

Drug and Substance Misuse Policy for Students



Definition

A drug is a substance that affects the way in which the body functions physically, emotionally or mentally. This definition includes illegal substances and also legal substances such as alcohol and tobacco; volatile substances; over the counter and prescription medicines; and other unauthorised substances. Drug and substance misuse is defined as the non-medical use of drugs that are intended only for use in medical treatment, the use of illegal substances, and the inappropriate use of legal substances such as alcohol, tobacco and volatile substances.

Aims

- To make students, parents and staff aware of the policy and disciplinary procedures of the school relating to the misuse of substances (as defined above) and the penalties for such action. To clarify legal responsibilities, entitlement and obligations.
- To support the Unicorn School's endeavour to maintain the safety and wellbeing of all students and staff. To ensure that all students and staff are provided with accurate and appropriate information about the nature of drugs, their social and legal status, and their uses and effects, so that they are able to make informed choices.
- To develop in students the confidence and the skills to assist them in rejecting pressures to misuse substances and to place the misuse of substances in a wider context of health and social issues. This will be achieved by providing a whole school approach to drug education in the context of the curriculum of the Unicorn School.
- To support all members of the Unicorn School community by providing clear guidance and procedures on drug related issues to ensure clarity and consistency.

Objectives

We seek to achieve these aims through the taught curriculum, a planned programme of personal development lessons in PSHE, and extra-curricular activities. The Unicorn School co-operates with other agencies to deliver its commitment to drugs education and to deal with incidents of substance misuse.

- To make, and review every two years, the disciplinary procedures for substance misuse at School.
- To provide staff with in-service training and up-to-date reference material concerning substances and consequences of their misuse.

- To plan courses with accurate and appropriate information for all year groups and in PSHE and in Science lessons.
- To identify and use those aspects of the Unicorn School life where the confidence to resist misusing substances can be developed and practised.
- To ensure that each student in the Unicorn School has access to the names of those people to whom they can speak to in confidence concerning matters arising from substance misuse. To ensure that personal guidance is always available from their tutor, teachers and pastoral support.
- To identify areas of the curriculum where the consequences on health and society of the misuse of substances can be reinforced. eg in biology lessons and assemblies.
- To ensure that all members of the school adhere to the no smoking policy on all areas of the school site.

Drug Related Incidents

The Unicorn School premises are defined as all locations where school activities are taking place including residential trips, off-site locations such as hotels, campsites, and transport to and from school-related activities including the joint bus service with Abingdon School. Drug related incidents may be any of the following:

- Finding drugs or related paraphernalia on the Unicorn School premises
- Possession of drugs by a student on the Unicorn School premises
- Use of drugs by a student on the Unicorn school premises
- A student being on the Unicorn School premises under the influence of drugs or the ill effect of alcohol consumption.
- Supply of drugs on or near the Unicorn School premises
- Students disclosing information about their drug use
- Reports of students using illegal substances.

Investigation Procedures

1. Investigations will be carried out in all cases of suspected drug-related incidents on the Unicorn School premises if they relate to a member of the school. Care will be taken to respect the rights and emotional needs of those people involved in the investigation.

Drugs and Substance Misuse Policy September 2023

2. If a student is unconscious, is having trouble breathing, is seriously confused or disorientated, has taken a harmful, toxic substance or is otherwise at immediate risk of harm, medical help will be sought immediately via calling 999, and first aid given if required. The priority at all times will be the individual's safety.

3. On suspicion of a drug related incident, the Headteacher or a member of the Senior Management Team must be informed, and they will investigate and compile a report. Should this then require a search of a student's property, it should take place with another member of staff and, if possible, in the presence of the student. Students may be asked to hand over substances voluntarily e.g., by turning out pockets or bags. This search will be conducted in private and in the presence of the student and if possible, with a nominated representative. The Unicorn School is not required to inform parents before a search takes place or to seek their consent to search their child. The Unicorn School would normally inform the individual student's parents or guardians where alcohol, illegal drugs or potentially harmful substances are found, though there is no legal requirement to do so.

4. If there is reasonable suspicion of substance misuse by a student, Parents will be informed immediately. There will be no random testing of students.

5. If any student or adult on school premises is found in possession of an unauthorised drug it will be confiscated, if possible. The substance will be placed in a suitable sealed container as soon as possible in the presence of the student and a witness (the Headteacher where possible, or member of SMT). If the drug is suspected to be illegal, the Unicorn School may wish to contact a police officer for discussion. The substance may then be analysed by external professional organisations as appropriate. All illegal substances will be legally destroyed or handed to the police as soon as possible and not stored.

6. Witnesses will be assured that interviews will be treated confidentially as far as possible but that written records may be used in subsequent action. All incidents and responses will be recorded as soon as possible after the event on CPOMS (electronic recording). When a statement is taken from a student an additional member of the teaching staff will be present. Informing the police where appropriate will be the responsibility of the Headteacher (Mr Andrew Day or Mrs Ann-Marie Martin DSL). The Headteacher will also inform the Chair of Governors, Mr Andrew Strivens and the Safeguarding Governor, Mr Matthew Small.

7. Students who have misused substances contrary to the Unicorn School rules will be required to comply with the sanctions deemed appropriate by the Headteacher and the Governors which could result in temporary or permanent exclusion. Appropriate support will be offered to those with substance related problems. If the student is felt to be at risk the Safeguarding Policy will come into effect and social services may need to be contacted.

8. Records of drug related incidents will be kept in the Unicorn School on CPOMS. Following a search, whether or not anything is found, the school will make a record of the person searched, the reason for the search, the time and place, who was present and note the outcomes and

any follow-up action. There is no legal requirement to do this. The record will be stored securely on CPOMS for the duration of the student's time in School and information will be passed on if a student moves school. They will then be maintained with the student records for 10 years after they have left.

9. Liaison with the media in any given incident will be the responsibility of the Headteacher.

10. A list of useful organisations is given in the Appendix and is taken from the document DfE and ACPO drug advice for schools, September 2012.

Dissemination

A copy of this policy is available on the Unicorn School website. All new staff and supply teachers will be made aware of the policy during induction. The policy will be shared with the students and parents via the website and in lessons.

Name: Alex Foster

Name: Ann-Marie Martin

Position: Acting Head Teacher

Position: Designated Safeguarding Lead

Signed: 

Signed: 

Date: November 2023

Date: November 2023

Name: Matthew Small

Position: Governor with responsibility for safeguarding

Signed: 

Date: November 2023

Review: September 2024

Appendix

- Addaction is one of the UK's largest specialist drug and alcohol treatment charities. As well as adult services, they provide services specifically tailored to the needs of young people and their parents. The Skills for Life project supports young people with drug misusing parents. Website: www.addaction.org.uk
- ADFAM offers information to families of drug and alcohol users, and the website has a database of local family support services. Tel: 020 7553 7640 Email: admin@adfam.org.uk Website: www.adfam.org.uk
- Alcohol Concern works to reduce the incidence and costs of alcohol-related harm and to increase the range and quality of services available to people with alcohol related problems Tel: 020 7264 0510. Email: contact@alcoholconcern.org.uk Website: www.alcoholconcern.org.uk
- ASH (Action on Smoking and Health) A campaigning public health charity aiming to reduce the health problems caused by tobacco. Tel: 020 7739 5902 Email: enquiries@ash.org.uk Website: www.ash.org.uk
- Children's Legal Centre operates a free and confidential legal advice and information service covering all aspects of law and policy affecting children and young people. Tel: 01206 877910 Email: clc@essex.ac.uk Website: www.childrenslegalcentre.com
- Children's Rights Alliance for England - A charity working to improve the lives and status of all children in England through the fullest implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Email: info@crae.org.uk Website: www.crae.org.uk
- Drinkaware - An independent charity that promotes responsible drinking through innovative ways to challenge the national drinking culture, helping reduce alcohol misuse and minimise alcohol related harm. Tel: 020 7307 7450 Website: www.drinkaware.co.uk/
- Drinkline - A free and confidential helpline for anyone who is concerned about their own or someone else's drinking. Tel: 0800 917 8282 (lines are open 24 hours a day)
- Drug Education Forum – this website contains a number of useful papers and briefing sheets for use by practitioners: Website: www.drugeducationforum.com/
- DrugScope is a centre of expertise on illegal drugs, aiming to inform policy development and reduce drug-related risk. The website includes detailed drug information and access to the Information and Library Service. DrugScope also hosts the Drug Education Practitioners Forum. Tel: 020 7520 7550 Email: info@drugscope.org.uk Website: www.drugscope.org.uk

- FRANK is the national drugs awareness campaign aiming to raise awareness amongst young people of the risks of illegal drugs, and to provide information and advice. It also provides support to parents/carers, helping to give them the skills and confidence to communicate with their children about drugs. 24 Hour Helpline: 0800 776600 Email: frank@talktofrank.com Website: www.talktofrank.com
- Mentor UK is a non-government organisation with a focus on protecting the health and wellbeing of children and young people to reduce the damage that drugs can do to their lives. Tel: 020 7739 8494. Email admin@mentoruk.org Website: www.mentoruk.org.uk
- National Children's Bureau promotes the interests and well-being of all children and young people across every aspect of their lives. Tel: 020 7843 6000 Website: www.ncb.org.uk
- Family Lives - A charity offering support and information to anyone parenting a child or teenager. It runs a free-phone helpline and courses for parents, and develops innovative projects. Tel: 0800 800 2222 Website: <http://familylives.org.uk/>
- Re-Solv (Society for the Prevention of Solvent and Volatile Substance Abuse) A national charity providing information for teachers, other professionals, parents and young people. Tel: 01785 817885 Information line: 01785 810762 Email: information@re-solv.org Website: www.re-solv.org
- Smokefree - NHS Smoking Helpline: 0800 169 0 169 Website: <http://smokefree.nhs.uk>
- Stars National Initiative offers support for anyone working with children, young people and families affected by parental drug and alcohol misuse. Website: www.starsnationalinitiative.org.uk
- Youth Offending Teams – Local Youth Offending Teams are multi-agency teams and are the responsibility of the local authority, who have a statutory duty to [prevent offending by young people under the age of 18. Website: <https://www.gov.uk/youthoffending-team>