

DevonPathways



DRUG POLICY

Approved by:	Chris Kenny	Date: 14/09/2022
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Previous review 01/09/23

Rationale

In the light of current evidence that young people's drug use is increasing, and use of disposable vapes is increasing in teenage community and shared concerns at local and national level, we wish to state that as part of its care for the welfare of its students, we believe that it has the duty to inform and educate young people on the consequences of drug use and misuse.

Aims

This policy will help to:

- Provide a secure framework within which the staff can operate with confidence
- Clarify legal responsibilities, entitlement and obligations
- Express and clarify a schools attitude and responses for staff and students, parents and directors

Definition of a 'drug'

Drugs in the context of this policy include:

- Drugs which are controlled/illegal substances
- Prescribed drugs which are improperly used
- Drugs which interfere with a student's ability to learn (for example alcohol, solvents)
- Drugs which have a harmful effect on pupil health (for example tobacco)
- Drugs which are misused to enhance performance (for example analgesics or steroids)

Staff should understand the role that drugs education can play in the national drug strategy and are confident in discussing drug issues with students. DevonPathways staff should have a basic knowledge of drugs and local drug services.

DevonPathways works with referring bodies parents, the police and YSMART (Drugs Service) where necessary in order to develop its understanding of local issues.

Young people should have access to appropriate advice and support agencies.

Procedure for handling an incident

Incidents involving substances may usually be placed into one of the following categories:

- Illness or inappropriate behaviour as a result of substance misuse
- Allegation of, or possession of, suspected illegal substances or drugs without medical authority
- Sharing/dealing in suspected illegal substances, or allegation/suspicion of same
- Drugs found on person or DevonPathways property of staff vehicles
- A young person discloses their own or another's involvement in one of the above scenarios

Medical Emergency

A medical emergency arises when a person:

- Is unconscious
- Is having trouble breathing
- Is seriously confused or disorientated
- Has taken a harmful substance
- Is otherwise at immediate risk

The first aid procedures should be followed, and all staff should be aware of them. Staff should know how to contact medical support through 999 if needed See Medical emergencies form (Appendix A)

Confiscation

It is legal to confiscate an illegal drug in order to prevent an offence being committed and then to destroy it or hand it to the police.

If a member of staff disposes of a drug, a witness should be present and the action recorded. The referring body should be immediately informed.

Contacting Parents/Carers

It is at the discretion of DevonPathways senior management whether the parents/carers are contacted and if so at what stage, but the leadership will try to consult with the referring body before contact is made.

If the young person is to be dropped home mentors will notify parents of their concerns or suspicions.

A joint approach may be agreed with the referring body.

Factors such as safety and welfare, whether they are on the child protection plan and confidentiality issues should be recognized, although in most cases it is expected that a parent/carer would be contacted.

The Police

The law does not require schools to inform the police of illegal drug situations. In normal circumstances, the referring body will contact the police. If drugs or a young person is suspected of being under the influence of drugs then the referring body will be informed and a joint solution agreed

Searching

Staff will not search a young person or their property for drugs. If a young person is suspected to be in possession or under the influence of drugs they are to be returned home or to school.

Mentors will inform their line manager who will inform the referring body of concerns and actions taken. Parents will be informed of the young person is dropped home

Supporting the young person and their family

After immediate medical needs have been addressed and the nature of the incident established, an assessment should be made of the needs of the pupil involved. Any child who uses drugs to cope with personal anxiety or problems may need help from outside agencies. Information about local drug support services should be made available to the pupil and parents.

Annex A

DRUGS SITUATIONS - MEDICAL EMERGENCIES

The procedures for an emergency apply when a child or young person or others are at immediate risk of harm. A person who is unconscious, having trouble breathing, seriously confused or disorientated or who has taken a harmful toxic substance, should be responded to as an emergency.

Your main responsibility is for any pupil at immediate risk, but you also need to ensure the well-being and safety of others. Put into practice your school's first aid procedures.

IF IN ANY DOUBT, CALL MEDICAL HELP.

ALWAYS:

- ◆ assess the situation
- ◆ if it is a medical emergency, send for medical help and an ambulance

BEFORE ASSISTANCE ARRIVES:

If the person is conscious:

- ◆ ask the person what has happened and to identify any drug used
- ◆ collect any drug sample and any vomit for medical analysis
- ◆ **do not** induce vomiting
- ◆ keep the person under observation, warm and quiet

If the person is unconscious:

- ◆ ensure that the person can breathe and place in recovery position
- ◆ **do not move the person** if they have fallen, as a fall may have led to spinal or other serious injury which may not be obvious
- ◆ **do not** give anything by mouth
- ◆ **do not** attempt to make the person sit or stand
- ◆ **do not** leave the person unattended or in the charge of another pupil.

WHEN MEDICAL HELP ARRIVES:

- ◆ pass on any available information and any vomit and drug samples.

PLEASE COMPLETE AN EMERGENCY RECORD FORM AS SOON AS YOU HAVE DEALT WITH THE EMERGENCY

POSSIBLE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF DRUG MISUSE

The signs listed may indicate that individuals or groups of young people are misusing drugs. Their presence alone is not conclusive proof of drug or solvent misuse: many of them are a normal part of adolescence but the presence of several signs together may point to a need for greater vigilance.

Behaviour

- Sudden and regular changes of mood or irritability.
- Unusually aggressive or restless.
- Gradual loss of interest in school/college work, friends, hobbies etc.
- Increased evidence of lying or other furtive behaviour.
- Loss of money or other objects from the house.
- Keeping at a distance from other pupils and away from points of supervision.
- Being the subject of rumours about drug taking.
- Talking to strangers on or near the premises.
- Stealing, which appears to be the work of several individuals rather than one person.
- Use of drug takers' slang.
- Exchanging money or other objects in unusual circumstances.
- Associating briefly with one person who is much older and not normally part of the peer group.
- Secretiveness about leisure time activities.

Physical Symptoms

- Loss of appetite.
- Uncharacteristically drowsy or sleepy.
- Unusual stains, marks or smells on the body or clothes or around the house.
- No interest in physical appearance.
- Sores or rashes especially on the mouth or nose.
- Heavy use of scents, colognes etc, to disguise the smell of drugs.
- Drunken behaviour.
- Frequent and persistent headaches, sore throat or running nose (whatever the reason a visit to the GP would be wise).

Appendix 1.1

The Law on Drugs. It is an offence under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971:

to supply or offer to supply a controlled drug to another;

to be in possession of, or to possess with intent to supply to another, a controlled drug in contravention of the Act. It is a defence to the offence of possession that, knowing or suspecting it to be a controlled drug, the accused took possession of it for the purpose of preventing another from committing or continuing to commit an offence and that as soon as possible after taking possession of it he took all such steps as were reasonably open to him to destroy the drug or to deliver it into the custody of a person lawfully entitled to take custody of it;

for the occupier or someone concerned in the management of any premises knowingly to permit or suffer on those premises the smoking of cannabis; or the production, attempted production, supply, attempted supply, or offering to supply of any controlled drug.

Appendix 1.2

The term 'Our School' refers to activities that take place within the physical school boundaries as identified in county plans during school time plus those which take place as planned activities where school staff are directly responsible for the welfare of our young people.

Premises used by staff and pupils for these 'off site' activities are subject to regular school policy, rules & regulations regarding substance use and misuse.

Appendix 1.2

Equipment Which May Be Used

- Scorched pieces of tin foil
- A home-made pipe
- The remains of a cannabis cigarette with small cardboard tube filter
- Sunglasses worn at inappropriate times
- Foil containers or cup shapes made from silver foil – perhaps discoloured by heat
- Metal tins
- Spoons discoloured by heat
- Pill boxes
- Plastic, cellophane or metal foil wrappers
- Small plastic or glass files or bottles
- Twists of paper
- Straws
- Sugar lumps
- Syringes or needles
- Cigarette papers and lighters
- Spent matches
- Plastic bags or butane gas containers (solvent abuse)
- Cardboard or other tubes
- Stamps, stickers or similar items
- Shredded cigarettes, home-rolled cigarettes and pipes
- Small squares of paper folded to make little envelopes

