

**TITLE: Drugs Incident Policy**

**MODEL POLICY STATEMENT**

This **is not** a Local Authority model policy

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| <b>Policy Owner:</b> | <b>Vice Principal (Inclusion)</b> | <b>Review period:</b>       | <b>Biannual</b>                  |
| <b>Last Review:</b>  | <b>November 2016</b>              | <b>Approving Committee:</b> | <b>Curriculum<br/>16.11.2016</b> |
| <b>Next Review:</b>  | <b>Autumn term 2018</b>           | <b>Latest FGB adoption:</b> | <b>08.12.2016</b>                |
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**IMPACT OF THIS POLICY**

The impact on College targets of using this policy is as follows:

To ensure that there is a robust Policy that is clearly understood, in order to deal with any occurrences of drug misuse in College.

## 1. RATIONALE

It is necessary to have a drugs incident policy in order to safeguard all young people and staff within the College. Some students may use / abuse drugs including alcohol and tobacco; they may be experimenting or they may be regular users.

Education promoting the harmful and dangerous effects of drugs is delivered within the Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) programme and through the Science National Curriculum course & Citizenship programme.

This policy outlines the procedures that should be followed if there is a misuse of drugs on College premises or during a College trip or visit

## 2. RATIONALE

### Definition

The term 'drug' as used in this policy includes illegal substances covered by the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971. The World Health Organisation classes a drug as "a substance which, on entering the body, changes the way that the body functions".

Drugs are those that are legal, such as alcohol, tobacco and solvents, over the counter and prescribed drugs and illegal drugs such as cannabis, ecstasy, heroin, crack/cocaine and LSD. Any drug can be potentially dangerous. Any drug, whether legal or illegal, can be misused. Clear distinctions between drug use and drug misuse are hard to draw. Misuse refers to harmful use, dependence or drug taking that is part of a wider spectrum of problematic or harmful behaviour.

It is important to recognise that the use of substances has different implications at different ages. It is important to acknowledge that harm can occur through any drug use whether through intoxication, illegality or health problems even though this may not be immediately apparent.

The College believes that the possession and use of drugs in school or during the College day is inappropriate and unacceptable. All of the drugs covered in this policy are not permitted to be bought, sold, used or otherwise obtained on College premises or during the College day, including when students are on College visits. These rules apply to adults working at and for the College. Individual exceptions may be made for students who need to take prescribed medicines where appropriate but this must be noted with the Health and Multi-Agency Co-ordinator.

### College Drug Co-ordinator

A member of staff will be designated as the College Drug Co-ordinator and will be responsible for collating and reporting on all incidents relating to the misuse of drugs and for advising other staff on the implementation of this policy. They are also responsible for keeping an up to date list of the harmful drugs within our society and to inform all staff for general drug awareness. The person responsible for this at the College is the Vice Principal.

## 3. IMPLEMENTATION

- If a staff member becomes aware that a young person is using or supplying substances off the premises, the appointed drug co-ordinator is to be informed and then the parents / carers will be informed. In relevant cases the police may also be informed.
- The College will consider each substance incident individually and recognises that a variety of responses will be necessary to deal with incidents. Members of the College's Senior Leadership Team will consider very

carefully the implications of any action it may take.

- Intervention in drug related incidents is tiered. The college is essentially involved at tier one, with links at tiers two – four in line with a multi-agency approach to individual need i.e. PCSOs, the Alcohol & Drug Advisory Service / The Police
- The aim of all intervention is to promote students' understanding and minimise harm, constructive strategies through the pastoral curriculum are needed to help pupils re-invest in their education.
- All incidents will be dealt with in a sympathetic manner to enable pupils to continue with their education, or to be able to return to school.
- The College will balance sanctions, support and education to ensure the wellbeing of the College community.
- Permanent exclusion may be warranted in some cases as a sanction for using or supplying substances on College property or during the College day. Permanent exclusion will only be used for a student who represents a significant risk to the health and safety of themselves or other students and members of staff, or has come to the end of a long line of sanctions and has not learned from past mistakes.
- Any drug-related situation must be recorded on the appropriate form. This will be kept by the nominated drugs co-ordinator
- All staff must be aware of the emergency medical procedures within the College
- In the event of media interest in an incident at the College no statement should be made by any staff member or Governor. All statements to the media would be through, or by arrangement with, the Principal.

Tavistock College is aware that, whilst substance misuse in itself may not be problematic, it may be a symptom of a more significant underlying problem. We are always proactive and extra vigilant to look out for any signs of possible substance misuse.

Where the incident involves disclosure by a pupil, care should be taken to safeguard significant relationships, for example with their parents or school staff, as far as possible. As their capacity for understanding increases, students will be made aware of issues relating to confidentiality and the differing roles of professionals within the school via the curriculum. In all cases the drugs co-ordinator **MUST** be informed immediately.

Staff must follow the College Data Protection / Confidentiality Policies. In the event of concerns regarding the safety and wellbeing of a pupil, the advice of one of the College's Child Protection Officers should be sought immediately.

Parents/carers need to be made aware that if drugs are found on a student, the police may then decide to search the home.

Where legal drugs are found on College premises, any substance which can be misused should be held in a safe place. The incident should be fully documented and arrangements should then be made to return the substance to the parents or carers if applicable.

### **Searches**

If a student is suspected of concealing a substance which is not permitted on college premises then college staff are permitted to search a student (without permission if necessary) as per the DfE guidance on searches (2014). Searches are not permitted without the prior permission of the Principal or designated person in all cases.

### **Confiscation and disposal of illegal drugs**

The law allows Tavistock College staff to take temporary possession of a substance suspected of being an illegal drug for the purposes of preventing an offence being committed or continued in relation to that drug, providing that all reasonable steps are taken to destroy the drug or to deliver it to a person lawfully entitled to take custody of it.

In taking possession and disposing of suspected illegal drugs the following steps need to be taken:

- Ensure that a second adult witness is present throughout.
- Staff must avoid any risk to their own welfare by following the Health & Safety policy.
- Staff must not attempt to analyse or taste substances to confirm they are drugs, but must follow these procedures if they suspect that the substance is an illegal drug:
  - Seal the sample in a plastic bag and include details of the date and time of the seizure / find and any witness present.
  - Store it in a secure location with access limited to two senior staff.
  - Notify the Police immediately, who will collect and then store or dispose of it in line with Devon and Cornwall Police protocols.
  
- The name of the student from whom the drug was removed will normally be passed to the Police.
- Record full details of the incident, including the police log number
- Inform parents / carers, unless there is concern that this would jeopardise the safety of the child, in which case the College Senior Safeguarding Officer must be informed – Vice Principal

### **Volatile substances**

Given the level of danger posed by volatile substances, schools may arrange for their safe disposal. Small amounts may be placed in a bin to which students do not have access, for example in a bin within a locked cupboard.