



Thomas Estley Community College

SUBSTANCE MISUSE POLICY

Approved/reviewed by	
TECC LGC 27/06/23 V2	
Date of next review	June 2025

This policy will be reviewed biannually to ensure compliance with current regulations.

Version	Date	Updated by	Summary of changes
V1	June 22	Cathy Cornelius	No major changes
V2	June 23	Cathy Cornelius	No major changes

Principles:

- It is a criminal offence to possess, supply or deal in illegal drugs. If any student is found in possession of illegal drugs, or involved in any way with drug taking, he/she may be required to leave College and the police may be informed.
- The College is charged with providing a safe environment for all its members. In carrying out this duty it strongly opposes the use, abuse and supply of illegal, prohibited or inappropriate substances including drugs and alcohol.
- The College is a place for students to study on a full-time basis. It is a place of work and we are committed to a partnership with parents and agencies to promote the health and safety of all members of our community. We will take firm action to safeguard their well-being.
- Issues concerning substance abuse may be explored and debated with substance misuse specialist services (e.g Turning Points) and other educational programmes and activities, some of which may also include the police, e.g. Police sniffer dogs
- All members of the College have a responsibility to implement this policy.
- The College reserves the right to conduct appropriate searches of student's belongings in order to check for drugs or other prohibited substances in line with guidance from the Department of Education on Searching, Screening and Confiscation.

Procedures

1. If a member of staff suspects a student is involved in the misuse of substances or that he/she is under the influence of drugs or alcohol, the Senior Leadership Team should be informed and he/she may investigate the matter further. If there are strong grounds for suspicion, the student will be interviewed, warned and may be suspended from College according to college procedures pending the outcome of further investigation; this may include dismissal / permanent exclusion.
2. Searches of students' bags or pockets on college premises may be carried out with their consent and in the presence of a witness, usually a member of the Senior Leadership or Pastoral team. Searches without consent may still be carried out by the Principal or Vice Principal and another member of staff as a witness (usually a year lead) if there are reasonable grounds for suspecting a student is in possession of drugs. If drugs or other inappropriate substances are found, they will be confiscated and disposed of appropriately when no longer needed for evidence. Any sort of drug taking paraphernalia will also be confiscated but may be returned if required to do so to the student's parent or guardian.
3. Staff discovering illegal substances being used or traded by a student(s), should ascertain the name of the student, request that the substances are handed over and that the student(s) accompany the student to a senior member of staff. It is advisable that the member of staff enlists the help of another colleague in confronting the student if possible. The substances should be identified and placed in safekeeping. All actions taken by the member of staff should be recorded in writing.

The Senior Member of Staff should investigate promptly and thoroughly, recording the details in writing. The Principal/Vice Principal should be alerted as early as possible and be involved in the interviewing if this seems appropriate.

If it is deemed that a serious offence has been committed in breach of the substance abuse policy, the following procedure will take place:

- Parents will be informed
- Depending on substance the Police or Dedicated Neighbourhood Team may be informed
- The Local Authority will be informed for all incidents of substance misuse
- The student will be suspended from College both as an initial punishment and/or to provide a period of time in which to investigate the matter
- The Principal will consider the outcome of all investigations and will either permanently exclude the student from the College or allow them to continue their education.
- The Principal will present the case and outcome of the investigation to the Governing body who will then consider the decision made by the Principal
- If the student is to return to College, conditions will be negotiated between senior staff, the student and, if appropriate, their parents and may include some of the following: disciplinary warning, undertaking a programme of drug awareness education, attendance at a clinic

Enlisting Specialist Support

Turning Point

0330 303 6000

www.turning-point.co.uk

Local Authority

All education providers should inform the Local Authority when a substance misuse incident occurs. The below services can also provide further advice and support:

Leicestershire and Rutland school improvement and performance service

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

Educational providers should be mindful that anything from tobacco usage to alcohol could be a result of a child being initially groomed for sexual exploitation.

Where there is suspicion of CSE, educational providers should contact the Police immediately (call 101)

Other useful policies/Guidance to consider:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland Drugs Guidance for Educational Settings
- Examples of good practice on how to deal with substance misuse incidents
- Child Protection Policy
- Searching, screening and confiscation (DfE)