

Drugs and Drugs Education

This document seeks to outline the school's approach to two aspects of the problems associated with drugs in education.

- 1 The way in which the school will handle incidents involving drugs being brought onto the school premises.
- 2 The outlining of the school's Drugs Education Programme.

A clear distinction must be drawn between legal drugs such as cigarettes, alcohol and solvent and illegal drugs such as cannabis, ecstasy, LSD and cocaine.

In addition, a distinction should be drawn between drugs used to combat medical conditions, both prescribed and 'over the counter' and 'recreational' drugs.

Throughout this document these different aspects will be taken into account.

The Legal framework

The Legal framework around which the school's policy must centre is the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971.

Under the act it is an offence:

- 1 to supply or offer to supply controlled drugs to another.
- 2 to be in possession of a controlled drug.
- 3 for the "manager or occupier" of any premises (in schools the Headteacher) to have reasonable grounds to suspect the possession or supply of drugs on their premises without informing the police.

This act, together with the advice offered by DfES forms the basis for this policy document.

At Chase Terrace Technology College we seek:

- 1) To provide a clear, balanced and sensitive delivery of factual information set against a background of moral values and the legal framework.
- 2) To have concern for the individual and to provide a support framework which will help to deal with any anxieties or questions arising from possible contacts with drug abuse.
- 3) To provide a clear and effective procedure for dealing with any incidence of drug abuse on the school premises.

Possession of Drugs in School

Drugs being taken for medical conditions as part of an agreed medical plan

No drugs of any nature should be brought onto the school premises without the knowledge of the school.

If a student needs to take drugs for an acute medical condition this must be organised through the Head of Year as part of an agreed medical plan. The medicine must be sent into school in a clearly labelled envelope, with a covering letter detailing times to be taken, dosage etc. The medicine should be taken to the student support centre and students should go there at the correct times to take it.

Under very exceptional circumstances pupils may be allowed to carry medicines with them in school. Permission for this will be at the discretion of the relevant Head of Year, in consultation with the student's parents.

Cigarettes, Alcohol, Solvents and illegal drugs

Any student caught in possession of, or suspected of having used, these substances will be referred immediately to a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

The normal procedure in such circumstances will be to:

- confiscate the substances and hold them until parents or police (as appropriate) can arrange collection
- assess students, liaise with parents, isolate from lessons.

Illegal Drugs

Where there is a strong suspicion that illegal drugs are in the possession of a student, or that a student is under the influence of illegal drugs, the student should be referred immediately to the Director of Student Support and Guidance. .

The normal procedure in such circumstances will be to:

- confiscate any suspicious substances which may be found (always in the presence of another member of staff) and refer the matter immediately to the Headteacher.
- assess students, liaise with parents, isolate from lessons.
- inform the police and the student's parents immediately.
- inform the Chair of Governors and discuss appropriate action to be taken by the school.

4. Drugs brought onto the premises for distribution to other students

The is a very serious offence and will result in permanent exclusion. All students have the right to be safe in school and parents need to have confidence that the school is a safe environment.

Counselling

Counselling for students will be organised where possible by the Head of Year in consultation with the Director of Student Support and Guidance. The School Nurse and Drugs Youth Workers will be the first point of contact with other outside agencies for students who feel that they need counselling in this area. Regular clinics are held in school by these groups where any problems identified by students can be discussed in private and in confidence.

Members of staff who are approached by students seeking help must always stress the limits to which they can guarantee confidentiality. Where there is a clear problem relating to drugs misuse the matter must be passed on to the Director of Student Support for guidance who will consult with the Headteacher who will then coordinate further action involving the student, parents, the school nurse and the police, as appropriate.

The following pages outline factors to look for relating to drug abuse. They are taken from 'Drugs: Guidance Manual for Schools in Staffordshire'.

Possible Warning signs shown by individuals

- Excessive spending or borrowing of money.
- Stealing money or goods.
- Reports from parents that more time is being spent away from home.
- Changes in attendance pattern and decline in willingness to participate at school.
- Decline in performance at school.
- Changes in behaviour, e.g. disruptive, more boisterous and less cooperative after session breaks.
- Disregard for physical appearance.
- Lack of appetite or drastic increase in consumption of sweet foods.
- Heavy use of after-shave or perfume to disguise the smell of drugs or solvents.
- Wearing sun-glasses at inappropriate times to hide dilated or constricted pupils.
- Bouts of drowsiness or sleepiness.
- Increased incidents of telling lies or of furtive behaviour.
- Unusual smells, stains or marks on the body or clothes, or around the school.
- A marked interest in glue, nail varnish or other solvent based products and aerosols.
- Unusual soreness or redness around the mouth, nose or eyes.
- Persistent irritable cough.
- Slurred speech.
- Involvement in petty delinquency.
- Making or receiving furtive phone calls.
- Rushing off 'to meet someone' at short notice.

Possible warning signs shown by groups

- Small groups gathering in secretive places.
- Appearing 'tipsy', giggling and seeming unsteady.
- Pooling money.
- Petty stealing.
- Behaving aggressively.
- A small group sharing a secret with a great deal of giggling immediately after a session break.
- Maintaining distance from other students away from supervision points.
- Being the subject of rumours of misuse.
- Use of drug users slang.
- Association with a person who is much older and not normally part of the peer group.
- Meeting non pupils at lunch time in the vicinity of school.

Objects that may indicate drug misuse

- Foil containers or cups shapes made from silver foil, perhaps discoloured from heat.
- Metal tins, small bottles or pill boxes.
- Heat discoloured spoons or tweezers.
- Twists of paper.
- Straws.
- Syringes or needles.
- Plastic bags or butane gas containers.
- Cardboard or other tubes.
- Shredded cigarettes or home-rolled cigarettes with a home made cardboard filter.
- Paper approx. 5 cm square folded to form an envelope.
- Small patterned squares of blotting paper. Rizzla packets with pieces torn off

B) Drugs Education Programme

Drugs Education cannot be delivered in isolation from the whole of the school's citizenship Programme. The development of right values and attitudes is a central aim of the school and attitudes towards drugs forms part of this.

Teachers are not drugs experts. The main thrust of delivery relating to Drugs Education comes through the Personal, Social and Health Education Programme within Citizenship.

The Police School's Liaison team have, in the past, delivered excellent material in school. Staffing reductions have now meant that they can only offer an advisory service. Staffordshire County Council Youth and Community Service offer an excellent link with local Youth workers; The Connexions Team work from Year 9 upwards and the local Youth for Christ Organisation are involved in relationships Education with different year groups.