



SUBSTANCE MISUSE (STUDENTS) POLICY

Mount St Mary's Catholic High School Substance Misuse Policy

Adopted by Mount St Marys' Governing Body on 20 September 2022

Signed

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Joe R. P.', is written over a faint horizontal line.

Chair of Governors

Review date: 20 September 2025

This policy has been written in accordance with the guidance provided in: "DfE and ACPO drug advice for schools: Advice for local authorities, headteachers, school staff and governing bodies" (DFE-00001-2012), and with The Misuse of Drugs Act 1971.

This policy should perhaps be read in conjunction with the Behaviour, Child Protection, health and Safety and Medical Conditions policies.

Definition of drug

Within the confines of this policy, we are accepting the definition of a drug as being:

Any substance which has an effect upon one's normal physical, psychological or emotional behaviour, this could refer to

- All illegal drugs
- All legal drugs including tobacco (nicotine), alcohol and volatile substances
- All medicines not properly prescribed for the user, but could also include correctly prescribed medicines incorrectly taken by the user (for use of prescribed medicines please refer to the Medical Conditions Policy)

Statement of Principles

Mount St Mary's Catholic High School (MSM) committed to going to all reasonable lengths to ensure the wellbeing and safety of its community, as part of this undertaking the principles underpinning this approach and policy are as follows:

- Commitment to the Health and Safety of the whole MSM community and will take action to safe guard its wellbeing which leads to zero tolerance of substance abuse or illegal supply of these substances on or off school premises by any member of the MSM community
- Acknowledgement of the importance of its pastoral role in the welfare of its pupils through the general ethos of the school, seeking to educate and equip young people with skills to make healthy, informed choices. Support will be given to any pupils who experience drug related problems or concerns.
- Acknowledgement of the duty to inform young people about the consequence of drug use and misuse through the curriculum.
- Complete co-operate with outside agencies that may, for whatever reason, may become or be invited to become involved with MSM to maintain effective, up-to-date information and to deal with incidents of substance use and misuse in the most effective way possible.
- Fundamental to our school values and practice is to share responsibility for education with parents/guardians, by keeping them informed and involved at all times.

The Purpose of the policy

Substance misuse Education programme

- Provide accurate information about some of the substances this policy refers to, and the implications and possible consequences of choosing to use and effectively misuse substances.
- Provide guidance for MSM staff in dealing with the issues of substance misuse and its consequences.

- Using drug education and substance misuse as a vehicle to enable pupils to make healthy, informed choices by increasing knowledge and challenging existing attitudes to help minimise the risks of potential users progressing to users, leading to enhancement of their decision-making skills more generally.
 - o Aspects of drug and substance misuse and education are accessed through the Science and PHSCE curriculum
- Enable young people to identify and make use of appropriate personal support and to recognise personal responsibility for decisions about substance use.
- Enhance later parenting skills in relation to prevention of drug misuse when current pupils reach adulthood, particularly those at risk of becoming users.

Extent of this policy

This policy relates to all members of the MSM community and visitors to it. This can be on the actual MSM site or any other location where members of the MSM community may be temporarily relocated e.g. residential visits. It relates to any time that members of the MSM community are on the MSM site, temporarily relocated for MSM related activities or engaged in the process of travelling to or from the MSM site or a temporary MSM site. Certain circumstances may require that these boundaries be extended.

The Management of Drug and Substance Misuse Related Incidents

The pastoral teams and system has a large role to play in all of the management procedures outlined below. In developing a response MSM will always seek to balance the interest of the pupil involved and other members of the MSM community, and will endeavour to secure care and support for the child and his/her family. The Headteacher will always take the final decision on any response to an incident

1. Drugs or drug-taking equipment are discovered on the school premises:
 - Confiscate and store (witness)
 - Inform Headteacher/DHT/YL/Safeguarding Team
 - Record information on behaviour database (CPOMS)
 - Identify substance if possible
 - Dispose of the substance (witness)
 - Inform LEA and police if appropriate
 - Seek to identify who is responsible.

2. A pupil is found in possession of drugs/solvents
 - Confiscate substance and store securely (witness)
 - Inform Headteacher/DHT/YL/Safeguarding Team
 - Identify substance
 - Record information
 - Dispose of substance (witness)
 - Consider family issues
 - Consider the management of informing parents
 - Consider involvement of outside agencies
 - Inform LEA and police if appropriate
 - Consider and implement appropriate responses e.g. exclusion, counselling.

3. A member of staff suspects or has evidence that a pupil is under the influence of drugs

- Follow procedures set out previously, as appropriate
- School medical procedures should be followed if necessary.

4. A pupil discloses parents/carers/relatives/friends are misusing/selling drugs/solvents

It is impossible to offer complete confidentiality as an investigation may follow. This must be made clear to the pupil and that parents and/or police may be informed. In a group setting the ground rules must be established first. If a disclosure is made or implied this must be followed up by HOY.

- Inform Headteacher/DHT/YL
- Record details disclosed
- Deciding when/if and how parent/carers are to be informed
- Consider involvement of outside agencies.

5. A pupil discloses that they are using drugs/solvents

- Inform Headteacher/DHT/YL
- Assess risk
- Record details of disclosure
- Provide counselling and support – internally or externally
- Consider informing parent

6. School becomes aware of availability/sale of drugs/solvents in the vicinity

- Consider informing the police
- Consider pupil safety entering and leaving school premises
- Decide if/when and how parents/staff/pupils are to be informed.

7. A parent/guardian comes to you for advice about their child who may be/is using drugs/solvents

- Establish cause for concern
- Offer support
- Discuss with HOY and consider support/action.

8. If a pupil is found smoking or possessing smoking equipment

- Smoking equipment confiscated
- Details of incident and smoking equipment passed on to YL
- Parents informed
- HOY to decide on appropriate sanction.

Confidentiality

It is impossible to offer complete confidentiality as an investigation may follow. This must be made clear to the pupil and that parents and/or police may be informed. In a group setting the ground rules must be established first. If a disclosure is made or implied this must be followed up by the Year Leader.

There is no legal obligation to inform the police over any incident occurring on school premises although MSM may wish to seek advice on any of the above matters.

It is assumed that staff looking after pupils under sixteen are acting 'in loco parentis' and have a duty to act as a responsible parent at all times. Whilst schools are not legally obliged to inform parents it is important to involve them as soon as it is clear their son or daughter may be involved in an incident.

When informing parents/guardians the Headteacher or delegated member of staff should consider their response. Many will over-react initially and may need reassurance and support.

There may be grounds for not informing the parents immediately if MSM suspects that physical injury to the pupil may result or if the parent is significantly involved in drug misuse themselves.

Information should not be ignored but the concern kept confidential. Details should be recorded in a non-judgemental way as a concern which may be of help on some future occasion.