



**HUNTERHOUSE COLLEGE**

## **DRUGS EDUCATION POLICY**

**Date/date Reviewed: January 2017**

**Previous:**

**Next Review due: January 2019**

This policy is available in pdf format from the school website

[www.hunterhousecollege.org.uk](http://www.hunterhousecollege.org.uk)

or on request from the School Office 028 9061 2293

[info@hunterhousecollege.belfast.ni.sch.uk](mailto:info@hunterhousecollege.belfast.ni.sch.uk)

## Rationale

For the purpose of this documentation the term 'drugs' includes tobacco, alcohol, over-the-counter and prescribed medication, volatile substances, controlled drugs and new psychoactive substances (NPS). Hunterhouse College does not condone the misuse of drugs but recognises that there has been a considerable increase in the misuse of drugs in recent years in Northern Ireland. Drug misuse appears to be affecting an ever-younger population and the so-called 'recreational' use of drugs can lead to a dangerous acceptance of illegal and harmful drug misuse as part of everyday life.

Research continues to show that by post-primary school age a significant number of young people are engaging with substances such as alcohol, cigarettes, including electronic cigarettes or solvents and/or have misused prescribed medicines or other substances.

We believe that Hunterhouse College has a vital role to play in enabling our students to make informed and responsible decisions and helping them to cope with living in an increasingly substance tolerant society.

All staff (teaching and support), should familiarise themselves with the information included in this policy and further copies may be obtained from the School Office.

Copies of the guidance on which this policy is based is - Drugs Guidance for Schools in Northern Ireland Revised Edition 2015, are available from the Council for Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment website [www.ccea.org.uk](http://www.ccea.org.uk)

## Ethos

Hunterhouse sees its role as that of a caring community committed to the physical, mental, social, emotional, moral and spiritual health, as well as the safety and well-being, of our students and staff.

We believe that the school community in Hunterhouse College has a vital role to play in combating the misuse of drugs by young people and we therefore include a Drugs Education Programme in our Curriculum.

## Definitions

For the purpose of this document, the terms 'drug' and 'substance' include any product that, when taken, has the effect of altering the way the body works or how a person behaves, feels, sees or thinks.

As well as everyday products such as tea and coffee, substances include:

- alcohol, tobacco and tobacco-related products, including nicotine replacement therapy (NRT), and electronic cigarettes;
- over-the-counter medicines such as paracetamol and cough medicine; prescribed drugs, such as antibiotics, painkillers, antidepressants, antipsychotics, inhalers and stimulants such as Ritalin;
- volatile substances such as correcting fluids or thinners, gas lighter fuel, aerosols, glues and petrol;
- controlled drugs such as cannabis, LSD, ecstasy, amphetamine sulphate (speed), magic mushrooms, heroin and cocaine;

- new psychoactive substances (NPS), formerly known as legal highs, which contain one or more chemical substances that produce similar effects to illegal drugs and are sold as incense, salts or plant food and marked 'not for human consumption' to avoid prosecution; and
- Other substances such as amyl or butyl nitrite (known as poppers) and unprocessed magic mushrooms.

Drug Use refers to taking a drug; there is no value judgement, although all drug use has an element of risk.

Drug Misuse refers to legal, illegal or illicit drug taking or alcohol consumption, which leads a person to experience social, psychological, physical or legal problems related to intoxication or regular excessive consumption and /or dependence. Drug use is therefore taking drugs, including prescribed drugs and NPS, that cause harm to the individual, their significant others or the wider community.

### Aims and objectives

- To have a clear and agreed understanding among everyone in the College community about the implications and possible consequences of drug use/misuse.
- To provide all staff (teaching and support) with adequate training and support to enable them to deal effectively and confidently with incidents of suspected drug misuse, and to ensure that the procedures are sensitively and consistently applied in all situations.
- To empower teaching staff through appropriate training and support to develop and deliver an effective Drugs Education programme.
- To provide a Drugs Education programme which:
  1. develops students' self-esteem and promotes positive attitudes in their relationships with others
  2. gives students opportunities to develop the values, skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to make informed and responsible decisions about the use/misuse of drugs including tobacco, alcohol and volatile substances, within the context of a healthy lifestyle; and
  3. helps students develop the skills necessary to assert themselves confidently and resist negative pressures and influences.
- To provide appropriate support and assistance for those students affected by drug-related issues.
- To inform parents/carers of the content of this policy and the procedures to be implemented in the management of incidents of suspected drug misuse.
- To establish an environment in which the College is free from the misuse of all drugs.

### Roles and Responsibilities

#### **Students**

- Be aware of and adhere to the College rules in relation to drug use/misuse, including tobacco, alcohol, over-the-counter and prescribed medication, volatile substances and controlled drugs.

#### **All staff (teaching and support)**

- Be alert to the possibility of drug use/misuse.

- Be familiar with the College's procedures in the handling of suspected drug-related incidents.
- It is not the responsibility of the individual staff member to investigate the circumstances surrounding an incident; however he/she should deal with any emergency procedures if necessary.
- Any information, substance or paraphernalia received should be forwarded to the designated teacher for drugs who may have to take immediate action.

### **Teachers delivering the Drugs Education programme**

- Deliver the College's Drugs Education programme.
- Try to create an atmosphere in the classroom in which students can freely contribute to discussion, safe in the knowledge that the comments, ideas and feelings of the group are valued.
- Support students in their class if necessary.
- Liaise with the designated teacher for drugs regarding any aspect of the programme/policy, as necessary.

### **The Designated Teacher for Drugs Education**

- Ensure that all staff and parents/carers are aware of and have access to a copy of the policy.
- Have oversight and co-ordination of the planning of curricular provision in compliance with the statutory requirements including periodic update and review of the policy.
- Liaise with other staff responsible for pastoral care in co-ordinating the delivery of the Drugs Education programme.
- Co-ordinate training and induction of all staff in the procedures for dealing with incidents of suspected drug misuse.
- Be responsible for co-ordinating the College's procedures for dealing with incidents of suspected drug misuse.
- Determine the circumstances surrounding the incident
- Complete a suspected incident report form (Appendix 1) and forward to the Principal.
- Ensuring the engagement and active participation of parent/carers in all aspects of Drugs Education.
- Act as the point of contact for outside agencies working with the College.

### **The Principal**

- Ensure that members of the Board of Governors have been consulted on and ratified the policy.

In the case of incidents of suspected drug misuse:

- Ensure the welfare and well-being of the student(s) involved in the incident and the rest of the College community.
- Ensure that the following people are informed (where relevant):
  1. Parents/carers
  2. PSNI - preferably the Community and Schools Involvement Officer
  3. Chairman of the Board of Governors
  4. Designated Officer in the Education Authority (Belfast Region)
  5. Members of staff
  6. Other students and parents informed within the confines of confidentiality

- Agree, in consultation with the Board of Governors, appropriate pastoral and disciplinary responses in relation to the incident, including counselling services/support.
- Retain written records of the incident and ensuring a copy of the reports is submitted to Board of Governors and the Education Authority (Belfast Region).
- Review procedures and amend.

### **The Board of Governors**

- Examine and approve the completed policy and education programme, prior to their implementation in the College.
- Ensure the policy is reviewed at regular intervals.
- Be fully aware of and adequately trained to deal with suspected incidents of drug misuse, including tobacco and alcohol, and their appropriate disciplinary response.
- Agree in consultation with the Principal appropriate pastoral and disciplinary responses in relation to suspected drug related incidents.

### **Parents/Carers**

- Support your child if they have become involved with drugs.
- Support the College in the development and implementation of this policy, including the College's procedures for handling incidents of suspected drug misuse and the Drugs Education programme.

### **Site Staff**

- Be vigilant around and conduct regular checks of College grounds for drug-related paraphernalia. Inform the Designated Teacher for Drugs Education should any be found.
- Ensure the safe storage, handling and disposal of potentially harmful substances such as solvents and cleaning fluids.

### **Drugs Education in the curriculum**

The Drugs Education programme in Hunterhouse College is just one part of the whole school response to drug use/misuse. The programme provides opportunities for students to:

- acquire knowledge and understanding in relation to drug use/misuse;
- identify values and attitudes in relation to drug use/misuse;
- develop skills to enable them to consider the effects of drugs on themselves and others; and
- make informed and responsible choices within the context of a healthy lifestyle.

The students acquire knowledge and understanding in relation to drug use/misuse through the delivery of the curriculum in subjects including Science, Home Economics, Religious Studies and Physical Education. The opportunity to identify values and develop skills is given in the Personal Development Strand of the Learning for Life and Work programme at Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4, all of which is supported by the College's pastoral care programme.

## **Procedures for managing suspected drug-related incidents**

For the purpose of this document, a drug-related incident may include:

- a student displaying unusual or uncharacteristic behaviour;
- an allegation;
- suspicion of possession, possession with intent to supply and/or supply of any substance as defined on pages 2-3;
- finding substance-related paraphernalia;
- any of the above whilst on a school trip, school minibus or any authorised College activity.

Procedures should be carried out in line with the College's Behaviour Policy. The Pastoral Care team will be involved in setting up appropriate support strategies.

Actions by members of staff (teaching and support) in the event of a suspected drugs-related incident:

1. Assess the situation and decide on action. Ensure the safety of the individual student involved, of other students, yourself and other staff.
2. Secure first aid and send for additional staff if necessary. Put the person(s) under the influence of the drugs in the recovery position if necessary. Ensure airways are cleared. Send for an ambulance if necessary.
3. Gather details and data from all the eye-witnesses at the scene.
4. Remove any other bystanders from the immediate vicinity.
5. Make the situation safe for all students and other staff.
6. Carefully gather up any drugs / paraphernalia / evidence lying around and keep safely. College staff are not permitted to search students' clothing or possessions. However, it is acceptable to ask the student to empty pockets and school bags. Staff may search College property such as lockers or desks.
7. Ascertain which substances / drugs have been taken and how much.
8. Secure all drugs and paraphernalia and give to the Designated Teacher immediately, who will ensure that they are placed in a locked cabinet in the Principal's office.
9. Write a factual account, sign and forward this to the Designated Teacher.

Actions taken by Designated Teacher:

1. Respond to first aider's advice and recommendations
2. Inform parents/carers immediately
3. Take possession of any evidence
4. Inform Principal
5. Inform the relevant Education Authority (Belfast Region) officer
6. Take initial responsibility for students involved in the suspected incident
7. Complete an incident report form (Appendix 1) and forward this to the Principal
8. All statements and phone calls should be recorded, signed and dated

Actions taken by the Principal:

- Determine the circumstances from the reports
- Contact the PSNI
- Verify that the following people have been contacted: parents/carers, Education Authority (Belfast Region) Officer
- Ensure the incident form is filled in and returned to the Advisor for Pastoral Care
- Inform the Board of Governors
- Agree pastoral and disciplinary responses including counselling services support
- Forward a copy of the incident report to the Chairman of the Board of Governors and the designated Education Authority (Belfast Region) Officer

- Review policy and procedures if necessary in the light of experience

### **Confidentiality**

Teachers cannot and should not promise confidentiality. They should make the boundaries of confidentiality clear to students. Members of staff will carefully consider their response if a student approaches them for individual advice on drug use or misuse. In the case of controlled substances, the staff member should explain to the student that they cannot offer a guarantee of confidentiality. If the student discloses information concerning controlled substances, the staff member must pass this on to the Designated Teacher for Drugs Education.

### **Communication following a suspected or confirmed drug-related incident**

#### **Staff, students and parents or carers**

The College will at all times give careful consideration as to how any information relating to an incident of suspected/confirmed drug use/misuse is communicated to staff, students and parents/carers. Information will only be disclosed to staff concerned with the pastoral needs of the individual student. Only the parents or carers of the student or students directly involved will be informed of the incident and of the subsequent outcomes.

Teachers will not discuss individual cases with other students. The College may, however, need to make a general statement informing the school community after an incident where rumours may create a negative atmosphere.

#### **Dealing with the Media**

If the school receives an enquiry from the media the caller will only be referred to the Principal or, in the absence of the Principal, the Designated Teacher for Drugs Education.

When responding to the media the privacy of the student(s), their family and/or any staff members will be respected at all times.

### **The Management of Prescribed Medicines**

At the start of the school year, parents/carers must inform the school of any medical illnesses their child has by completing the second page of the data capture form. If a student needs to take a prescribed medicine in school this should also be stated on the data capture form. The student must immediately give the medication, along with a written note of instructions from the parent/carer, to Pupil Reception who will pass it to a member of the first aid team located in Colinmore. The member of staff must store the medicine in a locked cupboard and ensure that only the student for whom the medicine is prescribed takes the medicine. If the student needs to carry the medicine, for example an inhaler or EpiPen, this must also be stated on the data capture form and a spare must be provided to be kept in a locked cupboard. If during the year a student is given a prescribed medicine for a short term then a letter from the parent/carer explaining the nature of the illness and the dosage required must be sent to the College with the student concerned. This medicine will then be stored in a locked cupboard and the student must present to the medical room at the appropriate time for the medication to be taken.

### **Appendix 1**

Drugs Incident Report Form

|                             |  |        |
|-----------------------------|--|--------|
| 1.                          | Name of Student                            |        |
|                             | DOB  |        |
|                             | Address                                    |        |
| 2.                          | Date of Incident                           |        |
|                             | Reported by                                |        |
|                             | Time of Incident                           |        |
|                             | Location of Incident                       |        |
| 3.                          | First Aid given                            | YES/NO |
|                             | Administered by                            |        |
|                             | Ambulance/Doctor called                    | YES/NO |
|                             | Time of Call                               |        |
| 4.                          | Parent or carer informed?                  | YES/NO |
|                             | Date                                       |        |
|                             | Time                                       |        |
| 5.                          | Where substance is retained                |        |
|                             | Date substance destroyed or passed to PSNI |        |
|                             | Time                                       |        |
| 6.                          | PSNI Informed                              | YES/NO |
|                             | Date                                       |        |
|                             | Time                                       |        |
| 7.                          | Education Authority Officer Informed       | YES/NO |
|                             | Date                                       |        |
|                             | Time                                       |        |
| 8.                          | Form completed by                          |        |
|                             | Date                                       |        |
|                             | Position                                   |        |
| Description of the Incident |  |        |
|                             |  |        |
| Actions Taken               |  |        |

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|                            |      |
|----------------------------|------|
| Incident form Completed by | Date |
|                            |      |