



# **SUBSTANCE USE AND MISUSE**

## **(Senior and Junior Schools)**

*Reviewed June 2020*

The School is committed to the health and safety of all its members and will take action to safeguard their well-being. QEHBristol School believes that all members of the School community are entitled to a school environment free of drugs and any pressure to take drugs, including those that are illegal under legislation and legal such as tobacco and alcohol.

1. The school believes that the misuse of drugs by members of the school, and/or the supply of these substances is wrong.
2. The school is committed to the health and safety of its members and will take action to safeguard their well-being.
3. 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 pupils in need of support to come forward.
4. The school will inform the parents of any pupil known to be (or suspected of) using or distributing drugs, either in or out of school.
5. The possession, use or supply of drugs in the school context, which is defined as on any School premises or during any School activity or where recognisable as a member of the school, is totally forbidden. Any such instance will be viewed as an extremely serious disciplinary matter and the likely outcome is permanent exclusion from the School.

In its response to drugs misuse and in the education it provides on drugs, the School follows the guidance given in *DfE and ACPO drug advice for schools [September 2012]*. This document should be read in conjunction with the School policies on safeguarding and child protection, behaviour and discipline, educational visits and trips, and the QEHBristol code of conduct and school expectations in the School Planner.

### **DEFINITION OF DRUGS WITHIN THE SCOPE OF THIS POLICY**

The term drugs in this policy is a 'substance people take to change the way they feel, think or behave and refers to alcohol, tobacco, illegal drugs, prescribed drugs, legal highs and volatile substances'. Drugs are substances which alter the mind or body or both. This policy is concerned with legal drugs such as solvents, tranquillisers, tobacco and alcohol, and illegal drugs under the terms of the Misuse of Drugs Act (1971).

## **THE ROLE OF THE HEADMASTER AND GOVERNORS**

The Headmaster takes overall responsibility for the policy and its implementation, for liaison with the Governing Body, parents and appropriate outside agencies. The Headmaster will ensure that all staff dealing with substance abuse are adequately supported and trained.

The Governing Body will be involved in substance education and substance related incidents in the same manner as any other matter concerning the direction of the school.

## **DRUG EDUCATION**

In response to shared concerns at a local and national level, the school states its belief that, as part of its care for the welfare of its pupils, the school has a duty to inform and educate young people on the consequences of drug use and misuse. The school takes a pro-active stance on this matter, believing that health education is a vital part of the personal and social education of every pupil. The school seeks to share with parents the responsibility for the education of young people about drugs.

The school supports the following educational aims in respect of substance use and misuse:

1. To ensure that members of staff are appropriately trained to instruct and counsel pupils about the use and misuse of substances.
2. To enable pupils to make healthy, informed choices by increasing knowledge, and challenging attitudes.
3. To provide accurate information about substances.
4. To increase understanding about the implications and possible consequences of use and misuse.
5. To widen understanding about related health and social issues, e.g. sex and sexuality, crime, HIV and AIDS.
6. To seek to minimise the risks that users and potential users face.
7. To enable young people to identify sources of appropriate personal support both inside and outside school.
8. In the case of alcohol, to advise pupils about responsible and proportionate levels of consumption.

These aims are fulfilled through aspects of the pupils' experiences in the taught curriculum, the informal curriculum (including assemblies and tutor time) and through opportunities for extra-curricular activities. The school delivers the taught curriculum mainly through PSHE, but other opportunities to reinforce learning occur in other parts of the teaching programme. Information on substance abuse, including alcohol is also available from the school nurse team and support for understanding addiction and recovery and its psychological impact is offered by the school counsellor.

## **ADMINISTERING MEDICINES**

Any pupil in need of medication during school time must register such medicines with the school nurse. The nurse will decide which medicines may be kept on the person and which will be locked in her room. Please refer to the Administration of Medication Policy.

## **LINKS WITH OUTSIDE AGENCIES AND THE MEDIA**

The school actively co-operates with other agencies such as Community Police, Social Services, Health and Drug Agencies to deliver its commitment to Drugs Education and to deal with incidents of substance use and misuse. The school also works with other local schools.

The Headmaster will take responsibility for liaison with the media. As the issue of substance misuse is an emotive one and likely to generate interest from the local media, the school will take appropriate advice and guidance to ensure that any reporting of incidents remains in the best interests of the young people, their families and the school.

<b>SUBSTANCE USE AND MISUSE: MANAGING A DRUG RELATED INCIDENT</b>
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## **EMERGENCY SITUATIONS**

Where the person is unconscious or semi-conscious an ambulance and the School Nurse should be called. Any obvious evidence of substance abuse should be gathered (see *Guidance*) and any clear information should be given to the emergency services. The Headmaster or Deputy Head (Pastoral) must be informed as soon as is practicable: he will commence the detailed investigation.

## **INTOXICATION**

The person will be taken to the School Nurse or the nurse called to assist. She must be told of any suspicion of drug misuse. The nurse will take appropriate medical action and will inform the Deputy Head (Pastoral) or the Headmaster who will commence detailed investigations.

## **DISCLOSURE**

If a pupil discloses to a member of staff that he/she is involved with drug misuse or has information regarding other pupils and drugs, the member of staff must not promise absolute confidentiality. The Deputy Head (Pastoral) or Headmaster should be informed with the pupil's knowledge. The Headmaster or Deputy Head (Pastoral) will then follow the procedures described in *Guidance for staff delegated to investigate*.

When a pupil discloses substance misuse on or off the premises, staff will inform the Headmaster or Deputy Head (Pastoral) and, where appropriate, may participate in the planning of subsequent action.

## **ON SUSPICION OF POSSESSION OF DRUGS OR OTHER PROHIBITED SUBSTANCES**

On suspicion of the possession of drugs or other prohibited substances, searches of a pupil's desk or locker may be made by members of staff. The pupil should ideally be present during the search but this might not be possible. The search must be carried out by at least two members of staff and should, if practicable involve a member of SMT. Pupils may also be asked to hand over substances voluntarily, for example by turning out their pockets or bag, again in the presence of more than one member of staff.

A pupil refusing to turn out his/her pockets, or give access to their locker or school bag should be escorted to the Deputy Head (Pastoral) or the Headmaster.

Searches of pupils by staff, without their consent are allowed by law, when undertaken by staff authorised by the Headmaster to conduct a search, if there is reasonable grounds for suspecting that the pupil may have a prohibited item. Prohibited items are defined in the DfE publication '*Searching, screening and confiscation: advice for headteachers, school staff and governing bodies*' (2018) and include alcohol, tobacco products, illegal drugs or any item identified by the school in the school rules as a banned item which can be searched for.

The Deputy Head (Pastoral) and/or Headmaster will decide based on the available information, whether a search without consent is appropriate. The police may be called for advice or assistance.

## **ON DISCOVERY**

When staff discover substances which are suspected of being harmful, illegal or deserving of investigation, they should note the two circumstances in which substances may be removed from either a **place** or a **person** ~

### **1. Place**

If possible, remove the substance from where it was discovered in the presence of a witness. If this is not possible, do not leave the substance *in situ* whilst enlisting the support of a colleague or pupil as a witness. Continue with the Procedure for Making Safe set out below.

### **2. Person**

When receiving or retrieving substances from a pupil, do so if possible in the presence of a witness. However, in the absence of a witness, do not put off receiving substances or, within the bounds of professional discretion, removing a suspicious substance from a pupil's possession.

## **PROCEDURE FOR MAKING SAFE**

Members of staff must observe the following procedures at all times:

1. Remove the substance (from place or person) and record the time, place and circumstance in which the substance came into your possession.
2. Do not investigate the nature of the substance but record its approximate size and appearance: tasting, testing or analysis by staff is forbidden as to do so is an offence under *The Misuse of Drugs Act (1971)*.
3. When possible, have the recordings counter-signed by a witness.
4. Take the substance immediately to the Headmaster or Deputy Head (Pastoral). Staff must not keep the substance about their person or in a place of safekeeping: to do so places staff at risk under *The Misuse of Drugs Act (1971)*.
5. In the presence of the Deputy Head (Pastoral) or Headmaster, place the substance in a suitable sealed container. The Deputy Head (Pastoral) and/or Headmaster, member of staff and witness should sign and date the package. An official report should be completed, recording the time, date and circumstance of the find and should be lodged with the Headmaster or Deputy Head (Pastoral) within 24 hours of the event.
6. The Headmaster can choose to arrange for the police or an approved agency to remove the substance from the premises or else to dispose of it in an appropriate way.
7. In the event of a discovery of any equipment associated with substance misuse, especially needles and syringes, pupils must not be permitted to handle such items. All equipment must be handled by adults with the utmost care. The Headmaster will ensure that materials are placed in a secure and rigid container to await collection by the appropriate agency.

## **AN INCIDENT ON A SCHOOL TRIP**

The prime concern must always be the well being of the pupil(s). Medical attention must be summoned if required (see Managing a Drug-related Incident) The supervising staff should make contact with the Headmaster, Deputy Head (Pastoral) or designated school contact as soon as possible.

When it is not appropriate for a senior member of staff to attend to take charge of the matter, close liaison with senior staff must be maintained throughout the incident. The procedures detailed in *Procedure for Making safe (above) and Guidance for staff delegated to investigate (below)* should be followed as far as is possible under the circumstances of the particular trip and bearing in mind the terms and conditions (if any) imposed by the travel company.

## **Alcohol**

QEH School recognises its duty to discourage and deter unhealthy and immoderate patterns of drinking, whilst helping to educate our students in the balanced, limited, social use of alcohol if and when appropriate.

We do not have a zero tolerance approach but encourage a safe and responsible attitude to the consumption of alcohol. At all times pupils at the School are bound by the law <https://www.gov.uk/alcohol-young-people-law> with some additional School restrictions. In the School context, no pupil may drink or bring alcohol onto School premises, or take it on School outings, trips, expeditions, fixtures, etc. unless permission has been granted by the Headmaster. In addition, no pupil may visit licensed premises during the School day. On trips and visits no pupil below Year 10 may enter a public house or bar whilst in the care of the School.

School contexts within which pupils may be allowed to consume very limited amounts of alcohol under the age of 18 are:

1. Social occasions in School where food is also served, e.g. a sports club or society dinner, subject to:
  - The terms of the licence granted for the occasion;
  - Restrictions on amounts;
  - Staff control of the serving of drinks
  - A total ban on the consumption of spirits.
  - Parents being aware and having had the opportunity to withdraw consent from their son/daughter consuming alcohol

The above also apply at private venues [such as an expedition's camp site].

2. Licenced premises, providing the conditions for supervision set out in [1] are strictly adhered to and pupils are in Year 10 or above. The supervising adult will be a member of staff designated by the trip organiser. This applies on trips outside England, except in countries where the law is more stringent. In this event pupils will be fully briefed of all additional restrictions. It is appreciated that some trips will have a 'No Alcohol' rule, whereas others will permit the responsible attitude towards drinking in keeping with the policy. All pupils and their parents or guardians will be made aware in writing of the specific rules for all trips and be given the opportunity to withhold permission for a pupil to consume alcohol. The member of staff in charge of the specific trip will assume responsibility for responsible alcohol consumption. If a pupil is hosted by a family then the pupil's parents will establish alcohol limits with the host family if appropriate. No spirits will be consumed.

A breach of this rule will be treated as a major disciplinary offence and will follow School procedure.

## **Smoking**

Under no circumstances may any pupil at QEH School smoke or otherwise be in possession of tobacco or products relating to e-cigarettes or vapes on the way to and from School, at any point during the School day, at any event representing School or during any visit or trip organised by the School. The whole site is non-smoking.

The supply of smoking related substances in School is a serious matter; any breach of the rules will follow the School discipline procedure.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>SUBSTANCE USE AND MISUSE: GUIDANCE FOR STAFF DELEGATED TO INVESTIGATE</b></p>
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## **PROCEDURES FOR INVESTIGATION**

On receipt of information from the member of staff and after considering the *prima facie* evidence, the Deputy Head (Pastoral) (or other member of staff) may plan an investigation.

Any investigation must proceed according to the principles of **natural justice**: i.e.

- The pupil must not be pre-judged.
- The investigative procedures must be fair, unbiased and impartial.
- Measures must be taken to ensure proper care for the well-being of all pupils involved.
- All investigations which appear necessary must be carried out.
- The pupil(s) and parents must be given a proper opportunity to be heard.
- In the case of expulsion, the pupil and parents must be informed of the consequences of expulsion and given details of the appeals mechanism.

## **FACT FINDING**

- Responsibility for fact-finding will normally be delegated by the Headmaster to the Deputy Head (Pastoral) and one other member of staff acting as a team of two.
- Before commencing investigation, the Headmaster and/or Deputy Head (Pastoral) will make careful plans:
  - to establish the parameters of the case
  - to establish a timetable
  - to anticipate possible consequences for the suspect(s) and the school community.
- The Headmaster will inform the Chair of Governors (or, in his absence, the Vice-Chair of Governors).
- The Headmaster and/or Deputy Head (Pastoral) will inform parents at the earliest opportunity.
- In the case of a potentially serious breach of the school's rule a suspect should be offered the opportunity to have an adult "friend" (e.g. parent or Form Tutor) present during interviews.

## **PUPIL SUSPECTS**

- Explain that answers to questions will be noted down and considered carefully.
- Explain what has been alleged and, unless there is good reason for confidentiality, by whom.

- Read over notes taken; ask if they are a correct record: then initial notes, date and time.
- If pupil suspect wishes to make a statement, this must be done in writing and signed and dated.
- If parents have not been present earlier and if the suspect has admitted a serious breach likely to lead to expulsion, he must be segregated and parents/guardians asked by Headmaster to attend without delay.
- Pupils and parents must be kept informed of the process and possible outcomes.

## **WITNESSES**

- Encourage witnesses to give a written account; otherwise detailed notes must be taken.
- Read over notes taken: then ask the witness to initial notes, date and time.
- Beware of hearsay.

## **REVIEW**

- Assess the facts of the case, considering the need to re-interview witnesses or to take further written statements.
- Consider whom to notify: Chair of Governors, parents, police, and other agencies.
- Consider the pupil suspect's file and previous record.

## **MEETING WITH PARENTS AND PUPIL SUSPECT**

- Consider staff to be present: normally the Headmaster and Deputy Head (Pastoral). Explain: what is alleged, the evidence and the consequences being considered; what the pupils suspect has said or written and what investigating staff believe to be true.
- Offer parents and pupil suspect time alone together to talk things over (unless pupil suspect appears frightened of parents).
- After time for reflection to consider options, tell parents and pupil suspect of decision or that the decision will be made by a specified time: consideration may be given to suspension pending the announcement of a final decision.
- If the decision is to expel, then the parents should be told of their rights of appeal.

## **NOTIFICATION**

The fact of an expulsion or request to withdraw will be given to the Governors but details should not be given to those Governors who might constitute an appeal panel.

## **SANCTIONS**

- Any offence involving substance abuse renders a pupil liable to expulsion but sanctions may range from a serious warning, through suspension, through special disciplinary regime to removal or expulsion.
- The principle is that anyone who has possessed or used drugs contrary to the school rules forfeits the right to be in the school. This remains the starting point: any

movement from that position is mitigation and control remains in the hands of the school.

- Expulsion means formal dismissal from the school, recorded as such, confirmed in writing in the pupil's file.
- The decision to expel is a breach of contract unless it is:
  - made in good faith
  - in accordance with the principles of natural justice
  - for an offence which is sufficiently serious
  - on the basis of guilt that is reasonably well established.
- Other options available instead of expulsion include
- withdrawal ~ voluntary withdrawal of the pupil by the parents
- removal ~ requirement falling short of expulsion that the parents remove the pupil from the school
- In cases where boys have to leave the school, every effort will be made to help them find a place in another school. Boys who remain at QEH but who have been involved in some way in a drugs-related incident will receive pastoral support in school.

## **Appendix 1 Drugs and Substance Help and Support**

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 <http://www.drinkaware.co.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](mailto:enquiries@ash.org.uk)

Website: [www.ash.org.uk](http://www.ash.org.uk)

Smokefree, NHS Smoking Helpline: 0800 169 0 169 Website: <http://smokefree.nhs.uk>

24 hour confidential telephone advice about drugs is offered by the National Drugs Helpline, also called *Talk to Frank* 0300 123660 <http://www.talktofrank.com/>

Bristol Drugs Project <http://www.bdp.org.uk/> Tel: 0117 987 6000 Email: [info@bdp.org.uk](mailto:info@bdp.org.uk)

Twitter: @bdpROADS