

## Drugs Policy

### Rationale

The problems resulting from the misuse of drugs, tobacco-related products including electronic cigarettes and alcohol affect every part of our society, including schools. Alcohol use and smoking among young people in Northern Ireland has declined. Fewer young people are receiving treatment for drug use. According to the *Young Peoples' Behaviour and Attitudes Survey* (YPBAS), few young people have been involved in incidents of being under the influence of, in possession of and/or supplying substances to others. Despite these positive indicators, teachers inevitably have to deal with situations in their classrooms and schools.

An important part of the overall ethos of North Coast Integrated College is its aim to promote the general welfare, health and development of its students and to protect them from harm. The misuse of drugs represents a significant danger to the welfare, health and development of students.

Therefore, it is the College's policy to firmly discourage the misuse of drugs by its students. This will be implemented in the main through the College's Drugs Education Programme through the preventative curriculum.

However, it remains possible that incidents of drug misuse may occur from time to time among students on the premises of North Coast Integrated College. These incidents will involve breaches of the law to which the College has a legal obligation to respond.

The designated teacher for child protection is the designated teacher for drugs in charge of all drug related incidents.

NCIC's Drug Policy can relate to and compliment the following school policies:

- Pastoral Care Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Discipline Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Managing Critical Incidents Policy

### **Ethos**

North Coast Integrated College is a Grant Maintained Integrated (GMI) co-educational school. North Coast Integrated College is co-educational and all-ability in nature; it is Christian in character but welcomes students from all backgrounds. We welcome all pupils regardless of tradition or ability. Respectfully, they will learn together and strive to excel in everything that they undertake. In partnership with parents, our goal is to see the individual succeed, to be fully valued and to fully value others. We seek for our students to flourish in their educational journey.

Being Christian in character, it is our aim to provide education that gives equal recognition and expression to the two main traditions in Northern Ireland whilst welcoming the contributions of other faiths, religions and nationalities to our evolving society. NCIC offers the opportunity for young people from differing religious and cultural backgrounds to be educated together in an atmosphere of respect, trust, tolerance and understanding.

### **Definition of the term 'drug'**

In the revised guidance the terms '**drug**' and '**substance**' is defined as any product which, when taken, has the effect of altering the way the body works or the way a person behaves, feels, sees or thinks. E-cigarettes are treated in the same way as ordinary cigarettes and their use is prohibited on school premises.

As well as everyday products such as tea and coffee, substances include:

- alcohol, tobacco and tobacco-related products, including nicotine replacement therapy (NRT), and electronic cigarettes;
- over-the-counter medicines such as paracetamol and cough medicine;
- prescribed drugs, such as antibiotics, painkillers, antidepressants, antipsychotics, inhalers and stimulants such as Ritalin;
- volatile substances such as correcting fluids or thinners, gas lighter fuel, aerosols, glues and petrol;
- controlled drugs such as cannabis, LSD, ecstasy, amphetamine sulphate (speed), magic mushrooms, heroin and cocaine;
- new psychoactive substances (NPS), formerly known as legal highs\*, which contain one or more chemical substances that produce similar effects to illegal drugs and are sold as incense, salts or plant food and marked 'not for human consumption' to avoid prosecution; and
- other substances such as amyl or butyl nitrite (known as poppers) and unprocessed magic mushrooms.

**Controlled substances** are legally classified according to their benefit when used in medical treatment or harm if misused. The Misuse of Drugs Act sets out a range of substances that are controlled under the act. It is an offense to possess, possess with intent to supply, supply, or allow premises you occupy or manage to be used unlawfully for the purpose of producing or supplying controlled drugs. The Act has four separate categories:

Class A, Class B, Class C and temporary class drugs. Substances may be reclassified.

The Misuse of Drugs regulations, created under the Misuse of Drugs Act, license production, possession and supply of substances classified under the act. These include five schedules that classify all controlled medicines and drugs.

- Schedule 1 has the highest level of control, but drugs in this group are very rarely used in medicines.
- Schedule 5 has a much lower level of control.

**Drug Use:** refers to taking a drug; there is no value judgement, although all drug use has an element of risk.

**Drug Misuse:** refers to legal, illegal or illicit drug taking or alcohol consumption, which leads a person to experience social, psychological, physical or legal problems related to intoxication or regular excessive consumption and/or dependence. Drug misuse is therefore taking drugs, including prescribed drugs and NPS, that cause harm to the individual, their significant others or the wider community.

Electronic cigarettes on school premises Electronic cigarettes are battery-powered vapour inhaler devices that generally contain nicotine, along with propylene glycol and glycerine. They were developed as an alternative to tobacco products and have become increasingly popular.

Although we perceive electronic cigarettes to be less harmful than tobacco, there are concerns about their safe use, particularly when children and young people use them, because the electronic cigarette market is unregulated. The Chief Medical Officer (CMO) for Northern Ireland has advised that schools prohibit electronic cigarettes on their premises, in line with tobacco products, because:

- nicotine is very addictive and there is a risk that using electronic cigarettes could act as a gateway into smoking for many young people;
- evidence suggests that adolescent exposure to nicotine may also have long term consequences for brain development;
- the availability and promotion of electronic cigarettes is reversing progress made by smoke-free legislation to de-normalise smoking; and
- there is insufficient evidence to determine whether the vapour produced by electronic cigarettes causes damage to users' health in the long term. The same applies to the impact of second-hand vapour the user exhales.

There is also a potential risk that users might fill the refillable cartridges used in some electronic cigarettes with substances other than nicotine. This has the potential to serve as a new and potentially dangerous way to deliver other drugs.

## **Our Aims**

- The policy should aim to protect young people from the harm associated with the use and misuse of substances.
- develop a consistent approach to drug-related issues in line with the school's pastoral care provision that all members of the school community can adopt;
- develop, implement and review a drugs education programme as part of the provision of PDMU and PD within the curriculum;
- develop procedures and protocols that address drug-related issues across all areas of school life;
- establish procedures for managing specific incidents of suspected drug misuse; and
- monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the policy in line with whole-school self-evaluation procedures.

## **Procedures for managing suspected drug use incidents**

### **Responding to Drug Related Incidents**

For the purposes of this policy, a drug-related incident may include:

- a pupil displaying unusual or uncharacteristic behaviour;
- an allegation;
- suspicion of possession, possession with intent to supply and/or supply of any substance;
- finding substance-related paraphernalia.

### **Roles and responsibilities in NCIC**

The role of the individual staff member (teaching and non-teaching) including all ancillary staff. All staff should be familiar with the content of the school's drug policy. They should also be fully aware of their responsibilities, should a suspected drug-related incident occur. It is not the staff's responsibility to determine the circumstances surrounding the incident, but they should:

- assess the situation and decide on the appropriate actions to take;
- notify the principal and the designated teacher for drugs at the earliest opportunity;
- deal with any emergency procedures to ensure the safety of pupils and staff, if necessary
- forward any information, substance or paraphernalia received to the designated teacher for drugs, who will respond accordingly;
- use the school's Drugs Incident Report Form to complete a brief factual report on the suspected incident and forward this to the designated teacher for drugs;
- consider the needs and safety of a pupil when discharging him or her into the care of a parent or carer who appears to be under the influence of alcohol or another substance (staff, who are in loco parentis, should maintain a calm atmosphere when dealing with the parent and, if concerned, should discuss with the parent alternative arrangements for caring for the pupil); and
- invoke safeguarding procedures, if a parent or carer's behaviour may place a pupil at risk.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **The role of the designated teacher for drugs**

The designated teacher for Child Protection is also the designated teacher with responsibility for drugs and has procedures in place for handling cases of suspected drug misuse on the premises. Every member of the school's staff, both teaching and non-teaching, should be completely familiar with our school's procedures and know who to contact and what to do when a young person is suspected either of being in possession of drugs or being under the influence of drugs, including alcohol.

The designated teacher is responsible for:

- co-ordinating the school's procedures for handling suspected drug-related incidents and training and inducting new and existing staff in these procedures;
- ensuring that the school's disciplinary policy has an appropriate statement about any disciplinary response resulting from suspected drug-related incidents;

- ensuring that the school's pastoral care policy has an appropriate statement about any pastoral response resulting from suspected drug-related incidents;
- liaising with other staff responsible for pastoral care;
- being the contact point for outside agencies that may have to work with the school or with a pupil or pupils concerned;
- responding to advice from first aiders, in the event of an incident, and informing the principal,
- contact the pupil's parents or carers immediately;
- taking possession of any substance(s) and associated paraphernalia found in a suspected incident;
- completing a factual report using the schools Drug-Related Incident Form, which they forward to the principal; and
- reviewing and if required updating the policy at least annually and after a drug-related incident, where learning from the experience could improve practice.

### **The role of the principal**

It is the principal's responsibility to determine the circumstances of all incidents, but it is the responsibility of the PSNI to investigate any criminal or suspected criminal offence. In any suspected drug-related incident, the principal should contact the parents or carers of those pupils involved. The principal must ensure that in any incident involving a controlled substance there is close liaison with the PSNI. **Failure to inform the PSNI of a suspected incident involving controlled drugs is a criminal offence.**

After contacting the PSNI, principals should confine their responsibilities to:

- the welfare of the pupil(s) involved in the incident and the other pupils in the school;
- health and safety during the handling, storage and safe disposal of any drug or drug related paraphernalia, using protective gloves at all times;
- informing the Board of Governors;
- agreeing any appropriate pastoral or disciplinary response;

- reporting the incident to the Education Authority if appropriate, for example if an incident:
  - is serious enough to require PSNI involvement;
  - requires that a child protection procedure is invoked; or
  - leads to the suspension or exclusion of a pupil; and
- completing a written report and forwarding a copy to the Board of Governors and the designated officer in the Education Authority.

### **The role of the Board of Governors**

School governors are responsible for their individual school. They should collaborate with appropriate staff, pupils and parents or carers to foster and support developing and reviewing its drugs policy. They should also:

- facilitate the consultative process where the school community can respond and contribute to the policy's effectiveness and quality, which the governors should examine and approve before implementing in the school;
  - ensure details of the policy are published in the school prospectus and that these are reviewed at least annually and after a drug-related incident; and
- be fully aware of and adequately trained to deal with suspected drug-related incidents, including alcohol and tobacco, tobacco-related products, electronic cigarettes, and their appropriate disciplinary response.

### **Legal responsibilities and involving the PSNI**

The schools' legal responsibilities

Schools must ensure that all staff are aware of their legal responsibilities. Schools must notify the PSNI in all instances where there is an allegation or suspicion that a crime has been committed. **Failure to notify the PSNI is a criminal offence.**

Staff must be aware of the legal implications of:

- receiving information about a controlled drug;
- discovering a young person in possession of a controlled drug; or
- discovering a young person is involved in supplying a controlled drug.



### **Contacting the PSNI**

NCIC has established and maintains contact with the designated officer in their local PSNI area to ensure an appropriate response when dealing with suspected drug-related incidents that might arise in school.

The PSNI will always try to handle all incidents promptly and with discretion, understanding and tact. We will notify the PSNI officer in every case where a pupil has or is suspected of having controlled drugs in their possession, either on their person or in their belongings, or if controlled drugs are found on the school premises. This may include new psychoactive substances or prescription medication. We are not legally obliged to notify the PSNI if they suspect the misuse of solvents or alcohol; each case will be considered individually.

### **Confidentiality**

Teachers cannot and should not promise total confidentiality. They should make the boundaries of confidentiality clear to pupils. Members of staff should carefully consider their response, if a pupil approaches them for individual advice on drug use or misuse. In the case of controlled substances, the staff member should explain to the pupil that they cannot offer a guarantee of confidentiality. If the pupil discloses information concerning controlled substances, the staff member must pass this on to the designated teacher for drugs.

### **North Coast Integrated College will follow the Drugs Guidance for Schools in Northern Ireland (Revised 2015) and Drugs Guidance Circular 2015/23**

#### **Principles**

1. The Principal and Designated Teacher must be informed of all drug-related incidents.
2. Parents must be notified where the facts show that a student has been involved in a drug-related incident.
3. The Police must be notified of any drug-related activities or discoveries in or around the College premises.

4. Suitable action must be taken within the College to ensure the safety of everyone concerned.

### **Taking possession of a suspected controlled substance**

If an unknown substance which is suspected to be a drug is discovered on College premises, the following procedures should be applied.

1. The substance should be handled carefully. The member of staff who discovers the substance should not taste it, smell it or handle it with cut or scratched hands.
2. The substance should be taken to the Designated Teacher for drugs who will lock it away until the Police can take it for analysis.
3. The Principal must be informed immediately.
4. The Principal should pass the substance to the police. The Police will be asked to provide feedback on the results of the analysis.
6. The member of staff who discovered the substance should make a written record of the action which has been taken.
7. The Principal should inform the Board of Governors.

### **Search Procedures**

If it is suspected that an illegal substance is on the College premises or in the possession of a student, a search should be made of school property. A search may be made of personal property (bags, pockets etc) of the student involved by the Designated Teacher/ Principal in the presence of another adult, with the pupil's consent. If they refuse to allow this search, the PSNI and parents will be notified.

### **Suspicion that a student has taken drugs on College premises**

If a student is suspected of having taken drugs on College premises, the following procedures should be applied.

- 1 **If the student is conscious:**
  - (a) the Designated Teacher and the Principal should be informed immediately;
  - (b) the member of staff who discovered the student should attempt to find out what substance the student has taken and how much of it he or she has taken;
  - (c) Parent/ guardians are contacted and informed of our concern and asked to come in to school.
  - (d) If it is decided that the student require hospital treatment, the College person should arrange for the student to be sent to hospital and the Principal should inform the student's parent(s)/guardian(s).
  
- 2 **If the student is not conscious:**
  - (a) the member of staff who discovers the student should place the student in the recovery position and stay with him or her;
  - (b) the member of staff who discovers the student should send someone to phone for an ambulance;
  - (c) the member of staff who discovered the student should attempt to find out what substance the student has taken and how much of it he or she has taken.
  - (d) the Principal and Designated Teacher must be informed immediately.
  - (e) the Designated Teacher should inform the student's parent(s)/guardian(s).
  
- 4 The Designated Teacher should conduct the search procedures in accordance with the College policy.
- 5 The Principal should contact the local PSNI using 101.
- 6 The Principal should inform the appropriate officer of the EA.

- 7 The member of staff who discovered the student, and the Principal should each write a detailed report of the incident, including full details of any action which they have taken.
- 8 The Principal should inform the Board of Governors.
- 9 The Principal should decide upon the disciplinary measures to be taken. Where it is proven that drugs have been brought into school, passed to another, sold or taken by students the recommendation to the BOG will be expulsion from NCIC. Each case will be considered independently.
- 10 To ensure that the health and safety of our own students is not compromised North Coast Integrated College will not accept a student that has been excluded from another school for a drug-related incident unless directed by the EA.

**Suspicion that a student possesses or is distributing an illegal substance.**

If a student is suspected of being in possession of, or of having been in possession of, distributing or having distributed an illegal substance, the following procedure should be applied:

1. The member of staff who suspects that the student is or has been in possession of an illegal substance should assess whether the student will be cooperative.
2. If it is considered that the student will cooperate:
  - (a) the student, along with his or her school bag and other possessions, should be taken to the designated teacher;
  - (b) the Principal and Designated Teacher must be informed immediately;
  - (c) the Designated Teacher should inform the student's parent(s)/ guardian(s);
  - (d) the Designated Teacher should conduct the search procedures according to the College policy; and

- (e) the teacher in charge of drug-related incidents or the Principal should contact the local PSNI Juvenile Liaison Officer if the search produces something which is suspected of being an illegal substance or if grounds for suspicion remain.
3. If it is considered that the student will not cooperate:
    - a. the student should be detained;
    - b. the Police should be called to the College;
    - c. the Principal must be informed immediately; and
    - d. the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) should be informed of the incident by the Principal.
  4. The member of staff who suspected that the student was in possession of an illegal substance, and the Principal should each write a detailed report of the incident, including full details of any action which they have taken.
  5. The Principal should inform the appropriate officer of the EA.
  6. The Principal should decide upon the disciplinary measures to be taken.
  7. The Principal should inform the Board of Governors.

### **Preventative Curriculum**

Drugs Education is delivered across the curriculum through PD and LLW and the Preventative Curriculum. Appendix 3 and 4

### **Disciplinary or Pastoral Care Responses**

All circumstances of drug related incidents or suspected drug related incidents will be dealt with in line with the College's discipline policy which is within the Pastoral Care Policy.

### **Provision of Counselling Services in School**

- NCIC makes use of Independent Counselling for Schools Service through Familyworks.

- This support service can be made available for any student involved in a drug related incident or suspected drug related incident.
- The College will also make every effort to make parents and carers aware of the support services available. (See Appendix 10)
- The College will also engage with outside agencies when appropriate.

#### **Guidelines for administering prescribed medication**

- NCIC follows the DE publication *Supporting Pupils with Medication Needs*, as a guideline for administering prescribed medication.
- This should include how schools will manage pupils engaged in smoking cessation

#### **Emergency first aid procedures**

- School staff should be aware of procedures in the event of a medical emergency.

#### **Monitoring and Evaluation this Policy**

This policy will be reviewed annually and/or following a drug related incident.

## Appendices

Appendix	
1	Main Types of Controlled Substances by Class
2	Drugs Incident Report Form
3	LLW / Preventative Curriculum Activities
4	Drug Education Overview

## Appendix 1 Main Types Of Controlled Substances by Class

The Misuse of Drugs Act (1971)

Class	Substance	Possession	Supply and Production
A	Crack cocaine, cocaine, ecstasy (MDMA), heroin, LSD, magic mushrooms, methadone, methamphetamine (crystal meth)	Up to 7 years in prison, an unlimited fine or both	Up to life in prison, an unlimited fine or both
B	Amphetamines, barbiturates, cannabis, codeine, methylphenidate (Ritalin), synthetic cannabinoids, synthetic cathinones (for example mephedrone or methoxetamine)	Up to 5 years in prison, an unlimited fine or both	Up to 14 years in prison, an unlimited fine or both
C	Anabolic steroids, benzodiazepines (diazepam), gamma hydroxybutyrate (GHB), gamma-butyrolactone (GBL), ketamine, piperazines (BZP)	Up to 2 years in prison, an unlimited fine or both	Up to 14 years in prison, an unlimited fine or both
Temporary class substance*	NBOMe and Benzofuran compounds	None, but police can take away a suspected temporary class substance	Up to 14 years in prison, an unlimited fine or both

[www.gov.uk/penalties-drug-possession-dealing](http://www.gov.uk/penalties-drug-possession-dealing) Please note the above table refers to some commonly available drugs. It is not a complete list of controlled drugs.



**Appendix 2**

**Drugs Incident Report Form**

Name of Pupil: \_\_\_\_\_ D.O.B \_\_\_\_\_  
Address:  
\_\_\_\_\_

Date of Incident: \_\_\_\_\_ Reported by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Location: \_\_\_\_\_

First Aid Required: Yes/ No Administered by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Ambulance called: Yes/ No

Parent or Carer informed: Yes/ No PSNI informed Yes/ No  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Description of incident:

Actions taken:

Incident form completed by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_