

DRUGS POLICY

To educate students through consistent messages about the benefits of a healthy lifestyle and the risks associated with drug misuse.

Students are introduced to the problem of drugs misuse through their PD lessons and via special activities as part of our termly Healthy College Weeks.

Outside agencies e.g. Drugline are routinely invited into all year groups Personal Development lessons to cover work on drug types, the risks of misuse, and the different types of addiction.

In Year 7 the emphasis is on smoking issues as well as attending the 2Smart for Drugs Roadshow. Year 8 – alcohol and Year 8 – illegal drugs.

Monitoring and evaluation is undertaken by the Head of PSHE on a regular basis.

Drugs/alcohol/smoking incidents within the college fall within our Behaviour for Learning Policy. Students risk being excluded and even considered for permanent exclusion depending on the circumstances. The Police are routinely informed of any drug related issue.

Introduction

This policy seeks to ensure:

- That young people in our college receive an education that enables them to grown up confidently, knowledgably, competently and safely in a drug using world.
- That young people get consistent messages about living a healthy lifestyle and the inappropriateness of drug misuse
- That drug related incidents are addressed throughout our college in a consistent manner.

Teachers, support staff, governors, parents/carers, young people and professionals from relevant local agencies including police, youth offending teams an drug agencies have been consulted in the formulation (or review) of this policy.

Definitions

We define a drug 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 drugs:

- Illegal drugs (Misuse of Drugs Act 1971)
- All legal drugs, including alcohol, tobacco and volatile substances
- Prescribed medicines
- Over-the-counter medicines

We define drug misuse to be

' ... the taking of a substances 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)

Education

Under the terms of the National Curriculum we are required to meet two aims:

- The college Curriculum should aim to provide opportunities for all pupils to learn and to achieve
- The college curriculum should aim to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and prepare all pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life

We are also required to meet the aim of the Essex Vision Statement:

“In Essex every learner is entitled to a curriculum rich and varied, challenging and inspiring, which enables every individual to fulfil her or his potential to the highest possible standard; so that all, for the benefit of all, are able to shape their destinies and create a better world.”

Young people are growing up in an increasingly drug using world. During their early childhood they are exposed to messages about drug use from the media, their peers, their families and our wider society, they may experiment with drugs whilst still of college age and will be confronted by opportunities to use drugs throughout their lives.

If we are to prepare our young people for living in a ‘drug-using world’ we need to ensure all young people in our college receive an appropriate curriculum matched to their age and readiness. This will be determined by classroom research (draw and write, graffiti walls etc).

We recognise that many of the aspects of the curriculum contribute towards enabling young people not only to know how to stay safe from substance misuse, but also to have the high self esteem and interpersonal skills that enable them to stay safe and in control.

Our college is committed to working towards the principles of the health promoting college and the National Health School Standard both to raise achievement and to support those young people living with the risk factors that increase their vulnerability to future drug misuse.

The raising of every child's self-esteem is a fundamental aim of our college.

Welfare

Problems with drug use can affect any of our young people, from the youngest to the eldest. These can range from:

- Accidental exposure to a substance (medicines) or drug equipment (discarded needles);
- Inappropriate experimental or recreational use of a drug;
- Developing a drug habit or losing control of their drug use
- A sudden, catastrophic health problem (sudden illness or collapse);
- Living in drug using families or in circumstances that might make them vulnerable to future drug misuse.

A young person's own problem 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.

Drug problems often need to be viewed alongside peer pressure issues.

In all cases our guiding principle will be that:

The welfare of the young person and their peers is paramount.

Confidentiality

Whilst every effort should be made to enable constructive dialogue to take place between young people requiring support and school staff, **no staff member can or should offer total confidentiality.**

Teachers must be able to honour their professional responsibilities in relation to:

- child protection
- co-operating with a police investigation
- referral to external services

All staff and any expert visitors to the college are subject at all times to child protection (Blue Book) procedures.

No visitor will work with young people in any unsupervised capacity unless they have been CRB checked.

Staff responsibility

Our Health Education Co-ordinator is: Mrs L Richards

Our named member of staff for Child Protection is: Mr B Large

Our Governor with responsibility for Child Protection is: (Vacant)

Our Governor with responsibility for PSHE and Citizenship is: Mrs D Sewell

The Taught Curriculum

The aim of our taught drug curriculum is to support the Essex vision for drug education:

In Essex, every learner has the knowledge, problem solving and decision making skills necessary to be able to make informed choices about drug use and that they have the interpersonal skills and high self-esteem required to enable them to enact their decision with the least possible harm to themselves or others.

Our curriculum will be taught in the following ways:

- Through classroom investigation (e.g. draw and write, first thoughts exercises etc), it will take account of the young people's current level of language and understanding.
- As part of a spiral programme of personal, social, moral and health education it will build on concepts that the young people already know and understand. It will link with work on safety, relationships and communication skills. Young people will have opportunities to discuss, have challenged and clarify their attitudes and beliefs about drug use.

- It will use language appropriate to their age, readiness, culture, ethnicity and vulnerability.
- It will be relevant to the backgrounds, cultures, ethnicity and needs of our young people and will focus on the drug use and surrounding issues most relevant to our young people
- It will be a focus on relevant situations and the subsequent emotions that influence choice, thinking skills, especially risk assessment and problem solving and interpersonal skills especially assertiveness and the language of assertion.
- It will offer accurate rather than sensationalised information.
- Whilst fully exploring the possible consequences of drug misuse, it will avoid 'shock/horror' which can serve to glamorize drug use.
- It will ensure that all young people regardless of background and ability can equally access the programmes of work.

Our college will work to inform parents in order to ensure that messages about drug misuse are consistent.

Where peer education is used peers will have received appropriate training, understand boundaries and have appropriate supervision and support.

Where possible we will seek to work with other local schools in order to harmonise the curriculum to ensure that young people receive comparable drug education at the same times as their peers.

We will also work with partner schools in other phases to ensure continuity and progression between key stages and especially at transitions.

The following table outlines the learning outcomes we believe meet the needs of our students:

Year 7 - emphasis on smoking issues. Attendance at the 2 smart for drugs roadshow.

Year 8 – alcohol

Year 9 – illegal drugs

Drug education will be monitored and assessed as part of the overall PSHE programme and the science element in accordance with requirements of the National Curriculum.

Use of external contributors to drug education

External contributors should not be used as substitute teachers and should contribute to the broad drug education programme. Any visitor to the college who has unsupervised access to pupils will be subject to Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks.

A teacher will normally always be present in the classroom for the whole of each lesson where external contributors are present. The responsibility for learning always remains with the teacher.

All visitors to our classrooms will work to the principles outlined within this policy.

Procedures

The college should be prepared for any pastoral incident where drug misuse is a significant or contributory factor in relation to the immediate or long-term safety or welfare of an individual child. Schools should also be aware of the risks posed to young people by parents, carers of staff members who misuse drugs.

Many 'over-the-counter preparations' such as paracetamol are potentially lethal if misused.

Drug related incidents in schools are rarely extreme. The majority of young people who use drugs are 'experimental' or 'recreational users' rather than 'habitual users'. All drug use carries risks, and these should neither be inappropriately exaggerated nor inappropriately minimized.

The college's response will be measured and balanced against the extent or nature of the incident. Our aim will always be to engage or re-engaged young people with learning.

We deem a drug incident to be within our boundaries of responsibility if it occurs:

- On college premises
- On a college trip
- A residential visit
- Work Experience placement
- On the journey to and from college

If a young person is sent home from a college trip related to any aspect of poor behaviour their parents or carers will be responsible for any additional cost of transport etc.

At all other times all staff still have a duty of care and any child deemed to be at risk will be reported to the named person for child protection.

A young person thought to have misused any substance by intent or by accident will always be treated as a serious medical emergency and medical advice and treatment will be swiftly sought.

The use of recreational drugs (including alcohol) or the bringing of recreational drugs onto the college premises will not be tolerated. The same principle will apply to school trips.

All staff have a duty to support young people who approach them with problems related to drug use. Prior to any further investigation any such approach will always be considered as a request for help and a pastoral rather than a disciplinary matter. (See scenario below).

When dealing with any incident, in priority, staff will consider:

- Medical support – immediate first aid/ambulance if required, then appropriate referral to health services
- Immediate safety/welfare support – is the young person 'at risk' from their own behaviour or the behaviour of others?
- Pastoral support – counseling and guidance
- Discipline – only if appropriate

All staff will swiftly ensure that senior staff are informed about any such problem.

The college, including the grounds, will be regularly checked for signs of drug misuse (including discarded drug taking equipment).

Any use of illegal drugs, the actual supply or the offer to supply illegal drugs on college premises or on college trips will always be reported to the police.

Vulnerable young people

Young people living with risk factors associated with future problem drug use will receive ongoing support through the college's pastoral care systems. Their welfare will be subject to regular monitoring.

Involving parents

As a general principle, parents will always be notified of the college's concern over a drug-related incident. The only exception to this is when the headteacher feels that the welfare of the young person would be placed in greater jeopardy by this action, in which case the Child Protection Team will be consulted.

Incident Management

The three principle areas of difficulty with drug use are:

- Health difficulties – long term damage to health (i.e. tobacco) or a sudden catastrophic incident (i.e. solvent) – many substances can have both effects (i.e. alcohol);
- Social/financial difficulties – conflict with parents, education etc.
- Legal difficulties – some drug use is illegal and this can effect freedom, career and travel. (Legal status however should never be confused with potential harm to self or others).

Staff have a professional duty to investigate and take appropriate action, either individually or by referral if we have reason to believe that any young person is at risk.

The college has a legal duty to ensure that illegal drug use or the making or supply of controlled drugs does not take place on our premises or on college trips.

College staff may safely take possession of an unknown substance. The law:

“provides that if a person took possession of a drug to prevent another committing an offence or continuing to commit an offence and then took speedy action to destroy the drug or hand it to an authorized person, this shall be a defence to the charge, of possessing a controlled drug”.

Sec 5 Misuse of Drugs Act 1971

Scenarios

Drugs or equipment are discovered on the college premises

Staff are required to:

- Take possession and store securely
- Inform a member of staff as soon as possible
- (the senior staff member) will seek police advice re identification of substance and safe disposal

In the event of a syringe being found it will be placed in a safe container (screw top coffee jar) and placed in a safe location prior to safe disposal – under no circumstances will a used syringe be placed in a waste bin. Senior staff will record the incident in the college log book.

A pupil is found in possession of drugs

Staff are required to:

- Take possession of the substance and store securely
- Inform a senior member of staff
- Seek advice from police re identification of substance and safe disposal/other legal actions;
- Inform the parents or carers

A pupil is thought to be in possession of a drug

Staff are required to:

- Isolate the pupils from peers and supervise at all times
- Inform a senior member of staff
- (senior member of staff) inform the police
- (senior member of staff) inform parents or carers

The college reserves the right to search the desk and locker of any pupil suspected of being in the possession of drugs; to ask a young person to empty their pockets or open their bag.

If the young person refuses, under no circumstances will any member of staff attempt to physically search a young person. This will only be undertaken by a police officer.

A member of staff suspects a pupil is under the influence of a drug

Staff will never treat intoxication lightly. The effect of any drug (including alcohol) on a young person can be highly unpredictable. Intoxication or a suspected overdose (even if the young person appears fit and well) will always be deemed a medical emergency.

Under no circumstances will an intoxicated young person be disciplined until medical advice has been sought. Intoxication from solvent can be lethal if the young person is suddenly shocked or alarmed. The unpleasant (even horrific) effects of psychedelic drugs can be lethal if the young

person is suddenly shocked or alarmed. The unpleasant (even horrific) effects of psychedelic drugs can be exacerbated by discipline with potentially catastrophic results.

Staff are required to:

- Seek medical advice (999 – if urgent)
- Perform appropriate first aid measures
- Keep the young person as calm as possible
- Inform a senior member of staff
- Ensure no other pupils are at risk (if appropriate call an emergency whole college registration)
- Inform parents or carers
- Inform child protection, if child is 'at risk'
- Inform police, if appropriate

A pupil discloses that they are using drugs

Staff are required to:

- Inform a senior member of staff who will
- Inform child protection team, if the child is 'at risk'
- Inform parents
- Seek advice from Community Drug and Alcohol Team and if appropriate Social Services

Pupil discloses parents or carers misuse/supply drugs

Staff are required to:

- Inform a senior member of staff
- Inform child protection team, if the child is 'at risk'
- Retain the child and notify senior staff if a parent is collecting a child from college (especially by car) appears intoxicated, (if unable to retain the child – telephone 999 and inform police)
- Inform the child protection team.

The college discovers that a pupils is 'dealing drugs' in the college

Staff are required to:

(see above on "pupil thought to be in possession of drugs")

- Inform a senior member of staff
- Inform police
- Secure as much evidence as possible
- Work with police to construct an action plan

Parents of carers under the influence of drugs on college premises

The focus of action will be to maintain the welfare of the child. If a parent is violent or abusive they will be asked to leave the premises. No member of staff will place themselves or a young person at risk. If necessary the police will be informed.

If the parent or carer is collecting the child and the welfare of the child is deemed to be at risk, the child will be retained on college premises, senior staff will be informed and the college will consider whether to invoke child protection procedures or call the police.

Monitoring and record keeping

We will record all drug related incidents initially on the college data log. We will make no entry on the young person's permanent record until all the evidence has been gathered and corroborated. Only factual information will be recorded. The college will regularly follow up drug related incidents in order to monitor progress.

Discipline

The majority of young people who misuse drugs are only experimenting with them. This behaviour is still potentially dangerous and young people must understand that the use of illegal drugs and the misuse of any substance in all circumstances is inappropriate.

Young people need to understand that the college will try to support anyone who voluntarily seeks our help with drugs related problems.

They also need to know clearly that bringing recreational drugs into college or onto college visits for any purpose will be dealt with severely; as will using the college or educational visits to make deals for the supply of illegal drugs.

As a general principle young people who are found in possession of, or have been supplying drugs will be suspended from college, whilst a thorough investigation can take place. During or immediately following this suspension a case conference will be held to decide the most appropriate action plan. Drug related incidents are also included in the Behaviour for Learning policy.

It is our policy:

- That young people who bring recreational drugs (i.e. tobacco, alcohol or solvent) to college will be disciplined and their parents informed
- That young people who knowingly bring illegal drugs into college will be reported to the police
- That young people who are found in possession of illegal drugs will be reported to the police (unless in exceptional circumstances i.e. where a young person has been coerced or bullied in to carrying a substance).

Once the police are involved and if a prosecution is to follow, the college will return to a counseling or supportive role with the intention of engaging the young person in learning.

The principle goal of the college will be to attempt to re-establish a working relationship with young people who have been disciplined for drug related issues.

The college reserves the right as a last resort to exclude permanently a young person who through their persistent behaviour is placing themselves, other young people or staff at risk. In this case the reason for the exclusion will be the endangerment to themselves or others caused by their actual behaviour rather than their drug use.

Media

All media involvement will only be dealt with by the headteacher of the college or the member of staff delegated by the headteacher.

Appendix

Sharps or needle-stick injuries

Some young people will encounter use injecting equipment in their community. Although the curriculum should include work on safety and emphasise the importance of not touching any suspicious sharp or dirty object, curiosity or simple accident may still result in a needle stick injury.

If this should happen or even if it is suspected that it might have happened it is **vital** that the following protocol is followed.

- Immediately encourage the wound to bleed and wash thoroughly with hot soapy water
- Do not suck or allow the child to suck the wound
- Dress wound as normal
- A senior member of staff will immediately contact the parents or carers
- **Medical attention should be sought as a matter of extreme urgency** because Hepatitis B requires the treatment to be started within 24 hours of exposure.

NHS Direct 0845 46 47 can give advice.