



FRIENDS' SCHOOL SAFFRON WALDEN

POLICY ON SUBSTANCE USE AND ABUSE

At Friends' School, we do not condone the abuse of drugs, solvents or alcohol by members of the school nor the illegal supply of these substances.

We are committed to the health and safety of the members of the community, and we will take action to safeguard their well-being. We see it as directly related to the ethos of the school, and part of our pastoral role in the welfare of young people, to educate and inform them about the consequences of substance use and abuse. The school takes a pro-active stance on this matter as part of our belief that health education is a vital part of the Personal and Social Education of every pupil.

We encourage pupils who are in particular need of support to come forward and seek help.

Whilst we acknowledge that the numbers of young people who use and abuse substances is rising, it is important to recognise the numbers of young people who do not do these things. We will endeavour to support their differing needs.

We believe that it is important to share the responsibility for educating young people on this matter with parents, and the wider community, by keeping them informed and involved. Effective communication and co-operation on all sides is essential to the successful implementation of this policy.

We have responses to deal with drug related incidents in school.

The Head takes overall responsibility for the policy and its implementation, for liaison with the Governing Body, parents, and appropriate outside agencies. The Assistant Head (Pastoral) has the general responsibility of handling the implementation of the policy. All staff dealing with substance issues will be adequately trained and supported.

TO SUMMARISE:

We recognise that **all pupils in the school are entitled to**

**KNOWLEDGE
SKILLS
CARE AND SUPPORT**

We appreciate the need to offer

SUPPORT TO PARENTS

We have procedures for

**RESPONDING TO DRUG, SOLVENT AND ALCOHOL RELATED
INCIDENTS IN SCHOOL**

The following pages expand on each of these headings.

PUPIL ENTITLEMENT

Knowledge which

- enables them to make healthy, informed choices by increasing their awareness of the facts, and challenging attitudes.
- gives them accurate information about substances.
- increases their understanding about the implications and possible consequences of use and abuse of substances.
- encourages an understanding of those experiencing or likely to experience substance abuse.
- widens understanding about related health and social issues, e.g. sex and sexuality, crime, HIV and AIDS.
- seeks to minimise the risks that users and potential users face.
- enables them to identify sources of appropriate personal support, by making them aware of outside agencies, both statutory and voluntary

The development and practice of skills of

- accessing information, assessment, assertiveness, communication, coping, decision making, listening, negotiating, and problem solving.

These aims are fulfilled through the curriculum mainly in Personal and Social Education lessons, but further opportunities to reinforce learning will occur in other parts of the teaching programme, and in response to particular circumstances. They are supported by the strong pastoral care system which is a feature of FSSW.

Care and Support

The staff of the Medical Centre are available for consultation and to offer help and advice on matters relating to substance use and abuse. Pupils are aware that confidentiality will be maintained if they choose to take advantage of this support.

It is not possible for other members of staff to agree to maintain confidentiality if a pupil discloses that they are using illegal drugs, solvents or alcohol, and staff should halt any discussion and make this clear so that the pupil can make a choice about whether to continue to disclose.

The school actively co-operates with outside agencies, statutory and voluntary, both to deliver its Drugs Education programme, and to deal with incidents of substance use and abuse.

SUPPORT FOR PARENTS

There will be opportunities to run evenings for parents on aspects of substance use and abuse in conjunction with the Parent Teacher Association. The Medical Centre will share its sound and extensive knowledge of local resources with parents as required.

PROCEDURES TO BE FOLLOWED WHEN DRUG, SOLVENT AND ALCOHOL RELATED INCIDENTS OCCUR IN SCHOOL.

Information given to the Medical Centre is confidential and therefore cannot result in disciplinary sanctions. However, where there are grounds for suspicion by other staff that a pupil is coming into school under the influence of illegal drugs or bringing drugs into school for sale or consumption, the pupil under suspicion will be asked to give a urine or hair follicle sample for testing and parents will be contacted. Refusal to give a sample could result in the pupil being asked to leave.

It is of paramount importance that any pupil who appears to be under the influence of drugs, solvents or alcohol is given adequate medical care and attention immediately. No risks should be taken.

Recording

All incidents must be reported to the Head or the Deputy Head in his absence and properly recorded together with all actions taken.

Confiscation

If a substance is found on the premises which is believed to be illegal or against the school rules, it should be confiscated immediately.

Storage

Any substance confiscated must be stored in a secure place. It should be separately packaged and the date, time and place of finding noted on the packaging. The person finding the substance should sign the package clearly, if possible in the presence of a colleague.

Special consideration should be given to the storage of solvents which may give off powerful fumes or react to heat.

Identification

If the substance is not immediately identifiable then all attempts must be made to find out what it is. The police will give assistance if necessary.

Disposal

At the appropriate time, the Head will arrange for the disposal of confiscated substances. Certain substances have to be disposed of under controlled circumstances, and the police will give advice.

Police involvement

There is no legal obligation to inform the police, about the discovery on the site of a substance which it is illegal to possess, although they may be able to give relevant support and advice. However, we cannot knowingly allow our premises to be used for the production or supply of any controlled drug, or the preparation or smoking of cannabis or opium. Where it is suspected that illegal substances are being sold on the premises, details of those involved as well as much information as possible will be passed to the Police.

Parental Involvement

In instances involving substance abuse or supply on the premises, parents will be informed at the earliest opportunity by the Head or Assistant Head (Pastoral). The school and the parents can then work together to support the young person involved.

Use of Illegal Substances off the Premises

If any member of staff discovers that a young person is using or supplying illegal substances off the premises, it is appropriate for them to consult with a senior member of staff, who will then consult the Head, or to consult the Head direct. The Head will then discuss the matter with the parents.

Action taken by School when a Pupil has been found in possession of illegal drugs, solvents or alcohol.

We at FSSW will consider each substance incident individually and recognise that a variety of responses will be necessary to deal with incidents, including contracts with pupils who have been caught using illegal drugs which state that they may remain in school on condition that they are willing to be tested for drugs on a random basis in future. We will consider very carefully the implications of any action we may take. We seek to balance the interests of the pupil involved, the other school members and the local community. The school reserves the right to permanently exclude a pupil, although this will be seen as a last resort as it may only transfer the problem.

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