

D21 STATEMENT OF POLICY ON SUBSTANCE MISUSE

INTRODUCTION

The school recognises that young people are at risk from a range of both legal and illegal substances and that substance misuse is an increasing social problem that can have disastrous consequences for individuals, families and the community as a whole. The school is committed to the health, safety and welfare of pupils and will take action to safeguard their well-being as well as providing pastoral support, advice and education about drugs and substance misuse as appropriate. The school will not condone the misuse of substances, and the possession or supply of illegal drugs by pupils.

THE SCHOOL'S AIMS

- To provide an environment free from illegal drugs
- To protect pupils from any substance harmful to them
- To provide a programme of drugs education for all pupils through the PSHE programme
- To take disciplinary action against those who have any involvement with illegal drugs or substance misuse while they are under the care and control of the school
- To provide information about support services for pupils and parents who are experiencing problems
- To work with parents and others in the community both to provide information and to prevent substance misuse
- To provide training on drugs awareness for teachers, non-teaching staff and governors.

PREVENTION

The school has a duty to inform and educate young people on the consequences of drug use and misuse. Health education is a vital part of the personal and social education of every pupil.

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.

Whilst we acknowledge that the number of young people who use and misuse substances is rising, it is important to recognise that larger numbers of young people are choosing not to use or misuse substances.

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

- to enable pupils to make healthy, informed choices by increasing knowledge, challenging attitudes and developing and practising skills in avoiding substance misuse

- to provide accurate information about substances
- to increase understanding about the implications and possible consequences of use and misuse
- to encourage an understanding of 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 minimise the risks that users and potential users face
- to enable young people to identify sources of appropriate personal support.

Drugs awareness education is part of the school's PSHE programme but opportunities to reinforce learning will occur in other parts of the teaching programme. The PSHE Co-ordinator is responsible for organising the drugs education programme. The school actively co-operates with other agencies such as the Police, Social Services, LEA and Health and Drug Agencies to deliver its commitment to drugs education and to deal with incidents of substance use and misuse.

RESPONDING TO DRUG USE: LEGAL SUBSTANCES

- Pupils needing to bring medicines to school should take them to the medical room or the school office at the beginning of the day. The exceptions asthma inhalers and epipens, which should be clearly labelled with the pupil's name and kept by pupils for immediate use by them. A spare, named inhaler may be left in the medical room.
- Administration of ritalin is supervised by either the nurse or a senior member of staff.
- Pupils are not allowed to bring tobacco onto the school premises or to smoke while the school has authority over them. Pupils breaking the rule will receive a detention. Persistent offenders warrant exclusion from school.
- Pupils are not allowed to bring alcohol onto the school premises. Parents will be asked to collect any pupil who is judged to be under its influence. Pupils bringing alcohol to school or drinking it while under the school's authority are liable to exclusion from school.
- Parents will also be contacted if pupils are misusing other substances such as solvents or medicines. Pupils may be liable for exclusion.
- The school has a wider obligation to the community to inform the police where investigation indicates that shops have broken the law in providing any of these substances to young people.

RESPONDING TO DRUG USE: ILLEGAL SUBSTANCES

- Possession, use or supply of any illegal substance by pupils while under the authority of the school is banned and serious disciplinary action will be taken against any pupils involved. Equipment used for substance misuse is similarly regarded. Parents will always be contacted. While each case will be judged individually, pupils are almost certain to face temporary or permanent exclusion from school. The police will be informed and their advice sought. It is possible that pupils may face police action as well as the school's sanctions.
- Pupils who supply others with illegal drugs (whether or not a monetary transaction takes place) warrant permanent exclusion and the police will be informed.
- Pupils who are in possession of category A substances (e.g. heroin, ecstasy, cocaine, crack) warrant permanent exclusion and the police will be informed.
- Incitement of another pupil to supply or experiment with an illegal drug will also be treated as a serious disciplinary offence which could merit temporary or permanent exclusion.
- Pupils will always be referred for appropriate support and counselling after a drug related incident. The type of referral will depend on the circumstances of the case.

WHAT IS A SUBSTANCE MISUSE RELATED INCIDENT?

The types of incidents will vary and may include:

- Litter related to substance misuse around premises e.g. cans, syringes etc.
- Suspicion and allegations about an individual's activities.
- Disclosure about substance misuse on the premises or whilst the pupils are the responsibility of the school e.g. on a school visit.
- Pupils clearly displaying signs of substance misuse.
- Possession of substances while children and young people or adults are the responsibility of the school.
- Use of substances while pupils are the responsibility of the school.
- Supplying substances (whether for money or not) while pupils are the responsibility of the school.

WHAT TO DO WHEN INVOLVED IN AN INCIDENT

Procedures for dealing with incidents involving pupils.

Each case will be carefully considered in the light of the individual circumstances and the best interests of the pupil. However the wider interests of the school community will also be considered particularly in incidents involving illegal substances.

All incidents of substance misuse will be treated seriously and must be reported to the responsible staff member. The guiding principle must be that the appropriate response protects or safeguards the welfare of the pupil and/or any other individuals involved in this

incident. Staff should be aware that confidentiality is not an option if pupils are at risk. The deciding factor is the degree of risk to the pupil. Incidents can be classified according to speed of action required. Some incidents require immediate action; others require time for assessment of information, seeking advice and the involvement of other agencies.

Immediate action is needed when there is a clear risk to safety. For example:

- An adult collecting a pupil appears to be under the influence of drink or drugs;
Action: apply child protection procedures, involve the police if adult is aggressive.
- A pupil appears ill or unsafe as a result of substance misuse;
Action: consider obtaining medical advice, note relevant facts and inform parent.
- Substances are being supplied on, or near premises;
Action: contact police / follow school's investigation and disciplinary procedure.
- The school has potentially hazardous substance misuse related litter e.g. needles, syringes;
Action: arrange safe removal of litter according to Health and Safety policy, involve police if related to illegal substance misuse.
- Substance misusers behaving aggressively;
Action: seek urgent police assistance to remove.
- A pupil discloses that they or their parent or other family members are misusing drugs;
Action: Contact social services or specialist substance misuse service for advice on how to respond.

Less immediate action e.g. observation, interview, consultation with other agencies, continued monitoring, may be appropriate when there are for example:

- Generalised allegations or concerns about a particular pupil
- Refuted / inconsistent disclosures
- Concerns but no evidence of substance misuse or related harmful or criminal conduct (such as supply of drugs or other harmful substances)
- Concerns but no evidence of immediate risk to safety.

Actions requiring referral to other organisations include:

- Investigation of criminal activity, including searching persons or personal property.
- Apart from immediate first aid, any health or medical emergency which should be attended by appropriate medical personnel.
- Assessment and providing support and services to vulnerable or troubled children and families are matters for social services.
- Counselling and drug treatment programmes require trained staff, normally accessible through social services, health or specialist substance misuse services.

Action appropriate for staff of school:

- Initial investigation of drugs related incidents.

- Providing support for young children and those with limited understanding.
- Supporting pupils involved in experimenting with solvents, alcohol or controlled drugs.
- Applying a range of responses appropriate to the incident.
- Referring pupils to agencies outside the school for support, advice, assessment and treatment.
- Referring to agencies outside the school for advice and guidance for themselves.

Action checklist for a substance misuse incident involving pupils:

- The immediate priority is welfare of the pupil.
- Provide first aid as necessary, minimise risk of harm to him/herself or others.
- Send for an ambulance if required. Arrange for appropriate adult to accompany the pupil to hospital.
- Inform parent / guardian of incident, invite parent / guardian to come to the school.
- If medical treatment is not required the pupil (and belongings) should be taken to a private room and supervised by preferably two members of staff.
- The Headteacher or senior member of staff has to quickly establish the facts and take action following clear, written procedures. The Headteacher should be satisfied that the appropriate steps have been carried out and recorded.
- Contact police for advice and / or involvement as necessary.
- Arrange an interview of the pupil with witnesses, to establish the facts of the incident, level of involvement and whether others were involved. Records must be kept of this interview. Where medical intervention has been necessary this interview will follow recovery.
- Arrange interview of staff and other pupils involved, with witnesses, to further establish the facts of the incident and obtain corroboration. Records must be kept of this.
- Arrange for staff and other children and young people involved to be interviewed, with witnesses, to establish the facts of the incident and obtain corroboration. Records must be kept of this.
- Once investigation has finished, assess the appropriate response and involve other organisations as required by policy.
- If there is reasonable evidence of possession or supply of suspected illegal drugs on school premises, the Headteacher will contact the police. In consultation with the relevant senior police officer, the Headteacher **may** authorize the use of drug detection dogs on school premises. Any consultation will follow the protocol agreed between Dyfed-Powys police and Directors of Education in January 2006. A copy is available from the Headteacher.

Checklist for Interview with Pupils

- Remind the pupil of the policy regarding substance misuse and the procedures to be followed to investigate the incident, including the intention to contact parents and police.
- Ask the pupil to hand over any substances. If reluctant to do so, explain that request will be repeated in presence of parents and possibly police. It is not legal to carry out personal searches. However possessions may be searched if there is a reasonable suspicion of possession of illegal substances which may harm others.
- Parents will be informed if police involvement is necessary.
- **Two** members of staff will interview any pupils involved in a drug related incident.