



POLTAIR POLICY DOCUMENT *for*

DRUG USE AND MISUSE POLICY

INTRODUCTION

1.1 The school condones neither the misuse of drugs and alcohol by members of the school, nor the illegal supply of these substances

1.2 The school is committed to the health and safety of its members and will take action to safeguard their wellbeing

1.3 The school acknowledges the importance of its pastoral role in the welfare of young people, and through the general ethos of the school, will seek to persuade students in need of support to come forward.

1.4 In response to our shared concerns at a local and national level, we wish to state that as part of its care for the welfare of its students, the school believes it has a duty to inform and educate young people on the consequences of drug use and misuse. The school takes a pro-active stance on this matter, believing that health education is a vital part of the personal and social education of every student.

1.5 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.

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

THE ROLES OF THE HEADTEACHER AND GOVERNING BODY

2.1 The headteacher takes overall responsibility for the policy and its implementation, for liaison with the governing body, parents, LA and appropriate outside agencies and for the naming within the school of a person who will have general responsibility for handling the daily implementation of this policy. The headteacher will ensure that all staff dealing with substance issues are adequately supported and trained.

2.2 In instances involving substance misuse or supply on the premises, and following discussion between staff members who know the student well, parents will be informed at the earliest opportunity by the headteacher. The school and the parents can then work together to support the young person involved.

2.3 If a young person admits to using or supplying substances off the premises, a member of the Leadership Team, will be informed to decide upon the next course of action. The headteacher will be informed, and he, or his deputy, will inform the parents.

2.4 There is no legal obligation to inform the police, though they may be able to give relevant support and advice. However, a school cannot knowingly allow its premises to be used for the production or supply of any controlled drug, or the preparation or smoking of cannabis or opium. Where it is suspected that substances are continuing to be sold on the premises details regarding those involved, will be passed to the Police Liaison Officer or Community Affairs Department.

2.5 The governing body will be involved in substance education and substance related incidents in the same manner as any other matter concerning the direction of the school. The school will consider each substance incident individually and recognises that a variety of responses will be necessary to deal with incidents. The school will consider very carefully the implications of any action it may take. It seeks to balance the interests of the student involved, the other school members and the local community. Permanent exclusion is seen as a last resort as it may only transfer the problem.

2.6 Regarding the welfare of staff, the school will follow the County Council policy on drug and alcohol misuse as part of its health and safety policy, which is designed to reduce to a minimum the possible effects of substance misuse on the user, other employees and the environment.

2.7 The headteacher will take responsibility for liaison with the media. As the issue of substance misuse is an emotive one, and is likely to generate interest from the local and national media, the school will take appropriate advice and guidance from the LA Press Office and Legal Department to ensure that any reporting of incidents remains in the best interests of the young people, their families and the school. The LA will be informed as soon as possible. This will be done via the LA Adviser for Drugs Education or the School Support Officer.

MEDICINES ON THE SCHOOL PREMISES

3.1 We ask that parents should ensure that medicines or tablets which need to be taken in school should be clearly labelled and accompanied by a note that gives permission for this medication to be taken.

3.2 Paracetamol will not be given to students on request. If students suffer from any condition which may require Paracetamol a note from parents explaining this should be given in to the School Nurse who will keep it on file.

APPENDIX A - RESPONSE TO THE DISCOVERY OF AN ILLEGAL DRUG

The role of teachers and non-teaching staff

4.1 Discovery and removal

Members of school staff discovering substances which are suspected to be illegal should:-

- remove the substance from the place where it was found, in the presence of a witness or witnesses, wherever possible.
- or
- take the substance from a student, if possible in the presence of a witness.

In the absence of a witness, staff should not wait, but should take the suspicious substances from the place found, or within the bounds of professional discretion, remove the suspicious substance from a student's possession.

4.2 Recording

- Immediately record the place, time, date and circumstances when the substance came into their possession.
- They must not try to investigate the nature of the substance, but may record what it looks like.
- When possible the above recordings should be countersigned by a witness.

4.3 Safe Storage

- The substance should be taken immediately to a member of the Leadership Team or directly to the headteacher.
- The headteacher or member of the LT on call should put the substance in an envelope or other container which can be sealed. He/she should sign across the seal and date the package. An official report should be completed using the recorded notes of the date, time, place and circumstances of the finding.
- In the event of the discovery of equipment associated with drug taking, especially needles and syringes, the equipment found must be handled with the utmost care; the headteacher must ensure that materials are placed in a secure and rigid container to await collection by the police.

4.4 Contact police

- The headteacher must contact the Youth Affairs Officer or the Divisional Commander or his/her deputy who will arrange to have the substance collected from the school

premises. Until collection, the headteacher remains responsible for the safe-keeping of the substance.

- The Police Service will be responsible for any analysis of the substance. School staff must not attempt this themselves.

APPENDIX B - DEALING WITH STUDENTS FOUND IN POSSESSION OF DRUGS

Contact parents

5.1 If the drug was found in the possession of a student/students it is the headteacher's responsibility to notify the parents concerned and, if necessary, to instigate any further actions considered appropriate.

Procedure for notifying the LA

5.2 A copy of any report submitted to the governing body **will** be forwarded to the LA.

5.3 The LA **will** be informed of any incident involving the following:

- criminal proceedings which directly or indirectly involve a student
- media attention
- care proceedings involving the Social Services

Advice and Confidentiality re. drugs-related issues for Teachers and Non-teaching Staff

5.4 Teachers may be approached by students who present drugs-related issues and, as we seek to persuade students in need of support to come forward, such dialogue should be encouraged. Teachers and non-teaching staff are not obliged to discuss confidentiality with any other person (unless abuse is suspected). However, it is generally regarded as unwise to promise unconditional confidentiality.

5.5 It is more appropriate to:-

- a) gain advice and support from the named person in school
- b) from the confidential Freshfield service
- c) encourage the student's self-referral to Freshfield, or GP.

5.6 Any member of staff offering individuals advice and support on drugs and other health issues should be aware of the 'post-Gillick' Code of Practice.