



Drug Incident Management Policy

Dated: July 2006
To be reviewed: July 2009



Specialist Schools
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Why do we need a Drug Incident Management policy?

At Belper School we are committed to providing an environment within which all of our school community can live, learn, work and grow in safety and security. As a school we recognise that in our modern society, there is now always the possibility that the misuse of drugs by people connected either directly or indirectly with the school and its members, or by people who have no links with us, has the potential to adversely affect that safety and security for individuals and the school community as a whole.

Some in our care will already be affected by their own drug use or misuse, or the drug taking of those they know. Other young people will be affected by the potential of such connections or by the fact that others are using their environment for drug taking activities.

The purpose of this policy is to recognise that we all have a responsibility to acknowledge these facts and to provide a framework by which we can respond to any drug-related incidents affecting the school as a community and its individual members.

How is Drug Incident Management communicated in practice?

Drugs Education

For us a key part of any response to drug related incidents has to lie in our approach to drugs education. It is our policy that all children in the school will receive regular, ongoing and structured drugs teaching and learning as part of their Personal, Health, Social and Citizenship Education. We believe this is very important because it is only by providing them with the necessary knowledge and skills and through the nurturing of attitudes, that our students will be effectively equipped to meet the challenges posed by drug use and misuse in their world. By linking the way in which we respond to drugs related incidents to what we teach and how we teach it, we are seeking to provide a visible link between 'theory' and the realities of life. We acknowledge that the impact of drugs education on drug using behaviour is limited and may not prevent students from ever experimenting with drugs.

Partnerships

A key factor in our response framework is working in partnership with others. Important groups include:

- all staff and governors
- students
- parents
- the local community
- outside agencies

It is only by working together that we will be able to respond effectively to drug related incidents and so it is our school policy that we will involve each of them as fully and appropriately as possible.

Students

The welfare of the students in our care is the primary focus in our response to all drug related incidents in school. It is therefore only appropriate that we should seek to involve them as fully as possible in our response process and development. This takes place for all students through our drugs education policy and programme of study, but can also have a more direct approach through formats such as:

- individual direct involvement as part of a specific incident
- sharing ideas through the school council
- students providing self support materials
- specific educational projects and visits
- target initiatives for vulnerable students or groups within the school
- making clear the supports and sanctions which will be offered around drug incidents

Parents/carers

Parents/carers are a vital part of our response to drug related incidents. We believe it is important that we seek to work together to:

- provide consistent messages
- offer support
- develop mutual understanding

The school will endeavour to include parents/carers in our response to all drug related incidents through:

- direct contact
- contact through support agencies
- information sharing
- awareness raising

The only circumstance where we would not seek to involve parents/carers is when doing so would place a student at risk. In such circumstances advice would be sought from the relevant agencies under the Child Protection procedures.

The Local Community

As a school we want to be an integral part of the community we serve. We recognise that there may be times when it is appropriate for us to respond to drug related situations that are not directly connected to the school but which could impact on us as a community and our relationship with others. In order to facilitate this we will:

- undertake awareness raising activities
- work with outside agencies
- share information

- have joint response strategies where appropriate

Outside agencies

An effective response to drug-related incidents has to include working in partnership with other relevant outside agencies. They can provide an expertise and contact network that will strengthen what we are able to achieve, provide the essential support students need in such circumstances and ensure overall effectiveness.

Training and Consultation

Drugs management is the shared responsibility of all connected with the life of the school. We believe that to be successful, our approach has to:

- be owned and understood by all concerned
- have recognised roles and responsibilities
- provide all concerned with the knowledge and skills they need

The school will therefore seek to ensure that everyone:

- is given regular and appropriate levels of training
- has clearly understood roles and responsibilities
- has access to up-to-date information
- appreciates the place of confidentiality in the process (see Confidentiality policy)

Incident Management

The Law

The school will ensure that all responses to any drug related incidents are in compliance with the law. Where this is unclear we will seek advice from appropriate sources before taking any action.

For incidents involving evidence of drug use or supply, or finding drugs or drugs paraphernalia, without knowing who is involved.

The school will respond to all such incidents in a way that meets the full requirements of the law, and which puts the safety of the students as the key priority at all times. In developing our response to this type of drug related incident, the school will seek to balance the need for open consistency with a recognition that each situation will be unique as a number of factors will be operating in each case. In responding to any incident, the following points will always be taken into account:

- the nature of the incident
- basing our response on facts
- the history and circumstances of the student concerned
- confidentiality

- a partnership approach
- long term pastoral support
- the safety of the individual
- confiscation and disposal of any drugs
- the school's behaviour policy and other related policies
- the use of sanctions against the student concerned

For incidents involving parents/carers and other family members.

Responding to incidents such as this requires, we believe, much sensitivity and the involvement of others. As in all drug related incidents, the safety and welfare of the student has to be our paramount concern. That parents/carers or other family members are using drugs does not necessarily mean that a student is going to be at risk. In all such cases it is the school policy that concerns and incidents will be responded to using the agreed Child Protection procedures (see Child Protection policy).

For people on the premises whose behaviour is being affected by drugs.

In these circumstances, the priority will be to put the safety and welfare of staff and students first at all times. Our policy is that our immediate response should always be followed by consideration of a longer-term approach to the people concerned. If we believe there is a risk to a student and/or members of staff or anyone else present, the school will call the police as a matter of urgency, and if necessary, adopt Child Protection procedures.

The views of students and teachers are used to make changes and improvements to the policy on an ongoing basis.

Action to be taken should instances of substance misuse or supply occur on the premises or campus.

1. The incident should be reported immediately to the Head of Year who, after consulting with the tutor and other colleagues as necessary, will inform the Headteacher and will inform the parents. The school will then work with the parents to help the student. (If the Head of Year is not available, a member of SLT will take responsibility at this stage).
2. If a student is found to be suffering from the effects of intoxication or substance abuse in school, the first priority should be to ensure their safety and that of the students around them. They should be removed from classes and parents contacted immediately. In an emergency, an ambulance should be called and the student should receive attention from a qualified first-aider until it arrives.
3. Where a student admits using or supplying substances on the premises, the school cannot condone this, and will inform the police, through the Police Liaison Officer.
4. If a student admits to using or supplying substances off the premises, the teacher's discretion will be involved, but he/she should normally inform the Head of Year, who will agree an appropriate course of action, and will inform the parents. Teachers must not promise confidentiality to any student.
5. Each incident will be considered individually, and a variety of responses will be necessary. Exclusion is seen as a last resort and the Governors Student Matters Committee will

consider any incidents deemed sufficiently serious to warrant the consideration of permanent exclusion, following the normal exclusion procedures.

6. The Headteacher or a delegated senior member of staff will take responsibility for liaison with the media concerning any incidents. We recognise that the issue of substance abuse is an emotive one, and the school will take legal action where necessary to ensure that any reporting remains in the best interest of the students, their families and the school.
7. The school will display details of telephone helplines for students who wish to seek individual help. Counselling may be offered through the Health Authority School Nurse, or 'Breakout', a young person's substance misuse service..

Other substance abuse

1. The school operates a no-smoking policy. Staff are made aware of this policy at the time of their appointment (please see Smoking policy).
2. The school recognises that smoking remains the largest preventable cause of death, and education to inform students of the effects of smoking is included in the PHSCE programme.
3. If students are found smoking on the premises, the tutor informs parents via a proforma letter. A special effort is made to prevent students smoking in the toilets where they threaten not only their own health, but that of others through the effects of passive smoking.
4. Solvent and volatile substance abuse is covered in the same way as education on the risks of other drugs, by giving students the information they need to resist and decline experimentation. The dangers of abusing legally available substances will also be covered.
5. If students are found to be suffering from the effects of use or misuse of legally available substances or medicines, medical assistance will be sought and parents informed.
6. Codes of Health and Safety are carefully adhered to when storing solvents or other volatile substances on school premises.

Procedures

1. In cases where staff make a professional judgement that confidentiality should not be broken they are advised to make a written record of their decision and why they have made it. If staff are still unsure whether or not someone else should be informed they should discuss the issue with the Head of Year or a member of SLT. If necessary, this can be done initially without naming the student involved (see Confidentiality policy).
2. If you discover substances on the premises you should remove them immediately, preferably in the presence of a witness. Record the time, place and circumstances in which you found the substance. Take it to your Head of Year; do not keep it on your person or in a safe place.
3. If you take the substance from a student, do so in front of a witness if at all possible. You should not attempt to search a student, though it is permissible to ask them to turn out their pockets or empty their bag. If the student refuses the police may be called. The student should be kept under surveillance until the police arrive. It is illegal to lock them up.
 - (I.) Any substance taken from a student should be kept in a sealed container, with the details of where they came from and the signatures of the staff involved, on it. The police may be asked to dispose of the substance.

- (II.) If staff have to dispose of drugs (on a trip) – they should do so by flushing them down a lavatory and they must have a witness to this. If the drug is in tablet form they must be counted aloud. Both members of staff must make statements at the time. The students concerned must make written statements, as soon as possible.
- (III.) In the event of the discovery of any equipment associated with substance use, especially needles and syringes, any staff handling them should do so with care and using the proper protective gloves. They should be stored carefully before being disposed of by the appropriate service.
- (IV.) Staff should avoid expressing their own personal views on ‘drugs’ or using anecdotal evidence.
- (V.) No one should bring illegal drugs onto the school premises unless they have a Home Office licence. For demonstration purposes good copies should be used.

Sanctions

If students are caught smoking a letter is sent to the parent, by the Tutor, explaining the circumstances and the school’s view of smoking. Students may also be given break and lunchtime detentions. Exclusion may also be considered for persistent offenders. Smoking cessation support can be accessed via self-referral to ‘Fresh Start’, (information available from Head of Year).

Any other form of drug abuse will be dealt with according to each individual case.

Personnel

The governor responsible for drugs management is:	To be decided
The school Health and Safety officer is:	John Young
The Child Protection co-ordinator is:	Pat Tur
The drugs education co-ordinator is:	Head of Year

Monitoring and Evaluation

In order to maintain effectiveness, this policy will be monitored regularly by the Headteacher and governors as part of the planned school development/improvement process.

Policy Development and Review

This document is freely available to the entire school community. It has also been made available on the school web site, in Faculty and Year offices and in the main school office.

This policy will be reviewed on a three yearly basis.

Review date July 2009



Policy Links

[PSHCE](#)

[Science](#)

[Discipline policy](#)

[Confidentiality policy](#)

[Drug Education policy](#)



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