



SUBSTANCE USE AND MISUSE POLICY

Reviewed: **April 2017**

Next review date: **April 2019**

SUBSTANCE USE AND MISUSE POLICY

Vision

LeAF Studio will never condone the use of illegal substances, alcohol, or tobacco nor the misuse of solvents, prescription and over-the-counter medicines. The School is committed to the health and safety of its community and will take action to safeguard their well-being.

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 young people in need of support in addressing their issues of substance use and misuse to come forward.

The definition of a drug, given by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime is: "A substance people take to change the way they feel, think or behave."

For the purposes of this document the term "drug(s)", unless otherwise stated, refers to:

- All illegal drug(s) (those controlled by the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971).
- All legal drug(s), including alcohol, tobacco, volatile substances, e-cigarettes/vapours
- All over-the-counter and prescription medicines.

Relevant documents to be read in conjunction with this policy:

DfE and ACPO Drug advice for schools

DfE Screening searching and confiscation-advice for head teachers, staff and governing bodies

Aim

The School believes that, as part of its care for the welfare of its young people, it has a duty to inform and educate young people on the consequences of drug use and misuse. The School takes a proactive stance on this matter, believing that health education is a vital part of the personal and social development of every young person.

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.

We believe and support the following educational aims in respect of substance use and misuse:

- To enable young people to make healthy, informed choices by increasing knowledge, challenging attitudes and developing and practising skills.
- To provide accurate information about substances through the curriculum, work of the welfare assistant and school nurse.
- To increase understanding about the implications and possible consequences of use and misuse.

Drugs on School Premises

The legal definition of premises of a school includes everything within the property boundaries including buildings, outbuildings, playgrounds, fields and also extends to include

other settings such as vehicles, boats, marquees or any venue managed by the school at the time e.g. premises of a school trip or visit.

- **Medicines**
The school has a policy/procedure for the administration of medicines that must be followed for everyone's safety.
- **Alcohol**
No alcohol will be consumed on the school site unless at a licensed event. Students and visitors under the effects of alcohol, away from a licensed event will be asked to leave the premises and return at a later date for the safety of the whole school. Parents will be asked to collect the student.
- **Smoking**
The school is a no smoking site at all times. Students are not permitted to bring smoking materials to school. This includes matches, lighters and e-cigarettes/vapours. In the interests of health and safety, should a student be found in possession of any of these on school premises, they will be confiscated and parents informed.
- **Illegal drugs**
No illegal drugs are allowed to be brought on to, or used on school premises.
- **Solvents**
The school will ensure that potentially hazardous substances are stored safely and students will be supervised if it is necessary that they come into contact with them in the course of their work. Students are not permitted to be in possession of sniffable products.

Responses to drug related incidents

A drug incident may be any of the following:

- Finding drugs, or related paraphernalia, on school premises
- Possession of drugs by an individual on school premises
- Use of drugs by an individual on school premises
- Supply of drugs on school premises
- Individuals disclosing information about their drug use
- Rumours of parents, staff or students using drugs
- Reports of parents, staff or students using drugs

The school is aware of its legal responsibilities in regard to drug related incidents and in responding to incidents, seeks to work in line with local and national guidance as outlined in The Right Responses. A member of the leadership team will normally be responsible for co-ordinating the management of drug related incidents, offering sources of support and liaising with outside agencies. Incidents will be dealt with after making an assessment of the situation and will be reported to the Principal. All incidents and responses will be recorded within 24 hours.

Appropriate support will be offered to those with substance related problems. Talking with an individual about a drug related incident will have as its purpose to confirm or reject suspicions or allegations, rather than conduct a wider investigation.

Evidence of drug use or possession will not necessarily result in permanent exclusion. Permanent exclusion will only be considered in serious cases and will be in accordance with

DCSF guidance on exclusions. A case conference will be called if necessary. Each case will be assessed and levels of sanctions may vary according to the seriousness of the incident and the student's involvement.

Individuals in possession of drugs

If any student or adult on school premises is found in possession of an unauthorised drug it will be confiscated, if possible. If the drug is suspected to be illegal, the school may contact the police for advice. Illegal substances will be legally destroyed or handed to the police as soon as possible and not stored. Parents will be informed (for a student) and other professionals such as the LA, Youth Service, Police, GP, Social Services will be informed or consulted as appropriate.

Confidentiality

Complete secrecy can never be promised to a student, though information given in confidence will not generally be disclosed to anyone else. In particular if a student chooses to disclose that they are using a drug without medical authorisation, this information will not be used against them. However, action will be taken to ensure the student comes to no serious harm if this is considered a risk. Regarding disclosures staff know to clearly define and communicate the boundaries of confidentiality offered.

Support for students

At our school the welfare of the student is paramount. We maintain that constructive strategies that enable students to continue to benefit from continued education are preferable to exclusion.

Following actions to preserve safety, the health and emotional needs of students will be considered. Support is available through the pastoral system, to ensure a caring response to students in distress. Interventions will be considered if the school feels a student is showing signs which indicate particular risks of, or from, involvement with drugs, whether their own or their parents'/carers'. Such interventions may include consultations with parents/carers and other agencies, possible case conferences and subsequent referral. Permanent exclusion from school will rarely be considered as permanently excluded students become significantly more vulnerable to drugs than those within formal schooling.