

NETHER STOWEY PRIMARY SCHOOL: DRUGS POLICY

Procedures for Dealing with Substance Related Incidents in School

1. Rationale

- 1.1 The aim of this document is to prepare all those working within our school, in matters to do with substance related incidents.
- 1.2 It is important that the school has policies and procedures that reflect the current guidance on drug prevention in schools and to ensure that Government legislation on the misuse of drugs is upheld and that staff are protected from unwitting mistakes which may bring them into conflict with the law. OFSTED will monitor school policy and practice in drug education and the management of drug related incidents as part of inspection.
- 1.3 A drug is defined as a chemical substance which can change the way a human body works, either physiologically or psychologically. Within this definition fall legal substances as tobacco, alcohol, prescribed medication and solvents, together with illegal substances such as cannabis, amphetamines and ecstasy.

2. Procedures Regarding Substances in Schools

2.1 Medicines

The following procedures have been drawn up in accordance with guidance from Somerset County Council.

Pupils under 16 should not bring any medication to school unless accompanied by a letter from the parent/guardian giving permission and indicating dosage. This applies to both prescribed and non-prescribed treatments. Unless needed in emergency all medicines should be kept secure in a nominated central but accessible location, currently the staff room. No member of staff should take possession of medicine on behalf of children. Medicine containers should be labelled clearly with the dosage, time of dosage and pupil's name. Pupils will be increasingly encouraged to take responsibility to remember to take the medication and to report to the nominated central location when necessary.

The exception to these rules will be in cases where medication may be needed in an emergency eg. inhalers for asthma. In such instances parents must inform the school what medication their child is carrying and take full responsibility for instruction in its use and safety. They should be stored in a place of safety, inaccessible to children.

Generally other medicines must never be given to pupils - not even aspirin - either by teaching or support staff.

3. **Procedures Regarding Illegal Substances**

- 3.1 It is important that staff behave in a corporate manner, sharing concerns rather than acting independently. Any response should be to the pupil rather than to the substance misuse itself. Teachers have a wide range of observational skills used in monitoring pupils' behaviour and academic progress. When these skills are used in cases of pupils misusing substances a supportive pastoral network will enable appropriate responses to be made. Always, if a problem occurs, the Headteacher should be informed.
- 3.2 All staff need to note that:
- a) It is an offence under the Misuse of Drugs Act to take in to one's possession illegal substances even with the intent of preventing a pupil from committing or continuing to commit an offence in connection with that drug unless the member of staff takes all reasonable steps as soon as possible. [see 3.6.9].
 - b) It is also an offence to fail to co-operate with any police investigation as such failure to co-operate may amount to obstruction.
 - c) It would be an offence for staff to knowingly allow or condone the use of illegal drugs on school premises.
- 3.3 Dealing with suspicion of drug use. When a member of staff has a concern for a pupil's behaviour a specific non-judgemental factual record, such as would be acceptable in a Court of Law, should be made giving an over-view of the pupil's behaviour.
- 3.4 If subsequently a suspicion is confirmed but there is no supportive evidence, the named member of staff ie. the Headteacher should make available advice and support for the pupil in conjunction with the parent. There is no legal requirement for the school to contact the police, however, it may be helpful to make informal contact with the named officer for further advice and support.
- 3.5 In applying these procedures the school should take into account the age of the pupil, and any relevant information regarding family background.
- 3.6 Discovery of substances If substances are discovered on school premises or elsewhere within the school's jurisdiction eg. on a school visit, the teacher should adopt the following procedure:-
- 3.6.1 If possible remove the substance in the presence of a witness. If this is not possible the substance should be removed from the location where it is discovered.
- 3.6.2 If the substance is in the possession of one or more pupils, the teacher should attempt to remove it if it is reasonably possible. Professional discretion should be exercised in such instances. If it is not possible to remove the substance, then a member of the senior management team should be called immediately.

- 3.6.3 Pupils should only be searched by staff if absolutely necessary. They must not be searched without their consent as such a search may amount to assault. At most a search should only consist of outer clothing ie. coat, gloves, personal belongings, footwear etc..Another member of staff must be present whilst the search is carried out and the member of staff conducting the search must be of the same gender as the pupil being searched.
- 3.6.4 If a pupil refuses to be searched the Police should be called in to deal with the situation. The school should decide at which stage parents should be informed depending on the particular circumstances.
- 3.6.5 Having removed the substances the school should record in the school log book the place, date and time the substance was removed. If possible this record should be countersigned.
- 3.6.6 **THE SUBSTANCES SHOULD BE TAKEN TO THE HEADTEACHER, OR DEPUTY IN THEIR ABSENCE, PREFERABLY IN A SEALED CONTAINER. THE SEAL SHOULD BE SIGNED AND DATED. THE TEACHER MUST NOT RETAIN THE SUBSTANCE. TO DO SO MAY PLACE THAT TEACHER AT RISK.**
- 3.6.7 The Headteacher must contact the local Drugs Intelligence officer (or the local police) who will arrange for the substance to be collected. Until that time the Headteacher is responsible for the safekeeping of the substance.
- 3.6.8 If a pupil is directly involved when the substance is found it is the Headteacher's responsibility to consult with the police, notify the parents concerned, and agree further appropriate action in line with the school's behaviour policy. Schools should be aware that if approached by the media advice should be sought from the LEA Press Office.
- 3.6.9 If any equipment associated with substance misuse is found it should be handled with extreme care, particularly where equipment involves syringes, for risk of infection. Equipment should be stored in a secure and rigid container. Schools may wish to contact the police for advice. Any syringes should be disposed of in a sharp safe, available from the Somerset Health Commission. sharp safes should be held in a central location known to all staff who work on the site.

3.6.10 Special Guidance for School Visits

Visits in the UK

If the substance is discovered on a visit away from the school, the teacher should contact the Headteacher (or deputy if the Headteacher is not available) without delay. The Headteacher (or deputy) will then contact Police local to the discovery.

4. **Notification of Governors**

- 4.1 The Headteacher will notify the Chairperson of Governors with regard to any substance-related incident in advance of information being generally known.
- 4.2 If individual governors enquire about such an incident, the Headteacher's reply will be short and factual, having regard for confidentiality. This will be followed by a confidential report of the incident for the chairperson, who then has to decide how such information should be disseminated to members of the governing body.

5. **Dealing with Persons Under the Influence of Legal and Illegal Substances**

If every there is an occasion when a pupil is found to be under the influence of legal or illegal substances, rapid response may be called for ----- including alerting staff with basic first aid competence.

