



Guidance on developing a Whole School Substance Misuse/ Drug Policy

Guidance for creating your policy

You may wish to have separate drug, alcohol and tobacco policies or you may want to have one policy covering all substances.

The needs of primary school pupils and secondary school pupils will be different with regard to use and therefore schools are encouraged to consider the age and experience of their pupils and to use this guidance as a framework for the needs of their pupils.

See also DfE and ACPO drug advice for schools. Advice for local authorities, headteachers, school staff and governing bodies (DfE, 2012):

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/270169/drug_advice_for_schools.pdf

Development process

- State the date of approval and adoption, and the date for the next major review.
- Describe the development process and how the whole school community was involved. This should include pupils (state how), parents/carers (state how), governors and staff (state how).

How is the Policy shared with other relevant people?

Describe the process for sharing the policy, including a link to where the policy can be found. How will pupils, parents, governors and other interested parties know where to find it?

The relationship to other policies

Include links to other written policies on, for example PSHE, medicine storage, confidentiality, pastoral support, healthy schools, safeguarding etc.

Definition of terms

Define specific words used within the policy such as 'drugs' and 'substances'. This should include medicines, volatile substances, alcohol, tobacco and illegal drugs.

Content of the policy

- 1. Aim of the policy**
- 2. Curriculum**
- 3. School culture**
- 4. Staff**
- 5. Managing incidents**
- 6. Support services and signposting**
- 7. The wider school community**

1. Aims of the Substance Misuse policy

This should include the aim of reducing substance misuse among young people. You may also choose to include some of the substance use information on the Healthy Schools website: <https://www.bristol.gov.uk/web/bristol-healthy-schools/topics/alcohol-tobacco-and-other-drugs>. This gives a good rationale for completing the Understanding Substances Award. Always ensure that any 'facts' that you include are the most up to date and accurate.

State where and to whom the policy applies

The policy should apply to all staff, pupils, parents/carers, governors and partner agencies working in the school. It should also state where and when it operates e.g. within the physical boundaries of the school, during school hours. It should also include pupils who are taking part in school trips, outings and field work.

2. Curriculum

Describe briefly how drug, alcohol and tobacco education is taught in school.

This should be a whole school programme of study, delivered within a spiral PHE curriculum and covering drug, alcohol and tobacco education lessons that are appropriate to age and experience.

There should also be lessons about this subject in the science curriculum.

3. School culture

The school's stance towards drugs, health and the needs of pupils

Include a clear statement that illegal and other unauthorised drugs are not acceptable within the boundaries identified within the policy. Explain that the health and safety of the school community and the pastoral needs of pupils are the priorities for the school.

Outline school rules with regard to authorised drugs and make links to the school policy on medicines.

4. Staff

Staff with key responsibility for drugs

Include the name of the staff member with lead responsibility for ensuring that the school has an approach to Alcohol, Tobacco & Drugs that promotes the health of the school community.

Staff support and training

Outline induction and drug awareness training arrangements for all staff working at the school and relevant governors.

Outline specific continuing professional development opportunities for drug education teachers and how this will be cascaded.

5. Managing Incidents

Management of drugs related incidents at school and on school trips

- Describe how the school will respond to **pupils** who are found to be in possession of illegal substances, tobacco or alcohol. This should be a trauma informed approach, taking into account the needs and experiences of the pupils involved. Exclusion should never be the first option.
- Describe the policy on dealing with **drug paraphernalia and suspected illegal and unauthorised drugs** found on school premises, including storage and safe disposal guidance for staff.
- State the arrangements for ensuring that **staff** are aware of their responsibilities in relation to drinking and other drug use in school hours and on school trips and describe how the school will respond to incidents involving staff.
- Outline procedures for managing **parents/carers** under the influence of drugs or alcohol on the school premises.

6. Support services and signposting

External Support Services

Outline procedures for supporting children and young people where there are concerns about drug and alcohol use, or where children are affected by a parent or carer's drug and alcohol misuse.

<https://www.bdp.org.uk/youth>

Outline the mechanisms in school for ensuring that pupils are made aware of the various internal and external support structures.

Outline services that may be recommended to parents and carers, when they are identified as misusing drugs or alcohol.

<https://www.dhi-online.org.uk/get-help/adult-drug-alcohol-treatment/bristol-roads>

Outline services that may be recommended to parents and carers, when their young people are using drugs and alcohol.

<https://www.dhi-online.org.uk/get-help/families-carers-services/families-also-matter-bristol>

Outline procedures where there are safeguarding concerns, or provide a link to the school's safeguarding policy.

7. Wider school community

Parents and carers

Include detail of how the school involves parents in drug, alcohol and tobacco work. Include how parents/carers are supported to understand the importance of talking to their children and young people about alcohol, tobacco and drugs at an age appropriate level.

The role of governors

State the arrangements for ensuring that governors are well informed on drugs issues as they affect the school.

Outline the role of governors (or a designated governor if appointed) in policy development and overseeing the drug education programme, and contributing to any case conferences called, or appeals against exclusions.