



# Milford Haven School

## Substance Misuse

### Policy

Date approved by Policy Committee: 24/5/23

Date to be reviewed: 01/06/24

Policy created and reviewed by: DHT for Wellbeing and Inclusion

### **Definition of a Substance**

For the purposes of this policy statement the word 'substance' is taken to mean those that are legal, such as tobacco, alcohol and solvents, over the counter and prescribed drugs and illegal drugs eg cannabis, heroin, ecstasy, LSD and new psycho-active substances are also considered to be a 'substance'.

### **Medicines**

Many drugs are lawfully carried as medicines. There is a clear policy on the administration of medicines. If students supply prescription drugs to others in school, they are acting unlawfully and so this policy applies.

### **Staff Responsibility**

The headteacher and governing body have ultimate responsibility for implementation of the policy. At Milford Haven School the responsible staff member is Mr R Berry (Deputy Headteacher). Training is encouraged on a regular basis.

Milford Haven School:

- condones neither the misuse of substances by members of the school, nor the illegal supply of these substances. Pupils supplying illegal substances on school premises or on school organised activities will be excluded. Any other involvement with legal or illegal substances falling short of supply will be considered in context based on Local Authority and Welsh Government guidelines;
- is committed to the health and safety of its members and will take action to safeguard their well-being;
- acknowledges the importance of its role in the welfare of young people, and through the PSE programme and the general ethos of the school will seek information and educate pupils on the consequences of drug use and misuse;
- takes a pro-active stance on this matter believing that health education is a vital part of the personal and social education of every pupil;
- shares the responsibility for the education of its pupils with their parents/carers, and will keep them informed and involved at all times
- believes that the possession and use of substances in school, or during the school day, or on school activities, is inappropriate. None of the substances covered in this policy are permitted to be bought, sold or otherwise obtained on school premises, or during the school day, including when pupils are on school activities or visits. Individual exceptions are made where individual pupils need to take prescribed medicines, where appropriate.

### **Educational Aims and Curriculum Issues in respect of Substance Misuse**

In line with the overall aims of the school Milford Haven School will:

- enable pupils to make healthy, informed choices by increasing knowledge, challenging attitudes, exploring issues and developing and practising personal skills;
- provide accurate information about substances;
- increase understanding about the implications and possible consequences of use and misuse
- widen understanding about related health and social issues e.g. sex and sexuality, crime, HIV and AIDS;
- enable pupils to identify sources of appropriate personal support.

These aims are fulfilled through PSE and Science lessons, Wellbeing provision, Enrichment days, assemblies and extracurricular activities. Opportunities are provided, where appropriate, for learners to develop and apply Personal and Social Education (PSE) across the curriculum. The school actively cooperates with external agencies such as the Police, Social Services, Youth Service and Health and Drug Agencies such as Barod to deliver its commitment to Drugs education and to deal with incidents of substance use and misuse. Referrals are made to Choices for pupils where required, this provides additional support for any young person who has been involved with the use of an illegal substance eg NOS (Nitrous Oxide).

Evidence from research on the effectiveness of substance misuse education shows that no single method is effective alone, and that a range of approaches are more productive.

The methods used should:

- Identify clear learning outcomes.
- Emphasise enquiry and investigation rather than formal presentations.
- Offer structured opportunities for discussion in pairs and groups of various sizes.
- Involve an appropriate balance of planned learning activities, including questionnaires, games, surveys, role-play, case study and discussion.
- Allow for graphic as well as written and oral responses.
- Stimulate interest and motivation without resorting to sensationalism.

Research shows that young people value approaches that provide:

- Consistent accurate information presented simply and clearly.
- Informative and accessible reading material.
- Access to peers and credible adult experts, in addition to teachers/youth workers.
- Stimulating and enjoyable tasks.
- Appropriate challenges in an atmosphere where they feel secure enough to play a full and active part.

All of these methods and approaches are incorporated into Substance Misuse Education at Milford Haven School.

Evidence suggests that substance misuse education is not effective when it relies solely upon:

- Stand-alone or one off talks and sessions which are not part of a whole organisation programme.
- Fear arousing approaches. Reliance on using this approach alone has been shown to lack credibility and may at worst glamorise substance misuse. Research has shown such approaches are not effective particularly in the long term.
- Information only. Evidence shows that information approaches alone will not change behaviour. Information does have a role as part of a broader life skills approach.
- Single messages e.g just say no. Such approaches may limit open, honest debate and discussion, which are building blocks of effective substance misuse education.

Substance Misuse Education at Milford Haven School does not rely solely upon any of the above.

### **Use of outside Speakers**

Contributions from outside speakers or theatre groups are no substitute for a properly resourced teacher led programme. They may enrich a programme if:

- The input is part of a programme and jointly planned with the teacher.
- The approach complements that of the school programme.
- The teacher is present so they can follow up the input at a later stage - there is no requirement for visitors to have a police check due to teacher presence.
- The speaker has experience and expertise in drug education and working with young people.
- The outside speaker can offer something specific and useful that teachers cannot (such as information about the services that young people can use or knowledge to help about the law and the consequences of breaking the law in this area).

This advice is always adhered to when using outside speakers to contribute to Substance Misuse Education at Milford Haven School.

### **Procedures for dealing with an incident**

Staff who become aware of difficulties or incidents involving pupils and drugs should inform the responsible staff member – Mr R Berry. Mr Berry will then notify the Headteacher. The response will depend on the type and degree of risk, with some situations requiring immediate action. Exemplars from Welsh Government guidance include:

Immediate action is needed when there is a clear risk to safety, for example:

- An adult collecting a child or young person appears to be under the influence of drink or drugs. Action: apply locally agreed child protection procedures, involve the police if adult is aggressive.
- A child or young person/adult appears ill or unsafe as a result of substance misuse. Action: consider obtaining medical advice, note relevant facts and inform parent/carer.
- Substances are being supplied on, or near premises. Action: contact police.
- There is ready access to controlled drugs. Action: contact police.
- The premises have potentially hazardous substance misuse related litter e.g needles, syringes. Action: arrange safe removal of litter according to Health and Safety policy, involve police if related to illegal substance misuse.
- Substance misusers behaving aggressively. Action: seek urgent police assistance to remove.
- A child/young person discloses that they are misusing drugs or their parent or other family members are misusing drugs. Action: contact social services/LA Safeguarding Officer or specialist substance misuse service for advice on how to respond.

Less immediate action e.g. observation, interview, consultation with other agencies, continued monitoring, may be appropriate when there are for example:

- Generalised allegations or concerns about a particular child/young person or family;
- Refuted/inconsistent disclosures;
- Concerns but no evidence of substance misuse or related harmful or criminal conduct (such as supply of drugs or other harmful substances);
- Concerns but no evidence of immediate risk to safety.

Actions requiring referral to other organisations include:

- Investigation of criminal activity, including searching persons or personal property.
- Apart from immediate first aid, any health or medical emergency which should be attended by appropriate medical personnel.
- Assessment and providing support and services to vulnerable or troubled children and families are matters for social services.

Counselling and drug treatment programmes require trained staff, normally accessible through social services, health or specialist substance misuse services.

If staff or pupils report a suspicion of any student involved with drugs, alcohol or paraphernalia then the pupil will be interviewed, possibly searched and parents/carers contacted. In some circumstances a search may take place without consent; this would be carried out within the boundaries set by the Department of Education (Searching, screening and confiscation, July 2022). Any item found, will be confiscated. Drugs and paraphernalia will be removed from the school site by the police; alcohol will be destroyed. Any incident relating to illegal substances will be reported to the linked police officer to the school. In addition to this, appropriate consequences will be considered by the school. The pupil may be excluded either for a fixed term or permanently as a result of the investigation and the seriousness of the incident. The school will also refer pupils to external support agencies. If a pupil is found with tobacco or e-cigarettes, parents will be informed and appropriate sanctions will be issued.

### **Power to Search pupils**

As per the Positive Engagement Policy, as a school we follow the DfES guidance: Screening, searching and confiscation 2022. School is not required to have formal written consent from the pupil for a search – it is enough for the teacher to ask the pupil to turn out his or her pockets or if the teacher can look in the pupil's bag and for the pupil to agree.

If a member of staff suspects a pupil has a banned item in his/her possession, they can instruct the pupil to turn out their pockets or bag and if the pupil refuses, the teacher can apply an appropriate sanction.

Banned items include:

- Drinks in cans
- High-energy drinks
- Alcohol
- Illegal drugs
- Stolen items
- Tobacco/cigarettes (all nicotine products including e-cigarettes) and cigarette papers and matches and lighters
- Legal high/weed
- Any article that the member of staff reasonably suspects has been, or is likely to be, used i) to commit an offence, ii) to cause personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the pupil)

### **Contact with Police**

Information concerning use or supply of illegal drugs will always be passed on to the police. Police officers will be briefed as to the nature of the allegation and the confidence in the source of information. If a search is necessary they should be escorted to the room in which the search is to take place. Initial contact with the police would normally be limited to:

The Head Teacher (Ms Ceri-Ann Morris)

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (Miss Janette Reynolds)

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (Mr R Berry)

### **Collecting pupils from locations within school**

If a pupil needs to be collected from a teaching room or other area within the school, wherever possible this should be done by two adults. Staff should be wary of any attempt of the student to escape to jettison drugs, or attempt to pass drugs to any other student either in the classroom or on the way to the search.

### **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

Alcohol should not be consumed by any member of the school community involved in school trips or residential visits.

### **Procedure for Dealing with young people after an incident**

Drugs and alcohol affect behaviour. The fact that drugs or alcohol have caused a student to behave inappropriately will not be seen as a mitigating factor. The behaviour will be punished using the normal range of school sanctions.

Exclusion is an appropriate punishment for using alcohol or drugs on school premises, but each case will depend on circumstances. A pupil found to be supplying illegal substances in school or on school organised activities will be **permanently excluded**.

It is not the role of the school to provide medical care to those under the influence of drink or drugs.

If a child is at risk because of impaired mental state, parents should be contacted and required to take control of their child. Failing that, any emergency contact could be asked to assist. Failing that, social services and police can be called for advice.

A child must not be released to walk, cycle or catch the bus home if there is concern about mental impairment resulting from drink or drugs.

### **Informing parents**

Parents should be informed of any drug related incident unless

- There are child protection concerns.
- It would interfere with a school investigation
- It would interfere with a police investigation
- It could result in greater harm to the child for another reason.

Parents would normally be contacted directly by telephone in the event of proven drug usage.

### **Procedure for Dealing with Adults**

The school is not able to release pupils into the care of other adults where there is a possibility of harm to that pupil. Where there is evidence that parents or carers arriving at school to collect children are under the influence of drugs or alcohol, either social services or the police will be contacted in line with the school child protection policy.

### **Media Contact**

The Head Teacher, in consultation with the LA and Governors will deal personally with all media matters. All media enquiries will be referred to the County Council's press office.

### **Review**

The policy will be reviewed on an annual basis by representatives of the governing body, staff, parents and pupils.

### **Related Policies**

Positive Engagement Policy

Child Protection Policy

Health and Safety Policy