

## **Substance Use and Abuse Policy**

### **QEHS:**

- Condone neither the misuse of drugs and alcohol by members of the school, nor the illegal supply of these substances.
- Is committed to the health and safety of its members and will take action to safeguard their well being.
- Acknowledges the importance of its pastoral role in the welfare of young people, and through the general ethos of the school, will seek to persuade pupils in need of support to come forward.
- Acknowledges that the number of young people who use and misuse substances is rising but recognises that a large number of young people are choosing not to use or misuse substances. We will continue to support students' differing needs.

### **Aims**

We believe and support the following educational aims in respect of substance use and misuse:

- to enable pupils to make healthy, informed choices by increasing knowledge, challenging attitudes and developing and practising skills
- to provide accurate information about substances
- to increase understanding about the implications and possible consequences of use and misuse
- to encourage an understanding for those experiencing or likely to experience substance use
- to widen understanding about related health and social issues, e.g. Sex and sexuality, crime, HIV and AIDS
- to seek to minimise the risks that users and potential users face
- to enable young people to identify sources of appropriate personal support

### **Strategies**

Drugs education takes place through aspects of the students' experiences in the taught curriculum, the informal curriculum and through opportunities for extra curricular activities including the Community Education Department. It is covered in the taught curriculum mainly through health education, science and the tutorial programme but other opportunities to reinforce learning will occur in other parts of the teaching programme.

Di Harris, Deputy Head, is the substance co-ordinator. Her role includes the following:

- Working with the co-ordinator of Health Education, Norma Golightly, who teaches Drugs Education.
- Attending appropriate courses and training [LEA and external].
- Maintaining links with outside agencies
- Facilitating staff training.
- Monitoring substance misuse incidents.
- Involvement in individual cases.

The school actively co-operates with other agencies such as Social Services, Community Police, LEA and Health and Drug agencies e.g. SORTED to develop it's commitment to drugs education and to deal with incidents of substance use and misuse. Outside agencies are involved in the training of governors and staff.

### **Procedures and Sanctions**

QEHS will consider each substance incident individually and recognises that a variety of responses will be necessary to deal with incidents. All incidents involving illegal substances will be treated as serious but regard will be given to factors such as age and peer group pressure. We seek to balance the interests of the student involved, other students and the local community.

In instances involving substance misuses or supply on the premises parents will be informed at the earliest opportunity by the head teacher/substance co-ordinator or other delegated colleague. The school and the parents can then work together to support the young person involved. The police will also be informed of all incidents involving illegal substances on school premises.

Fixed term exclusions will be used to deal with incidents of possession or use of illegal drugs or alcohol on the school premises.

First offence	:	5 days
Second offence	:	15 days

A third offence will result in permanent exclusion.

Permanent exclusions will be invoked to deal with all instances where there is clear involvement in supplying drugs on school premises.

If a young person admits to using or supplying substances off the premises, the teacher's discretion will be involved but informing the substance co-ordinator/head teacher is

appropriate action. The head teacher/substance co-ordinator would normally contact parents and the police.

There is no legal obligation to inform the police though they may be able to give relevant support and advice.

### ***Removal/retrieval of substances***

In all cases the substance co-ordinator should be involved at the earliest opportunity

### ***Searching Students***

A member of staff may search a student's desk or locker where there is reasonable cause to believe it contains unlawful items including illegal drugs. Where students are suspected of concealing illegal drugs on their person [this would include their bag] every effort should be made to secure the voluntary production of any unlawful substances, e.g. By asking them to empty their bag/pockets. Intimate physical searches should never be made by a teacher. Staff do not have the right to search the student unless they have his/her consent. If consent is given the procedure below should be followed, if consent is denied then legally nothing can be done. The head/substance co-ordinator will call in parents and police to help deal with the situation.

Removal/Retrieval of substances may be from either:

- a) a place – if possible the substance should be removed from where it was discovered in the presence of a witness.
- b) a person – if possible the substance should be retrieved from a pupil in the presence of a witness.

The following guidelines should be observed [with witness or without]:

- Remove the substance and record details [time, place, circumstance, approx. size and appearance of substance].
- If substance co-ordinator cannot be present, take the substance immediately to a senior member of staff who will take it to the Head. Do not keep the substance on your person or in a place of safe keeping.
- The substance should be placed in a suitable sealed container. The package should be signed and dated. An official report should be completed.
- The head can house to arrange for the police to remove the substance from the premises or may choose to dispose of it in an appropriate way.
- In the case of the discovery of any equipment associated with substance misuse the head/substance co-ordinator should be informed and such equipment discarded in a safe manner.

### ***Student under the influence of substance/alcohol***

- Involve substance co-ordinator at earliest opportunity.
- Administer first aid if necessary.
- Keep any evidence of what has been consumed.
- It is difficult to talk to a student who is intoxicated or high – seek support from emergency contact as in staff handbook. The student should be placed in a quiet room and talked calmly.
- Parents should be contacted and invited into school to discuss the issue with substance co-ordinator or a senior member of staff and to take the student home.
- Information about drugs and other support agencies [e.g. SORTED for counselling] should be made available to the student and family.

### **NB:**

- All incidents will be dealt with in confidence, however, no member of staff can guarantee full confidence where risk taking behaviour presents a danger to either self or others. A multi-agency approach will be used where appropriate.
- All enquiries from the media will be dealt with by the headteacher.