

## **FITZALAN HIGH SCHOOL SUBSTANCE MISUSE POLICY**

Substance misuse is a term encompassing all mind-altering substances, commonly referred to as "drugs", and includes other legal substances such as solvents, tobacco and alcohol.

### **Rationale**

*"There will still be some young people of school age who choose to experiment with illegal drugs even if they have both the knowledge of the risks and the skills to resist peer pressure. Schools therefore need clear policies and procedures for dealing with drug-related incidents on school premises and for working with other services concerned with young people to offer appropriate advice and support"*  
*DFEE Circular 4/95*

Fitzalan believes it has a duty to inform and educate young people about the consequences of substance misuse. The school takes a pro-active stance on this matter, believing that health education is a vital part of the Personal and Social Education of every pupil. Fundamental to the school's values and practice is the principle of sharing the responsibility for education of young people with parents by keeping them informed and involved at all times.

### **Objectives in respect of substance use and misuse**

- To safeguard all pupils in the school.
- To enable pupils to make healthy, informed choices by increasing knowledge, challenging attitudes and developing and practicing skills.
- To provide accurate information about substances.
- To increase understanding about the implications and possible consequences of use and misuse.
- To widen understanding about related health and social issues (e.g. crime, HIV and Aids) and to seek to minimise the risks that potential users face.
- To enable young people to identify sources of appropriate support, including the relevant agencies.
- To create an atmosphere in which the use of substances on the school premises is unacceptable.

These objectives will be fulfilled through the taught curriculum, the informal curriculum and through opportunities for extra curricular activities. Education on substance issues forms an important and integral part of the skills curriculum and is formally included in Schemes of Work. Substance education also takes place through assemblies and the school actively co-operates with outside agencies such as the Police, Social Services and Health & Drug Agencies to deliver its commitment to Health Education and to deal with incidents of substance use and misuse.

## **The Roles of the Headteacher and the Governing Body**

- The Headteacher takes overall responsibility for the policy and will ensure that all staff dealing with substance issues are adequately supported and trained.
- The Headteacher will take responsibility for liaison with the media where appropriate.
- The Governing Body will be involved in substance education and substance-related incidents in the same manner as any other matter concerning the direction of the school.

## **Guidelines on dealing with substance misuse-related issues taking place in school**

- The school condones neither the misuse of drugs (including tobacco) nor alcohol by pupils of the school, nor the illegal supply of these substances.
- As clearly stated in the school rules, cigarettes, alcohol and illegal substances are strictly forbidden in school. Smoking is not permitted anywhere on the school site.
- The school acknowledges the importance of its pastoral role in the welfare of young people, and through its general ethos, will seek to persuade pupils in need of support to come forward.
- The school is committed to the health and safety of its pupils and will take action to safeguard their well-being and therefore in responding to incidents involving cigarettes, alcohol and illegal substances, the appropriate school sanctions procedures will be followed.
- Each drug related case will be documented fully as soon as possible after the incident using the appropriate form.
- Parents/guardians will be informed in any suspected incidence of drug or alcohol use.

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## **APPENDIX A**

### **Procedure for dealing with incidents involving cigarettes, alcohol and illegal substances:**

#### **1. Cigarettes**

- i) When a pupil is found to be in possession of smoking materials, these materials should be confiscated and given to the Head of Year.
- ii) Where a pupil is found to be smoking on school premises, the matter should be reported immediately to the appropriate Head of Year.
- iii) Parents should be notified in writing.
- iv) The pupil should serve an after school Detention, period in the LSU or exclusion. The sanction will be determined by the Head of Year.
- v) Details of the incident should be recorded in the pupil's file.

#### **2. Alcohol**

- i) When a member of staff suspects that a child may be under the influence of alcohol, a member of SMT should be called immediately and the Headteacher should be informed.
- ii) Where a child is found to be in possession of alcohol, he/she should be taken to a member of SMT immediately.
- iii) The alcohol should be confiscated and passed on to SMT.
- iv) The member of SMT will contact parents immediately if the pupil is affected by the alcohol and ask them to collect the pupil from school.
- v) The school will advise parents on possible sources of help and support e.g. Alcohol Concern/ Drinkline.
- vi) The Headteacher will ensure that the incident is fully investigated and will then decide on appropriate sanctions, which may include fixed term or permanent exclusion.
- vii) Parents will be informed.

#### **3. Illegal Substances**

When a member of staff suspects that a pupil may be either in possession of an illegal substance or under the influence of an illegal substance a member of SMT should be called immediately and the Headteacher should be informed.

##### **Pupils found in possession**

- i) The Headteacher, supported by SMT will investigate.
- ii) The substance will be confiscated and given to the Headteacher.
- iii) The police will be notified. They may take the pupil to the police station to be interviewed.
- iv) The parents will be contacted and informed.
- v) The Headteacher may exclude the pupil for a fixed term pending further investigation, and then decide on appropriate sanctions, which may include permanent exclusion.
- vi) The school will advise parents on possible sources of help and support.

**Pupils found to be under the influence of drugs or solvents**

- i) In serious cases an ambulance should be called first.
- ii) In all other cases the parents will be contacted to remove the pupil from school.
- iii) The police may be notified.
- iv) The Headteacher may exclude the pupil for a fixed term pending further investigation, and decide on appropriate sanctions, which may include permanent exclusion.