

Substance and Misuse Policy

Date:	March 2019	Review Date:	September 2024
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Substance misuse is something that may be encountered in any Educational Facility from time to time. It is important that staff are aware of the recommended course of action in such situations. The action may vary somewhat according to the specifics of each individual incident and this policy will help to give guidance to all those involved.

This policy uses the term Drugs to refer to any psychotropic substance, all legal drugs, including alcohol, all illegal Drugs, volatile substances, and over-the-counter and prescription medication. Drugs Definitions (source: 'The Right Approach' [DrugScope, 1999])

The term 'drugs' will be used to describe substances which interfere with a pupil's ability to learn, are potentially harmful, or are capable of misuse, including those whose possession and use are illegal. Substances alleged or believed to be drugs, as defined here, will be treated in the same way.

Drug Taking will be seen as the consumption of any drug. All drug taking, including medicinal use, carries the potential for harm. Different interventions are appropriate to address drug taking by young people.

Drug Use is drug taking through which harm may occur, whether through intoxication, breach of school rules or the law, or the possibility of future health problems, although such harm may not be immediately perceptible. Drug use will require interventions such as management, education, advice and information and prevention work to reduce the potential for harm.

Drug Misuse is drug taking which harms health or functioning. It may take the form of physical or psychological dependence or be part of a wider spectrum of problematic or harmful behaviour. Drug misuse will require a further range of interventions, which may include treatment.

Drug Incident is evidence or suspicion of a specific event at school involving one or more unauthorised drugs, and requiring immediate action by school staff.

Policy Aims

This policy aims to ensure that this educational facility is a safe and supportive environment for all those within it and that it is free from illicit drugs.

Stage I

- The Head Teacher or another senior member of staff should be informed immediately.
- The pupil concerned should be separated from his/her peer group (preferably to a quiet room) and kept under constant supervision.

Stage II**In a case where substance misuse is suspected but not proven:**

- The above measures will be taken.
- The situation discussed with the pupil.
- The parents/carers will be informed as to the suspicion of involvement.

In cases where there is no doubt regarding the pupil's involvement in substance misuse:-

The pupil shall be deemed unfit to be in education.

- They will be isolated from other pupils and supervised by a member of staff until the parents/carers can be contacted.
- Attempts will be made to discover the source of the substance and action taken according to the information gained and where deemed appropriate the Police will be involved.
- Parents/carers will be asked to collect their son/daughter and take them home or appropriate provision will be provided.
- The opportunity for further discussion regarding the misuse will be offered to both pupil and parents/carers.
- Parents/carers and pupils will be provided with the names and telephone numbers of outside agencies which may be able to offer them further support and guidance and where it is deemed appropriate pupils will be required to attend a Substance Misuse Course.
- Any substance which may still be in the possession of the pupil will be confiscated and handed over to the appropriate authority.
- In the case of illegal substances, the police will be contacted and the matter discussed to decide on what further action may be necessary.
- The incident will be recorded and staff will be made aware of any pupil involvement in substance misuse so that the pupils subsequent behaviour and performance can be closely monitored.

The objective of the above responses are not to drive substance misuse underground, but to be proactive in offering guidance, advice and support for all those involved in a manner that creates an environment where pupils, parents/carers and staff feel safe.

See Appendix 1 for further support and information about Legal Highs.

Helplines/support:

SAdAS**01483 590150****FRANK****0800 776600** [FRANK website.](#)

Appendix 1

Legal highs



Legal highs are substances that have similar effects to illegal drugs like [cocaine](#) or [cannabis](#). They are sometimes called club drugs or new psychoactive substances (NPS).

Many of these drugs are now controlled, but some are still legal to possess. This does not mean they are safe or approved for people to use.

Some drugs marketed as legal highs actually contain ingredients that are illegal to possess.

The risks of legal highs

Legal highs can carry serious health risks. The chemicals they contain have in most cases never been used before in drugs for human consumption.

This means they haven't been tested to show they are safe. Users can never be certain what they are taking and what the effects might be.

Other risks:

- Legal or illegal drugs carry an increased risk if combined with alcohol.
- Legal highs can reduce inhibitions, so a person may do things they wouldn't normally do. Legal highs can cause paranoia, coma, seizures and, in rare cases, death.
- Because the chemical ingredients in a branded product can be changed without you knowing, the risks are unpredictable.
- Even drugs that look similar or have similar names may be of varying strengths and have different effects.

When to get medical help

Most problems with short-term use of legal highs will settle after you stop taking them. However, the negative effects of some legal highs can take a few days to wear off completely, just like the comedown from stimulants such as cocaine or amphetamines.

If you think someone is having a serious negative reaction soon after taking a legal high, or if they experience problems that do not settle with a little time out, fluids and fresh air, get medical help straight away by going to the [accident and emergency \(A&E\) department of your nearest hospital](#).

If someone is worried about continuing health problems after they've stopped taking the drugs they should, visit their GP. But if they think further advice would be helpful before deciding whether or not to visit their GP, they should call the FRANK drugs helpline on 0300 123 6600, or [NHS 111](#).

Legal highs and the law

Many drugs that were previously sold as legal highs are now controlled under the Misuse of Drugs Act, including mephedrone (meow meow or mcat), naphyrone, BZP and GBL. This means they are illegal to possess or supply to others.

There are lots of different types of synthetic cannabinoids, and a large number have become Class B drugs.