SUTTON VALENCE SCHOOL
SINCE 1576

Drugs Policy

(Senior School)

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Introduction

Sutton Valence School believes that drug-related problems should be confronted in an open and responsible manner. The School believes unequivocally that taking illegal drugs is wrong; it is against the law, potentially hazardous to physical and mental health and has other known detrimental effects. The School acknowledges the fact that illegal drug-taking is endemic and cuts across all strata of society. Similarly, the School acknowledges that our pupils will be exposed to what are commonly termed, despite the recent change in the law, Legal Highs. The dangers that these substances pose are well documented. This policy is designed to outline our response to both legal and illegal drugs. This is highlighted by the extract from the Guidelines to School Life: "Also banned are any substances which are not controlled under the Misuse of Drugs Act but which have no role to play in normal School routines".

In some ways it is part of the culture of many present-day teenagers. Many young people encounter drugs in the wider social scene outside School and occasionally the problem will carry over into School in a variety of ways, e.g. academic performance, punctuality and appearance. The School accepts that its pupils are unlikely to be markedly different in this respect from their peers in other parts of the country. It is vital that all pupils are helped to understand the dangers of drug misuse and dependency.

The School is also aware of the fact that there appears to be increasing evidence that the longer-term effects of the misuse of illegal drugs may well be more extensive and serious than is generally perceived to be the case and that for some pupils there is a heightened risk of psychosis. Inevitably, those who become involved with drug use also become involved with a criminal element of society with the risks that follow.

The School sees that it is part of its professional responsibility to provide support and counselling for any pupils and their families who encounter problems with drugs. At the same time, it will take any necessary disciplinary or other appropriate action. It is also the School's responsibility to protect the community, as much as it can, from dangerous influences and these include drugs.

Anyone coming forward with a drugs problem will receive help.

Drugs Education

The School will provide a planned programme of drugs education within the curriculum as part of the PSHE/ Pathways Programme. This curriculum programme will contain factual information, including the legal and health issues concerning drugs, and includes the opportunity to discuss moral and other aspects involved in drug taking. The School's Medical Officer, local health agencies and Police including the PCSO team will, where appropriate, assist in the delivery of this programme. From time

to time, there will be information evenings for parents on this and other topics (County Lines for example) which will support visits from organisations such as the Daniel Spargo-Mabbs Foundation. Therefore, this policy strengthens the School's commitment to its pastoral role in the general educational welfare of pupils and to the health and safety of the whole community.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to prevent pupils from using illegal drugs during School time and to discourage their use at any time. Critically, the School has a legitimate interest in pupils' activities outside School hours. Risky behaviour may endanger the wellbeing of the pupils concerned, put them at physical or mental risk, lead to them breaking the law or indeed bring the School into disrepute

The School has long been concerned with the dangers of illegal drugs and their misuse. Its aim is to dissuade members of the School from taking illegal drugs. Consequently, if a pupil is found to be involved in the misuse of illegal drugs, if reliable reports give rise to suspicion of involvement, or if a pupil's behaviour shows signs that he/she may be abusing drugs, parents will always be informed of the School's concerns as soon as possible.

Procedures for investigations

If a member of staff is aware that a member of the School is in possession of, using, supplying or inciting other members of the School to use, illegal drugs on School premises, in School time or whilst on School-organised activities, he or she should immediately report the fact to a member of the Senior Management Team.

If the incident occurs on a School-organised activity taking place away from School, the senior member of Staff present must immediately be informed. As soon as possible the incident must be reported to a member of the Senior Management Team.

When illegal drugs are found on a pupil or on School premises, the law allows staff to take temporary possession of the suspected substances. At the first opportunity, the substances should be handed over to a member of the Senior Management Team. It is not permissible to retain the substance, as this would be an offence against the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971, nor is it permissible for staff to try to analyse or taste an unidentified substance.

The Headmaster and/or Deputy Head will decide how to proceed with the investigation. Parents and/or guardians will be contacted as soon as possible. Interviews with the pupil concerned will normally be conducted in the presence of another senior member of staff or tutor and any pupil in this position will be advised of his right to have an adult present during the interview. Notes should be kept of any interview, including accurate recording of the date, time, and those present. Both in written and in verbal statements, confidentiality should be respected where possible.

Any illicit or suspicious substances confiscated during the investigation will be handed to the Police for disposal or identification as appropriate.

Similarly, the police will be informed should the School become aware of the fact that a pupil is in possession of an illegal substance be that at home or in School.

Searches

Pupils may be asked to hand over any substances voluntarily, for example by turning out their pockets or bag. However, on suspicion, searches of a pupil's bags, blazer or locker may be made. These should take place in the presence of the pupil and another member of staff. The right to search covers all School premises, including boarding houses.

Before any search is undertaken, consent will usually be sought from parents or from the pupil if he/she is of sufficient maturity and understanding. The member of staff leading the search will determine whether or not the pupil is able to provide this consent and may request the additional

opinion of a medically qualified member of staff if required. If the pupil refuses consent, he/she will be asked to say why he/she has refused. The School will be entitled to draw inferences from his or her response and general demeanour and the Police may be informed. If a parent refuses consent, the School may draw inferences from the pupil's general demeanour and the Police may be informed.

Physical searches of pupils by staff are not allowed by law. If a pupil refuses to turn out his/her pockets, Department for Children Schools and Families (DCSF) advice is that the School should contact the Police.

The right to search must be based on the principle of reasonableness and show sensitivity towards the pupil concerned with regard to respecting his/her property. A pupil has the right to nominate someone to be present during the search.

Drugs Testing

The School reserves the right to request a drug test when there is reasonable cause for suspicion of the misuse of illegal drugs, or if individual circumstances suggest it would be appropriate.

The main reasons for suspecting drug use by a pupil are:

1. Information from another pupil or member of staff;
2. A complaint from the wider Sutton Valence community, either in or outside term time;
3. A pupil's behaviour.

The relevant consent to a drugs test is that of the pupil rather than the parents, even if the pupil is under 16 years of age, provided he/she is of sufficient maturity and understanding and gives his/her informed consent in writing. The member of staff leading the investigation will determine whether or not the pupil is able to provide this consent and may request the additional opinion of an experienced or medically qualified member of staff. If it is deemed that the pupil is not competent to provide this consent, a parent or guardian will be asked to provide it for them.

Parents or guardians will be informed at the earliest opportunity of the requirement for such a test, and the reasons for that requirement. This may be after the test has been administered.

If a pupil refuses to undertake the drug test, he/she will be asked to say why he/she has refused. The School will be entitled to draw inferences from his/her response and general demeanour and the Police may be informed.

If it is deemed that the pupil is not competent to provide consent, a parent or guardian will be asked to provide it for them. However, if the parent or guardian refuse to consent to their child being tested, the School may again draw inferences and the Police may be informed.

From September 2018, the School has used a urine screening test cup, provided by Sure Screen diagnostics, using a rapid test cup as the means for testing for 15 substances . This test: is largely self-administered by the pupil; is rapid, accurate and easy to undertake; does not require medical supervision, and will normally be supervised (collected) by a member of the Senior Management Team. Housemasters/mistresses are also trained in the simple procedure which is naturally in accordance with good standard practice, and the device itself conforms to the appropriate ISO standard. For a full explanation of the protocol for testing, see Appendix 1.

1. Pupils will produce the urine sample under controlled conditions in the Health Centre, guided by a member of the Senior Management Team and supported by their Housemaster/mistress or appropriate member of staff. The same staff will be present when the results are revealed after five minutes. Results will show positive, negative or invalid for 15 drugs.

2. A positive result to the test (drugs are present) would be expected to lead to an admission of drug use by the pupil. The SMT member will then fill two more specimen bottles in the back-

to-the-lab kit with the same sample. One bottle will sent to a laboratory for confirmation; one bottle will be frozen and made available to a second laboratory chosen by the pupil or his/her family should the need arise.

The School believes that drug testing may help to remove the problems of uncertainty and lingering suspicion which often emerge during investigations. On the first occasion, in the event of a drug test proving negative, the School will pay for the test. In the event that it is positive, the pupil's parents will be charged for the test.

Testing will only be carried out when there is clear reason to do so. The procedures for the test are outlined in Appendix A. The donor will be given the opportunity to declare any recent use of prescribed or non-prescribed drugs. The School will treat a positive test, although not infallible, as evidence that the pupil has been using drugs. Subsequently:

Sanctions following the misuse of illegal drugs

Any pupil caught in possession of, or using illegal drugs on School premises or whilst on a School-related activity, will be expelled unless there are extenuating circumstances, in which case they are likely to face suspension and acceptance of the requirement that, if they do return to School, the School will reserve the right to implement the Supportive Testing Programme for the remainder of their time at the School. These tests will be made at the School's behest and charged to a pupil's parents. Failure to agree to this will result in expulsion. Both pupils and parents to whom the Supportive Testing Programme is offered would be required to sign consent forms describing the way in which the programme would operate.

A pupil on the Supportive Testing Programme will be tested, under the supervision of a member of the Senior Management Team after they have consulted with the Headmaster. Usually a Housemaster/mistress will be involved in administering the test in the Medical Centre. The procedure will be to summon the pupil without warning, tell them they are to be tested, ask them if they consent to being tested and their parents informed of the result after the test or, if they prefer them to be informed first, ask them if they want a 'donor witness'. The test then proceeds as per the instructions in the testing kit. A pupil on the Supportive Testing Programme testing positive to illegal drugs would be expelled from the School.

Any pupil caught supplying, or inciting the use of, illegal drugs, or being in possession of them with the intent to supply, will be permanently excluded. The Headmaster may, at his discretion, offer a supportive regime as an alternative to expulsion, if the circumstances warrant it. This scheme is set out under Appendix B.

Appendix A - Procedures for Testing

1) Introduction

Any testing must be authorised by the Headmaster who will appoint a supervisor for the collection of necessary samples. The reasons for the test will be clearly outlined to the pupil and will only take place with the required consent.

A pupil will not be compelled to take a test. If necessary, it will be explained to the pupil that taking a test could remove suspicion and possibly allow their innocence to be established. They will also be made aware of the fact that should they refuse to take a drugs test, the School reserves the right to draw inferences from such a refusal and may result in the pupil being required to leave the School community and/or the Police being informed.

2) Procedure for Collection of Sample

Collection of samples will take place in a private room in the Medical Centre. Testing will normally be supervised by a member of the Senior Management Team or a Housemaster/mistress with assistance from a nurse. The pupil from whom the sample is being collected will have the right to ask for a member of staff to be present as an observer.

The method of testing will be through urine samples and the procedure for collection as detailed by the manufacturer of the testing kit (see above) will be clearly outlined to the pupil before collection of the sample takes place. This will also include an explanation of the paperwork and the completion of that paperwork. Throughout the test, every effort will be made to maintain privacy and dignity. Should the pupil, or his/her observer, be concerned about any part of the procedure, they have the right to ask for that particular test to be stopped and for the procedure to be restarted.

Prior to the test, the pupil will be asked to remove any coats, jackets or jerseys and they will be asked to empty all pockets as well as removing shoes. They will also be asked to thoroughly wash their hands and be provided with a clean towel. They will not be allowed to take articles of any kind into the testing room. When providing the sample, they will be assured of privacy.

Appendix B - Supportive Testing Programme

Date: .....

Full Name of Pupil: .....

Pupil's Date of Birth: ..... Age Now: .....

1. I have made a voluntary admission of having used a controlled drug or substance in breach of the School's policy and disciplinary rules.

   And/Or

2. As an alternative to permanent exclusion, the Headmaster has offered me a supportive regime under which:

   - While a member of the School and until such time as the Headmaster sees fit, without obligation on the part of the School, I may be asked at any time to provide a urine sample under medical supervision for analysis in accordance with the procedures described on the attached policy which I have read and understood.

   - I understand that I may be asked to provide a urine sample at any reasonable time even though no grounds exist at that time to suspect that I have been involved with drugs or substances.

3. I agree to be subject to this programme and to co-operate with the School in every respect. I understand that the School will take all reasonable care to preserve my confidentiality and human rights in the operation of this regime.

4. I also understand that if without good reason I fail to cooperate with this regime or if a test proves positive, I would be required to leave Sutton Valence School.

Signed: .....

Declaration of Parents/Guardian/Education Guardian

I/We the undersigned have read Sutton Valence School's Policy on controlled drugs and substances, and this Appendix. For my/our part, I/we accept the Headmaster's offer of a Supportive Testing Programme for the above named pupil, as described above.

I/We undertake to co-operate with the regime in all respects and to pay laboratory charges for each test which I/we understand to be less than £50 plus VAT per test.

Signed: ..... Signed: .....

Full name: ..... Full name: .....

Relationship to the Pupil: ..... Relationship to the Pupil: .....

Date: ..... Date: .....

Confidentiality: Pupils are encouraged to discuss their anxieties about drugs or substances in confidence with a member of staff or the School Counsellor. For confidentiality and freedom from disciplinary issues to be assured, the circumstances in which these matters are brought to staff must be genuine (see drugs policy para.5). At the start of any conversations with pupils seeking advice about their drug related anxieties, the member of staff must make it clear to the pupil that, if the pupil or other people are judged to be likely to be harmed as a result of the situation which the pupil describes, then confidentiality may well have to be breached. If a member of staff is unsure about whether confidentiality does have to be breached, then they should discuss the situation with a senior member of staff before progressing. In that discussion, the pupil will not be identified.