



Substance Abuse & Misuse

(Revised November 1999)

"..... compared with eight years ago, the drug situation in this country appears to have deteriorated. Prevalence figures are difficult to establish, but it is worth noting, that in 1984, notifications of drug addictions to the Home Office Index were 7,410 but had risen to almost 21,000 in 1991. In 1984 AIDS and HIV were not an issue, but today, with the connection between injecting drug misuse and transmission of HIV infection, the prevention of drug misuse is even more urgent. Added to this is the possibility of risky sexual behaviour whilst being intoxicated by drugs and the risks of infection faced by those who resort to prostitution to finance their drug addiction. A further worrying feature is that drug misuse appears to be progressively affecting a younger population. New drugs have been added to the total range of illicit drugs available and new youth culture are emerging. Recently, M.D.M.A (Ecstasy) and related drugs, along with L.S.D and amphetamines, have become so popular with young people, especially in connection with the club/rave scene. The so-called "recreational" use of such drugs can lead to a dangerous acceptance of illegal and harmful drug use as part of every day life. Recent deaths among young people using ecstasy are cause for particular concern. Increasingly there is an acceptance amongst some participants in sports and certain leisure pursuits of the misuse of drugs such as anabolic steroids and substances which they believe will enhance their performanceFurthermore, volatile substance use (aerosols, glue, solvents etc. which can be misused by inhaling) causes an alarming number of fatalities. Statistics show a rising number of deaths in the U.K. reaching 149 in 1990, over an age range that starts as early as nine years".

Drug Education in Schools - The Need for New Impetus. Home Office 1993

Cottenham Village College condones neither the misuse of drugs and alcohol by members of the College, nor the illegal supply of these substances.

- The College is committed to the health and safety of its members and will take action to safeguard their well being.
- The College acknowledges the importance of its pastoral role in the welfare of young people, and through the general ethos of the College, will seek to persuade students in need of support to come forward.

In response to our shared concerns at all local and national level, we wish to state that as part of its care for the welfare of its students, the College believes it has a duty to inform and educate young people on the consequences of drug use and misuse. The College takes a pro-active stance on this matter, believing that health education is a vital part of the Personal and Social education of every student.

Fundamental to our College's values and practice is the principle of sharing the responsibility for education of young people with parents, by keeping them informed and involved at all times. Effective communication and co-operation is essential to the successful implementation of this policy.

Whilst we acknowledge that the number of young people who use and misuse substances is rising, it is seen as important that the larger number of young people are choosing not to use or misuse substances. We will continue to support their differing needs.

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





- **To enable students 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.

These aims are fulfilled through aspects of the students' experienced in the taught curriculum, the informal curriculum and through opportunities for extra-curricular activities. We deliver in the taught curriculum mainly through Personal and Social Education Days, Science and English areas, but other opportunities to reinforce learning will occur in other parts of the teaching programme. The College actively co-operated with other agencies such as Police, Social Services, L.E.A and Health and Drug Agencies to deliver its commitment to Drugs Education and to deal with incidents of substance use and misuse. Visitors who support the College will be informed of the values held within this policy.

The Role Of The Warden And Governing Body

The Warden takes overall responsibility for the policy and its implementation, for liaison with the Governing Body, parents, L.E.A and appropriate outside agencies. As Substance Co-ordinator, he will have general responsibility for handling the daily implementation of this policy. The Warden will ensure that all staff dealing with substance issues are adequately supported and trained.

In instances involving substance misuse or supply on the premises and following discussion between staff members who know the student well, parents will be informed at the earliest opportunity by the Warden. The College and the parents can then work together to support the young person involved.

If a young person admits to using or supplying substances off the premises, the teacher's discretion will be involved, but informing the Warden would be appropriate action. The Warden will then inform the parents.

There is no legal obligation to inform the Police, although they may be able to give relevant support and advice. However, a school cannot knowingly allow its premises to be used for the production or supply of any controlled drug, or the preparation or smoking of opium or cannabis. Where it is suspected that substances are continuing to be sold on the premises, details regarding those involved as well as much information as possible, will be passed to the Police Liaison Officer or the Community Affairs Department.

The Governing Body will be involved in substance education and substance related incidents in the same manner as any other matter concerning the direction of the College.

The College will consider each substance incident individually and recognises that a variety of responses will be necessary to deal with incidents. The College will consider very carefully, the implications of any action it may take. It seeks to balance the interests of the student involved, the other College members and the local community. Permanent exclusion is seen as a last resort as it may only transfer the problem.





Regarding the welfare of staff, the College will follow the County Council Policy on Drug and Alcohol Misuse as part of its Health and Safety Policy, which is designed to reduce to a minimum the possible effects of substance misuse on the user, other employees and the environment.

The Warden will take responsibility for liaison with the media. As the issue of substance misuse is an emotive one, and is likely to generate interest from the local and national media, the College will take appropriate advice and guidance from the L.E.A Press Office and Legal Department to ensure that any reporting of incidents remains in the best interests of the young people, their families and the College. The L.E.A will be informed as soon as possible, via the L.E.A Adviser for Drugs Education, or the School Support Officer.

APPENDIX 1 - GUIDANCE FOR STAFF

Where a young person discloses substance misuse on the premises, staff will inform the Warden and where appropriate, participate in the planning of subsequent action as described above. Where a young person discloses substance misuse off the premises, the staff member will use his or her discretion to decide on appropriate action, but will normally involve the Warden

Where staff discover substances which are suspected to be harmful, illegal or deserving of investigation, they should note the two circumstances in which substances may be removed from: either a **place** or a **person**.

(a) Place

If possible, remove the substance from where it was discovered in the presence of a witness. If this is not possible, do not leave the substance there while you enlist the support of a colleague or student as a witness. Continue with the procedure below.

(b) Person

When receiving or retrieving substances from a student do so, if possible, in the presence of a witness. In the absence of a witness do not put off receiving substances or, within bounds of your professional discretion, removing a suspicious substance from a student's possession.

The following guidelines should be observed at all times:-

- (1) Remove the substance and record the time, place and circumstance when the substance came in to your possession.
- (2) Do not investigate the nature of the substance, but do record its approximate size and appearance.
- (3) When possible, have the recordings countersigned by a witness.
- (4) Take the substance immediately to the Warden. Do not keep the substance on your person or in a place of safekeeping. To do so may place you at risk.
- (5) In the presence of the Warden, place the substance in a suitable sealed container. The Warden, yourself and when possible, the witness, should sign and date the package. An official report should be completed, recording the time, date and circumstances of the findings.
- (6) The Warden can choose to arrange for the Police to remove the substance from the premises or may choose to dispose of it in an appropriate way.





- (7) In the event of a discovery of any equipment associated with substance use, especially needles and syringes, students should not be allowed to handle such items. All equipment found must be handled by adults with utmost care. The Warden will ensure that materials are placed in a secure and rigid container to await collection by the appropriate service.

SUPPORT AGENCIES

CAMBRIDGE

The Bridge Project
154 Mill Road

Tel : 01223 214614

DRINKSENSE

Alcohol Advice Service
Eastfield Road
Peterborough

Tel : 01733 347105

HEALTH AND DRUG EDUCATION

Advisor : John Pratt
Brampton Infant School
Brampton
Huntingdon
Cams
PE18 8RF

Tel : 01480 375171
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