



Substance Abuse Policy

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1	SLT	05/02/19	New policy
Distribution			
Essential reading for:			
Information for:		All stakeholders of the school	

Queen Mary's High School is committed to tackling substance misuse among students and therefore supporting Safeguarding Policies.

Instances of possession, use or supply of drugs on school premises will be regarded with utmost seriousness and, depending upon individual circumstances, can lead to permanent exclusion from the school

The National Drugs Helpline is a free and confidential telephone helpline, offering information about drugs and drug abuse. Open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
Tel: 0800 77 66 00.

FRANK provides a free, confidential helpline that offers information about drugs and drug abuse and is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
Call 0800 776600 or www.talktofrank.com

Policy summary

- Drugs and alcohol and tobacco have no place at Queen Mary's High School.
- Lessons in science and PSHCE in particular will give all students the chance to learn about substance misuse.

Definition Of "Drugs"

The Government defines "Drug Misuse" as the non-medical use of drugs that are only intended for use in medical treatment, and the use of drugs that have no accepted medical purpose. Such drugs are controlled under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971. (The Act does not cover solvent misuse). We further believe that the word 'Drugs' includes all mood and performance changing substances, both legal and illegal, and including prescribed drugs, alcohol, tobacco and solvents.

Medicines

Many drugs are lawfully carried as medicines. If students supply prescription drugs to others in school, they are acting unlawfully and so this policy applies.

The Law on Drugs

It is an offence under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971:

- To supply or offer to supply a controlled drug to another in contravention of the Act;

- To be in possession of, or to possess with the intent to supply another, a controlled drug in contravention of the Act; it is a defence to the offence of possession that, knowing or suspecting it to be a controlled drug, the accused took possession of it for the purpose of preventing another from committing or continuing to commit an offence and that as soon as possible after taking possession of it he/she took all such steps as were reasonably open to him/her to destroy the drug or to deliver it into the custody of a person lawfully entitled to take custody of it;
- For the occupier or someone concerned in the management of any premises knowingly to permit or suffer on those premises: the smoking of cannabis, or the production, attempted production, supply, attempted supply, or offering to supply any controlled drug.

In-school procedures

The School will liaise closely with the local police force to ensure that there will be agreement for dealing with any incidents which might arise involving illegal drugs.

The staff dealing with an incident will, wherever possible, take possession of any substance suspected of being a controlled drug.

The school will hand the substance to the police who will be able to identify whether it is an illegal drug; school staff should not attempt to analyse or taste any unidentified substance.

Whenever possible any quantity of the suspected substance must be taken to a secure place e.g. the school safe. This should be done in the presence of the person from whom it has been taken and another adult. The suspected substance must be placed in a sealed envelope and the details/time/quantity should be recorded on the outside. The envelope should then be placed in the school safe.

It is open to a member of staff accompanied by another adult to search a pupil's locker where he/she has a reasonable cause to believe it contains unlawful items, including illegal drugs, or other substances prohibited by school rules.

Where pupils/students are suspected of concealing illegal drugs on their person, every effort should first be made to secure the voluntary production of any unlawful substance, e.g. by asking them to turn out their pockets and bags in the presence of another adult. If the pupil/student refuses, the police should be called in to deal with the situation.

Where a member of staff is told, or is aware, of possible criminal activity outside school premises they must inform the Head Teacher (or designated member of Senior Leadership Team) who will inform the police, in the interests of safeguarding the health and safety of young people in the area.

All incidents involving illegal drugs must be reported to the Head Teacher, Deputy Head, Assistant Head (Pastoral). Parents must be informed of the incident as soon as is possible.

The Head Teacher will retain the responsibility for deciding how to respond to particular incidents involving illegal drugs. The Head Teacher will consider each incident individually and recognise that a variety of responses may be necessary. The implications of any action taken will be considered very carefully.

Out of school procedures

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

- On school trips and visits, when the same rules and procedures should be applied as far as is reasonable and practicable.
- To the extent that the effect of some substances may persist into school time.
- By passing information onto relevant agencies when the safety or well-being of students is threatened.
- To assist police in preventing the use of land surrounding the school for drug trading.

The following will contribute to, but not constrain, the Head Teacher's decision making:

Whether:

- the substance is known/admitted?
- the substance is legal? If not, into which category does it fall?
- there is any intention to supply to others?
- the quantity is such that it could only be for personal use by the possessor.
- the possessor has been of previous good conduct?

Summary of responses available:

- Confiscation of the substance.
- Offering counselling
- Referral to Health Education Unit/Coordinator
- Institute disciplinary procedures
- Inform the police of any relevant information

Taking into consideration the above and the individual circumstance of each case the school will institute disciplinary proceedings within the context of the school's behaviour and sanctions policies.

Accordingly, infringement of the school standards by involvement in drug related incident(s) will be regarded as a serious breach of the school's behaviour and discipline policies, for which the school reserves the right if considered appropriate in all the circumstances to implement permanent exclusion even for "one off" events. Revised guidance of Circular 10/99 Social Inclusion: pupil support indicates that permanent exclusion is normally appropriate for cases of drug dealing/supplying (including selling, offering and distributing to other pupils) even on the first occasion and for repeated instances of possession.

In the interests of safeguarding the education and/or welfare of all the pupils of the school, there is zero tolerance of drug dealing/supplying (including selling, offering and distributing to other pupils). Accordingly, save in exceptional circumstances, any pupil will be permanently excluded from the school for drug dealing/supplying. A pupil may also be permanently excluded for possession or use of drugs on the school premises.

Signs of Drug Misuse or Substance Misuse

Early detection of drugs misuse is extremely important. If a young person's drug misuse is identified at an early stage, it is easier for action to be taken to prevent further misuse of drugs. Teachers and Associate staff, should be alert to the warning signs which may indicate that a pupil is misusing drugs. Teachers need to be particularly vigilant when they are in charge of activities which take groups away from the school premises.

Some of the main signs which may be associated with drug misuse:

- continually increasing the dose of drugs to get the same effect,
- a feeling of dependency on drugs or a fear of stopping using drugs,
- withdrawal symptoms if they stop taking the drug for a short time,
- sudden mood changes,
- a negative or changed outlook on life,
- a loss of motivation,
- poor performance in school,
- problems with personal relationships,
- borrowing or stealing money from friends and family, and
- being secretive about activities and actions

(www.nhs.uk)

The presence of these signs alone is not conclusive proof of drug or solvent misuse; many of them are part of normal adolescence. All incidents must be reported initially to the Assistant Head (via CPOMS)

Media Contact

It is important that staff do not report incidents and/or issues concerning drug misuse to the local press and media generally. The Head Teacher, in consultation with the Mercian Trust and Governors will deal personally with all media matters.

Drugs Curriculum

At Queen Mary's High School, we believe that the approaches used for drugs and substance misuse education should provide opportunities for issues to be explored as well as information to be gained.

Largely, education about drugs substance misuse takes place in PSHCE and Science (although other subject areas also cover related issues).

(Copies of both the PSHCE and Science Schemes of Work are available on request).