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Staff Drug and Alcohol Policy

#SG30

**Last amended 4th April 2025**

**To be reviewed no later than December 31st 2026**

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**Common abbreviations and acronyms**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **AA** | Admissions Authority | **GIAS** | Get Information about Schools |
| **AAI** | Adrenaline Auto-Injector (Epi Pen) | **GPA** | Government Procurement Arrangement |
| **ACM** | Asbestos Containing Materials | **HASH** | Herefordshire Association of Secondary Heads |
| **AFH** | Academies Financial Handbook | **HBV** | Honour Based Violence |
| **AHT** | Assistant Headteacher | **HR** | Human Resources |
| **AIR** | Attendance Intervention Reviews | **H&S** | Health and Safety |
| **APIs** | Application Programme Interfaces | **HoS** | Head of School |
| **BAME** | Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Backgrounds | **HSE** | Health and Safety Executive |
| **BCP** | Business Continuity Plan | **ICO** | Information Commissioners Office |
| **BFR** | Budget Forecast Return | **IHP** | Individual Healthcare Plan |
| **CAMHS** | Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services | **IRMS** | Information and Records Management Society |
| **CEO** | Chief Executive Officer | **IWF** | Internet Watch Foundation |
| **CFO** | Chief Financial Officer | **KCSIE** | Keeping Children Safe in Education |
| **CIF** | Condition Improvement Fund | **KS1/2/3/4** | Key Stage 1/2/3/4 |
| **CIN** | Child in Need | **LAC** | Looked After Child |
| **CLA** | Children Looked After | **LADO** | Local Authority Designated Officer |
| **CMIE** | Child Missing in Education | **LGB** | Local Governing Body |
| **COO** | Chief Operating Officer | **LLC** | Low-Level Concerns |
| **COSHH** | Control and Substances Hazardous to Health | **LSA** | Learning Support Assistants |
| **CP** | Child Protection | **MASH** | Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub |
| **CPD** | Continuing Professional Development | **MAT** | Multi-Academy Trust |
| **CSCS** | Children’s Social Care Services | **MFA** | Multi-Factor Authentication |
| **CSE** | Child Sexual Exploitation | **MFL** | Modern Foreign Language |
| **CTIRU** | Counter-Terrorism Internet Referral Unit | **NCSC’s** | National Cyber Security Centres |
| **CWD** | Children with Disabilities | **NPQEL** | National Professional Qualification in Executive Leadership |
| **DBS** | Disclosure and Barring Service | **PA** | Persistent Absence |
| **DDSL** | Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead | **PAN** | Published Admission Number |
| **DfE** | Department for Education | **PECR** | Privacy and Electronic Communications Regulations |
| **DHT** | Deputy Headteacher | **PEP** | Personal Education Plan |
| **DSE** | Display Screen Equipment | **PEEP** | Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan |
| **DSL** | Designated Safeguarding Lead | **PEx** | Permanent Exclusion |
| **DPO** | Data Protection Officer | **PLAC** | Previously Looked After Child |
| **EAL** | English as an Additional Language | **PP** | Pupil Premium |
| **ECT** | Early Career Teacher | **PSHE** | Personal, Social and Health Education |
| **EHA** | Early Help Assessment | **PSED** | Public Sector Equality Duty |
| **EHCNA** | Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment | **PTFA** | Parent, Teacher and Friends Association |
| **EHCP** | Education, Health and Care Plan | **RHE** | Relationships and Health Education |
| **EHE** | Elective Home Education | **RSHE** | Relationships, Sex and Health Education |
| **ELSA** | Emotional, Literacy and Support Assistant | **SALT** | Speech and Language Therapist |
| **ELSI** | Executive Leader for Safeguarding and Inclusion | **SARC** | Sexual Assault Referral Centre |
| **ESFA** | Education and Skills Funding Agency | **SBM** | School Business Manager |
| **EVC** | Educational Visit Coordinator | **SCCs** | Standard Contractual Clauses |
| **EWO** | Education Welfare Officer | **SDQ** | Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire |
| **EYFS** | Early Years Foundation Stage | **SEMH** | Social, Emotional, and Mental Health |
| **FBV** | Fundamental British Values | **SENCO** | Special Educational Needs Coordinator |
| **FGM** | Female Genital Mutilation | **SEND** | Special Educational Needs and Disabilities |
| **FOI** | Freedom of Information | **SLA’s** | Service Level Agreements |
| **FSM** | Free School Meals | **STEM** | Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths |
| **FTS** | Find a Tender Service | **TA** | Teaching Assistant |
| **GAG** | General Annual Grant | **TCAT** | Three Counties Academy Trust |
| **GDPR** | General Data Protection Regulation | **VSH** | Virtual School Headteacher |
| **RIDDOR** | Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations |  |  |

**Statement of intent**

At Three Counties Academy Trust (TCAT), we are committed to promoting a safe, healthy, and productive working environment for all our staff. This policy provides a framework for how we will deal with any problems arising from substance use and misuse.

We have a zero-tolerance approach towards the misuse of drugs and alcohol on the premises, and will not take such incidents lightly; however, we recognise that the misuse of drugs and alcohol may indicate a significant health concern and, as such, we aim to support employees in these situations.

This policy has been created to outline staff members’ responsibilities in relation to their conduct and use of drugs and alcohol, as well as the disciplinary procedures if this policy is breached.

**NB. Where the term “parent” or “parents” is used this includes those who act as carers or have parental responsibility.**

# Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

* Misuse of Drugs Act 1971
* Health Act 2006
* Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
* The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999

Where legislation has been passed or updated during the shelf life of this policy, we will always apply the latest version available irrespective of the version quoted here.

This policy operates in conjunction with the following policies:

* Disciplinary Policy and Procedure (HR3)
* Health and Safety Policy (HS1)
* COSHH Policy (HS7)
* Smoke-Free Policy (ST4)

Central TCAT policies have the policy number identified, e.g. “SG1”. Where no policy number is identified this indicates the policy is a school specific policy available from an individual TCAT school’s website.

# Definitions

For the purposes of this policy, **“drug”** is defined as any substance which, when ingested, alters perception and how the body works. This definition includes, but is not limited to, the following:

* All illegal substances
* Alcohol
* Tobacco
* Solvents
* Medicines
* Legal highs

# Roles and responsibilities

The Trust Board will be responsible for:

* Ensuring that effective policies and procedures are in place pertaining to the misuse of alcohol and drugs at any TCAT school
* Ensuring that this policy is maintained and disseminated to all staff
* Ensuring that staff experiencing difficulties with alcohol and/or drugs can access the support they need

The Executive Headteacher/CEO in collaboration with the Executive Leader for Safeguarding and Inclusion is responsible for:

* Providing a safe environment for all staff, pupils, and visitors
* Working with Trustees and Governors to ensure compliance with relevant legislation
* Dealing with any alcohol or drug-related issues within the school in collaboration with Headteachers/Heads of School
* Deciding upon any disciplinary action that will take place
* Ensuring appropriate support mechanisms are in place to promote staff members’ health and wellbeing

The Headteacher/Head of School will be responsible for:

* The day-to-day management of this policy
* Providing a safe environment for all staff, pupils, and visitors
* Working with their Governors to ensure compliance with relevant legislation
* Dealing with any alcohol or drug-related issues within the school in collaboration with the Executive Headteacher/CEO and the Executive Leader for Safeguarding and Inclusion
* Ensuring appropriate support mechanisms are in place to promote staff members’ health and wellbeing

All staff will be responsible for:

* Adhering to the procedures outlined in this policy
* Taking reasonable care whilst at work, ensuring they do not endanger themselves or others
* Bringing any alcohol or drug-related issues to the attention of the Headteacher/Head of School; this includes in relation to themselves or other staff members
* Ensuring that they report for work and remain in a condition to perform their duties free from the effects of drugs, alcohol or any other substances that may hinder judgement and cause changes in behaviour; this does not include over-the-counter painkillers such as paracetamol

# Staff training

Staff members will receive regular training on alcohol and drug-related issues, as well as the support available to them.

Management staff, including the Headteacher/Head of School, will receive regular training in the following areas:

* How to implement and enforce this policy
* How to recognise the signs of alcohol and substance misuse and the effects on the performance, attendance, and health of staff
* How to provide early and non-judgemental intervention for staff who are exhibiting indicators of substance abuse
* How to provide support and assistance to staff where appropriate
* The level of confidentiality with which such matters should be treated

The importance of reporting issues to management will be highlighted in training to encourage staff members to seek help.

Staff members will also receive additional training in response to any current issues.

# Smoking and the use of e-cigarettes

In line with the Health Act 2006, all TCAT estate is strictly a smoke-free environment; there are no designated areas available anywhere on TCAT premises for smoking.

Staff are not permitted to smoke within a one-mile radius of a TCAT site during school hours and will not smoke in front of pupils or encourage pupils to smoke.

Smoking is not permitted in any personal vehicles on TCAT premises or within a one-mile radius.

Any individual who is witnessed smoking on TCAT premises, or within a one-mile radius during school hours, will be subject to disciplinary sanctions in accordance with TCAT’s Disciplinary Policy and Procedures.

Although TCAT recognises that the use of e-cigarettes has significant potential to reduce tobacco use and the harmful effects of smoking, it is our position that the use of e-cigarettes still poses some safety hazards.

TCAT does not consider the use of e-cigarettes to be professional behaviour and, therefore, staff are not permitted to use e-cigarettes.

Staff members will adhere to all procedures outlined in TCAT’s Smoke-Free Policy.

# Legal drugs and prescribed medicines

TCAT understands that some staff members may require medication that has been prescribed by a doctor or other health professional. Staff members will notify the Headteacher/Head of School if they are required to take legal drugs or prescribed medicines.

Staff members will notify the Headteacher/Head of School of any side effects of medicines; if it is believed the side effects will affect their work, the Headteacher/Head of School will decide whether the staff member should return home until they are feeling better.

TCAT will only allow medicines which have been prescribed by a doctor, dentist, nurse, or pharmacist, with the exception of over-the-counter painkillers, e.g., paracetamol, which may be taken in moderation.

Medicines will only be brought on to the premises if it would be detrimental to the staff member’s health not to administer them whilst at work. Medicines will be stored in locked cabinets which cannot be accessed by pupils.

Staff members will not exceed the maximum dosage of any legal drugs or prescribed medicines. Staff members will also avoid taking legal drugs and medicines in the presence of pupils.

# Alcohol and illegal drugs

Staff members are not permitted to consume alcohol or illegal drugs when carrying out their duties; this includes both on and off the premises, e.g., during school trips.

Staff members are instructed that they should not carry out their duties whilst under the influence of alcohol; this includes smelling of alcohol and exhibiting alcohol-related behaviours, e.g., slurring or unsteadiness.

Every member of staff is responsible for regulating their behaviour and is aware that they may be subject to disciplinary action.

Staff members will not be searched for alcohol or drugs unless they refuse to hand over any substance reasonably suspected to be in their possession. Every effort will be made to encourage the staff member to hand over any substance suspected to be in their possession.

Where a staff member refuses to adhere to the above, the substance is believed to be illegal and it is considered appropriate to engage in formal proceedings, the school may search the employee in line with the following:

* The staff member consents to the search
* A second witness will be present
* If a substance that is believed to be illegal is found, it will be sealed in a plastic bag
* A record will be kept of the details of the substance, the date and time it was found, and the name of the second witness
* The police will be informed if it is believed that an illegal substance has been found
* Details of the incident, including the police incident reference number, will be included on the record

Any substances found which are believed to be illegal, will be stored in a secure location before they are handed to the police.

Where the staff member does not consent, no search will be undertaken, and this will be managed in line with the Disciplinary Policy and Procedures.

TCAT staff will liaise with the police, and the staff member will be subject to an investigation and any appropriate disciplinary action in accordance with the Disciplinary Policy and Procedure. A full incident report will be completed and submitted to the Executive Headteacher/CEO and the Executive Leader for Safeguarding and Inclusion.

If a staff member has alcohol in their possession, this will not be confiscated, but they will be instructed to store this in a locked cabinet inaccessible to pupils and not retrieve this until the end of the school day, or until they have finished carrying out their duties.

# Solvents

Staff members are not permitted to bring solvent-based products on to the premises including, but not limited to, aerosol deodorants, compressed air, and aerosol hairspray.

TCAT will ensure that potentially hazardous solvents are stored safely. Further information regarding solvents can be found within the TCAT’s COSHH Policy.

# Disciplinary action

Disciplinary action will occur where staff members:

* Enter TCAT premises under the influence of alcohol or drugs
* Are found to have illegal drugs in their possession
* Consume alcohol or drugs whilst carrying out their duties

Disciplinary action will be dealt with in accordance with the TCAT’s Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.

Once disciplinary action has begun, staff members will be invited to attend a formal meeting with their Headteacher/Head of School and the Executive Leader for Safeguarding and Inclusion, in order to discover whether an alcohol or drug problem exists.

Where a breach of procedures occurs, but it is established that an alcohol or drug-related problem exists, and the staff member is willing to cooperate with the support offered to them, TCAT may decide not to issue disciplinary action following a discussion with the Executive Headteacher/CEO.

An exception to the above would be where gross misconduct has occurred, and disciplinary action is necessary regardless of whether they are willing to cooperate with support offered – this decision is at the discretion of the Executive Headteacher/CEO.

Staff who do not comply with the support offered, or continue to misuse alcohol and drugs, will be subject to disciplinary action.

# Identifying a problem

Misuse of alcohol and drugs which affects performance and behaviour at work, e.g., through serious misconduct or an inability to meet standards of work performance, will not be tolerated.

A formal meeting will be held to discuss the problem, and the Headteacher/Head of School will make a referral to the Occupational Health service. The Occupational Health service will be responsible for conducting an assessment of the member of staff, collecting relevant information, and providing a management report. Disciplinary action will not commence until advice is obtained from the Occupational Health service, unless gross misconduct has occurred. If necessary, suspension arrangements will be followed.

The Occupational Health service will be responsible for monitoring the member of staff’s progress; where there is a lack of progress, the Headteacher/Head of School will conduct another review with the staff member to consider whether disciplinary action is necessary and if it is, will consult with the Executive Headteacher/CEO. TCAT will aim to accommodate any recommendations made by the Occupational Health service, such as where the staff member has been off work, and they require supervision upon their return.

If a member of staff misuses alcohol or drugs after support has been offered to them, TCAT will decide whether a second referral is appropriate, or in cases of gross misconduct, whether disciplinary action should be followed immediately without support.

Should the problems of the member of staff develop to an extent that continuation in their role is impossible, TCAT may identify alternative work arrangements or arrange for dismissal in line with the Disciplinary Policy and Procedure. If the problem is directly affecting the staff member’s performance, but they do not wish to address it, reject the support offered to them, or fail to cooperate in their referral, disciplinary action will commence immediately.

# Situations without disciplinary action

TCAT understands that staff members could have a drug or alcohol problem, although it may not directly affect their work performance or behaviour. This could arise where a member of staff confides in another staff member, or the Headteacher/Head of School, Executive Leader for Safeguarding and Inclusion or the Executive Headteacher/CEO has identified possible indicators of a problem and may wish to approach the individual, e.g., through a regular absence pattern.

Through regular training, TCAT will highlight the importance of discussion and encourage staff to seek help from their employer or line manager in these situations.

If an employee seeks help with an alcohol or drug-related problem from HR or a member of management staff and wishes to keep this confidential from other staff, this will be respected unless there is a reason to believe that this could put that staff member, their colleagues, pupils, or anyone else at risk. Any staff member who approaches their alcohol or drug-related problem in this way will be strongly encouraged to seek external help, e.g., through the Occupational Health service.

Where a TCAT school is faced with this problem, the Headteacher/Head of Schoolwill:

* Seek advice from the Occupational Health service regarding whether, and how, the matter should be dealt with
* Provide support for the member of staff and, if appropriate, arrange for the member of staff to be referred to the Occupational Health service
* Where a problem exists, allow the Occupational Health service to establish, monitor and review support for the member of staff

TCAT recognises that the above procedures cannot take place without the cooperation of the staff member. If the staff member does not wish to participate, no further action will be required.

The Headteacher/Head of School or the Executive Leader for Safeguarding and Inclusionmay provide the staff member with references to external support organisations, should they wish to access them.

If a staff member decides to engage in the support offered by the Occupational Health service, there will be no further involvement from TCAT, unless the problem begins to affect their work performance. If the problem begins to affect their work performance, disciplinary procedures will be followed as outlined in the appropriate section of this policy.

# Medical emergencies

In alcohol and drug-related emergencies, trained first aiders will be contacted. A staff member will remain with the casualty until the first aider arrives.

Any other pupils or staff members will be removed from the immediate area, as soon as reasonably practicable.

Following an assessment by the first aider, a decision will be made to ascertain whether an ambulance should be called.

The staff member’s immediate family will be contacted to inform them of the incident.

Further information regarding medical emergencies can be sought from the First Aid Policy.

# Threatening behaviour

Threatening or aggressive behaviour by staff members under the influence of drugs or alcohol will be taken very seriously.

Where threatening or aggressive behaviour is displayed, TCAT will not hesitate to contact the police. Any staff member displaying threatening or aggressive behaviour will be removed from the premises and later disciplined in line with TCAT’s Disciplinary Policy and Procedures.

# Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed in line with the published schedule at the front of this document and at any point material changes require it by the Executive Headteacher/CEO in collaboration with the Board appointed Trustee, the Trust Board and Executive and Senior Leadership.

Any changes made to the policy will be amended by the Executive Headteacher/CEO and will be communicated to Executive Leaders, the TCAT Central Team and to Headteachers/Heads of School, who, in turn, will alert school-based staff.

The next scheduled review date for this policy is 31st December 2026.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Signed by: | | | |
|  | Executive Headteacher/CEO | Date: |  |
|  | Board appointed Trustee | Date: |  |