

DRUG AND SUBSTANCE MISUSE POLICY

NOV 2018

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POLICY

A significant proportion of young people referred to New Horizons Federation schools are known users of drugs and alcohol. Some are also known dealers. In some cases they have been excluded from their mainstream schools because of drugs misuse.

The Federation does not condone drugs of any type and all incidents will be fully investigated. The policy of the Federation schools is to educate our pupils to understand the harmful nature of substance abuse; to suggest strategies for saying no and avoiding peer pressure and assist users to find the support advice and guidance they need from professional agencies when ready.

The Federation does not permanently exclude pupils because of drug use. However the safety of all pupils, staff and visitors is paramount. We therefore have a range of procedures designed to keep everyone safe.

The rules are explained on admission and are as follows;

Whilst accessing our schools, pupils must not be in possession of or under the influence of any illegal substances, alcohol or drugs.

This includes but is not limited to;

- Cannabis or derivatives
- Any form of amphetamines – cocaine, speed, bass, and ecstasy
- Hallucinogenic drugs – mushrooms, trips, keratin, LSD
- Alcohol
- Over the counter drugs – poppers, glues, canisters, lighter fuel, aerosols.
- “Legal highs”
- Prescribed medication for specific disorders or medical conditions inappropriately used or sold/ shared or passed to other pupils;
- Large quantities of over the counter medication which could cause harm if taken in large doses;
- Sometimes decisions are made to work with a pupil only on a one to one or two to one basis until some form of rehabilitation and improvement can be found.

Legal Drugs

Young people are increasingly aware of, and in some cases using, new psychoactive substances (NPS). These are designed to mimic the effect of illegal drugs but are structurally different enough to be avoiding being classified as illegal substances under the Misuse of Drugs act. Despite being labelled as ‘legal’ these substances are not safe to use and often contain controlled drugs making them illegal to possess. If there is uncertainty about what the substance is, it is the DFE recommendation that it will be treated as a controlled drug.

Searching and Confiscation

Where there is suspicion a pupil may have brought drugs or drug paraphernalia in to school, a search of the pupil’s belongings will take place. All searches will follow the schools’ Searching and Confiscation policy and the DFE guidance on Screening, Searching and Confiscation 2018.

Section 91 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 enables a member of staff to confiscate, retain or dispose of a pupil's property as a disciplinary penalty where it is reasonable to do so. All drugs and paraphernalia will be confiscated and passed to the safer schools police officer.

Where a member of staff finds other substances which are not believed to be controlled drugs, but could be harmful or detrimental to a pupil's wellbeing, these will be confiscated and the same procedure followed as outlined above. This will include psychoactive substances, 'legal highs' alcohol and alcohol induced drinks. If staff are unable to identify the legal status of a drug, it will be treated as a controlled drug and the safer schools police officer notified.

Schools are not required by law to inform parents before a search takes place or to seek consent to search their child. However, where a search has been undertaken and items found, parents will be contacted by the Head of School who will advise on the actions taken.

Where staff confiscates drugs or drug paraphernalia the following procedure should be followed;

- Ensure a second adult witness is present throughout the search and confiscation;
- Place the item somewhere secure, i.e. plastic bag and record the details of the date and time and witness present;
- Store the item in a secure location, i.e. Lockable cabinet with access limited to senior members of staff;
- Inform the Head of School and contact the safer schools police officer to collect the item.
- Record full details of the incident, including police reference number;
- Complete an incident report and safeguarding concern form;
- Head of School to notify parents unless this is not in the best interest of the pupil;
- Identify any safeguarding concerns and consider support and disciplinary responses.

Involving parents and complaints

All incidents related to drugs, substance and alcohol must be referred to the Head of School. Whilst there is no legal duty on schools to do so, the Head of School will inform parents where illegal drugs and potentially harmful substances are found.

All complaints about searching will be dealt with through the Horizons Academy complaints procedure.

Safeguarding of Pupils

Any pupil suspected of being **under the influence** of drugs will be dealt with in accordance with the severity of the incident. If necessary the incident will be dealt with as a medical emergency, administering first aid and summoning appropriate support. Depending on the circumstances, parents or the police may be contacted. If the child is felt to be at risk the school's safeguarding policy will be implemented and social services may be contacted.

Where a child is suspected as being under the influence, the following procedure will be followed;

- The pupil will be asked to discuss it immediately with a nominated member of staff (usually SLT) accompanied by a second member of staff;

- A written record of the meeting will be kept and the Head of School informed to ensure appropriate action can be taken;
- Parents / carers will be informed that the pupil is being sent home and then they will be escorted from the premises. The pupil will be recorded as “sick” as they have not presented in any fit state of health to attend school;
- Return to school is dependent upon a meeting and agreed strategy between parents, pupil and Head of School / Centre Manager.

Any pupil suspected of being in **possession of** any of the above substances will be asked to discuss it immediately with the Centre Manager or other SLT accompanied by a second member of staff. A written record of the meeting will be kept. Parents / carers will be informed that the pupil is being sent home and then they will be escorted from the premises. Return to school is dependent upon a meeting and agreed strategy between parents, pupil and Centre Manager. Drug counselling will always be offered. It may be necessary to call the police depending upon the severity of the problem. The police will always be informed if a pupil is caught or reportedly dealing drugs or alcohol on site or to any other Federation pupils.

Early Intervention and Support

Drugs and substance misuse is included in the PSHE and PSD curriculum provided to all pupils at Horizons Academy. A targeted substance misuse workshop is delivered to pupils in KS4 and a dedicated targeted outreach programme is included in the curriculum delivered as part of the Reintegration Success Programme in KS3.

In all incidents the pupil will be provided additional support and information. This will include local and national helplines including FRANK for drugs, NHS smoking services for tobacco and Drinkline for alcohol. Information will also be provided to the pupil regarding local authority youth and community services and parents will be provided information on the local authority Family Wellbeing Service for ongoing support.

Managing Medicines

Some pupils may require medicines that have been prescribed for their medical condition during the school day. All prescribed medication should be provided to the school and administered by the school team in accordance with agreed medical health care plans.

Further information:

DFE Guidance and ACPO drug advice for schools September 2012

DOCUMENT REVISION

Date	Who	Description
Sep 2015		Initial Version
Jan 2017		Reviewed
Jun 2017	Governors	Approval
Dec 2017	JH	Re-formatted
May 2018	ES	Reviewed and updated
Nov 2018	Governors	Approved