

# Cantonian High School

## Ysgol Uwchradd Cantonian



THE BEST FROM EACH  
SUCCESS FOR ALL

## Drug & Alcohol Policy

October 2008

Revised April 2010

Revised January 2011

Revised June 2013

Revised January 2014

Revised March 2016

Reviewed December 2020 – updated group/association names

Reviewed Autumn 2023 – no changes

This policy was adopted by Governors on 14 March 2016

## POLICY OVERVIEW

In brief, our policy is that:

- Drugs, alcohol and tobacco have no place in Cantonian High School.
- PSE lessons will give all pupils the chance to learn about substance misuse, including its dangers.
- Pupils who bring drugs to school or use drugs outside school in a way that affects their behaviour in school will be punished using the severest school sanctions. External agencies, including the police, may be informed.
- Permanent exclusion will be the response to: drug dealing on school premises, repeated drug usage, drug usage that threatens the health and safety of others, or possession of drugs while on school premises. N.B. Alcohol is also considered to be a drug for the purposes of this policy.
- If a pupil is on short-term medication (e.g. antibiotics), their parent/carer is asked to inform the school. Parents/Carers retain responsibility.
- The school is informed by the school nurse if a pupil is prescribed medication that needs to be administered during the school day. The school nurse will complete a 'Health Care Plan' and a 'Request for Medication' form with parents/carers. Copies of these forms are kept with the medication.
- Staff who bring to school legal medication needed throughout the school day for personal use must ensure that this is stored securely.
- Staff who abuse substances or encourage substance abuse will face investigation which may lead to disciplinary action.
- Although recognising that individuals – whether staff or pupils – who abuse substances risk permanent harm to themselves, our primary aim must be to help and counsel. This does not preclude disciplinary action, which is an automatic response to substance and alcohol misuse.
- The school is not a main provider of counselling or health care – it is our role to direct a pupil or staff member towards the right sources of help. We will complete a referral when it is appropriate or possible.
- We will inform and involve parents/carers in any instance of substance misuse. We will also involve the police.

## POLICY DETAIL AND PROCEDURES

### Definition of “Drugs”

For the purposes of this policy statement the word “Drugs” includes all mood and performance changing substances, both legal and illegal, regardless of “class” and including prescribed drugs, alcohol, tobacco and solvents. (See “Useful Definitions”.)

### Medicines

Many drugs are lawfully carried as medicines. Children are expected to give prescription drugs (except inhalers) to a member of staff. The school is informed by the school nurse if a pupil is prescribed medication that needs to be administered during the school day. The school nurse will complete a ‘Health Care Plan’ and a ‘Request for Medication’ form with parents/carers. Copies of these forms are kept on file.

If a pupil is on short-term medication (e.g. antibiotics), their parent/carer is asked to inform the school. Parents/Carers retain responsibility.

Non-prescription drugs should not normally be brought to school. If pupils supply prescription drugs to others in school, this is treated as ‘dealing’ and so this policy applies.

### Personnel

While the Headteacher has ultimate responsibility for implementation of the policy, all members of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) have responsibility for overseeing the management of an incident involving substance misuse.

### IN-SCHOOL PROCEDURES (with possible suggestions for action)

Staff who become aware of incidents involving pupils and drugs should inform a member of the SLT who will inform the Headteacher.

Immediate action is needed when there is a clear risk to safety. For example:

- An adult collecting a child or young person appears to be under the influence of drink or drugs;  
*Action: apply locally agreed child protection procedures, involve the police if the health and safety of others may be compromised.*
- A child or young person/adults appears ill or unsafe as a result of substance misuse;  
*Action: consider obtaining medical advice, note relevant facts and inform parent/carer/police.*
- Substances are being supplied on, or near premises;  
*Action: contact police.*
- There is ready access to controlled drugs;  
*Action: contact police.*

- The premises have potentially hazardous substance misuse related litter e.g. needles, syringes;  
*Action: arrange safe removal of litter according to Health and Safety policy, involve police if related to illegal substance misuse.*
- Substance misusers behaving aggressively;  
*Action: seek urgent police assistance.*
- A child/young person discloses that they are misusing drugs/substances or their parent/carer or family members are misusing drugs/substances;  
*Action: inform school Child Protection Officer, who will contact social services or specialist substance misuse service for advice on how to respond. Confiscate drugs/substance (to be disposed of appropriately). Explain that the police will have to be involved.*

Less immediate action e.g. observation, interview, consultation with other agencies (including the police), continued monitoring, may be appropriate when there are for example:

- Generalised allegations or concerns about a particular child/young person or family;
- Refuted/inconsistent disclosures;
- Concerns but no evidence of substance misuse or related harmful criminal conduct (such as supply of drugs or other harmful substances);
- Concerns but no evidence of immediate risk to safety.

Actions requiring referral to other organisations (e.g. the police) may include:

- Investigation of criminal activity, including searching persons or personal property;
- Apart from immediate first aid, any health or medical emergency which should be attended by appropriate medical personnel;
- Assessment and providing support and services to vulnerable or troubled children and families are matters for social services;
- Counselling and drug treatment programmes require trained staff, normally accessible through social services, health or specialist substance misuse services.

## SURRENDER OF ILLEGAL DRUGS

Ideally, no staff member should deal with these occurrences alone. Always try to have a colleague as witness.

Some pupils will offer to voluntarily surrender illegal drugs. If this happens, the pupil should then be warned that it is the school's policy to inform parents/carers in each case. The school always involves the police.

If any drugs are surrendered, they must be clearly labelled and sealed with self adhesive tape into a robust envelope, with the time, date and name of member of staff taking charge of the drugs marked clearly on the outside. These must be handed to the Headteacher or Child Protection Officer as soon as reasonably practical. The local police should be consulted on disposal.

## LINKS WITH POLICE / POWERS OF SEARCH PROTOCOL FOR THE INVESTIGATION OF DRUG INCIDENTS IN CANTONIAN HIGH SCHOOL

When school staff are made aware that pupils are likely to be in possession of, or attempting to trade, illegal drugs on school premises, the following protocol should form strong guidance in determining the sequence of actions.

### **Quality of Information**

The school should attempt to assess the quality of the information:

Is the source of information thought to be reliable?

Are there any other motives for giving this information?

Is the source of information prepared to pass this information without it being anonymous?

Is the information based on direct observation or hearsay?

Would the source wish to remain confidential?

Note: it is only necessary for the information to appear to be reliable. It does not need to be proven in advance.

### **Contact with Parents/Carers**

There should only be a reasonable attempt to contact parents/carers to inform them that a search will be taking place. Parents/Carers do not have the right to prevent such a search nor delay it unduly. The police are limited in their powers to detain a person in advance of a search.

If parents/carers can be contacted and are able to attend the school site, they should be escorted to the room in which the search is to take place.

### **Contact with Officers**

When information is passed to the police, a search should be requested. If pupils are requested to provide write-ups of incidents they have been involved with or witnessed, these must be referred to as 'write-ups in order to clarify facts', not as statements, which it is the duty of the police to obtain.

On attending, officers should be briefed as to the nature of the allegation and the confidence in the source of information. They should be escorted to the room in which the search is to take place.

If the child is already present, they should then be escorted to this room for the search to be conducted. If the parents/carers are not present a member of school staff (teaching or non-teaching) must be present throughout the search. Note that although some questioning associated with the search is allowable, no formal interview must be permitted unless parents/carers are present. It is very unlikely that such an interview would take place on school premises.

If the pupil must be collected from a teaching room or other area within the school, wherever possible this should be done by two adults of the same sex as the pupil. Staff should be wary of any attempt of the pupil to escape to jettison drugs, or attempt to pass drugs to any other pupil either in the classroom or on the way to the search.

## **Awareness**

This protocol should be communicated to all staff who may make initial contact with the police. Such contact should normally be limited to:

- The Headteacher
- A member of the SLT
- The Child Protection Officer

## **Out of School Procedures**

The school has no role in dealing with drug incidents outside school hours and premises other than:

- When the pupil should be in school.
- On school trips and visits, when the same rules and procedures should be applied as far as is reasonable and practicable.
- While the pupil is in school uniform or is representing the school.
- To the extent that the effect of some substances may persist into school time.
- By passing information onto relevant agencies when the safety or wellbeing of pupils is threatened.
- To assist police in preventing the use of land surrounding the school for drug trading.
- Whilst the pupil is travelling to and from school.

On residential trips with sixth form pupils, staff must not allow pupils to use alcohol unless:

- 1) the pupil is over 18 and agrees that alcohol usage will be responsible; and
- 2) the alcohol is a maximum of 2 units of wine, beer or cider consumed with a meal.

## **PROCEDURE FOR DEALING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE AFTER AN INCIDENT**

Drugs and alcohol affect behaviour. The fact that drugs or alcohol have caused a pupil to behave inappropriately will not be seen as a mitigating factor – the behaviour will be punished using the normal range of school sanctions, which may include exclusion, either fixed-term or permanent.

It would be normal practice to contact police according to the agreed protocol if a search is required or if there is a concern about dealing in illegal drugs.

Exclusion is an appropriate punishment for using or possessing alcohol or drugs on school premises, and in situations as stated in "Out of school procedures" (above). The decision whether or not to exclude a pupil, and the nature of the exclusion, rests with the Headteacher.

A child found to be dealing drugs will be permanently excluded from school. This means selling drugs for cash or other goods, or providing drugs to others.

It is not the role of the school to provide medical care to those under the influence of drink or drugs. If a child is at risk because of impaired mental/physical state, parents/carers should be contacted and required to take control of their child. Failing that, any emergency contact could be asked to assist. Failing that, social services and police can be called for advice. However, if the school is concerned about the pupil's health & safety, an ambulance may be called. Parents/Carers will be required to attend hospital immediately. The school cannot normally release staff to attend.

A child must not be released to walk, cycle, drive (in the case of sixth form pupils) or catch the bus home if there is concern about mental/physical impairment resulting from drink or drugs. If necessary, reasonable force may be used to restrain the child. Any employee is authorised to use reasonable force in these circumstances.

Refer to the school's Child Protection Officer.

## INFORMING PARENTS/CARERS

Parents/Carers should be informed of any drugs-related incident unless:

- There are child protection concerns.
- It would interfere with a school investigation.
- It would interfere with a police investigation.
- It could result in greater harm to the child for another reason.

Parents/Carers would normally be contacted directly by telephone in the event of proven or suspected drug usage.

## PROCEDURE FOR DEALING WITH INCIDENTS INVOLVING STAFF

- Staff attention is drawn to the Code of Professional Conduct & Practice for Registered Teachers (EWC).
- Substance-misuse-related incidents involving staff are subject to Cardiff County Council's employment and disciplinary policy and procedures, as adopted by the Governors of Cantonian High School.
- Substance misuse, including alcohol, on school premises or in school time will result in suspension and the disciplinary policy being applied following investigation. This may include dismissal.
- Substance misuse, including alcohol, outside school hours could adversely affect job performance and so trigger competency procedures. If the effects of misuse are such that pupil or staff safety is at risk, the member of staff can be suspended pending investigation and possible disciplinary action. This may include dismissal.
- Supply of illegal drugs or alcohol to school pupils or other staff members in school or on school visits is potentially gross professional misconduct and would normally be reported to the Education Workforce Council and the police. Suspension would be a normal consequence while an investigation takes place. The disciplinary policy would apply, and the result could be dismissal.

## MEDIA CONTACT

Staff must not report incidents and/or issues concerning drug misuse to parents/carers, to the local press and media generally. The Headteacher, in consultation with the Local Authority and Governors will deal with all media matters.

## CURRICULUM ISSUES

The approaches used for substance misuse education should provide opportunities for issues to be explored as well as information to be gained. Largely, education about substance misuse takes place in PSE and Science lessons.

Account should be taken of:

- The knowledge children and young people already have
- What they need
- What they are able to say and do
- What responsibilities they can take
- How they feel
- What anxieties they might have
- Evidence from research as described below

Evidence from research on the effectiveness of substance misuse education shows that no single method is effective alone and multi-faceted sustained approaches are more productive.

The methods used should:

- Identify clear learning outcomes
- Emphasise enquiry and investigation rather than formal presentations
- Offer structured opportunities for discussion in pairs and groups of various sizes
- Involve an appropriate balance of planned learning activities, including questionnaires, games, surveys, role-play, case study and discussion
- Allow for graphic as well as written and oral responses
- Stimulate interest and motivation without resorting to sensationalism

Research shows that young people value approaches that provide:

- Consistent accurate information presented simply and clearly
- Informative and accessible reading material
- Access to peers and credible adult experts, in addition to teachers/youth workers
- Stimulating and enjoyable tasks
- Appropriate challenges in an atmosphere where they feel secure enough to play a full and active part

Evidence suggests that substance misuse education is not effective when it relies solely upon:

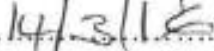
- Stand alone or one off talks and sessions which are not part of a whole organisation programme.
- Fear arousing approaches. Reliance on using this approach alone has been shown to lack credibility and may at worst glamorise substance misuse. Research has shown such approaches are not effective particularly in the long term.
- Information only. Evidence shows that information approaches alone will not change behaviour. Information does have a role as part of a broader life skills approach.
- Single messages e.g. just say no. Such approaches may limit open, honest debate and discussions, which are building blocks of effective substance misuse education.



The application of this policy will be monitored by the Headteacher during the academic year and it will be reviewed as and when necessary.

Agreed by Headteacher: ..... 

Agreed by Chair of Governors: ..... 

Date of Issue: ..... 

Date for Review: Autumn 2026