



Westfield
School



(27) Substance Misuse Policy

CSM Governors

This policy has been produced in conjunction with the latest guidance.

D Hague

September 2015

Review September 2016

WESTFIELD SCHOOL MISUSE OF SUBSTANCE POLICY

Introduction

For the purpose of this policy the term “drugs” includes tobacco, alcohol, E-Gigs and legal highs plus over the counter and prescribed medication, volatile substances and controlled drugs. Westfield School recognises that there has been a considerable increase in the abuse of drugs in recent years. Drug misuse is 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.

Westfield School has a vital role to play in combating the misuse of drugs by young people and therefore includes drug education as part of our PSHE lessons and specific events such as “Watch Yours Image”

Westfield School is committed to helping address the drug problems within our community and the wider community and works closely with a number of outside agencies which play a part in educating young people in making responsible decisions about drugs.

Westfield School endeavours to support our students to grow in knowledge and develop the appropriate values, attitudes and skills which will support the physical, emotional, social, moral and spiritual health needed in becoming competent and well-adjusted adults.

“There is a public perception that drug misuse is mainly an issue in disadvantaged inner city areas. Drug misuse is just as much an issue in rural areas and affluent communities: it extends across socioeconomic, geographical and cultural boundaries. Educationally successful young people are just as likely to put themselves at risk as low attainers”.

Definitions

Legal drugs that should not be in school include substances which, when taken, have the effect of altering the way the body works or the way a person behaves, feels, sees or thinks.

These include:

- alcohol and tobacco (including E-cigs);
- “over-the-counter” medication;
- Prescribed drugs;
- Volatile substances, such as correcting fluid/thinner, gas lighter fuel, aerosols, glues and petrol;
- Controlled drugs, such as cannabis, LSD, Ecstasy amphetamine sulphate (speed), magic mushrooms (processed), legal highs, heroin and cocaine
- Other substances such as amyl/butyl nitrite (poppers) and unprocessed magic mushrooms.

Ethos

Westfield School aim is to promote a caring and healthy school which believes in the self-worth of all individuals is of great importance and therefore we do NOT tolerate the misuse of drugs in our school.

Westfield School understands that drug misuse affects all areas of the city including our own community and accepts we cannot become complacent or think that our students are not at risk and that we must help our students to live safely in a drug using society.

We have an important role to play in helping our young people respond to this drug culture. We embrace working alongside other stakeholders addressing the issues of preventing, delaying or limiting drug use. Drug education alone will not solve the problem, but drug misuse will not be solved in the absence of effective drugs education.

Aims and Objectives

- Safeguard our students from harm caused by drug misuse
- To ensure all staff (teaching and associate) receive adequate training and support to enable them to deal effectively and confidently with incidents of suspected drug use/misuse, and to ensure that the procedures are sensitively and consistently applied in all situations.
- To have a clear and agreed understanding among everyone in the school community about implications and possible consequences of drug use/misuse.
- To empower teaching staff through appropriate training and support to develop and deliver an effective drug education program
- To provide a drug education which;
- Develops students’ self-esteem and promotes positive attitudes in their relationships with others

- Gives students' opportunities to develop the values, skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to make informed and responsible decisions about the use/misuse of drugs
- Help students to develop the skills necessary in assert themselves confidently and resist negative pressures and influences
- Students are successfully signposted to appropriate outside agencies and school works alongside these agencies providing emotional support
- When deemed appropriate the school and outside agencies liaise together to maximize support
- To provide appropriate support and assistance for those students affected by drug-related issues.
- To inform parents/carers of the policy and the procedures to be implemented in the management of drug-related incidents in line with safeguarding guidelines
- To establish an environment in which the school is free from the misuse of all drugs.

Procedures

Westfield School will always take the steps that would be reasonably expected of parents/carers to safeguard the wellbeing and safety of all the students in our care.

The School will conduct a full investigation upon receiving information relating to an incident of suspected/confirmed drug use/misuse.

The parents/carers of the student(s) directly involved in an incident of suspected drug use/misuse will be informed of the incident upon the result of an investigation or when deemed appropriate recognising that the future of the student(s) can be adversely affected.

Confidentiality is of paramount importance in drug related incidents and the subsequent outcomes.

It is important to make everyone aware that sanctions relating to drug incidents within Westfield School will have serious consequences applied to them and could result in a permanent exclusion.

Members of staff MUST consult with the Headteacher or Safeguarding Officer before any calls to the police are made, which must be considered.

Safeguarding

Drug use/misuse by a young person does not on its own constitute significant harm. However members of staff must report the incident to the child protection officers so that further safeguarding investigations can be undertaken. If the child protection officers is concerned that the students is at risk of significant harm, a telephone referral to social care services should be made as soon as possible.

Drugs: Guidance for Schools was written after extensive consultation with teachers, Local Education Authorities, drug education specialists, police and students. It outlines a wide range of educational and preventative measures that schools can take to address drugs.

It sends a clear message that illegal and other unauthorised drugs of any kind on school premises are not acceptable, and gives Headteacher's a clear 'one strike' option to permanently exclude pupils involved in dealing drugs on school premises, even for a first offence.

Other key messages from the guidance include:

- schools should ensure that pupils vulnerable to drug misuse are identified and receive appropriate support either from within the school or through referral to other services;
- all schools should have a drug policy which sets out the school's role in relation to all drug matters - both the content and organisation of drug education, and the management of drugs on school premises;
- all schools should have agreed a range of responses and procedures for managing drug incidents in schools, which are understood by all members of the school community, and documented within the drug policy; and
- all staff should receive drug awareness training, understand the school's drug policy and their role in implementing the policy.

The guidance highlights a range of options available to Headteacher's from which they can choose to tackle drugs including drug testing. It spells out the issues schools should consider before employing such an approach, including appropriate consent, full consultation with parents, pupils and governors and making it clear in their school drugs policy for all parents to see.

Schools Minister Stephen Twigg said: "We are committed to a zero tolerance policy towards drugs in schools, and many schools are already doing excellent work on drug education. Nearly all schools now have drug policies, and Ofsted tells us that the quality and quantity of drug education has never been better.

"We believe that Headteacher's should have every tool in the box when it comes to drug education and prevention, and the guidance issued today gives clear advice on the best ways to deal with any issue around drugs."