

1. Introduction

The involvement of young people in drug misuse has increased in recent years, as a wide range of substances are readily available in youth culture. This policy recognises the need to manage drug-related incidents and to provide drug education for all our students.

2. Rationale

This policy is needed so that all who are involved with the education and care of our students are clear about our approach to drugs education and drug-related incidents.

3. Purpose

To define how and in what ways we intend to address complex issues that arise from the use of drugs in our society in a way that reflects and enhances the spirit and ethos of Litherland High School.

4. Broad Guidelines

Litherland High School will:

- Develop a policy which responds to the needs of its students and wider community.
- At all times respond to the legal obligations of the Governing Body.
- Develop and implement appropriate responses to drug-related incidents.
- Establish links with external agencies.
- Ensure the policy compliments other relevant school policies.

5. Defining Substances

The school will consider its responses to the misuse of illegal drugs, alcohol, tobacco, solvents and volatile substances. The term "misuse" is used to refer to illicit drugs and socially acceptable drugs, for example, alcohol and tobacco which may be used in a harmful and/or socially unacceptable way.

For the purpose of this policy, the term drugs includes tobacco, alcohol, solvents and other substances which may have harmful effects on the body and mind as well as illegal drugs if they are misused.

For the purpose of this policy, the term drug paraphernalia includes but is not limited to, cannabis, grinders, rolling papers, filters, matches, lighters and pipes.

6. Illegal Drugs

The school does not support the misuse of drugs or the illegal supply of these substances and will take the appropriate action when dealing with situations which may arise from their misuse. School's general power to discipline, as set out in **Section 91 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006**, enables a member of staff to confiscate, retain or dispose of a student's property as a disciplinary penalty, where reasonable to do so. If school staff are unable to identify the legal status of a drug, it will be treated as a controlled drug.

7. The School Boundaries and Educational Visits

The school's boundaries are defined as the school premises. Expectations of behaviour are placed on its students when engaged on a school visit, arriving/leaving the school grounds or during a residential trip including trips abroad.

The school acknowledges its shared responsibility with parents for encouraging appropriate behaviour of students when travelling to and from school. We will inform parents of any behaviour which may reflect badly on the school's name which may include drug-related incidents.

8. Dealing with a Drug-Related Incident

The school is not required to inform parents/carers before a search takes place or to seek their consent. There is no legal requirement to make or keep a record of a search, but it is advisable in order to respond to any future complaint by a student or parent/carer. Please refer to DFE guidance for further guidance on how to conduct a search (**DFE Searching Screening & Confiscation, 2018**).

The school will inform the individual's parents/carers where alcohol, illegal drugs or harmful substances are found. Complaints about searching will be dealt with through the normal school complaints procedure.

9. Guidance when taking possession of Suspected Drugs

The student(s) and substance should be taken to the Principal or Assistant Principal (Behaviour Lead) as soon as possible. If this is not possible then the following actions should be followed;

- Ensure two adults are present throughout. One adult is to act as a witness.
- Seal the sample in a plastic bag or envelope and include details of the date and time of the seizure/find and staff present. Both staff are to sign the bag/envelope.
- Store it in a secure location, such as the school safe with access limited to senior members of staff.
- Notify the Police without delay, who will collect it and then store or dispose of it in line with locally agreed protocols. The law does not require a school to inform the Police of the name of the student from whom the drugs were taken but it is advisable to do so.
- Staff involved are to complete an Incident Report, including the Police Incident Reference number.

- Inform parents/carers of the incident.
- Identify any safeguarding concerns and develop a support and disciplinary response.

10. Critical Incident Guidance

The school will follow the Local Authority guidelines 'Managing Critical Incidents' in the event of a serious injury or death arising from a drug-related incident.

11. The stage of use/reasons for use

The Principal or Assistant Principal (DSL) will ascertain through sensitive questioning which of the following stages of use the student is at to determine what help, if any, is needed from outside agencies;

- Experimental Use (trying substance once), Recreational Use (use substance only at certain times) or Habitual Use (addicted to the substance).
- What substance is being used?
- How is it being obtained?
- Where does the money come from to purchase the substance?
- Is the substance taken for enjoyment?
- Are there any relationship difficulties with family?
- Do they have friends/family to talk to?

If the Principal or DSL is not available to speak with the identified student then another member of the Safeguarding Team should conduct the above questioning.

12. Confidentiality and Disclosure

Where a student discloses to a member of staff that he/she is taking drugs, the member of staff must make it clear to the student that he/she can offer no guarantee of confidentiality given the serious nature of drug misuse. The student should always be told what information will be passed on and to whom. The student should be made aware during the process that their welfare is paramount.

The school will seek to inform students through its drug education programme of the agencies that are available to them to help with drug-related problems and ensure that students know which services give confidential advice.

13. Discipline and Sanctions

The school will consider each substance incident individually and recognises that a variety of responses will be necessary to deal with incidents. The school's response will include both sanctions and support to reflect the individual nature and/or level of the offence and consider carefully the implications of any action it may take.

Action taken will be at the discretion of the Principal in consultation with parents/carers. This may involve support from outside agencies if appropriate. The school seeks to balance the interests of the student involved, the other students, staff and the local community.

Possible sanctions may include;

- In-school counselling services
- Referral made by school for an appointment for the student with the School Nurse
- Enlisting help and guidance from outside agencies
- Using monitoring programmes
- Establishing a behaviour contract
- Internal, Fixed-term or Permanent Exclusion (see Behaviour for Learning Policy)

14. The use of Outside agencies / Pastoral care and support for students at risk

Depending on the seriousness and nature of the incident, help may be needed from outside agencies. The school wishes to support the individual alongside parents and other professionals from outside agencies. The nature of this support will be specific to the individual and will be negotiated between the student, school, parents and outside agencies.

15. Contacting the Police

The school will always have due regard to its legal obligations and will inform the Police of any illegal drug dealing which it either has evidence of or suspects is taking place on its premises. The school will also inform the Police if they discover illegal drugs on the premises being taken by a student.

16. Aims of Drug Education

Drug Education will be covered across the school curriculum and is specifically delivered through the SMSC programme, the intention is to enable all students to make healthy, informed choices and decisions by increasing knowledge, challenging attitudes and developing and practising skills.