

Copleston High School

Drug Education and Drug Incidents Policy Summary

The policy is aimed at all staff, students, parents/carers, governors and agencies working with the school. The policy links with Sex & Relationship Education, Health, Safety and Welfare and Behaviour for Learning Policies.

- The stance towards drugs, health and needs of students.
Copleston High School recognises that drug misuse in our society is a major threat to individuals, families and the wider community. An effective programme of drug education within school will, however, help to ensure that young people are aware of the risks of drug taking and have the skills and knowledge to resist. Thus we recognise our responsibility to treat drug misuse as an educational issue and to work, as appropriate, in partnership with the police, health services and parents to inform and protect the students of the school.
- Drugs education is placed firmly in the context of an overall health education programme.
- Smoking is prohibited on Copleston school site. This includes the use of tobacco, e-cigarettes, vaporizers and other associated inhaling devices.
- Definitions and the context of Drugs education at Copleston are explained.
- Parental involvement/confidentiality issues are covered.
- Boundaries and school responsibilities are outlined.
- Sanctions are covered together with support that can be put in place.
- The collection and holding of evidence procedures are outlined.

Drug related incidents

There are a variety of situations that would constitute a drug related incident:

- 1 Pupils who have misused drugs or who are under the influence of drugs, including alcohol
- 2 Discovery – illegal drugs/alcohol/tobacco/paraphernalia found on students
- 3 Supplying - students by students, students by staff/parents/carers/persons external to the school community
- 4 Disclosure
- 5 Suspicion or rumour
- 6 Illegal drugs/alcohol/tobacco/paraphernalia found on premises

Boundaries and School Responsibility

- 1 Students are expected to adhere to this policy once they have entered the physical boundaries of the school until they leave the boundaries at the end of the school day. (The school boundaries are shown on maps in classrooms) Students are expected to adhere to this policy whilst they are attending an event, on work experience placements or on a residential or school visit, whether supervised or not. Any student involved in a drug related incident on such an occasion will be dealt with according to this policy. People concerned in the management of any venue hosting an event may impose additional procedures or sanctions.

Sanctions

The school views any case of substance abuse extremely seriously and every incident will be dealt with assiduously. There will not be an automatic sanction applied to any drug related incident in school

- 1 Every individual situation will be dealt with in a way which is sensitive to the needs of the student/s concerned, the welfare and education of other students and will offer support to staff
- 2 In every confirmed case of illegal drug use the police will be involved. Staff, individually or collectively, will be informed of outcomes at the discretion of the Principal. In the case of a misuse of a legal substance similar procedures will apply. Instant and summary exclusion may not always be seen as a useful sanction for all but the most serious of cases
- 3 The issue of considering other students' perceptions of outcomes is a vital one. Sanctions must be seen to be applied fairly, consistently and containing an element of deterrence. Students may be informed of these outcomes in assembly, at the discretion of the Principal
- 4 Parents are vital in the process of dealing with incidents, as are outside agencies, such as the EWO, Schools Psychological Service and other relevant agencies

There is a range of possible responses that the school may implement; (in no particular order)

- 1 Establish an individual support plan
- 2 Make sure the student/s is/are not the victim/s of bullying
- 3 Use the school reward system for appropriate behaviour changes
- 4 Assessment by Educational Psychology Service
- 5 Access to counselling
- 6 Closer supervision of break/lunchtimes
- 7 Referral to the appropriate medical team
- 8 Referral to local drug support agency
- 9 Letters home to parents/carers
- 10 Parents/carers being asked to attend meetings at school
- 11 Involvement of the police – the school will consider involvement of the police for serious offences and will involve the police for offences involving illegal drugs or where there is a lack of cooperation from students and/or parents/carers. In addition the school may also impose internal sanctions to help the student/s benefit from the experience and use the incident as a deterrent within the school
- 12 Fixed term or permanent exclusion – may be used when other options have been explored or where it is demonstrated that there is significant risk to the safety and welfare of staff and/or other students

Collecting Evidence

- 1 The law permits school staff to take temporary possession of a substance suspected of being a controlled drug for the purposes of protecting a student from harm and/or committing an offence of possession
- 2 The substance should either be handed to the police who will be able to identify if it is an illegal drug or it should be disposed of in the presence of the Principal or Deputy Head, but its identity cannot be claimed in retrospect. Staff should not attempt to analyse or taste an unidentified substance
- 3 It is open to a member of staff to search a student's bag or locker where s/he has reasonable cause to believe it contains unlawful items. This should be done in the presence of a witness and the student.
- 4 Where students are suspected of concealing illegal substances on their persons, every effort should be made to secure the voluntary handing over of any unlawful substance
- 5 The member of staff should be careful to ensure that there is no opportunity for allegations of assault or improper conduct to arise, and therefore a witness should be in attendance at any interview or search of belongings
- 6 If a student refuses, the student should be detained under supervision while the police are called to deal with the situation
- 7 Physical (body) searches should never be made by a member of staff – the powers to search by the police are clearly defined in law