

# TCS Drugs Use and Misuse Policy

## Incorporating the Drugs Education Policy

**Written by:** Assistant Headteacher **Date:** 2006

**Approved by:** Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare **Date:** 2006

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This policy is under continuous review by the Leadership Team and the Governing Body in order to allow responses to the rapidly changing drugs scene both locally and nationally.

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# 1. Ethos of the school

The philosophy of the school is to provide a supportive and nurturing environment in which all students achieve excellence whilst simultaneously developing their personal 'life' skills. This in turn prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences they may encounter in their future lives, allowing them to make appropriate choices in the future. This policy has been written in accordance with this philosophy.

## 2. Rationale

It is our aim to help all students to be able to take their place safely in a world where a wide range of drugs exists. We recognise that some drugs have beneficial medicinal effects, but also that *every* drug has potential harm. For this reason, all drugs need appropriate and responsible care and management. In order to be able to make informed choices, staff and students need to understand the nature of drugs, their social and legal status, their uses and effects.

Testbourne Community School strongly opposes the misuse and supply of all drugs and will always take action to safeguard the wellbeing of all members of the community.

## 3. Definition of a drug

A drug is a substance that affects the way in which the body functions physically, emotionally or mentally. This definition includes illegal substances and also legal substances such as alcohol and tobacco, volatile substances, over the counter and prescription medicines. Drugs also include the 'new psychoactive substances' (NPS). These formally had the moniker of 'legal highs' but this name is misleading as these substances are now legally controlled due to their proven harmful effects.

### **Other key definitions**

#### **(i) Controlled or prohibited substances**

These are:

- (a) Those listed in the Misuse of Drugs act 1971 (amended in January 2004).
- (b) Anything which is traded as or purported to be a drug, including alcohol
- (c) Cigarettes or any tobacco related substance

#### **(ii) The School jurisdiction**

A student will be considered to be within the school's jurisdiction when travelling to and from school, in the school's grounds or at school sanctioned activities wherever they take place.

### **(iii) Under the influence**

A student shall be considered under the influence when his/her bearing, behaviour, condition, speech or appearance is affected by, or suggests prior use of, a controlled or prohibited substance.

### **(iv) Use of/possession**

A student shall be considered using or possessing a controlled or prohibited substance or drug paraphernalia if the substance or paraphernalia is found on the person, personal property, car or other vehicle, cupboard or other storage area within the school's jurisdiction.

### **(v) Drug paraphernalia**

Drug paraphernalia shall be any machine, instrument, tool or device which is primarily designed and intended for one or more of the following:

- (a) to introduce into the human body; and/or
- (b) to enhance the effect on the human body of; and/or
- (c) to conceal any quantity of; and/or
- (d) to test the strength, effectiveness or purity of any controlled or prohibited substances.

### **(vi) Distributing, selling, giving or exchanging**

This is any means by which a substance is dispensed from one to another.

## **4. Aims of the policy**

- To support the school's endeavour to maintain the safety and wellbeing of all students and staff.
- To clarify legal responsibilities, entitlement and obligations and to support all the members of the school community by providing clear guidance and procedures on drug related issues to ensure clarity and consistency.
- To develop a whole school approach to drug education in the context of the curriculum of the school.

## **5. Staff with Key Responsibilities for Drugs**

The Headteacher has delegated the responsibility for all issues regarding drugs, including liaison with Governors and external agencies, to the Assistant Headteacher in charge of Student Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare. In cases where liaison with the media is required, the Headteacher will fulfil this responsibility.

## 6. The Role of Governors

Governors will be kept well informed on drugs issues by attending relevant training and by receiving briefings, as part of the Headteacher's reports to Governors, both in writing and during Governor's meetings.

The Link Governor for Student Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare will liaise with the Assistant Headteacher regarding policy development, overseeing the drug education programme and contributing to any case conferences or appeals against exclusions.

## 7. Education Programme

Our Drugs Educational Programme is set in the broader context of a programme of health education, to include the benefits of a healthy lifestyle.

Drugs Education is specifically taught in Science lessons and in PSHE (Personal, Social and Health Education). Various aspects of drugs education are covered more generally in many other subject areas as well as during assemblies and tutor time. The aim of our Drugs Education Programme is to:

- enable students to make healthy, informed choices by increasing knowledge, exploring their own and other people's attitudes and developing and practising skills;
- promote positive attitudes towards healthy lifestyles;
- provide accurate information about substances;
- increase understanding about the implications and possible consequences of use and misuse;
- encourage an understanding for those experiencing or likely to experience substance use;
- widen understanding about related health and social issues, e.g. sex and sexuality, crime, exploitation; HIV and AIDS;
- seek to minimise the risks that users and potential users face;
- enable young people to identify sources of appropriate personal support.

A variety of teaching approaches and a range of resources are used to best meet the needs of our students, and the different impact that drug education can have on different people. Primarily, it is teachers who are responsible for teaching about drugs and the dangers of their use and misuse. The school actively co-operates with other agencies such as community police, the LA and health and drug agencies to deliver its commitment to drug education.

Teachers have access to on-going support and training as part of their own professional development and teaching materials are reviewed for quality and relevance.

Parents and carers are given information during information evenings as required.

## 8. Drugs on school premises

The legal definition of premises of a school includes everything within the property boundaries including buildings, outbuildings, playgrounds, fields and also extends to include other settings such as vehicles, boats, marquees or any venue managed by the school at the time e.g. premises of a school trip or visit. In addition, the school's jurisdiction extends to whenever students are in school uniform outside the school, such as walking to and from school or using facilities in the local community, at any time.

- **Medicines**

The school has a policy/procedure for the administration of medicines that must be followed for everyone's safety. We follow procedures recommended by Hampshire Local Authority.

- **Alcohol**

No alcohol will be consumed during the course of a normal school day. Students and visitors under the effects of alcohol will be asked to leave the premises and return at a later date for the safety of the whole school. Parents will be asked to collect their children. Students who consume or supply alcohol or are intoxicated on site, will face further consequences as set out in the Behaviour for Learning policy.

- **Smoking**

The school is a no smoking site at all times. Students are not permitted to bring to school smoking paraphernalia, including matches, cigarette papers, rolling tobacco and lighters. In the interests of health and safety, should a student be found in possession of any of these on school premises, they will be confiscated and parents informed. There will be additional sanctions as set out in the Behaviour for Learning Policy.

- **Illegal drugs**

No illegal drugs are allowed to be brought onto or used on school premises. The possession of drugs with the intent to supply will lead to serious sanctions up to and including permanent exclusion, as set out in the Behaviour for Learning policy.

- **Solvents**

The school will ensure that potentially hazardous substances are stored safely, and students will be supervised if it is necessary that they come into contact with them in the course of their work. Students are not permitted to be in possession of products that may be inhaled and cause harm. If students are found to be in possession of potentially harmful solvents, they face sanctions as set out in the Behaviour for Learning policy.

- **New Psychoactive Substances (NPSs)**

NPSs were formally known as 'legal highs.' The name of these substances was changed to reflect the change in law which means that these substances are now controlled under the Misuse of Drugs Act (1971). These substances cannot be considered safe or legal and will be dealt with according to the protocols for other illegal drugs.

- **Responses to drug related incidents**

A drug incident may be any of the following:

- (i) Finding drugs, or related paraphernalia, on school premises
- (ii) Possession of drugs by an individual on school premises
- (iii) Use of drugs by an individual on school premises
- (iv) Supply of drugs on school premises
- (v) Individuals disclosing information about their own drug use
- (vi) Individuals disclosing information about the drug use of their parent/carer, relative or friend or the school discovers this occurring
- (vii) Rumours of parents, staff or students using drugs
- (viii) Reports of parents, staff or students using drugs
- (ix) Parents seeking advice from school about drug use or possible drug use by a student
- (x) The school becoming aware of possible drug supply in the local community.

The school is aware of its legal responsibilities in regard to drug related incidents and, in responding to incidents, seeks to work in line with local and national guidance. A member of the Leadership Team will usually be responsible for co-ordinating the management of drug-related incidents, drawing on other members of the Student Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare Team to offer sources of support and to liaise with outside agencies. Incidents will be dealt with after making an assessment of the situation and will be reported to the Headteacher. All incidents and responses will be recorded within 24 hours. The first priority in any situation will be the health and wellbeing of the student.

Appropriate support will be offered to those with substance related problems. Talking with an individual about a drug related incident will have as its purpose to confirm or reject suspicions or allegations, rather than conduct a wider investigation.

Evidence of drug use or possession will not necessarily result in permanent exclusion. Permanent exclusion will only be considered in serious cases and will be in accordance with DfE guidance on exclusions. Each case will be assessed and levels of sanctions may vary according to the seriousness of the incident and the student's individual involvement and history of behaviours.

## 9. Procedures

These procedures should be strictly observed.

The following procedures are to be followed for students who are:

- Under the influence of controlled or prohibited substances.
- Using or in possession of controlled or prohibited substances or drug paraphernalia.
- Distributing, selling, giving or exchanging controlled or prohibited substances whilst in the school jurisdiction.

**(i)**

(a) The member of staff first on the scene observing a student who appears to be under the influence will notify the on-call member of staff or a senior member of staff, who will observe the student.

(b) A staff member who comes into contact with drug paraphernalia or controlled or prohibited substances will notify one of the Leadership Team immediately.

**(ii)** If the Leadership Team member feels that the student is under the influence or has paraphernalia items in his/her possession, parents may be contacted as soon as possible. In the event of unusual or dangerous behaviour, the behaviour should be described but no attempt should be made to diagnose the student's condition.

**(iii)** A staff member who has reasonable cause to believe that a student is in possession of such substances or paraphernalia should immediately alert a Leadership Team member by sending a message to reception or to Support on Request. A member of staff should remain with the student whilst awaiting the Leadership Team member.

**(iv)** While waiting for parent or medical aid (if applicable) the student will not be left alone but will be placed in a quiet non-public situation and kept under observation.

**(v)** The Leadership Team member may want to obtain evidence of substances or paraphernalia by directly requesting it from the student.

**(vi)** If a specified substance or paraphernalia is forthcoming the Leadership Team member will place it in an envelope. The envelope will be sealed, dated and initialled by the individual who obtained the materials and by the Leadership Team member. It will be then placed in the school safe. There should be another adult in the room at all times when a student is being questioned. If the substance or paraphernalia is not forthcoming, the right to search (see below) will be invoked with the student's consent. If the student does not consent, the police will be called to carry out the search.

**(vii)** The Leadership Team member will call the police and request that the sealed envelope be collected. Parents will be informed of this action. (This paragraph does not apply to tobacco and alcohol).

**(viii)** Off-Site procedures - the spirit of these procedures should be followed. Telephone contact should be made with the specified contact point as soon as possible when further advice will be given. The issue will be dealt with by the Leadership Team member on return to school.

## 10. Other situations

Drugs are found on the school site but not in the possession of a student

In this case, the drug will be safely removed, securely stored and the police will be asked to collect the drug to take away for proper storage and/or destruction. CCTV footage and other information will be investigated and if a person is found to have placed the drugs in the place they were found, they will be sanctioned and supported according to the protocols outlined in this policy.

A student discloses own involvement with drugs

Though by nature this is 'confidential', the health and safety of the student would normally mean that it would be in the student's best interests to disclose the information to other agencies and/or individuals. In this sense it is a safeguarding/child protection issue and needs to be referred to the DSL.

Student discloses or school discovers a parent/carer, relative or friend is using or selling drugs

This is a safeguarding/child protection issue and needs to be referred to the DSL.

Parent seeks advice from school about (possible) drug use by a student

Notify the Leadership Team member who will establish cause for concern and assess whether there is sufficient evidence to notify parents/carers and/or other agencies. (There is no legal obligation to act).

The school becomes aware of the sale of drugs in the school vicinity

Notify the Leadership Team member who will establish cause for concern and assess whether there is sufficient evidence to notify parents/carers and/or other agencies. (There is no legal obligation to act).

## 11. Right to Search

In line with recent legislation, the staff at Testbourne Community School reserves the right to search students if they have reason to believe that they are carrying offensive weapons or illegal substances. Similarly, students can expect to be physically restrained if they present a danger to themselves or other members of the community.

For details of the right to search and the right to restrain, see the Behaviour for Learning policy. The Behaviour for Learning policy also sets out details of other sanctions and situations in which they may be applied.

Testbourne Community School works closely with local police officers and community support officers. If students are involved with any activity which breaks the law the police may be involved in the confiscation of items, Restorative Justice Conferencing, group work and education as well as links with home. Parents/carers will usually be informed when the police are involved and given the opportunity to attend any interviews wherever possible. In some cases, the safety and wellbeing of the student may have to be a priority so that parents are not able to be informed before the involvement of the police. In these cases, parents will be informed as soon as possible.

## 12. Involvement of the Police

The Headteacher, or designee, may request the assistance of a police officer to:

- conduct a personal search;
- conduct a search of personal property (bags etc.);
- conduct a search of school property, including storage areas;
- conduct a search of any motor vehicle or any object in the possession of the student, such as a purse, briefcase or backpack;
- identify or take possession of prohibited items found in the course of a search conducted in accordance with this section.

## 13. Custody of Evidence

Anything found in the course of a search conducted in accordance with this section which is evidence of a violation of school rules and regulations may be seized, tested, and/or admitted as evidence in any exclusion proceeding. If testing of a substance has shown it to be a controlled substance, and if the substance has been turned over to the police, written documentation or the identification of the substance will be maintained and admitted as evidence in any exclusion proceeding.

Students who are found in possession of cigarettes or alcohol will have these items confiscated. They will only be returned to parents. Any such property not collected after one week will be destroyed.

## 14. Transfer of Records

Records of substantiated offences including the date, type of offence and the disciplinary action taken will be kept in school. If a student transfers from one school to another, this information will be transferred.

## 15. Information Received by Staff

The Leadership Team sometimes receives information which suggests that certain students are involved with drugs. Where such information is received the Leadership Team may contact parents to inform them. This information will be provided on the strict understanding that no firm evidence is known but that the school believes that its duty of care to the student demands that parents should have this information.

## 16. Support for students

At our school the welfare of the student is paramount. We maintain that constructive strategies that enable students to continue to benefit from continued education are preferable to exclusion. Following actions to preserve safety, the health and emotional needs of students will be considered. Support is available through the pastoral system, to ensure a caring response to students in distress. Interventions will be considered if the

school feels a student is showing signs which indicate particular risks of, or from, involvement with drugs, whether their own or their parents'/carers'. Such interventions may include consultation with parents/carers and other agencies, possible case conferences, internal multi agency meetings and subsequent referral. Permanent exclusion from school will rarely be considered as permanently excluded students become significantly more vulnerable to drugs than those within formal schooling. It is, however, the Headteacher's prerogative to choose to permanently exclude a child where this is thought necessary when the facts of a situation have been considered. The safety and wellbeing of all of the members of our community must be considered alongside that of the student in question.

The police will be involved if any student is suspected of having contact with an illegal substance. This includes possession, using or dealing. In such cases, the police will decide what course of action should be taken.

## 17. Local drug and alcohol services

Where appropriate the school will communicate with and refer to agencies providing support to children and young people around drug and alcohol. We will use our expertise to identify the need and refer or signpost to appropriate services where necessary.

These may include:

- Targeted prevention / early intervention for young people who are identified as at high risk of substance use and who may already be experimenting.
- Specialist services for young people whose drug or alcohol use is frequent / escalating or is otherwise believed to pose a risk of harm, because of the age of the child or young person, the substance used (for example volatile substances).
- Specialist services for children and young people who have complex needs or whose substance misuse is causing current harm, requiring a specialist or statutory integrated response, which may be focused around safeguarding.
- Services to support the children of drug and alcohol misusers. These might be young carers services, for example.

## 18. Drug or Solvent Misuse: Recognising the Signs

(Reproduced from DfE/Welsh office booklet, "Drug Misuse and the Young – A Guide for the Education Service", 1992)

## 19. 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 groups of young people away from the school premises. Research has shown that first experiments with drugs almost always involve a substance provided by a friend.

The signs listed in lists 1 and 2 may indicate that individuals or groups of young people are misusing drugs. Their presence alone is not conclusive proof of drug use or misuse and many of them are a normal part of adolescence, but the presence of several signs together may point to a need for greater vigilance. List 3 lists equipment which, if found in certain circumstances, might also give grounds for concern.

### **List (1) – Warning signs for 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 or with 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 in 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)

### **List (2) – Warning signs in groups**

- Regular absence on certain days (e.g. the day young people receive state benefits)
- Keeping at a distance from other students, away from supervision points (e.g. groups who frequently gather near the gate of a school playground 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.

### **List (3) – Objects that may indicate misuse**

- Foil containers or cup shapes made from silver foil, perhaps discoloured by heat
- Metal tins
- Spoons discoloured by heat
- Pill boxes
- False cans of drink or aerosols
- 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 (approx 2" square) folded to form an envelope (heroin)

**Lists (1), (2) and (3) are adapted from Liverpool Education Authority and TACADE materials**