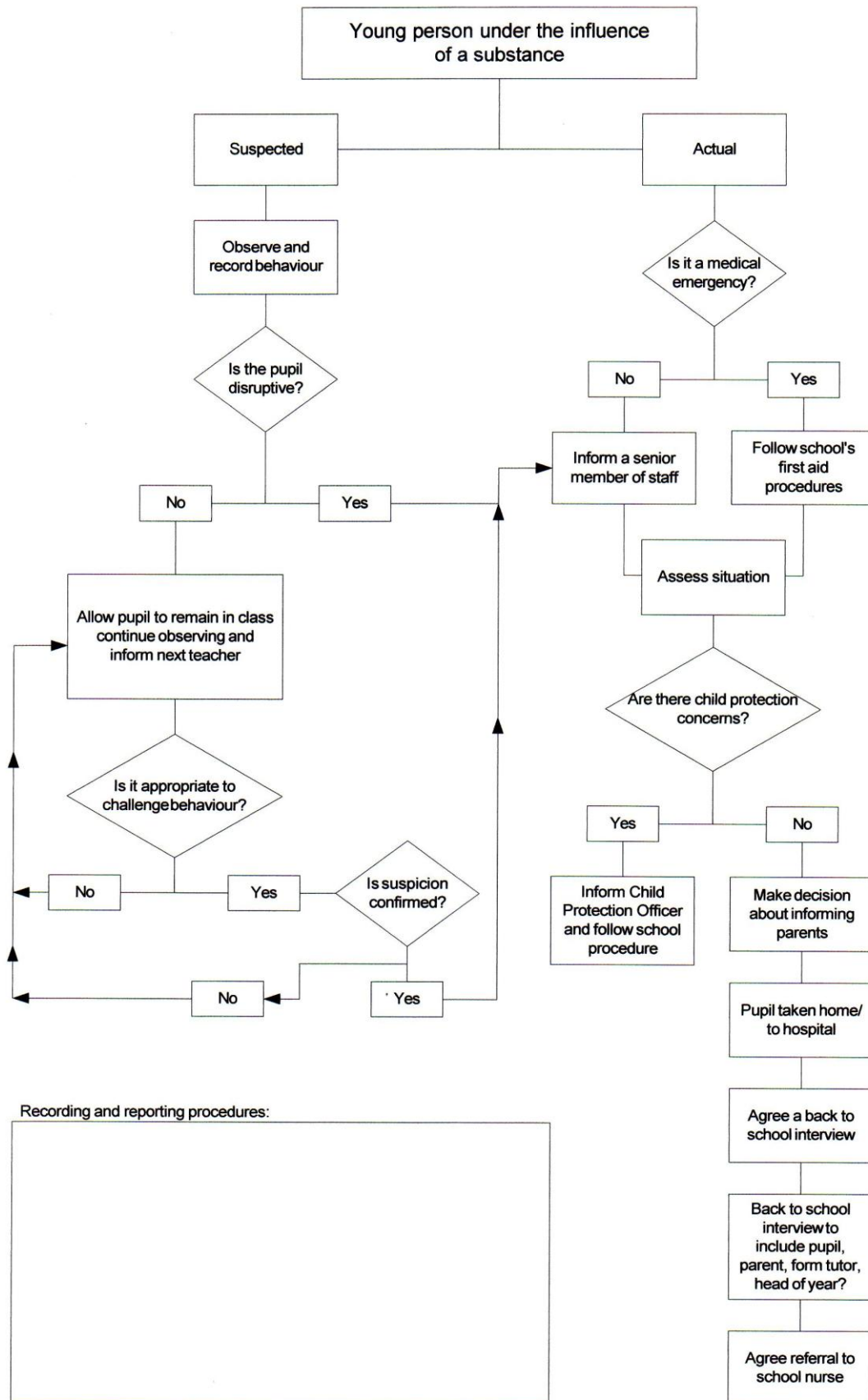
That drug related incidents are addressed throughout our school in a consistent manner, and that sanctions used and outcomes are monitored.

That staff have access to training and support that they evaluate as enabling them to provide education on drug abuses.

That findings from surveys of young people such as the Students Health Education Unit (SHEU) reports are evaluated for local/individual schools data into drug use and attitudes to drug use.

That vulnerable children and young people, or those at risk of exclusion, are referred to appropriate services for early interventions or child protection issues relating to drug use.

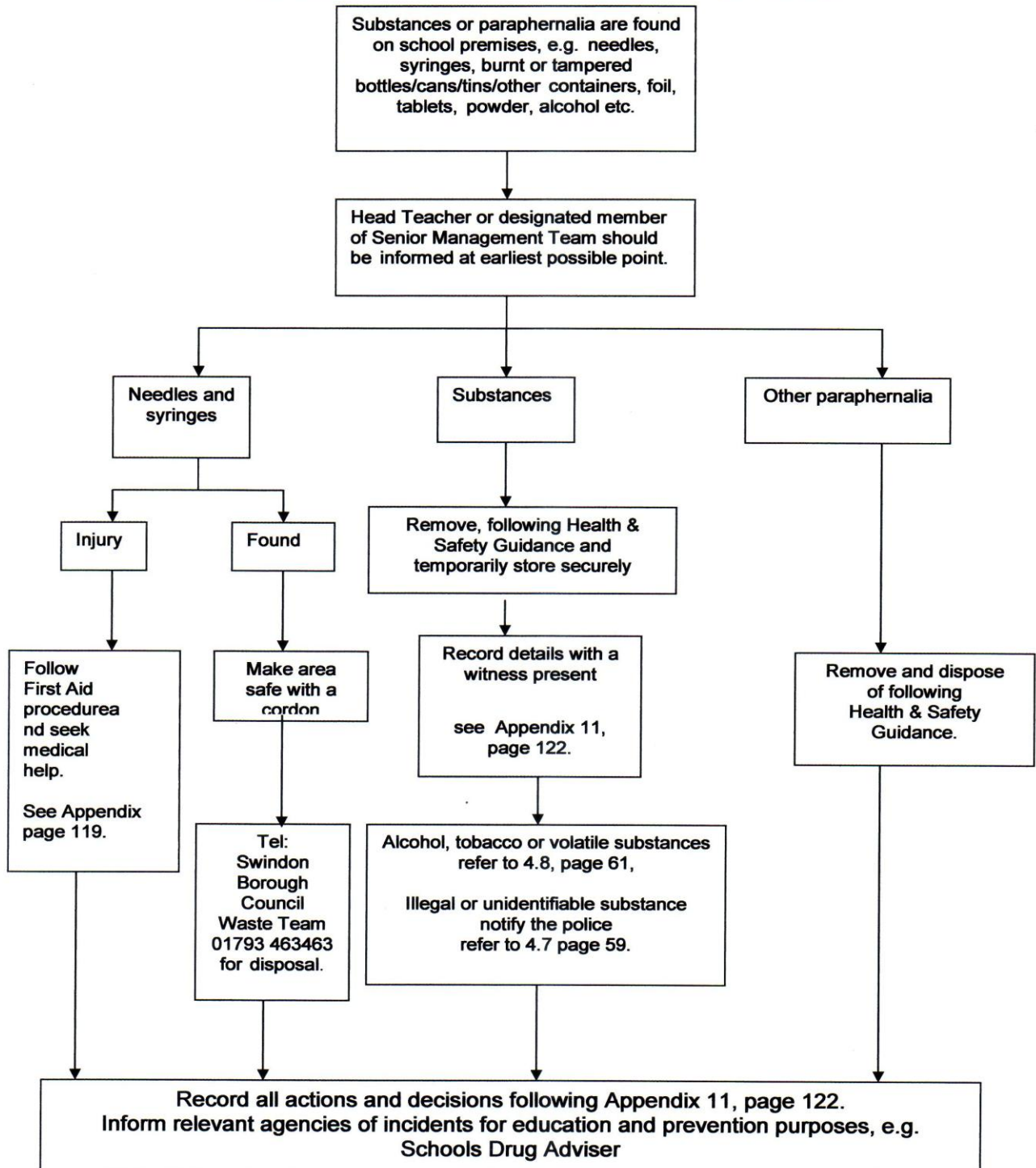
## Appendix 1 – Flowchart for dealing with young person under the influence



## Appendix 2

### Finding and disposing of substances and drug paraphernalia

All references apply to DfES Drugs: Guidance for Schools 2004



**Classification: The Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 (amended January 2004)**

	Class A	Class B	Class C
Common drugs included	Opium Heroin/methadone Cocaine/Crack cocaine LSD Ecstasy Magic mushrooms (processed) Class B drugs prepared for injection	Amphetamines Barbiturates Codeine Ritalin	Cannabis Resin Cannabis Herb Anabolic steroids Benzodiazepines (minor tranquillisers, e.g. temazepam) GHB (gamma-hydroxy butyrate) Some stimulant, anti-depressant and anti-obesity medicines
Maximum penalty for possession	7 years and/or a fine	5 years and/or a fine	2 years and/or a fine
Maximum penalty for trafficking, supply or production	Life imprisonment and a fine	14 years and/or a fine	14 years and/or a fine

Statement to Evening Advertiser from Swindon Schools Secondary Headteachers, March 2004:

## Reclassification of Cannabis

From 29<sup>th</sup> January 2004 Cannabis has been reclassified following the advice the Government has received from the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs that cannabis is harmful, but not as harmful as drugs such as amphetamines. This change will allow for more credible and therefore effective education messages to be put out to young people about the harm caused by cannabis and other illegal drugs. It will also permit the various drugs agencies to put more focus on tackling Class A drugs, such as heroin and cocaine, the ones which do the most harm and destroy lives.

The reclassification of cannabis will mean:

- Cannabis will remain illegal – it is harmful
- Maximum penalties for possession of cannabis will be reduced
- Maximum penalties for supplying or dealing in cannabis will be unchanged
- For adults who are found in possession of cannabis, there will be a presumption against arrest. However, a police officer can arrest where someone is smoking in public view, is a repeat offender, is in possession of cannabis close to youth premises, is a vulnerable person or where there is a local policing problem linked to cannabis use. In other cases, the person will be given a warning on the spot and have their cannabis taken away from them.
- For a young person under 18 who is found in possession of cannabis, they will be dealt with under the early warning scheme in the Crime and Disorder Act. They will be taken to the police station and, if they are a first offender, they are likely to receive a formal reprimand. The young person's circumstances will be looked into, to establish whether there are underlying problems which need help.
- A young person under 18 who has offended more than once is likely to receive a final warning or be prosecuted in court. If the court finds them guilty, they are likely to receive a fine or a community punishment.

We need to deal with any uncertainty or concerns among our pupils about the legal status of cannabis and to ensure that they are aware that reclassification does not mean that cannabis is harmless. On the contrary, cannabis is harmful.

### Additional Documents for advice and guidance

Blueprint – Drug Education Moving Forward, [www.drugeducationforum.org.uk/extra1](http://www.drugeducationforum.org.uk/extra1)

Drug guidance for Schools – DfES 2004

National Healthy Schools Standards – Drug Education (including alcohol and tobacco).

Copies of all these documents are available via the School Drugs Adviser, Healthy School Team Tel. 01793 464624.

## **SECTION 1.1 INTRODUCTION**

Headteachers are ultimately responsible for deciding how to respond to drug-related incidents. Different situations will require different responses. Each institution will need to consider and prepare clear policies and procedures for dealing with drug-related incidents which are understood and agreed by all staff, governors, parents and pupils.

As institutions working with young people we have a collective and shared responsibility in drug education and a collective responsibility within a wider community towards dealing with substance misuse.

**Substance misuse** is a term encompassing all mind altering substances, which are commonly referred to as “drugs” and include other legal substances frequently forgotten, such as solvents, tobacco and alcohol.

The following guidelines are designed to help schools to be prepared for any drug-related incidents and to respond appropriate and effectively. Incidents, if they arise, need to be treated in a consistent and agreed manner. We should always bear in mind that the welfare and care of the individual involved is considered paramount.

### **What are we trying to achieve?**

- a. prevent recurrence;
- b. safeguard others;
- c. provide help and support to the young person from the right people;
- d. maintain a positive image of the school;
- e. provide a consistency of approach;
- f. establish good collaborative working relationships with other agencies;
- g. create an atmosphere in which the use of substances on the school premises is unacceptable.

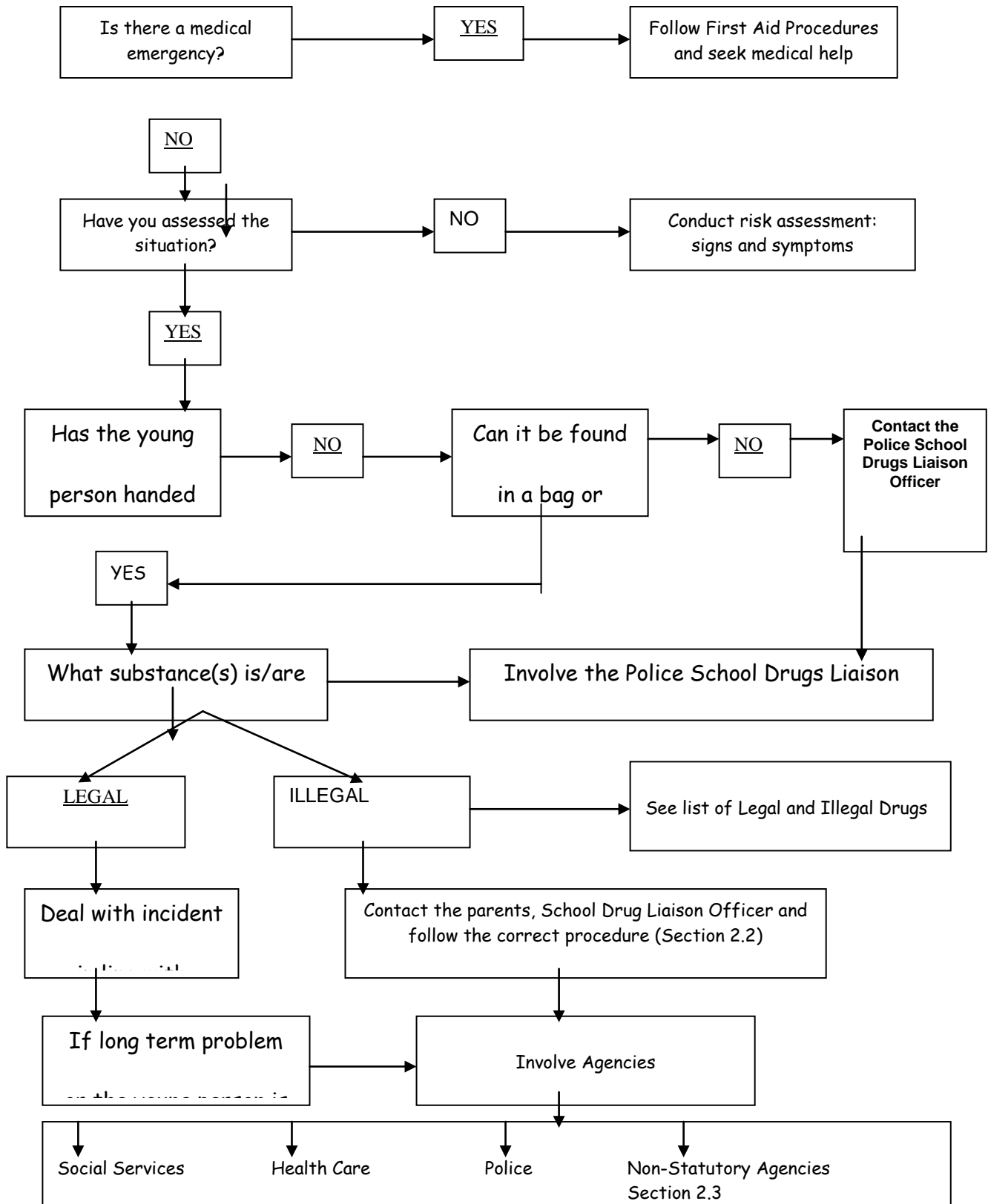
These principles should form part of the School’s Drug Policy

## SECTION 1.2 IMMEDIATE CONCERNS

### IDENTIFYING AND DEALING WITH A SUSPICIOUS SUBSTANCE

“The Secretary of State would expect the police to be informed when illegal drugs are found on a pupil or on school premises.”

Drug Prevention and schools, DfES, Circular 4/95 para. 49



## **What do you do if you find or are given a suspicious substance?**

To avoid placing yourself in danger of “possession” of a substance suspected of being illegal, you should:

- a. record the place, date, time and circumstances in which the substance(s) came into your possession. If there was a witness, ask them to countersign;
- b. in the presence of the Headteacher and the young person place the substance(s) (in its original wrapping or container) in a clear plastic bag which can be sealed, dated and signed, and handed to the police. Take care when handling needles and syringes. Always wear gloves and place in a rigid container if possible. Contact the Police in accordance with the procedure identified in Section 2.2;
- c. if a syringe is found in the School grounds, this should be removed taking all possible care to minimise danger. Pupils should be informed not to touch, and to report the incident immediately;
- d. if a member of staff has reasonable cause to suspect that a young person has an illegal substance concealed in his or her locker or desk, a search, preferably with a witness present and the young person’s consent, is appropriate;
- e. if a member of staff suspects a pupil of concealing an illegal substance on his or her person or in a bag, the young person should be asked to turn out his or her pockets / bag.

If a young person refuses to hand over a suspected illegal substance he or she should be detained under close supervision while the police are called. A preliminary search (coat, jacket, pockets, etc.) will be undertaken in School using the powers of search that the police have under The Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984.

## SECTION 1.3      LEGAL RESPONSIBILITIES

“A drug is a substance that alters the way in which the body functions”

Martin Platt – Drugs in Perspective

### What is a drug?

A “drug can be an illegal substance, e.g. Ecstasy and Cannabis or a legal substance, e.g. medicines and solvents, all of which can be misused. Some drugs have a physical effect on the body, such as relieving pain or fighting infection, others have a psychological effect as they affect the mind or emotions. Drugs can therefore be described as effecting change either physically or psychologically.

#### Legal Drugs

Cigarettes  
Alcohol  
Amyl Nitrite (Poppers)  
Solvents and volatile substances, e.g. lighter fuel  
Unprocessed magic mushrooms  
Ketamine

In certain circumstances it is not illegal for young people to have in their possession or use any of these substances. However, the School can decide that these substances are not allowed on the premises and confiscate them. All these substances and prescribed drugs should be covered by the School’s Drugs Policy.

#### Illegal Drugs

Cannabis  
LSD  
Ecstasy  
Amphetamines  
Heroin  
Methadone  
Cocaine  
Crack Cocaine  
Barbiturates  
Processed magic mushrooms  
Tranquillisers

The above are substances controlled by the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 and are illegal, unless prescribed to the individual in question. It is illegal for prescribed drugs to be supplied to persons other than to the person named on the prescription. It is important to note that prescribed medicines can be misused.

## What are your legal responsibilities?

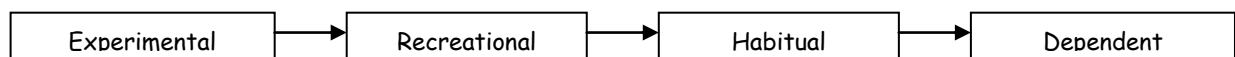
You must inform the police if you:

- a. know about the **use** of any controlled drugs on the premises (it is an offence if you take no action – Section 8, Misuse of Drugs Act 1971);
- b. know about the **supply** of any controlled drugs on the premises (it is an offence if you take no action).

## SECTION 2 ASSESSMENT AND SUPPORT

### SECTION 2.1 RISK ASSESSMENT

Substance use may present a problem at any point along the following scale:



There are many different reasons why young people use drugs. It is important when assessing the situation to identify at what stage the young person is at along the above scale of use.

**What do you need to find out in order to assess the situation and decide on appropriate action?**

**The nature of the use:**

- a. what substance(s) is/are being used?
- b. what is the underlying problem?
- c. how often? (one-off? occasional? recreational? dependent?)
- d. how long has it been going on?
- e. how are the substances being taken? – swallowing, eating, sniffing, smoking, injecting?

## **Other important information**

- a. where does the substance misuse take place?
- b. where are the substances being obtained from?
- c. what quantity is involved?
- d. are substances being mixed?
- e. what does the young person know about the substance?
- f. what is the young person's attitude? – how would they describe their use? – how do they feel about it?
- g. where did the money come from to purchase the substance?

## **Related problems to consider**

- a. are others involved?
- b. who else knows?
- c. is it affecting relationships, school work?
- d. what other activities are occurring which might be connected?

## **Warning signs and symptoms in individuals**

- a. changes in the pattern of attendance
- b. decline in school performance
- c. decline in willingness to participate in activities
- d. changing friendship patterns
- e. changing pattern of interests
- f. spending considerable time away from home
- g. unusual outbreaks of temper
- h. change in style of clothing
- i. changes in the availability and use of money
- j. borrowing / stealing money
- k. volatile mood swings
- l. restlessness and irritability
- m. loss of appetite
- n. lethargy
- o. lack of motivation and interest
- p. reduced concentration
- q. personal disorganisation
- r. tiredness
- s. loss of weight
- t. spots concentrated around the face and mouth
- u. poor physical appearance

- v. heavy use of perfume or aftershave to disguise smell of substances
- w. stains on clothing and body
- x. poor hygiene
- y. dilated / constricted pupils
- z. wearing sunglasses at inappropriate times
- aa. problems at home

It is important to remember that many of these signs and symptoms could be caused by factors other than substances. Therefore it is important not to jump to conclusions. Look for clusters of symptoms.

### **Warning Signs and Symptoms in groups**

- a. hearing rumours and gossip about the group
- b. all being absent together
- c. keeping apart from others
- d. getting into trouble as a group
- e. talking to strangers on or near the premises
- f. using slang names associated with drug taking
- g. exchanging money or objects in unusual circumstances
- h. stealing which appears to involve several individuals

Paraphernalia likely to suggest drug abuse

- a. foil containers or cup shapes made from silver foil, perhaps discoloured by heat**
- b. metal tins**
- c. spoons discoloured by heat**
- d. pill boxes**
- e. plastic, cellophane or metal foil wrappers**
- f. small plastic or glass phials or bottles**
- g. twists of paper**
- h. straws**
- i. sugar lumps**
- j. syringes and needles**
- k. cigarette papers and lighters**
- l. spent matches**
- m. plastic bags or butane gas containers (solvent abuse)**
- n. cardboard or other tubes (for heroin)**
- o. stamps, stickers, transfers or similar items indicating a drugs culture**
- p. shredded cigarettes, home rolled cigarettes and pipes – “blow machines” (cannabis)**
- q. paper, about 6 cms square, folded to form an envelope**

## **SECTION 2.2 THE RESPONSE OF THE SCHOOL – A GENERIC FRAMEWORK AND SPECIFIC GUIDELINES**

“There will still be some young people of school age who choose to experiment with illegal drugs even if they have both the knowledge of the risks and the skills to resist peer pressure. Schools therefore need clear policies and procedures for dealing with drug-related incidents on school premises and for working with other services concerned with young people to offer appropriate advice and support.”

Circular 4/95: Drug Prevention and Schools

### **Incidents and possible options / responses**

Every incident needs to be looked on its own merit. It is important that each case must be documented fully as soon as possible after the incident and in any case within 24 hours. It may be helpful to supply a copy of any information being placed on a pupil's record to the parents. Schools should see exclusions as a last resort.

The following are examples of possible incidents and options / responses.

#### **A minor incident, involving one person, and there is:**

- a. a one-off event involving possession of a substance;
- b. no danger to others;
- c. does not involve “chaotic behaviour”
- d. a substance which needs to be identified and removed from the School

#### **consider the following options / responses by:**

- a. involving the parents immediately;
- b. discussing with the police School Drug Liaison Office
- c. using internal disciplinary sanctions (reference should also be made in the School's Behaviour Policy, as directed in 8/94)
- d. consider providing support and counselling if appropriate;
- e. documenting the incident;
- f. implementing (substance-related) behavioural contracts (commitment should be made in writing and signed by both the young person and parents)

If the young person does not appreciate the seriousness of the situation, you should consider a fixed term exclusion.

**A more serious incident, which may involve more than one person, and there is:**

- a. involvement of larger quantities and there is evidence of supplying;
- b. a danger to others;
- c. repeated use of substances;
- d. behaviour which is unacceptable;
- e. a substance which needs to be identified and removed from the School.

**consider the following options / responses by:**

- a. involving the parents immediately;
- b. discussion with the School Drug Liaison Officer;
- c. involving Social Services as necessary;
- d. documenting the incident;
- e. using internal disciplinary sanctions;
- f. considering a fixed period exclusion;
- g. providing support and counselling if appropriate;
- h. implementing (substance-related) behavioural contracts (commitment should be made in writing and signed by both the young person and parents)

**in addition, if:**

- a. there is no commitment to appropriate future conduct;
- b. others are at risk (e.g. by supplying or being caught in possession with intent to supply);
- c. the reputation of the School as a safe environment is in question;

**consider the following options / responses by;**

- a. involving the parents immediately;
- b. considering permanent exclusion;
- c. providing information on support available in consultation; with the support agencies.

Permanent exclusion is your final option and should be part of a multi-agency response to the individual's difficulties. There is no evidence that excluding drug users will deter others from using drugs. For the person excluded it may provide greater opportunities for drug use, especially in a situation where supervision and counselling are absent. Engaging young people in education will mean that they are less at risk. However, in the interests of other pupils you may decide to use this option.

## **School activities outside of School premises**

### **Prior to a school trip / visit**

- a. ensure that all parents are aware of the School policy regarding substance related incidents and that any purchase of substances will be dealt with severely;
- b. provide information to parents which identify what items / substances would not be allowed.

### **If you find a young person(s) in possession of an illegal substance in this country, respond by:**

- a. informing the Headteacher immediately, who should contact the parents;
- b. following the procedures already identified depending on the seriousness of the incident.

### **If you find a young person in possession of an illegal substance abroad, respond by:**

- a. informing the Headteacher immediately, who should contact the parents;
- b. documenting the incident;
- c. following the procedures already identified depending on the seriousness of the incidents using internal disciplinary sanctions – an option might be to send the young person home at the parents' expense.

Under no circumstances attempt to bring any suspected substance back into this country.

Each school must make a decision how incidents which occur abroad will be dealt with. This must be written into the School Drug Policy and shared with parents.

“The lack of detail in some policy statements ... suggests tensions in school in terms of when and how to involve the pastoral systems, parents, the leadership group and outside agencies in dealing with possible incidents. Certainly, lack of a clear policy leads to a minority of schools simply invoking their disciplinary procedures which in turn sometimes results in the school moving too quickly to exclusion. Such schools fail to consider sufficiently carefully the educational and social development of the pupil concerned and the impact of the exclusion on the pupil as well as on others. In some instances, exclusion can place the pupil at risk of further exposure to drugs. In the majority of schools, isolation of the pupil or temporary exclusion provides a breathing space while the school, in consultation with others, decides upon the most appropriate course of action.”

### ***Drugs Education in Schools Ofsted, A Report from***

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools 1997, p.24

## **Working with the Police**

### **School Drug Liaison Officers**

In order to achieve a consistency of approach, Wiltshire Constabulary has agreed that School Drug Liaison Officers will be the point of contact in dealing with drug-related incidents in schools where a suspected illegal substance is found on the school site. These Officers will discuss each individual case on a “without prejudice”\* basis, with a view to helping staff reach the most effective solution for the young person and the School. The Police may be able to confirm the nature of the substance(s) using a basic testing kit.

\*The police will not commit themselves to a particular course of action and may agree to leave the matter in the hands of the parents and School.

These Officers have been appointed with the intention of providing schools with a consistency of response which takes account of the needs of young people, the School and the requirements of the law.

They will be concerned about the means of supply of the substance(s) whatever the outcome and will arrange for the collection, and if necessary, destruction of the substance(s).

### **Identifying a member of staff with responsibility for substance related incidents**

Schools should identify a member of staff with responsibility for dealing with Drug-related Incidents and liaising with the appropriate School Drug Liaison Officer in order to build up a relationship of trust.

Some outcomes might be:

- a. the School Drug Liaison Officer will agree that the matter should be left to be dealt with by the School. A receipt will be given for the substance which will be destroyed by the police.
- b. the matter will be dealt with by the police who will interview the young person(s) concerned at home with the parents present, keeping the School informed.

In either case, the Police Officer will be concerned to find out where the substance was obtained and how the means of supply can be stopped. At all times the School will be kept informed so that support can continue to be given.

Depending on the circumstances following an incident the young person may:

- a. receive a caution by the Police (a recorded formal warning)

- b. be given caution plus (this involves other agencies and includes diversionary schemes away from the behaviour);
- c. in very serious circumstances be taken before the Juvenile Court.

### **Confidentiality**

- a. do not promise confidentiality: it is unrealistic and may put others at risk;
- b. professionals working with young people should share information with the Headteacher and others on a need to know basis;
- c. the young person should be told when information is passed on and to whom;
- d. the young person should be reassured that they will not be named as the source of information that implicates others.

### **Working with Support Agencies**

- a. where special circumstances apply to the young person concerned, e.g. is already in the care of Social Services or involved in the Youth Justice system, contact should be made with the appropriate agency for consultation and to obtain appropriate support;
- b. it may be necessary to contact these agencies prior to contacting parents should there be serious concerns of the young person's safety, or that young person is in care;
- c. information, advice and support including counselling can be obtained from a range of external agencies to support the needs of the young person(s) concerned (see Section 2.3)

### **Working with parents**

- a. young people should be aware that parents are to be informed;
- b. you should inform parents – however, there may be situations where parents are not informed, e.g. where a parent is likely to physically injure a young person;
- c. it may be helpful to facilitate a young person / parent meeting;
- d. the Headteacher of the School should meet with the parents to explain the situation and follow up action;
- e. parents may need to be made aware that the young person needs love and understanding, rather than reaction and rejection if they are to resolve positively and modify their behaviour;
- f. parents may also need help and support to achieve a broader understanding of the issues of substance use.

## **Counselling**

Counselling may be useful where initial assessment has shown that the young person has particular problems. Few institutions have counsellors, but the institution may wish to have non-judgemental discussions which encourage the young person to do most of the talking. However, the use of a trained counsellor is the best option (see Section 2.3).

If you wish to carry out discussions you should:

- a. choose a comfortable setting where you won't be interrupted and the young person will feel at ease;
- b. discuss the limits of confidentiality;
- c. ask open-ended questions, e.g. "tell me about ...?"
- d. encourage the young person to do the talking;
- e. try not to be confrontational or moralise;
- f. not condone the use of substances;
- g. focus on the young person rather than the substance use – there may be other problems that have led to the use.

## **Responding to the media**

It is advisable to respond to media enquiries and to have a prepared statement covering incidents of this sort before you are placed in the position of responding. This should be short and could say:

*"The matter is being dealt with in co-operation with parents in order to resolve the matter, in accordance with School policy."*

Don't be pressurised into giving further information on the spot, and before agreeing to give further information:

- a. ask who the reporter represents;
- b. ask who the article is for;
- c. write down any specific questions;
- d. take their name, phone / fax number / e-mail address, and arrange to provide them with a response.

## **How you should prepare your response**

- a. prepare your response in writing;
- b. make reference to the School Policy;
- c. be honest, don't attempt to cover up or mislead;
- d. keep your comments to issues concerned with the school;
- e. don't provide information prejudicial to individual young persons;
- f. end with a positive statement which shows that the matter has been effectively managed;
- g. check your response with your appropriate Press Office.

## **Preparing a more lengthy model statement**

You may wish to have a statement ready prepared, and it should include the following:

- a. reference to the School Policy;
- b. confirmation, if appropriate, of the outline details of the incident (no names should be mentioned);
- c. the steps you have taken and their purpose (this should include preventing re-occurrence, safeguarding other young people, support and help for the young person);
- d. the agencies you have involved, checking that they are happy to be identified;
- e. state the work that the School undertakes in the area of drug prevention, e.g. all young people follow a comprehensive drug-related education programme.

## **Liaison with Governors**

- a. inform the Chairman of Governors as soon as possible of the consequences of any incidents – parental concern, media interest, police involvement, support provided;
- b. where confidential information is concerned, the Chairman of Governors is responsible for deciding what information other Governors need to know. This is particularly important regarding information about individual young people.

## **Support and sanctions**

- a. schools must not be seen to condone substance use and misuse, and every young person should be made aware of the consequences of any substance-related incident;
- b. schools should develop a range of responses, which include support, sanctions and counselling, which reflect the different kinds of substance-related offences;
- c. fixed period exclusions may be appropriate in some cases and permanent exclusions may be warranted as a final sanction when all other reasonable steps have been taken. The School needs to try to ensure that appropriate support exists in order that young people are not put at further risk following an exclusion. The underlying problems could well involve unsatisfactory relationships, experiences and stress at School. The approach to sanctions will influence the effectiveness of any support and counselling;
- d. as with other school rules it is important that young people should know what is and what is not allowed and any sanctions which may follow from substance use;
- e. any sanctions should be seen as consistent and fair concerning substance use on school premises.

## **SECTION 2.3 WHO TO TURN TO FOR HELP, ADVICE AND SUPPORT**

### **NATIONAL**

#### **National Drug Helpline**

**Tel: 0800 77 66 00**

A free confidential service offering advice, information and support about drugs and solvents. Open 24 hours a day.

#### **Action on Smoking and Health**

**Tel: 020-7739-5902**

109 Gloucester Place, London, W1H 4EJ  
A charity that provides information to students, health professionals and the general public on all aspects of smoking control

#### **Drugs in Schools**

**Tel: 01345 36 6666**

Helpline 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. Monday – Friday. All calls charged at local rate. A confidential service for young people, parents, staff concerned about drugs in school.

#### **Quit**

**Tel: 0800-002200**

Victory House, 170 Tottenham Court Road  
London W1P 0HA  
Offers help and advice to smokers wishing to quit and additional advice and support to non-smokers

#### **Release**

**Tel:0808-8000800**

388 Old Street, London, EC1V 9LT

#### **Re-solv**

**Tel: 01785-817885**

30A High Street, Stone, Staffordshire, ST15 8AW

#### **SCODA (Standing Council on Drug Abuse)**

**Tel: 020-7928-7071**

32-36 Loman Street, London, SE1 0EE

## **SWINDON**

### **Connections**

**Tel: 01793-695255**

Offers counselling for 14-25 year olds. Appointment system and drop-in

### **Druglink**

**Tel: 01793-810133**

Advice, support, counselling, treatment, peer support, training, needle exchange, prescribing service, acupuncture. Appointment system and drop-in

Tel: 01793-616210

## **East Wiltshire Health Care & NHS Trust District**

### **Addiction Service**

**Tel: 01793-491917**

31 Wood Street, Swindon  
17-65, although they have seen young people under this age. Assessment, support (practical and emotional), prescribing, training, detoxification. Appointments only.

### **Social Service Mental Health Team**

**Tel: 01793-481182**

Advice, support, counselling, access to rehabilitation. Appointments only. Limited direct access

### **Swindon Health Promotion Service**

**Tel: 01793-481182**

3 The Mall, Swindon  
Advice, training and resources

### **Wiltshire Council on Alcohol**

**Tel: 01793-895405**

50 Victoria Road, Swindon  
Information, advice, support, counselling, self-help groups and training. Everyone plus youth service (11-18 year olds)

## **WILTSHIRE**

### **Wiltshire LEA**

Jacqui Stephens, Adviser for Health Education and PSHE, County Hall, Trowbridge  
Advice, support, information, training, curriculum development.

**Tel: 01225-713860**

### **Wiltshire Ambulance Service NHS Trust**

Health and Safety; First Aid Training

**Tel: 01249-654125**

### **Help Counselling Service**

Bridge House, Stallard Street, Trowbridge, BA14 9AE  
Offers support, counselling for users, friends and families

**Tel: 01225-787459**

### **Kennet Rural Development Agency**

10a High Street, Pewsey, SN9 5AQ  
Information and support to voluntary organisations and community groups

**Tel: 01672-584140**

### **Salisbury Alcohol and Drug Advisory Service**

138 Fisherton Street, Salisbury, SP2 7DT  
Offers advice, information, counselling, substitute prescribing, community detoxification and needle exchange

**Tel: 01722-412932**

### **The Advice Centre for Young People**

3 Union Street, Chippenham  
Offers help, advice, support and information, access to free, confidential telephone help lines. Free literature for young people

**Tel: 01249-480840**

### **The Advice Centre for Young People**

Malmesbury  
Offers help, advice, support and information, access to free, confidential telephone help lines. Free literature for young people

**Tel: 01666-825533**

**Wiltshire Health Promotion Unit****Tel: 01249-454270**

Oak House, Greenways Centre, Malmesbury Road,  
Chippenham  
Information on all health issues

**BEYOND WILTSHIRE****Bath Area Drugs Advisory Service****Tel: 01225-489479**

32 Broad Street, Bath, BA1 5LP  
Advice, support, counselling, needle and syringe  
exchange, arts therapy, massage and training. Drop-in.

**Bath Mental Health Care NHS Trust****Tel: 01225-428099**

Advice, support, counselling, psychotherapy,  
prescribing, community detoxification. Available  
to all, appointments only.

**Off the Record****Tel: 01225-335561**

Open House Centre, Manvers Street, Bath, BA1 1JW  
Offers advice, support, counselling, information to  
12-25 year olds and people involved with young  
people, e.g. parents, teachers, students, social  
workers. Drop-in service available.