



St Ursula's Convent School
A Humanities College and Teaching School

ALCOHOL AND DRUGS POLICY

Policy reviewed by:

HEADTEACHER
SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM

Reviewed	Agreed by Governing Body	Next review
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Alcohol and Drugs Policy

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Employees must ensure they are fit for work and take reasonable care of themselves whilst at work. This is also a requirement under the Health and Safety at Work Act.
- 1.2 The Alcohol and Drugs policy makes it clear that failure to comply could have serious consequences for the employee and may lead to dismissal where it is proven that there is an inability to perform work satisfactorily or safely.
- 1.3 The recreational taking or involvement in controlled drugs is illegal and cases involving drugs may lead to police involvement. Where an employee is under the influence of alcohol or drugs to such a degree that the individual is a danger to themselves or to others, this may lead to dismissal as this is considered gross misconduct.
- 1.4 Random alcohol and drug screening is not current policy. However the School reserves the right to consider this in future, for example with safety critical jobs.
- 1.5 Any reference to the Headteacher, shall be construed as relating equally to their representatives,

2. The need for compliance

- 2.1 This policy applies to all employees, as well as those staff not directly employed by the School such as contract staff, agency workers and those self-employed such as consultants. All are expected to be aware, observe the provisions and comply with this policy.
- 2.2 Whilst at work no employee should be under the influence of alcohol or drugs as this will impact on their ability to perform work satisfactorily or safely. Where the influence is to such a degree that the employee is a danger to themselves or to others, this is considered as gross misconduct.
- 2.3 Employees who are under investigation by the Police in relation to an allegation that they have committed a criminal act, such as drink driving, or who have accepted a caution or have been charged in a criminal case, must disclose this to the School.

- 2.4 Headteachers must make sure, as far as practical, that their staff are aware of this policy by including it in inductions, referencing in one-to-one or team meetings where appropriate for example if a social event is planned and alcohol will be made available.

3. Management responsibilities

- 3.1 Headteachers must be aware of their responsibilities in advising employees regarding the use of alcohol and drugs, either at work or outside, to not undertake any acts that may bring the School into disrepute. Headteachers should therefore always set a good example while they are at work or at a work-related function.
- 3.2 Where the Headteacher reasonably suspects that an employee is unfit for work due to alcohol or drugs, they will require the employee to leave work immediately. The employee will not be permitted to return until they are fit for work. The employee will be required to take any such leave as annual leave or unpaid leave. Such occurrences will be investigated upon the employee's return to work and may result in disciplinary action, which may lead to dismissal.
- 3.3 Headteachers should monitor the performance and behaviour of their employees. If the Headteacher notices a fall in standards and suspects alcohol or drug abuse, they should have an informal private meeting with the employee. If they think a decline in performance is attributed to dependence on alcohol or drugs, they should contact the Schools' HR Team with a view to making a referral to Occupational Health.
- 3.4 Headteachers must, at all times, respect the privacy and confidentiality of information given to them by employees with an alcohol or drug dependency problem. Headteachers, Human Resources and Occupational Health staff who arrange and/or provide intervention/support will not reveal this information to any other person without first requesting this, or providing a reason why notification is needed, with the individual employee concerned.

4. Individual responsibilities

- 4.1 It is the responsibility of all employees to ensure that they are fit for work. Employees have clear knowledge that the taking of alcohol or drugs is very likely to interfere with work performance, judgement and could compromise health and safety and therefore places them at risk of misconduct or even gross misconduct in serious cases. It is the responsibility of the employee, not the School, for making any individual decision on what constitutes moderate or safe alcohol consumption.
- 4.2 The School's view is that no alcohol or drugs taking is the only reliable and safe way to avoid accidents and disciplinary action as a result of not being in a fit state at work.
- 4.3 Employees who believe they have an alcohol or drug dependency problem should get help and advice from a doctor or from a specialist organisation such as Alcoholics Anonymous or Narcotics Anonymous. Information, advice and support can also be obtained from the Council's confidential employee assistance programme run by the Positive People Company (see Appendix A for details/contact numbers for above mentioned organisations).
- 4.4.1 Employees are encouraged to come forward and tell the Headteacher about any drug or alcohol-related dependency problem in order to seek help such as a treatment programme. Occupational Health or the Council's own Drug & Alcohol Action Team can sign post to relevant rehabilitation programmes and provide advice as necessary.
- 4.5 If an employee tells the Headteacher, it is the employee's responsibility to co-operate in addressing the problem. If the employee does not agree to a treatment plan or does not attend support provided, disciplinary action may be taken, for example where dependency is impacting on work attendance or performance, as this will be seen as deliberate neglect prejudicial to recovery and return to work.

- 4.6 If the Headteacher is not made aware of an employee's alcohol or drug problem (or an employee denies having such a problem) and the employee's conduct, attendance or performance deteriorates to an unacceptable level, the employee will be treated the same as any other employee under the relevant procedure.
- 4.7 Where an employee suspects that a colleague or line manager is under the influence of alcohol or drugs during working hours and that this is affecting their performance, they should inform the Headteacher. Where an employee suspects that the Headteacher is under the influence of alcohol or drugs during working hours then they should inform the Chair of Governors.
- 4.8 Employees who are under investigation by the Police in relation to an allegation, caution or charged in relation to drink driving, must disclose this to the Headteacher. A decision will then be made as to whether the act is serious enough to render the employee unsuitable for their current position; taking into account the employee has disclosed the information. Failure to disclose would result in disciplinary action.

5. Driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs

- 5.1 Any employee driving their own vehicle on School business whilst under the influence of alcohol or drugs will be subject to disciplinary action which may result in dismissal from employment and Police involvement. Each case will be considered on its individual circumstances.
- 5.2 Drivers must always stop driving and inform the Headteacher in the event of receiving medical advice from their doctor that they should not drive due to either a medical condition or whilst taking prescribed drugs. This is largely because medicines can cause drowsiness and dizziness. An alternative work schedule will be put in place as a temporary measure. Driving while unfit even with prescribed drugs is still a criminal offence.
- 5.3 Employees must disclose any police cautions, charges or convictions particularly drink driving offences so that the Headteacher can determine whether the employee is suitable to continue in their current role. Failure to make a declaration to the School would be considered an act of gross misconduct.

6. General Health and Safety

- 6.1 There are specific situations when, in addition to driving, general health and safety requires no alcohol or drug use. For example:
- using machinery, electrical equipment or ladders
 - completing repair or manual work
 - responsible for children and/or vulnerable adults

7. Use and involvement in Drugs

- 7.1 Given that the taking or involvement in illegal drugs is a criminal offence and being under the influence of drugs can endanger others, any employee believed to be using or involved in drugs will be subject to a disciplinary investigation which may result in further disciplinary action and involvement of the Police.
- 7.2 Where an employee voluntarily asks for specific help with a dependency problem appropriate support (as outlined in section 8) should be provided where possible.

7.3 Any employee using drugs prescribed by a doctor should notify the Headteacher where appropriate to do so, for example if the effects are likely to impact on health and safety or ability to drive.

8. Examples of support available

8.1 Given the seriousness of having a drug or alcohol habit, it is recognised that getting help and support is a major priority for the individual. The following are examples of how Headteachers can support employees that have come forward asking for help, subject to the exigencies of the service:

- Granting either paid leave (e.g. annual leave) or unpaid special leave so the employee can arrange for help or attendance on a programme.
- Offer a referral to Occupational Health, or allow time for them to make an appointment with their GP or a specialist agency or support group.
- Review how to combine support and advice with current work plan and consider rescheduling work or changing priorities.
- Be flexible with working hours and leave requests to deal with any side effects of withdrawing from drugs and alcohol.

9. Further information

9.1 If you have any queries about this policy, please contact a member of SLT or the Greenwich Borough Schools' HR Team.

Appendix A – Where to obtain help and advice

The Council offers a free and confidential employee assistance programme to all employees via the Positive People Company (PPC). PPC offers information, expert advice, specialist counselling and support online or via the telephone to help staff deal with all life events, crises and problems, including drug and alcohol abuse, addiction and resulting symptoms such as anxiety and depression. The company aims to answer questions immediately or refer staff to the most appropriate advisor, counsellor or source of information all completely confidential.

Positive People Company

Tel: 0800 289316 (24-hours a day, 7 days a week)
www.ppconline.info

NHS Greenwich Drug Education Team

This team co-ordinates drug education across the borough including local agencies that provide drug and alcohol support. Services include advice and information and drug education courses. Opening hours are 8.30 am to 4.15pm. Contact details: 1 Hyde Vale, Greenwich, London SE10 8QG. Tel: 0208 694 7300. Information can be found by searching on the Council website:
<http://www.greenwich.gov.uk/Greenwich/>

Greenwich Council Drug and Alcohol Action Team

This team commission's a range of services for people who have alcohol and drugs misuse problems. Tel: 0208 921 6920

Alcoholics Anonymous (A.A.) Great Britain

Tel: 020 7833 0022 (London helpline – 10am to 10pm)
Tel: 0845 769 7555 (24-hour, 365 days a year national helpline)
www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk

A.A. provides a confidential helpline for people who are alcoholic or have a drinking problem, want to stop drinking and stay sober. It provides callers with local contacts and details of local groups that meet weekly in the London area, as well as literature that describes the Fellowship of A.A. and the suggested Twelve Step programme of personal recovery. The website provides further information and lists the calendar of events and service meetings.

Al-Anon Family Groups UK & Eire

Tel: 020 7403 0888 (confidential helpline, available 10am-10pm, 365 days a year)

www.al-anonuk.org.uk

Email: enquiries@al-anonuk.org.uk

Al-Anon provides support and understanding to anyone whose life is, or has been, affected by someone else's drinking. It allows families and friends of alcoholics to share their experience at support groups in order to solve their common problems.

Narcotics Anonymous (NA)

Tel: 0300 999 1212 (National UK helpline, open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week)

Tel: 020 7251 4007 (service office telephone for literature, etc.)

www.ukna.org

Email helpline: NAHelpline@ukna.org

Narcotics Anonymous is a non-profit society for whom drugs have become a major problem. It is an organisation of recovering addicts who meet regularly to help each other stay clean. Membership is open to anyone with a drug problem seeking help, regardless of what drug or combination of drugs they have used. NA offers a confidential helpline for people who think they may have a drug problem, want to stop using drugs and stay clean. It also provides information about weekly meetings in the London area, literature that describes NA and the 12 Step programme of recovery.

Other useful Websites

<http://units.nhs.uk/index.php>

<http://www.drinkaware.co.uk/>

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/alcoholdrugs/>

Greenwich Health and Safety Management System: Council intranet. See section 3.4.23 on Alcohol and Drugs