

Drugs Policy

REVIEW DATE – SUMMER 2027

1 INTRODUCTION

The school Drugs Policy is a statutory document, in accordance with Drugs: Guidance for Schools in Northern Ireland 2004. The policy follows the guidance given in the [SEFLB_EA](#) Drug Policy Document.

Our school believes that the misuse of drugs endangers not only our pupils but also affects the wider community in which we live. While in our care, we have a responsibility for every child's health and safety along with their social, emotional and physical well-being. Drug misuse undermines this and hinders the development of the young person.

The policy provides a focus for the school to consider how drugs education should be implemented and developed within the curriculum, and outlines the roles, responsibilities and legal duties of key staff. From a wider perspective, it gives parents and the local community an opportunity for involvement in drug issues. The policy should form an integral part of the Personal Development for Mutual Understanding strand in the Primary Curriculum.

1.1 RATIONALE

Newtownards Model Primary School recognises that young people in today's society are exposed to the risks associated with the drug culture which exists.

Young children are exposed to messages about drug use from an early age. The messages they receive from television and the media tend to glamorise the use of drugs. They are likely to have seen parents or older brothers and sisters smoking, **vaping**, drinking or taking pills and medicines. Some children may have already tried alcohol or cigarettes and taken prescribed medicines or other drugs. Inevitably older children want to pass on their knowledge and experiences in an effort to try to influence younger children; these experiences are likely to include their experimentation with drugs.

The school wishes to promote the development of the 'whole person' which encompasses physical, mental, emotional, social and environmental health; by equipping pupils with the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values to handle their lives effectively in the present and prepare them for adulthood.

Research cites personal inadequacy, a lack of self esteem and peer pressure as the main reasons for drug misuse among young people. This places a responsibility on the school to 'better prepare young people for adult life.' (Education Reform (NI) Order 1989)

Drugs education should therefore form an integral part of the school curriculum.

1.2 DRUGS EDUCATION IN CONTEXT

'A drugs education programme is just one part of a whole school response to drug misuse. It should provide opportunities for pupils to acquire the knowledge, understanding and skills to enable them to consider the effects of drugs on themselves and others, and to make informed and responsible choices within the context of a healthy lifestyle' (Drugs: Guidance for Schools in NI 2004)

The programme of education is integrated within the Personal Development Strand of the Curriculum. A life skills approach to drug prevention is essential and within the programme, pupils are taught about raising self-esteem, self confidence and assertiveness to prepare them for making informed decisions about drug use, the main focus being on knowledge, social skills, attitudes and values.

In the Northern Ireland Curriculum, Personal Development will form part of the Statutory Core Curriculum. Drugs Education is specifically included within Health, Growth and Change in Primary and in the Post-Primary in Learning for Life and Work (Personal Development) under Personal Health.

2 THE RANGE OF SUBSTANCES

The school's policy on drugs education covers any substance under the DENI definition: (CCEA 2004)

'A drug is any substance which, when taken, has the effect of altering the way the body works or the way a person behaves, feels sees or thinks. As well as everyday substances such as tea and coffee, drugs include:

- *Alcohol, tobacco & vaping*
- *'over the counter medicines' such as paracetamol for headaches*
- *prescribed drugs, such as antibiotics and tranquilisers*
- *volatile substances such as glues and aerosols*
- *illegal drugs such as cannabis, LSD and ecstasy*
- *other substances such as amyl / butyl nitrate ('poppers') and magic mushrooms*

Procedures for handling alcohol and tobacco misuse are outlined in Appendix 1. Procedures for handling prescribed medicines and volatile substances are also outlined in Appendix 1 and are in the school *Health and Safety Policy*. This policy complements these policies and also the *Safeguarding Policy*. It does not exist in isolation.

3 PROCEDURES FOR HANDLING AND REPORTING INCIDENTS

A suspected drug related incident is described as

- Suspect drugs or paraphernalia found on the school premises
- A pupil suspected of being in possession of drugs
- A pupil found to be in possession of drugs
- A pupil suspected of being under the influence of drugs

When an incident occurs the member of staff involved should:

- Make the situation safe
- Send for support
- Administer First Aid if necessary
- If a drug is found, gloves should be used and it should be secured in a safe place until dealt with by the police
- Report the incident

The incident will be in the first incidence reported to the Designated Teacher (**Vice Principal**) and then to the Principal, who will contact the Community and Schools Involvement officer (CSIO) from the police in this area. The parents will also be contacted and made aware of the situation. The incident will be **recorded by the teacher involved and by the Designated Teacher**. A '**Record of Drugs Related Incident**' form will be filled out. One copy will be sent to the Education Authority

designated officer for Drugs Education – and a copy will be retained for the school's confidential file. The Board of Governors will also be informed.

All staff are made aware of the procedure, which follow the guidelines issued by CCEA Drugs: Guidance for Schools in Northern Ireland 2004. This is outlined in Appendix 3 of this policy.

School staff are not permitted to search pupils' clothing or possessions. **Staff may search school property such as the cloakroom or desks.** However, personal belongings within a desk or a locker cannot be searched without consent. **A search of pupils' personal belongings, including school bag, coat or other items should only be made with the pupils' consent.** Such a search should be made in presence of the pupil and another adult witness. It is acceptable to ask the pupil to empty pockets and school bags.

3.1 PROCEDURES RELATING TO DISCIPLINE AND COUNSELLING

The Principal will be responsible for deciding how to respond to particular incidents as they occur. He will take into account all the factors associated with each separate incident, such as the age of the pupil concerned, whether the incident involved one pupil or a group of pupils, whether there has been evidence of particular peer group pressure and whether it is a first offence. Newtownards Model Primary School is committed to tackling drug misuse and any instances of possession, use or supply of illegal drugs on school premises will be regarded with the utmost seriousness. Whilst it is not appropriate to prescribe specific sanctions, the decision rests with the Principal who will respond appropriately, incorporating sanctions which may include suspension or, in extreme cases expulsion. **Internal counselling** will be offered if appropriate.

3.2 EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

For the purposes of this policy, an emergency is considered to be either:

- A situation in which a pupil or staff is in danger, or
 - A sequence of events which require urgent attention.
- A flow chart for dealing with emergencies is contained in Appendix 3 of this policy.
- Emergency First Aid and procedures are contained in Appendix 4.

3.3 CONFIDENTIALITY

The spirit of confidentiality is of primary importance to those who work professionally with young people in a trusting and secure environment. However, the legal requirements of drug legislation will mean that in certain circumstances there will be a change in the convention of confidentiality. The Children (Northern Ireland) Order (1995) makes it clear that the welfare of the young person is paramount and therefore confidentiality must be included.

Where a pupil discloses to a teacher that he or she is taking drugs, **the teacher should make it clear that he or she can offer no guarantee of confidentiality.** However, the teacher can advise the pupil of other sources of confidential information or advice. Pupils should also be encouraged to talk to their parents.

3.4 DEALING WITH THE MEDIA

If the school receives an enquiry from the media, the caller will be referred only to the Principal or in his absence the Vice Principal.

When responding to the media, the privacy of the pupil will be respected and advice sought from the Education Authority.

4 THE PLACE OF DRUGS EDUCATION WITHIN THE CURRICULUM

Drugs education is not taught in isolation. It is a continuous process which involves the development of skills and attitudes enabling pupils to make informed choices. Effective drugs education should take account of not only the individual, but also the family, their peer groups, and the wider community. Where possible, the school promotes the partnership between the parent and child, when addressing drug issues.

In Northern Ireland, at all Key Stages, the statutory curriculum for pupils includes the Personal Development Strand. There will be opportunities for pupils to develop their knowledge and understanding of the use, misuse, risks and effects of drugs and other potentially harmful substances; their effects of health and lifestyle.

Drugs education is specifically included within the Area of PDMU, The World Around Us and within other subjects, such as Religious Education, Literacy, and Physical Education, there are opportunities for considering drug-related issues from a variety of perspectives.

5 THE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE DRUGS EDUCATION PROGRAMME

The school's drugs education programme is grounded in the Personal Development and the enhancement of protective factors.

5.1 AIMS

- To promote positive attitudes towards personal health.
- To develop self-discipline and self-respect.
- To build pupils' self esteem.
- To develop decision-making skills which may delay or prevent the onset of experimentation.
- To inform pupils of the effects of drug abuse, and the risks involved.
- To help pupils to understand how they can influence their peers.
- To develop knowledge and understanding of themselves and others as individuals.

5.2 OBJECTIVES

Drugs Education should enable pupils to develop a knowledge and understanding about drugs and drug issues, as well as the skills needed to cope with challenges they will encounter.

Pupils should be able to:

- Understand their own personality, needs, abilities and interests.
- Understand the process of reasoning required to make informed choices.

- Explore their own attitudes towards drugs and drug issues.
- Develop coping strategies to deal with peer pressure.
- Develop a competence in challenging attitudes and patterns of behaviour associated with drug misuse.
- Develop self-discipline.
- Understand what is meant by 'a drug' and the definition of 'addiction'.
- Understand how some drugs affect the body.
- Be aware of the benefits of healthy lifestyles.
- Recognise potential drug exploitation and how to take avoiding action.
- Be aware of the current drug culture and the effect of advertising campaigns.

These objectives are closely linked with our Safeguarding Policy and they should not be seen in isolation.

6 | THE DELIVERY AND ORGANISATION OF THE DRUGS EDUCATION PROGRAMME.

Drugs Education is a whole staff issue. Newtownards Model Primary School ensures that staff are regularly updated with changes in the curriculum and changes to the policy, which have an effect on their delivery of the curriculum.

The Designated Teacher for Drugs (Designated Teacher) will ensure that the appropriate themes are covered under Personal Development for each year group. It is the responsibility of the classroom teacher to include drugs education in other subject areas if it forms part of the Northern Ireland Curriculum, and to spend an adequate amount of time delivering drugs education.

6.1 RESOURCES

The main resources used for the delivery of the drugs education programme are: textbooks, **teacher-generated or commercial worksheets, websites, DVDs, information apps, educational visits etc.**

6.2 OUTSIDE AGENCIES

Newtownards Model Primary School may use outside agencies to help deliver the drug education programme providing the following criteria are met:

- The content and delivery of the programme has been jointly agreed.
- The programme and methods of delivery are consistent with the aims and objectives outlined in this policy.
- The Principal has given his approval for the use of the outside agency.
- The staff from the agency have been vetted in relation to Child Protection.
- The agency is familiar with the school's drug policy and is prepared to adhere to it.
- The resources used are appropriate to the age range and maturity of the pupils.
- The visitor(s) to the school are clear that confidentiality cannot be maintained and any disclosure which might suggest that a pupil is at risk must be passed to the designated teacher for drugs.
- The teacher will always be present when a visitor to the school is taking a class.
- Outside agencies will be asked to complete the External Agencies Form – Appendix 5

7 LINKS WITH PARENTS, THE COMMUNITY AND THE POLICE

Parents will be informed when external agencies are being used to address drugs related issues and are encouraged to play an active role in homework tasks, and discuss drug issues with their child whenever possible. Parents are also aware of the school's procedures for dealing with drug related incidents.

The school endeavours to work closely with the local community to help reduce the number of drug related incidents.

Newtownards Model Primary School has developed good working relationships with the local police. This helps to ensure that if a drug related incident is reported, it will be dealt with in a professional and discrete manner, and in keeping the best interests of the child concerned in mind.

Community and Schools Involvement Officers offer advice and support when it is needed.

8 THE ROLE OF THE DESIGNATED TEACHER FOR DRUG RELATED INCIDENTS

The Vice Principal is responsible for the co-ordination of the arrangements to deal with individual cases of suspected or actual drug misuse. Her role includes:

- Oversight of co-ordination of planning of curricular provision
- Implementing procedures as outlined in this policy for dealing with an incident
- Receiving any substance and associated paraphernalia found in school
- Regularly updating staff on the policy and the procedures for dealing with a drug related incident
- Liaison with the Principal on any drug related incident
- Liaison with other staff responsible for Safeguarding
- Liaison with outside agencies in relation to drug related incidents
- The induction of new staff and training of existing staff as appropriate
- Reviewing and updating the school drug policy after an incident and when required.
- Completing an incident report form.

8.1 THE ROLE OF THE PRINCIPAL

It is the responsibility of the Principal to ensure that correct procedure is followed if a drug incident occurs. His role includes:

- Determining the circumstances surrounding incidents.
 - Liaison with the PSNI.
 - Ensuring pupils' welfare.
 - Handling, storage and safe disposal of any drug/drugs related paraphernalia.
 - Liaison with the Board of Governors and Education Authority.
 - Ensuring the completion of a written report and forwarding to the Board of Governors and Education Authority.
- Contacting parent / guardian of pupil/s involved.

8.2 THE ROLE OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS

School Governors have the responsibility for their individual school to foster and support the development and on-going review of the policy and education programme. Their role includes:

- Facilitation of the consultative process whereby the school community can respond and contribute to the effectiveness and quality of the policy and programme which they examine and approve prior to implementation in the school.

- Ensuring the policy is published on the school website
- Ensuring that it is reviewed at regular intervals.

9 MONITORING AND EVALUATING

The school drugs education policy is periodically reviewed to reflect changing circumstances and trends in drug use. The programmes of study for drugs education are continually reviewed and any changes deemed necessary are implemented.

The policy is available to parents if they request it.

The policy can also be accessed from the school website.

APPENDIX 1

PROCEDURES FOR HANDLING ALCOHOL MISUSE

The school premises are an alcohol free zone. The school does not allow any alcohol to be brought onto or consumed in school premises. This applies to visitors, staff, parents and pupils.

Adults breaking this rule will be referred to the Principal directly.

Pupils will be dealt with under the school's discipline policy.

PROCEDURES FOR HANDLING TOBACCO MISUSE

The school is a no smoking environment with no one being permitted to smoke on the school premises. This also includes e-cigarettes.

Adults breaking this rule will be advised by other members of staff.

Pupils breaking this rule will be dealt with under the school's discipline policy.

THE MANAGEMENT OF PRESCRIBED MEDICINES

This is very clearly defined in the Administration of Medicines Policy.

THE MANAGEMENT OF SOLVENTS

Pupils are not permitted to bring solvents or aerosols into school. This includes Tippex fluid and pens, Tippex thinners, glue, marker pens and spray deodorants. Pupils *are* permitted to bring felt tip pens to school.

All members of staff are responsible for the safe storage and usage of solvents in their classroom. The cleaners and caretakers should also ensure that their stores are locked when not in use and that solvents are held in a secure place.

APPENDIX 2 - THE LAW IN NORTHERN IRELAND

All staff are aware of their responsibilities under the law. The law in Northern Ireland differs in certain aspects from elsewhere in the UK. The relevant pieces of legislation are 'The Misuse of Drugs Act 1971, Section 5 of the Criminal Law Act (Northern Ireland) 1967, and the Powers of Arrest – Police and Criminal Evidence (Northern Ireland) Order 1989.

If the Principal has reasonable grounds to suspect that drugs are being used or supplied on the school premises, he will inform the police immediately in order to avoid any liability as a 'manager or occupier' of premises.

If staff have taken possession of a substance for the purposes of protecting a pupil from harm and from committing an offence; they should under no circumstance, try to analyse or identify it. If they suspect it to be LSD, they should wear gloves when handling it, to avoid ingestion through the skin. **The drug should be immediately stored in the school safe, in the First Aid room, and the police contacted.**

MISUSE OF DRUGS ACT 1971

It is an offence under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971:

— to supply or offer to supply a controlled drug to another in contravention of the Act;

i.

i. — to be in possession of, or to possess with intent to supply to another, a controlled drug in contravention of the Act; it is a defence to the offence of possession that, knowing or suspecting it to be a controlled drug, the accused took possession of it for the purpose of preventing another from committing or continuing to commit an offence and that as soon as possible after taking possession of it he took all such steps as were reasonably open to him to destroy the drug or to deliver it into the custody of a person lawfully entitled to take custody of it;

ii.

ii.iii. for the occupier or someone concerned in the management of any premises knowingly to permit or suffer on those premises the smoking of cannabis: or the production, attempted production, supply, attempted supply, or offering to supply of any controlled drug.

The offences listed above are arrestable offences.

Section 8. A person commits an offence if, being the occupier or concerned in the management of any premises, he knowingly permits or suffers any of the following activities to take place on those premises, that is to say:

- (a) producing or attempting to produce a controlled drug in contravention of section 4 (1) of this Act;
- (b) supplying or attempting to supply a controlled drug to another in contravention of section 4 (1) of this Act or offering to supply a controlled drug to another in contravention of section 4 (1) of this Act;
- (c) preparing opium for smoking;
- (c)(d) smoking cannabis resin or prepared opium.

CRIMINAL LAW ACT (NORTHERN IRELAND) 1967

Section 5. Failing to give iInformation. Where a person has committed an arrestable offence, it shall be the duty of every other person who knows or believes:

- (i) that the offence or some other arrestable offence has been committed; and
- (ii) that he has information which is likely to secure, or to be of material assistance in securing, the apprehension, prosecution or conviction of any person for that offence;

to give that information, within a reasonable time, to a constable and if, without reasonable excuse, he fails to do so then that person is committing an offence.

This places an onus on individuals to inform a constable.

POWERS OF ARREST – POLICE AND CRIMINAL EVIDENCE (NORTHERN IRELAND) ORDER 1989

Art. 26(4) – Any person may arrest without warrant anyone who is, or whom he with reasonable grounds suspects to be, guilty of the offence.

Art 26(5) – Where an arrestable offence has been committed, **any person** may arrest without warrant anyone who is, or whom he with reasonable grounds suspects to be, guilty of the offence.

These powers of arrest are available to non-police and, as the following drug offences fall within the definition of Arrestable Offence, are available for use in such circumstances.

(1) Possession of Controlled Drugs

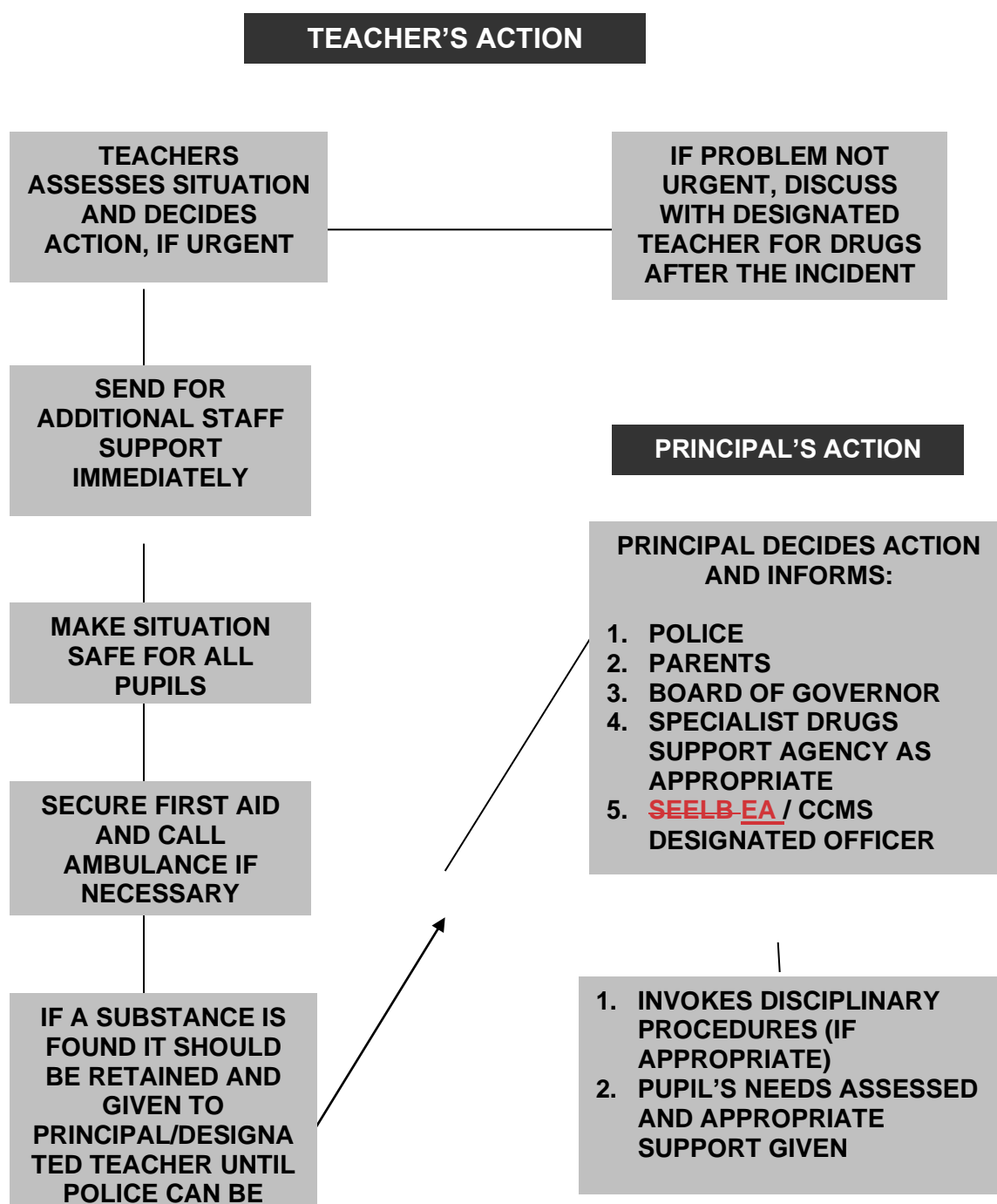
(2) Possession of Controlled Drugs with Intent to Supply

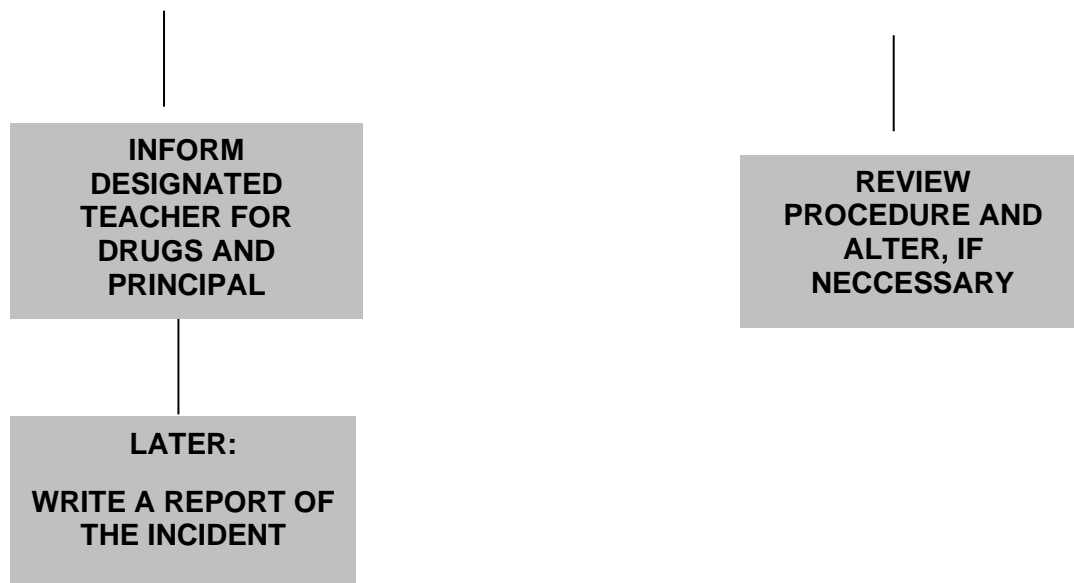
(3) Supply of Controlled Drugs

NB: The above information is advisory only and does not represent legal opinion.

APPENDIX 3 - HANDLING INCIDENTS

Action to be taken in the event of a suspected incident of drug misuse where the designated teacher for drug issues is not the principal:





Managing an Incident - Summary

Actions by members of staff in the event of a suspected drugs-related incident:

1 Individual Staff Member

- Assess situation and decide action;
- Secure First Aid and send for additional staff support if necessary;
- Make situation safe for all pupils and other members of staff;
- Carefully gather up any drugs and/or associated paraphernalia/evidence. Pass all information/evidence to the designated teacher for drugs; and
- Write a brief factual report of the incident and forward it to the designated teacher for drugs.

2 Designated Teacher for Drugs

- Respond to first aiders advice/recommendations regarding the incident;
- In the case of an emergency inform parents/guardians immediately;
- Take possession of any substance(s) and associated paraphernalia found;
- Inform principal;
- Take initial responsibility for pupil(s) involved in suspected incident; and
- Complete an incident report form (see Appendix 7) and forward it to the principal.

3 Principal

● Determine the circumstances surrounding the incident;

● Ensure that the following people are informed where relevant:

- Parents/guardians;
- Community and Schools Involvement Officer (CSIO);
- Board of Governors;

— Designated Officer in [EAELB](#).

— Agree pastoral and disciplinary responses including counselling services/support;

● Forward a copy of the incident report form to the Chairperson of the Board of Governors and the designated officer within the Education Authority; and

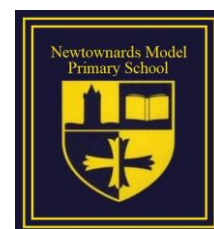
● Review procedures and amend, if necessary.

EMERGENCY FIRST AID

The school's trained first aiders are:

Mr [Mr G Bennett](#) (Designated First Aider) , [\(Designated First Aider\)](#) , Mrs N Ferguson, [Mrs K Tannock](#) , Mrs N Hamilton and Ms K Fulton.

Appendix 4: Exemplar Form when using External Agencies



Drugs Education Programme – External Agency

School: _____
Principal: _____
Contact Teacher: _____
Tel No: _____
Fax No: _____
E-mail: _____

Agency: _____
Agency contact: _____
Tel No: _____
Fax No: _____
E-mail: _____

Agreed Aims

- _____
- _____
- _____

Sessions to be Delivered

Date(s): _____
Times(s): _____

Audience

Number of participants: _____
Type of group (age, ability, etc) _____

Methodology

(Brief description of programme content and methods)

Intended Learning Outcomes

- _____
- _____
- _____

Evaluation

(Brief description of how this will be conducted and reported)

Signed _____ (Contact Teacher/Principal)
Signed: _____ (Agency contact) Date: _____



1. Name of Pupil / Young person _____ DOB _____
Address _____
School / Youth Club _____

2. Date of Incident _____ Reported by _____
Time of Incident _____ Location of Incident _____

3. First Aid given YES / NO Administered by _____
Ambulance/Doctor Called YES / NO Time of Call _____
Drug Involved (if known) _____ Sample Found YES / NO

4. Parent Informed YES / NO Date _____ Time _____
By whom _____

5. Where sample retained _____ or
Date Sample Destroyed _____ Time _____
Witnessed by _____

6. Police Informed YES / NO Date _____ Time _____
By _____ Name of Station / Officer _____

7. [EASEELB](#) Drug Education Officer Informed YES / NO Date _____
Time _____ By whom _____

8. Form completed by _____ Date _____
Position _____

Please retain one copy for your confidential file
and return the original to: