

**HIGHLAND COUNCIL EDUCATION, CULTURE and SPORT SERVICE - GUIDELINES  
FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF INCIDENTS OF DRUG MISUSE IN SCHOOLS**

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# **HIGHLAND COUNCIL EDUCATION, CULTURE and SPORT SERVICE - GUIDELINES FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF INCIDENTS OF DRUG MISUSE IN SCHOOLS**

## **1 Key Principles**

The key principles of these Guidelines are:

- protection of the welfare of children and young people, both those involved in drugs incidents and others who may be affected
- adoption of *Making it Work Together – Guidelines for the Management of Drug Misuse in Schools*. All responses to drug related incidents must be in accord with its principles. The full text can be found on the following web-site; [www.scotland.gov.uk/drugsinschools/drug-00.htm](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/drugsinschools/drug-00.htm) Other information regarding Highland Council policy can be found on the Council Intranet under the Policies Handbook section of the Education, Culture and Sport Service. This policy document can be found on the Virtual School website; [http://www.highlandschools-virtualib.org.uk/pr\\_policies](http://www.highlandschools-virtualib.org.uk/pr_policies)
- continuous staff development which is essential if all are to appreciate and deal with the complexities of drugs issues and incidents.

## **2. Definition of Drug Misuse and related incidents**

2.1 The term 'Drug Misuse' within these guidelines applies to possessing, using or selling a controlled substance such as heroin, cocaine and cannabis. It applies to individuals on or near school premises, engaged in out of school activities and to pupils travelling to or from school. It may not be clear from the outset of any incident that controlled substances are involved – these guidelines should be followed if there is any suspicion that controlled substances are involved.

Substance misuse includes the use of solvents, medication and alcohol and the principles contained in these guidelines should be applied to such incidents. The legality or otherwise regarding some substances means that some elements in the guidelines may not apply in all cases of substance misuse.

Tobacco is dealt with separately. Please refer to the Highland Council smoking policy.

2.2 Drug related incidents include

- drug-related litter on or near school premises
- suspicion and allegations about drug-related activities in and out of school
- disclosure about drug misuse taking place in school and during out of school activities
- pupils/adults who display symptoms of drug misuse
- pupils/adults possessing, using and/or supplying drugs on school premises/trip/transport

2.3 Incidents involving staff misuse of drugs must be dealt with in line with Highland Council Policy.

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## **3. Responsibilities**

3.1 Each school must appoint a designated person (normally the Head Teacher) who will be responsible for the management of all drug-related incidents in school. Adoption of this Policy in relation to the Guidelines for the Management of Incidents of Drug Misuse in Schools will ensure compliance with national and Highland Council Policies. All incidents of drug misuse must be reported to the Area Service Manager (Education) at the time of the incident. (See Appendix 1)

3.3 The roles and responsibilities of school staff are:

**A. If medical help is required -  
any member of staff should, as  
appropriate**

- Provide immediate assistance as necessary
- Send for an ambulance and arrange for appropriate adult to accompany pupil to hospital
- Send for Head Teacher /Designated Person
- Seek assistance from another member of staff or suitable adult
- Arrange for safe removal of drug-related litter (in accordance with set management procedures)
- Retain evidence (including vomit to assist medical diagnosis) if at all possible

**Head Teacher /Designated Person should**

- Establish the facts of the incident
- Inform parents of incident and, if necessary, invite parents to come to school
- Contact Police for advice and/or involvement as necessary
- Where the Police decide no action is required continue to arrange interviews with staff and other pupils involved with another responsible adult present. Records of these meetings must be kept.
- Where there is to a Police investigation no further interviews should be conducted by school staff. If possible pupils involved (and belongings) should be taken to a private room and supervised by preferably two members of staff
- Inform Area Education Manager as soon as possible using form in Appendix 1
- Arrange interview of pupils who require medical attention when recovered. Records must be kept
- Once school investigation has finished, give consideration to the guidance which has been given in terms of excluding pupils and involving other agencies such as social work

**B. If medical help is not required -  
any member of staff should, as  
appropriate**

- Send for Head Teacher/Designated Person
- Seek assistance from another member of staff or suitable adult
- Minimise risk of pupil damaging him/herself or others. Reasonable restraint may be necessary.
- Retain evidence (including vomit to assist medical diagnosis) if at all possible
- Pupil (and belongings) should be taken to a private room and supervised by preferably two members of staff
- Arrange for safe removal of drug-related litter (in accordance with set management procedures)

**Head Teacher /Designated Person should**

- Remind pupil of school policy regarding drug misuse and the procedures to be followed to investigate the incident, including the intention to contact parents and police
- Ask pupil to hand over any drug-related material. If reluctant to do so, explain that request will be repeated in presence of parents and possibly police
- Contact Police for advice and/or involvement as necessary
- Inform parents of incident and that police have been contacted, invite parents to come to school
- Where the Police decide no action is required continue to arrange interviews with staff and other pupils involved with another responsible adult present. Records of these meetings must be kept.
- Where there is to a Police investigation no further interviews should be conducted by school staff. If possible pupils involved (and belongings) should be taken to a private room

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- an supervised by preferably two members of staff
- Inform Area Education Manager as soon as possible using the form in Appendix 1
- Once investigation has finished, give consideration to the guidance which has been given in terms of excluding pupils and involving other agencies such as social work

3.4 Each area education office must have a designated officer to whom notification of drugs related incidents will be given. This will normally be the Area Service Manager (Education). The roles and responsibilities of the ASM(E) are set out below.

- The role of the Area Service Manager (Education) is to support and advise the Headteacher of any school where a drug misuse incident is being reported.
- The Area Service Manager (Education) should, in consultation with the Headteacher, prepare a statement for issue to the media should the media be alerted to the incident. The Area Service Manager (Education) will be responsible for all media communications.
- The Area Service Manager (Education) should advise the Headteacher of any legal requirements arising as a result of the reported incident.
- The Area Service Manager (Education) should advise the Director of Education, Culture and Sport of any reported incident and what steps are being taken by the school to manage it.
- The Area Service Manager (Education) should ensure that all schools comply with Highland Education Culture and Sport policy and follow current Guidelines for dealing with incidents of drug misuse in schools.

## **4. Managing the arrival of parents and police where police are involved**

4.1 Parents should be informed and involved in any drug-related incident involving their child. It will not always be appropriate for the police to be actively involved in incidents involving drug misuse, but where they are involved, the following key principles should apply.

4.2 If parents arrive before the police, the parents should be allowed access to the pupil with a teacher present at all times.

4.3 If the police arrive before the parents and the parents have yet to be contacted or are on their way, the police should be asked if they would be willing to wait. Circumstances may dictate that the police may wish to take immediate action. Every attempt should be made to have parents present but. Failing this, a teacher must be present.

4.4 The police may arrive at school prior to parents and wish to take the pupil away for questioning. In these circumstances staff are asked to seek an explanation from the attending officer(s) for their actions.

4.5 In exceptional circumstance police or social work rather than school staff will contact parents. This should be determined by all the agencies following inter-agency discussion and planning. These may be cases in which social work services are carrying out child protection inquiries related to an incident or the police and social work are carrying out a joint investigation under local child protection procedures.

## **5. Responding to Media**

5.1 If the press or other media approaches the school for comment on a particular incident they should be referred to the Area Education Manager, or other nominated person in the Education

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Service. As soon as possible a press statement should be prepared by the Head Teacher and AEM for release by the AEM in response to any approach.

5.2 If the press approaches the school or the AEM before an agreed statement is prepared, the response should be that a statement will be issued in due course.

5.3 School staff should not make any comments to the media.

5.4 Where other agencies are involved they should agree with the school and Education Service a strategy for handling any approaches from the media.

## **6 Action required following an incident involving drug misuse**

6.1 There is a need to ensure that schools have procedures in place to protect the welfare of any young person after a drug incident. It is important that pupils receive increased supervision and reassurance in the period following a drug incident or disclosure of illegal drug misuse as they may feel extremely vulnerable at this time.

6.2 In conjunction with the Education Service, schools will need to consider whether there is a need to share any information with parents of other children or the wider community depending on the nature and extent of the seriousness of the drug related incident. If staff think that this is necessary it should be done as soon as possible after an incident has occurred in order to prevent the circulation of misinformation. Other pupils, parents and staff need to know the relevant facts and be reassured that everything possible to ensure the safety and welfare of all pupils has been done. The name(s) of pupil(s) involved **must** be kept confidential.

Staff need:

- To be informed of a drug-related incident
- To know which was involved
- To agree a consistent response to pupils and parents and
- To consider whether any change is needed to the school's drug education programme.

Where necessary pupils need:

- To be told the facts about the incident, including the consequences
- To have the school's policy on drug misuse reinforced and
- To have a drug education programme which can be responsive to incidents when appropriate.

Parents of pupils at the school or, in exceptional circumstances in the surrounding community, need;

- To be informed of a drug-related incident
- To know which drug was involved
- To know that the school policy has been followed in line with national and Highland Council advice and
- To have access to more information about drugs.

6.3 In the case of a pupil with a history of drug misuse who has been excluded or has transferred from another school or has attended or is attending an external drug support programme, the school should make arrangements for close monitoring and appropriate support when the pupil returns to

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school. Monitoring and support should be based on a behavioural contract agreed by the pupil and his or her parents. In such cases, the school will require to monitor provision carefully to ensure that further drug misuse does not place the pupil or other pupils at risk.

In these cases the school will require to liaise closely with the social work service and/or other service providers and agencies involved.

6.4 At the conclusion of any drug-related incident in school as defined in section 2.2, it is essential to review the actions taken by all agencies involved. A meeting of those concerned in dealing with the incident may provide valuable insight into how each agency responded and will encourage and develop best practice for the future.

The results of such a review will assist in fine tuning local arrangements and responses to any future incidents and help to harmonise the actions of agencies involved to ensure that co-ordinated, effective and timeous support is provided to the school community.

## **7 Recording Incidents**

7.1 The school should make sure that systematic arrangements for recording an incident of drug misuse are in place.

7.2 Accurate, factual records of all drug-related incidents are required in school and Education Service files. Such records may be required by other agencies such as health professionals, police, social workers or the Reporter to the Children's Panel.

To support accuracy, staff recording action should complete reports using the form provided by the Education Service. (See Appendix 2)

7.3 Schools are required to provide the Education Service with an annual summary of drug-related incidents using the form provided by the Education Service. (See Appendix 2)

## **APPENDICES**

### **1 Exemplar Forms for Record Keeping**

### **2 Exemplar Form for Reporting Annual Summary of Drug-related incidents to Education Service**

### **3 Local contacts – Reference page**

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**Appendix 1**

RECORD OF DRUG-RELATED INCIDENT- School Name		
Date/Time of Incident		Reported by
Details of Pupil(s) involved (give name, DoB, home/emergency contact no.)		
Details of incident		
Drug type (if known) or description		
Has substance been removed from pupil(s) Yes/No If Yes where has it been kept		
Signed.....		
Category of incident and action taken		
1	Drug related litter on or near school premises	
2	Suspicion, allegation or disclosure in and out of school activities	
3	Symptoms of Drug misuse	
4	Pupils/parents with drugs on school premises/trip/transport	
5	Pupils/parents taking drugs on school premises/trip/transport	
6	Pupils/parents selling/supplying drugs on school premises/trip/transport	
Contacts made where appropriate		Contact No
Police		
Ambulance		
Other Health Professionals		
Social Work		
Child Protection Team		
Protective Services		
Other (give details)		

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Interview with Pupil(s) (give details of time, location and whether parents present)	
Interviewer	Designation
Details	
Were parents present – Yes/No	
Others present (list all those present and indicate whether present for whole or part of interview)	
Details of immediate outcome of incident	
Details of any follow-up procedures required (give details of who will carry out and/or monitor follow-up)	
Signed  Designation  Date	Signed  Designation  Date
<b>This Record must be retained in the Pupil Record for at least five years in compliance with national policy on school records and data protection.</b>	

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**Appendix 2**

**INCIDENTS OF DRUG MISUSE RECORD**

**Please return this form (nil returns required) to:**

**Dave McCartney  
Education Centre  
Castle Street  
Dingwall  
IV15 9HU**

**By**

**SCHOOL**

<b>Number of incidents of drug misuse involving</b>	<b>Total</b>
Alcohol	
Solvent	
Cannabis	
Other controlled drug	
<b>Total incidents</b>	

<b>Number of incidents of drug misuse involving</b>	<b>Total</b>
Drug-related litter on or near school premises	
Suspicion, allegation or disclosure in and out of school activities	
Symptoms of drug misuse	
Pupils/parents with drugs on school premises/trip/transport	
Pupils/parents taking drugs on school premises/trip/transport	
Pupils/parents selling/supplying drugs on school premises/trip/transport	
<b>Total incidents</b>	

Signed (HeadTeacher).....

Date.....

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## **Local Contacts (to be developed by each school)**

Each school will want to develop its own network of local contacts. The following list is meant as guidance for this purpose.

Agency	Function	Key Contact
Social Work Dept	Enquiry & Information	Name Address  Tel No
Social Work Dept	Substance misuse team	Name Address  Tel No
Police		Name Address  Tel No
Youth Action Service		Name Address  Tel No
St Andrew's Ambulance/Red Cross	Support/first aid training	Name Address  Tel No
Family support groups		Name Address  Tel No
Health Promotion Dept	Information and training on drug issues. Policy and curriculum development	Name Address  Tel No
Drug Action Team/Local Drug & Alcohol Forum	Local support and advice	Name Address  Tel No
Local Substance Misuse groups	Support, Advice, Counselling	Name Address  Tel No
Other		Name Address  Tel No
		Name Address  Tel No