



# Drug Education and Management of Drug Related Incidents Policy

## Introduction

### **Definition**

A drug is any substance the use of which alters the physiological or psychological functioning of the body.

### **The Context**

Young people are constantly exposed to the issues of the use and misuse of drugs in our society. They therefore have an educational need to learn to live safely within a society in which there is widespread use and misuse of drugs for medicinal or recreational purposes and unease about this development.

None of what follows applies to drugs which are prescribed for a student's own use by his or her family doctor. The school expects to be formally informed by parents if a student requires medication during the school day, in line with Calderdale's guidance on students requiring medication.

### **The School's Response**

- Park Lane Learning Trust does not condone the possession, supply or misuse of any illegal drug on or off school premises.
- The school recognises that Drugs fall into three distinct categories:
  - those it is legal to possess and to use: tobacco, alcohol, volatile substances, such as solvents and glues
  - those it is illegal to possess, supply or use, such as cannabis, ecstasy, LSD, amphetamines, cocaine, heroin
  - those it is legal to obtain as prescribed medicines but which have the potential to cause harm, either if misused or obtained illegally (e.g. by theft from prescribed users).
- Despite the varying opinions and personal practices of parents and families in relation to these categories of drugs, we see no place in school for students to be in possession of or experiencing the effects of substances commonly described as drugs and mentioned above.

## Drugs Education Policy

1. The central aims of our Drugs Education Policy are:
  - to give our students the facts, knowledge, skills and confidence to make informed and responsible choices now and later in life about lifestyles;
  - to have a full appreciation of the benefits of a healthy and safe lifestyle.
2. Drugs Education in the school is co-ordinated by the Head of Personal, Social and Health Education and is reviewed annually.
3. The main but not exclusive vehicle for the delivery of Drugs Education is the PSHCE programme which is delivered on discrete Theme Days, which emphasises in all aspects of its curriculum the nurturing of self-confidence and self-esteem, personal and social responsibility and access to sufficient objective information to enable young people to make rational personal decisions.
4. The Drugs Education work of the school seeks to actively build links with appropriate agencies in the community, including the Police and Advice and Counselling services, including HX1 Lifeline.
5. Staff training needs are assessed in terms of drug knowledge, the ability to respond appropriately to drug related incidents and the ability to deliver appropriate Drug Education.
6. Co-operation with parents/carers is an important dimension to our work. The Calderdale Drug Education Consultant works with the school to ascertain the best ways to enable dissemination of information and general discussion to parents/carers.
7. Full details of the drugs education programme are available from the Head of Personal, Social and Health Education.

## The Management of Drugs Related Incidents

### **1. General Circumstances**

- As with any issues pertaining to Child Protection, all members of staff are required to be vigilant in relation to all matters of health, welfare, safety and security. The effective operation of the school's pastoral system depends on all colleagues sharing this commitment and being prepared to raise concerns with senior colleagues and those with designated responsibilities.
- All students are also encouraged and reminded to be aware of the needs of their fellow students and to feel sufficiently confident to discuss problems or concerns with members of staff.

- Where a member of staff has grounds for concern, he or she will normally be expected to bring these to the attention of the relevant senior member of staff who will alert the Headteacher of the situation and discuss possible courses of action.

## **2. Establishing the Facts**

- Establishing a clear understanding of the facts is an essential first step before deciding on any course of action. Because of the sensitivity surrounding these issues, unsubstantiated allegation can cause great difficulty. Periodically, the school receives information from an anonymous source, typically someone claiming to be a parent or friend of the school. Every effort is made to establish the identity of such informants. It is difficult to manage successfully 'rumours' or 'tip-offs', however well intended.
- The conduct of an investigation into an allegation will normally be conducted by the Senior Leadership Team and at the outcome of the investigation a course of action will be agreed by the Headteacher in consultation with others, as appropriate.
- Careful attention is given to recording all relevant information in a drug related incident. These records are then kept in student files for reference purposes with a clear explanation that these were allegations/rumours. These records are clearly dated.

## **3. Action to be taken**

A variety of circumstances may arise, each of which requires a different response. In determining the appropriate response, the members of staff dealing with it will be mindful of pastoral and legal considerations. The kind of circumstances may include:

- Drugs are discovered on school premises but not on a person:
  - the drugs will be placed in a secure place
  - the police will be informed and arrangements made for disposal
- Drugs related material, such as syringes, needles etc are discovered on school premises but not on a person:
  - as above but with particular attention to safety in handling sharps
- A student is found in possession of drugs but with no evidence of being under the influence of the drug:
  - investigation
  - involvement of parents/carers unless it is felt that this would further jeopardise the safety of the student
  - return to parents/carers of legal substances (eg alcohol) or arrange disposal

- involvement of police if student is in possession of illegal drugs or in illegal possession of prescribed drugs. The school is aware that they are not under any obligation to inform on those who were found in possession of a substance.
- counselling, guidance, punishment, as appropriate. This may involve consultation with Calderdale’s Drug education Consultant and/or HX1 Lifeline ( 01422 258800)
- A student is found in possession of drug related materials:
  - as above, with involvement of police if investigation suggests this is appropriate.
- A student is suspected of being under the influence of a drug or alcohol:
  - ensure safety of individual and treat as a medical emergency, if appropriate
  - try to confiscate any further supply of substance to ensure safety. If successful, store and record, preferably with an adult witness.
  - investigate as in above once student is able to participate in investigation
  - contact police for advice
- A student is suspected of supplying drugs:
  - establish whether the substance in question is legal or illegal
  - attempt to establish whether the drug is for personal use or for supply
  - involve parents/carers
  - if substance is illegal, it may be decided to contact the police who will set up a criminal investigation. This is at the discretion of the Headteacher.

- Smoking

Although tobacco clearly is a harmful drug, the above procedures do not apply to instances of smoking or possession of cigarettes; smoking is regarded as a simple breach of school discipline and dealt with accordingly. It is routine to confiscate cigarettes and also to counsel students on the risks of health connected to smoking.

Park Lane Learning Trust is aware of Calderdale Council’s No Smoking Policy on Council premises and seeks to enforce this.

#### **4. Sanctions**

- Society views with grave concern the use of illegal drugs. It is much more indulgent in regard to alcohol and tobacco.
- The school is an educative community and as such aims to change unacceptable or damaging behaviour when it occurs.

- The school needs to be prepared to distinguish between the self-inflicted damage suffered by an individual or group of individuals who misuse drugs and the damage done by those who abuse the school by making it a place to profit from the vulnerability of others.
- The school will examine and deal with each situation on its merits but will not hesitate at the possibility of using the ultimate school sanction of permanent exclusion to deal with deliberately criminal activity and drug dealing.
- At all times, the final decision regarding the use of exclusion as an appropriate sanction rests with the Headteacher.

### Drug Using Parents/Carers

At all times it is the safety and wellbeing of students in our care that is paramount.

In the case of a student disclosing knowledge of a drug using parent/carer it is important to ascertain the impact that this is having on the young person. If it is felt that the situation poses a risk of significant harm to the student the Child Protection procedures should be followed. It is worth remembering that young people often find ways to test the attitudes and values of adults in their lives and that a non judgemental stance, rather than condoning or condemnatory, is preferred. At all times, staff must remember that they are not drug counsellors and that attempting to intervene in drug related incidents involving an adult in the community may cause greater harm than good.

In the case of suspicion of a drug using parent/carer, again, the main concern is for the welfare of the young person. Staff should discuss their concerns with the named person for Child Protection and an appropriate course of action should be taken. This may include monitoring the situation or seeking further advice from HX1 Lifeline. As with all cases of suspected drug misuse, a written and dated record is kept in a secure, centrally located place.

### Conclusion

The use or misuse of drugs in our society is a complex issue. Dealing with the issue, the school needs a measured and sensitive approach.

Park Lane Learning Trust has developed a repertoire of responses, incorporating both sanctions and counselling which reflect the range of drugs-related problems. The school accepts its responsibility to support and help those who misuse drugs. At the same time, its major response, through its educational programme, will continue to be to prepare young people for responsible adulthood.

We believe that we are striving to fulfil our obligations under the Education Reform Act 1988 and DfEE Circular 4/95.

## Support Documentation

Child Protection Policy

## Monitoring and Review

This Plan should be reviewed every 3 years.

## **The Substance Use and Abuse Awareness Programme Adopted as Part of the Personal, Social and Health Education Programme**

### **Introduction**

The study of substance use and misuse is an integral part of the Personal, Social and Health Education programme at our school. There have been many evaluations of the impact of the drugs education on young people throughout the country and the findings of many of these studies show that drugs education does not stop drug use, and that 'shock horror' approaches to drugs education may even encourage drug use amongst those people who are most at risk.

### **Aims**

At Park Lane Learning Trust, therefore, we try to be more sophisticated in our approach treating drugs education as an 'educational' rather than a 'propaganda' issue. We believe that the raising of self-esteem, valuing of oneself and others, honest acknowledgement of feelings and emotions, together with the ability to care for and co-operate with others makes students more able to cope responsibly with stressful situations. Hence, drug education aims to allow our students to develop the attitudes, knowledge, understanding and skills to enable them to make personal, well informed, healthy decisions about their own and other people's drug use, and about drugs as an issue in wider society.

Our approach to this area of study takes two main routes. Firstly, to provide factual information and knowledge about drugs and secondly to build and develop skills which enable students to analyse risks and make decisions. These two inputs are intertwined and mutually supportive, one cannot be done successfully without the other.

More specifically, drugs education aims to:

- 1 Enable students to make responsible, healthy, informed choices increasing knowledge, enabling students to explore and challenge a range of attitudes and to develop and practise skills.
- 2 Provide accurate and relevant information about substances.
- 3 Increase understanding about the implications and possible consequences of use and misuse.
- 4 Develop an understanding of the role of drugs in society and about those people experiencing or likely to experience substance abuse.
- 5 Widen understanding about related health and social issues eg sex and sexuality, crime, laws and HIV and AIDS.
- 6 Seek to minimise the risks that users and potential users face.
- 7 Develop skills in responsibility, assessment, assertiveness, helping others, getting help, communicating, decision making, etc relevant to drug use and drug issues.

8 To enable young people to identify sources of appropriate resource support.

## **Methodology**

Substance use and abuse is taught across the school from Years 7-11 during discrete PHSCE Theme Days. These lessons are delivered by teachers who are comfortable with the subject and have the ability to enable students to discuss issues openly. We find it useful to integrate outside speakers into the drugs education programme eg the police, and NARCONON, but believe that drug experts alone are not a substitute for a good teacher who has an ongoing relationship with the students involved. A danger could be that if we relied too much on outside experts our students would think that we were unprepared to discuss drug issues with them.

The provision of drugs education begins in Year 7 concentrating on alcohol, tobacco and solvents, progressing to illegal drugs in Year 8 including Cannabis, Ecstasy and amphetamines. In Year 9 we revisit all drugs and examine their effects. During Key Stage 4, years 10 and 11, illegal drugs are part of their work about the law, violence, crime, HIV, sexuality, disability, terminal illness, prejudice and general discussion about the social effects of drug taking on individual and friendship groupings, family life and society. However, a continued re-emphasis is put on tobacco, over the counter drugs, prescribed drugs and alcohol because it is misleading to discuss one drug in isolation from all others.

The use of this 'spiral curriculum' is important as it constantly keeps the information on all substances up to date and thus relevant to students. It also emphasises that substance use and abuse is not a subject to be looked at in isolation or as a 'tick box' exercise to be forgotten as the student moves on to other issues.

Teaching methods are not didactic but student centred and activity based, using a variety of tested techniques such as games, role play, small group work, brainstorming, quizzes, card games, videos, debates, case studies, decision making exercises, self assertiveness exercises, values clarifications, identification of coping techniques and questions to visiting speakers. Research shows that participative methods are most effective for drugs education.

During Personal, Social and Health Education lesson students have their own ground rules about how they should and should not behave. Although teachers cannot guarantee absolute confidentiality in school, confidentiality is one of the group rules particularly relevant to drugs education in order to maximise learning.

### **Useful classroom ground rules for confidentiality include:**

- Personal disclosures in small groups should not be repeated by other people in the large group without consent.
- Personal disclosures in the large group should not be repeated outside the group.
- People should talk for themselves with 'I' statements, rather than talk about other people.
- *People should not be put on the spot and pressed about their own drug use.*