



**PONTARDDULAIS COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL**  
**YSGOL GYFUN PONTARDDULAIS**



## **Substance Misuse Policy**

### **Polisi Camddefnyddio Sylweddau**

Mr. G. Rees  
Headteacher

Mrs. S. Bradshaw  
Chair of Governors



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## DRUGS POLICY STATEMENT

The Welsh Assembly Government published its new guidance for schools 'Children and Young People: Substance Misuse' in June 2002 (Circular 17/02). This Policy falls in line with the LA's Substance Misuse Policy and follows the Welsh Assembly Government's guidance for schools.

Drug misuse is a major threat to individuals, families and the wider community. In this context drug and substance misuse includes illegal drugs, smoking and alcohol misuse, as well as volatile substance misuse.

Schools, working in partnership with health, social services, the police and other agencies, have a responsibility to formulate a response to drug misuse through appropriate education and through the management of incidents either on school premises or at any time when pupils are under our jurisdiction.

The main areas of the policy addresses:

1. Educational Aims and Curriculum Issues
2. Disciplinary measures
3. Contacting parents
4. Contacting police
5. Confidentiality
6. Referral to other agencies

### 1. Educational Aims and Curriculum Issues

In line with the overall aims of the school Pontarddulais Comprehensive School will:

- a) Enable pupils to make healthy, informed choices by increasing knowledge, challenging attitudes, exploring issues and developing and practising personal skills.
- b) Provide accurate information about substances.
- c) Increase understanding about the implications and possible consequences of use and misuse.
- d) Widen understanding about related health and social issues e.g. sex and sexuality, crime, HIV and AIDS.
- e) Enable pupils to identify sources of appropriate personal support.

These aims are fulfilled through PSE and Science lessons, Wellbeing provision, assemblies and extra-curricular 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, Health and



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Drug Agencies to deliver its commitment to Drugs education and to deal with incidents of substance use and misuse.

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 Pontarddulais.

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 Pontarddulais Comprehensive does not rely solely upon any of the above.



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### 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 compliments that of the school programme.
- The teacher is present so they can follow up the input at a later stage. As long as the teacher is present, there is no requirement for visitors to have a police check.
- 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 helping services young people can use or knowledge 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 Pontarddulais Comprehensive School.

## **2. Disciplinary Measures**

- a) As a school we are committed to tackling drug misuse among our pupils and that any instances of possession, use or supply of illegal drugs or misuse on the school premises will be regarded extremely seriously.
- b) A core team of named persons will co-ordinate responses to all drugs related incidences:

Headteacher: Mr. G. Rees

Child Protection Officer: Miss R. Thomas

Deputy Child Protection Officer: Mr. C. Mitchell

- c) The Headteacher has the responsibility of deciding how to respond to particular incidents taking into account:
  - i) The substance involved – an illegal drug, alcohol, cigarettes or volatile substances
  - ii) Age of pupil concerned
  - iii) One or more of a group of pupils involved
  - iv) Whether the incident was premeditated and evidence of particular peer group pressure
  - v) Whether there is any evidence of a pupil giving or selling illegal drugs and the health and safety of other pupils is directly at risk.
  - vi) Wherever there is an incident the Substance Misuse Related Incident Form should be completed (See Appendix 1).





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- d) The Headteacher may decide to exclude, either for a fixed term or permanently. Alternatives to permanent exclusion are always to be preferred and a variety of responses incorporating sanctions, further education and counselling will be employed. These will reflect the kind of drug related offence that has occurred. It is important that a violation of criminal law should not automatically lead to exclusion of a pupil.
- e) The first priority must be to separate the pupil from his peers and in due course to obtain any substance still in his possession together with a statement of the facts.

### 3. Contacting Parents

- a) Parents will be informed, although sensitivity needs to be attached to this step bearing in mind some sort of domestic difficulty may have caused the pupil to turn to substances for help.
- b) The age and maturity of the pupil needs to be considered, as well as the substance involved.
- c) Parents need to be assured of professional support and advice. The school nurse would be a natural link between the school and health professionals.
- d) The responsibility of informing parents will rest with the Headteacher or the Child Protection Officer.
- e) It is important that, if possible, the pupil is present at any interview with school and parents (and outside agencies if appropriate).
- f) When a pupil has been found taking drugs or is intoxicated on school premises, parents must be informed and the pupil given adequate care until either the parent arrives to take them home or the school nurse arranges transport for the pupil to be taken home safely.

### 4. Contacting Police

- a) Close liaison with local police to reach an understanding on how we deal with incidents involving illegal drugs.
- b) Any illegal substance should be handed to the police for disposal. The law permits a member of staff to take possession of a substance, if it is suspected of being a controlled drug, to protect that pupil and others from harm.
- c) Alternatively, a substance not handed to the police must be disposed of, and a witness is essential to its disposal.



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- d) Although the powers of police to search are clearly defined, it is nevertheless appropriate for a member of staff to search a pupil's belongings for an illegal substance if there is a reasonable cause to believe he/she is concealing such an item. However, every effort must be made to secure voluntary production of the substance. If the pupil refuses to co-operate, parental involvement will be necessary.

### 5. Confidentiality

- a) Pupils need to be aware of help and advice available within the school.
- b) The core team will decide the people that need to be informed – including Headship Team, the TAC Team and information will be recorded on My Concern.
- c) The pupils need to be aware that in counselling or helping a situation, absolute confidentiality cannot be assured (i.e. there may be a need to pass on information to others.) However, conditional confidentiality can be offered. In the case of the return of a pupil following an overdose, appropriate help and counselling needs to be made available. Once again, the core team needs to decide who needs to be informed within the school.

### 6. Dealing with a school incident

- a) Separate pupil from peers and maintain under quiet supervision in a quiet room. Speak in low soothing tones.
- b) Inform Headteacher, Child Protection Officer or any core team member.

#### **NB**

- 1. If in any doubt regarding pupil's health i.e. unconscious or laboured breathing always call an ambulance.
  - 2. Once calm and reasonable try to obtain any substance still in their possession.
  - 3. Inform parents and take pupil home safely.
  - 4. Arrange meeting with parents and pupil at school to offer further counselling and advice.
  - 5. Referral to Other Agencies
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- d) The core team is responsible for help and advice within the school and in referring to outside agencies.