



Meadowhead School Academy Trust

Policy on Substance Use and Misuse Drugs Education Policy



**This is a policy of Meadowhead School Academy Trust.
Meadowhead School is a Foundation School
and a member of the
Meadowhead Community Learning Trust**

Staff Responsible:

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Section A: Policy on Substance Use and Misuse

As part of its care for the welfare of its pupils, Meadowhead School believes 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 education for every pupil.

- The school condones neither the misuse of drugs and/or alcohol by members of the school, nor the illegal supply of these substances; consequently very severe action will be taken in all cases.
- The school is committed to the health and safety of its members and will take action to safeguard their wellbeing.
- 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.

Fundamental to our school's values and practice it is the principle of sharing the responsibility for education of young people with parents, person legally responsible or guardian keeping them informed and involved at all times. Effective communication is essential to the successful implementation of this policy.

ROLES

The Headteacher has overall responsibility for the school's policy and its implementation, for liaison with the Governing Body, parents, person legally responsible or guardian, LA and appropriate outside agencies. The Headteacher will ensure that all staff dealing with substance issues are adequately supported and trained.

If a young person admits to using or supplying substances off the premises, informing the Heads of School or the Headteacher is the required action.

There is no legal obligation to inform the police, although they may be able to give relevant support and advice. However, a school cannot knowingly allow its premises to be used for the production or supply of any controlled drug, or the preparation or smoking of any controlled drug. Where it is suspected that substances are continuing to be sold on the premises, details regarding those involved as well as as much information as possible will be passed on to the Police by the Headteacher.

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.

The school will consider each substance individually and recognises that a variety of responses may be necessary to deal with incidents. The school will consider very carefully the implications of any action it may take. It seeks to balance the interests of the pupil involved, the other school members and the local community.

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

Section A: Policy on Substance Use and Misuse

SCHOOL PROCEDURES: GUIDANCE FOR STAFF

(Including support staff, supply teachers, caretakers and lunchtime supervisors)

Where a pupil discloses substance misuse on or off the premises, the Headteacher should be informed. This may be done through the Safeguarding/Heads of Year/Pastoral Team.

Where a pupil discloses to a member of staff that he or she is taking drugs, they should make it clear to the pupil that he or she can offer no guarantee of confidentiality given the seriousness of drug misuse. In all cases the Headteacher must be informed. Staff should be aware however that confidentiality must remain within the school and any disclosure is the responsibility of the Headteacher.

ILLEGAL DRUGS (and Legal Highs)

The school regards the possession, use or supply of illegal drugs (and Legal Highs) on school premises with the utmost seriousness. Cannabis, LSD, Ecstasy for example are illegal drugs. It is an offence:

- to supply to, or offer to supply a controlled drug/legal high to another
- to be in possession of, or to possess with intent to supply another, a controlled drug/legal high

As a general rule the school will exclude a pupil:

- if he/she is found to be in possession of an illegal drug (or legal high)
- if he/she is found to be supplying or offering to supply an illegal drug (or legal high)
- if he/she is found to have taken an illegal substance/legal high during the school day or whilst on the way to and from school

The parents, person legally responsible or guardian will be informed.

If a pupil is found to have taken an illegal substance at any other time the parents, person legally responsible or guardian will be informed. Subsequent action will depend on the circumstances.

TOBACCO / CIGARETTES / e-Cigarettes

Pupils are not permitted to smoke or vape at any time during the school day or when they are coming to, or going from, school.

As it is illegal to sell cigarettes to under 18s, if pupils are found to be in possession of cigarettes and they provide information relating to their purchase, the school will inform the shopkeeper.

The following action will be taken:

- pupils found smoking are given a C3 detention and the parents, person legally responsible or guardian are informed. Cigarettes and/or lighter or matches will be confiscated and returned if parents come to collect them
- if a pupil persists in smoking the parents, person legally responsible or guardian will be invited in to discuss the matter, and suspension is an option

Section A: Policy on Substance Use and Misuse

VOLATILE SUBSTANCES

Volatile substances include adhesives, aerosol gases, lighter fuel, lighter refills, typewriter correction fluid etc.

Whilst these substances are not illegal, their use can lead to illness and/or death and are frequently seen as a 'gateway' into illegal drug misuse. The school will take strong action, which may include suspension, in any incident of this nature. In all cases the parents, person legally responsible or guardian will be informed.

ALCOHOL AND TABLETS

There are no circumstances under which pupils are permitted to possess or consume alcohol on school premises nor are they expected to arrive at school under the influence of alcohol. In such cases the parents, person legally responsible or guardian will be contacted. The parents, person legally responsible or guardian and child will be seen the following day. Suspension may follow depending on the seriousness of the offence.

If a pupil is found to be in possession of alcohol it will be confiscated and the parents, person legally responsible or guardian informed and requested to collect the alcohol in person.

Tablets will be dealt with in the same way when they are thought to be suspicious. Administration of medicines and tablets such as paracetamol are dealt with in the First Aid booklet.

FURTHER GUIDANCE

Where staff discover substances which are suspected to be harmful, illegal, or deserving of investigation, they should note the two circumstances in which substances may be removed from either place or person:

1. PLACE

If possible, remove the substance from where it was discovered in the presence of a witness.

2. PERSON

When receiving or retrieving substances from a pupil, do so if possible in the presence of a witness.

The following guidelines should be observed at all times:

- a) Remove the substance and record the time, place and circumstances when the substance came into your possession
- b) Do not investigate the nature of the substance but do record its approximate size and appearance
- c) Where possible, have the recordings countersigned by a witness
- d) Take the substance to the Headteacher (or Deputy Head). Do not keep the substance on your person or in a place of safekeeping, to do so may place you at risk
- e) The substance should be placed in a suitable sealed container, which should be signed and dated. An official report should be completed detailing the time, date and circumstances of the findings
- f) The Headteacher can choose to arrange for the police to remove the substance from the premises, or may choose to dispose of it in an appropriate manner
- g) In the event of a discovery of any equipment associated with substance abuse, especially needles or syringes, pupils should not be allowed to handle such items. All equipment found must be handled by adults with utmost care. The Headteacher must ensure that materials are placed in a secure and rigid container to await collection by the appropriate service.

Section A: Policy on Substance Use and Misuse

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR STAFF

WARNING SIGNS:

Early detection of drug misuse is extremely important. If a young person's drug misuse is identified at an early stage, it is easier for action to be taken to prevent his or her further misuse of drugs. Therefore, teachers need to be vigilant, particularly when they are in charge of activities which take young people away from the school premises. Research has shown that first experiments with drugs by young people almost always involve a substance provided by a friend.

The signs listed in Table 1 and Table 2 may indicate those individuals or groups of people who are misusing drugs. Their presence alone is not conclusive proof of drug or solvent misuse - many of them are a normal part of adolescence, but the presence of several signs together may point to a need for greater vigilance.

Table 3 lists equipment for which, if found in certain circumstance, might also give grounds for concern.

TABLE 1: Warning Signs in Individuals

- Changes in attendance, and being unwilling to take part in school activities
- Decline in performance in school work
- Unusual outbreaks of temper, marked swings of mood, restlessness or irritability
- Reports from parents that more time is being spent away from home, possibly with new friends in older age groups
- Excessive spending or borrowing of money
- Stealing money or goods
- Excessive tiredness without obvious cause
- No interest in physical appearance
- Sores or rashes, especially on the mouth or nose
- Lack of appetite
- Heavy use of scents, colognes etc to disguise the smell of drugs
- Wearing sunglasses at inappropriate times (to hide dilated or constricted pupils)

TABLE 2: Warning Signs in Groups

- Regular absence on certain days
- Keeping at a distance from other pupils, away from supervision points (e.g. groups who frequently gather near the gate of a school building or sports field)
- Being the subject of rumours about drug taking
- Talking to strangers on or near the premises
- Stealing which appears to be the work of several individuals rather than one person (e.g. perhaps to shoplift solvents)
- Use of drug-takers slang
- Exchanging money or other objects in unusual circumstances
- Associating briefly with one person who is much older and not normally part of the peer group

Section A: Policy on Substance Use and Misuse

TABLE 3: Objects That May Indicate Drug Misuse

- Foil containers or cup shapes made of silver foil, perhaps discoloured by heat
- Metal tins
- Spoons discoloured by heat
- Pill boxes
- Plastic, cellophane or metal foil wrappers
- Small plastic or glass phials or bottles
- Twists of paper
- Straws
- Sugar lumps
- Syringes and needles
- Cigarette papers and lighters
- Spent matches
- Plastic bags or butane gas containers (solvent abuse)
- Cardboard or other tubes (heroin)
- Stamps, stickers, transfers or similar items
- Shredded cigarettes, home-rolled cigarettes and pipes (cannabis)
- Paper (about 5cm square) folded to form an envelope (heroin)

Section B: Drugs Education Policy

AIMS

1. To enable pupils to develop knowledge and understanding about the physical, psychological and social effects of drugs and to appreciate the various attitudes towards the role of drugs in society
2. To enable pupils to make healthy informed choices by increasing knowledge, challenging attitudes and developing and practising skills of saying **no**
3. To encourage pupils to develop the skills necessary to communicate effectively with others and make individual informed decisions
4. To make pupils aware of the laws relating to drugs and the consequence of breaking them
5. To seek to minimise the risks that users and potential users face
6. To enable young people to identify sources of appropriate personal support

These aims are delivered mainly through Ethics, Science and English on the school curriculum

ETHICS

Drugs education is delivered in ethics lessons as part of the “Staying Safe and Healthy” strand of the school’s personal development curriculum. Some lessons and topics listed below examine drug issues directly (e.g. smoking in Year 7), whilst other sessions focus on skills such as assertiveness, resisting peer pressure, developing self-esteem, which can help the young person to choose a healthier lifestyle.

Other related topics may also involve consideration of drug issues where relevant (e.g. the relationship between alcohol and underage sex).

In Year 7 pupils focus on:

- a) Smoking/vaping
 - health risks
 - addiction
 - legal age
- b) Alcohol/caffeine and energy drinks
 - effects of the drug
 - informed decisions / consequences
 - legal issues
- c) Peer pressure
 - strategies for coping / saying no
- d) County Lines
 - risks for young people and organised crime
- e) Kindness
 - Caring, helping and keeping secrets
- f) Integrity
 - Sticking to your values

Section B: Drugs Education Policy

In Year 8 pupils focus on:

- a) Stress management – healthy coping strategies
- b) Assertiveness and responding to Peer Pressure
 - distinguish between assertive / passive / aggressive
 - resolving situations
 - practice techniques
- c) Grief
- d) The Rights and Responsibilities of a citizen
- e) Body Image and Self Harm
- f) Ethical Relationship (including grooming)

In Year 9 pupils focus directly on substance abuse:

- a) Illegal Drugs:
 - why people take drugs
 - how drugs work
 - drugs and the law
 - helping with addiction and rehabilitation
 - the dangers of drugs
 - religious attitudes
- b) Tobacco and alcohol:
 - risks
 - the law
 - taxation benefits
 - addiction
- c) Prescription drugs and new psychoactive substances

This content is then revisited in a unit on Drugs and Health during Year 10. Further work is also conducted as part of Y12 and Y13 Tutor Time.

More details about the “Staying Safe and Healthy” strand of the school’s curriculum can be found in the [Relationships, Sex and Health Education policy](#).

SCIENCE

The National Curriculum Science order requires the following elements of drug education to be taught:

At Key Stage 3

11-14 year olds should be taught:

- that the abuse of alcohol, solvents, tobacco and other drugs affect health
- that the body’s natural defences may be enhanced by immunisation and medicines, and
- how smoking affects lung structure and gas exchange

The difference between legal, illegal and prescription drugs is also dealt with in KS3

At Key Stage 4

14-16 year olds should be taught the effects of solvents, tobacco, alcohol and other drugs on body functions.

Section B: Drugs Education Policy

ENGLISH

Pupils from Year 7 study literary and non-literary texts that deal with relevant issues such as the effects of drugs, peer pressure, self-esteem, bullying, social disadvantage etc. Class discussion, oral and written tasks encourage pupils to question, research and develop their own views on these subjects.

OUTSIDE AGENCIES

A number of outside agencies are involved in our drugs education curriculum. We have close links with the Police.

QUIT/ZEST have been involved with the school over the issue of smoking.

Section B: Drugs Education Policy

SUMMARY OF POLICY

DRUGS AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

The school condones neither the misuse of drugs or alcohol by members of the school, nor the illegal supply of these substances. Consequently severe action will be taken in all cases.

ILLEGAL DRUGS

The school regards the possession, use or supply of illegal drugs on school premises with the utmost seriousness. Cannabis, LSD, Ecstasy, for example, are illegal drugs. It is an offence to:

- supply to offer a controlled drug to another
- to be in possession of, or to possess with intent to supply another, a controlled drug

As a general rule the school will exclude a pupil if:

- he/she is found to be in possession of an illegal drug
- he/she is found to be supplying or offering to supply an illegal drug
- he/she is found to have taken an illegal substance during the school day (including lunchtime or whilst on the way to and from school)

The parents and police will be informed.

If the pupil is found to have taken illegal substances at any other time, parents will be informed. Subsequent action may also be taken by the school.

CIGARETTES AND TOBACCO/VAPES

Pupils are not permitted to smoke or vape at any time during the school day (including lunchtimes), or whilst on their way to and from school.

It is illegal to sell cigarettes to under 18s. If evidence is obtained that the law is broken, the shopkeeper will be informed.

- Pupils found smoking are given a detention and parents are informed by letter. Cigarettes, lighters, matches or vapes will be confiscated and returned if the parents collect them from school
- If a pupil persists in smoking, parents will be invited to school to discuss the matter and exclusion is a possibility

OTHER SUBSTANCES

These include tablets, legal highs, e-cigarettes, volatile adhesives, correcting fluid, lighter fuel, aerosols, and the misuse of other drugs.

Though the substances are not illegal, misuse can lead to illness and even death.

- In all cases of misuse, parents will be informed, The school will also take strong action, which generally would involve exclusion

Section B: Drugs Education Policy

ALCOHOL

There are no circumstances in which pupils are permitted to consume or possess alcohol on school premises, nor should pupils arrive at school under the influence of alcohol.

- If a pupil is found to be under the influence of alcohol, the parent will be contacted. The parent and child will be seen the following day and exclusion may follow.
- If a pupil is found to be in possession of alcohol it will be confiscated and the parent requested to collect it in person. The school will take appropriate disciplinary action, which could include exclusion.