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Drugs and other substances policy

Policy Aims

Young people face growing pressures to use or experiment with controlled drugs, alcohol, Tobacco and other substances. Our purpose as teaching professionals is to do all we can To reduce these pressures, to educate children about the risks of involvement with drugs and to maintain an environment free from illegal drugs and from the temptation to use illegal drugs and other harmful or potentially harmful substances.

The responsibility for the education of our pupils is shared with parents and effective communication and cooperation is essential to the implementation of the School's policy. It is also our purpose at Rowhill:

- To provide pupils with accurate information about drugs, including 'legal highs', and other harmful or potentially harmful substances and make them aware of consequences of substance misuse.
- To help develop in each of our pupils the moral courage to reject those parts of "youth culture" which may be harmful to their health and well-being.
- To enable pupils to make healthy, informed choices by increasing knowledge, challenging attitudes and developing coping strategies.
- To provide support and confidential counselling for those who may otherwise be tempted to take risks or experiment with illegal drugs.
- To actively discourage the use of illegal drugs and to treat cases of illegal drug usage by pupils as serious misconduct which will be investigated and may lead to the imposition of sanctions against pupils?
- To provide a firm disciplinary framework for dealing with pupils who bring illegal drugs into school and use or tempt others to use them at or away from school premises.

Pupils involved with illegal drugs in this way are liable to expulsion.

This policy has been drawn up in accordance with the guidance contained in the DfES guidance 'Drugs: Guidance for Schools (2004)'.

Parents are expected to give their wholehearted support to these aims.

Scope

The policy applies at all times when a pupil is in the care of the School. It will also apply to complaints or other incidents in or out of School where an individual pupil or the reputation of the School is affected, for example when one pupil is found to have offered illegal drugs or other substances to another.

Implementation of the Policy

Implementation of this Policy will be based upon trust and understanding between pupils, staff and parents and is seen as being in the best interests of all pupils at the school. It is also meant to act as a positive and effective deterrent. The head teacher takes overall responsibility for the policy and its implementation.

Education: A continuing programme of education about drugs will be maintained throughout the School. The programme will be delivered primarily through the school's Personal Development programme.

Training of staff: The programme of education for pupils will be complemented by appropriate in-service training for staff.

Involvement of parents: Parents will be kept informed of any changes or developments to the school's programme of drugs education. Parents are also encouraged to contact the School if they feel that their son/daughter may have been offered, or in any way be involved with illegal drugs.

Individual pupils: Help will be provided for any pupils genuinely seeking it as part of the school's pastoral care provision. The school allows pupils to discuss their anxieties about drugs or substances in confidence if they need to do so as long as the safety of the student or other students' is not considered to be at risk. A referral would be made to KCA if required.

Investigation: The School will investigate any report of involvement with illegal drugs or substances. The investigation may involve segregating a pupil for no longer than necessary: asking him/her questions; asking him/her to give a written account of particular circumstances; searching his/her personal belongings; taking possession of property for analysis.

Investigations will be conducted fairly and in accordance with natural justice. The pupil will have reasonable access to a toilet, food and drink and will not be left unaccompanied for long periods of time. Interviews will normally be conducted by a senior staff member in the presence of another staff member as a witness. Sources of information will not be disclosed. Parents will be kept informed so far as practicable.

Searching:

Informed consent: Before any search is undertaken, consent will usually be sought from the pupil if he/she is of sufficient maturity and understanding. The senior member of staff leading the search will determine whether or not the pupil is able to provide this consent. If the pupil refuses consent, he/she will be asked to say why they have refused. The school will be entitled to draw inferences from their response and general demeanour and the police may be informed.

Searches without consent: In relation to alcohol and prohibited items as defined in Section 2 of the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 and in DfE Guidance issued in February 2014, the Deputy Head teacher and staff, authorised by the Head teacher, may search a pupil or pupil's possessions, without their consent, where they have reasonable grounds for suspecting that a pupil has a prohibited item in their possession.

Searches generally: If staff believe a pupil possesses or has stored drugs and substances, it may be appropriate for a member of staff to carry out:

- A search of outer clothing; and/or
- A search of school property, e.g., pupils' lockers or desks; and/or
- A search of personal property, e.g., bag or pencil case within a locker.

Searches will be conducted in such a manner as to minimise embarrassment or distress. Any search of a pupil or his/her possessions will be carried out in the presence of the pupil and another member of staff.

Where a pupil is searched, the searcher and the second member of staff present will be the same gender as the pupil.

Where the staff find anything which they have reasonable grounds for suspecting is a prohibited item, they may seize, retain and dispose of that item.

Where the pupil declines to allow a search, this will be taken into account in any subsequent disciplinary procedures.

Police involvement:

If the school seizes a controlled drug, the drug may be destroyed if there is good reason to do so. Otherwise the School will deliver it to the police as soon as reasonably practicable. In all other cases, the school may decide to request the involvement of the police from the outset. If the police suspect that a pupil possesses or has stored drugs, substances or related accoutrements, the police may elect to investigate using their own procedures or may pass the matter back to the School to investigate.

The School may use its discretion to decide whether police involvement is appropriate.

4. Discipline following misuse of drugs or substances

The School will consider each substance incident individually and recognises that a variety of responses will be necessary to deal with incidents.

The School will take temporary possession of a substance that is or is suspected to be an illegal drug to protect the pupil from harm and from committing the offence of possession. This is permitted in law. School staff will not attempt to analyse or taste an unidentified substance.

The substance will be handed over to the police, who will be able to identify whether it is an illegal drug.

Appropriate counselling and support will be available to those pupils perceived to be at risk.

Where a pupil discloses to a member of staff that he/she is taking illegal drugs, the member of staff should make clear to the pupil that the information will be shared with Head teacher and/or Deputy Heads. Given the seriousness of substance misuse, the pupil will be pointed to sources of confidential information and advice, and to treatment and rehabilitation services available to help those who are misusing substances.

Supply : Those who sell illegal drugs, possess them with intent to supply, distribute them, to encourage others to use them, whether on or off school premises while under school auspices could result in exclusion.

Other involvement: In every other case where the head teacher is satisfied that there has been involvement in illegal drugs on or off School premises while under School auspices, the pupil may be expelled, as the health and safety of other pupils is directly at risk. Alternative sanctions, depending on all the circumstances, including the pupil's degree of involvement and at the sole discretion of the Head teacher after consultation with the Chair of Governors may include a suspension.