



Three Towers

An Alternative Provision Academy

Expanding Horizons

Drugs Education & Misuse Policy

2023 – 2024

Approved: September 2023

Review: September 2024

1. Introduction

A significant proportion of young people referred to Three Towers are known users of drugs and alcohol; some are also known dealers. In some cases they have been excluded from their mainstream schools because of drugs misuse.

We do not condone drugs of any type and all incidents will be fully investigated. Our policy is to educate our learners to understand the harmful nature of substance abuse; to suggest strategies for saying no and avoiding peer pressure and assist users to find the support advice and guidance they need from professional agencies when ready.

We rarely permanently exclude learners because of drug use, however the safety of all learners, staff and visitors is paramount, and we may change the provision of learners who are dealing or are suspected of dealing drugs in school. We have a range of procedures designed to keep everyone safe. Sometimes decisions are made to work with a learner only in a twilight lessons and/or on a one-to-one or two-to-one basis until some form of rehabilitation and improvement can be found.

Our expectations are explained on admission and are as follows;

Whilst accessing our sites, learners must not be in possession of or under the influence of alcohol, drugs or illegal substances. This includes but is not limited to;

- cannabis or derivatives;
- any form of amphetamines – cocaine, speed, bass, and ecstasy;
- hallucinogenic drugs – mushrooms, trips, keratin, LSD;
- alcohol;
- over the counter drugs – poppers, glues, canisters, lighter fuel, aerosols;
- “legal highs”;
- prescribed medication for specific disorders or medical conditions inappropriately used or sold/ shared or passed to other learners;
- large quantities of over the counter medication which could cause harm if taken in large doses.

2. Aims

This policy aims to:

- acknowledge and clarify TTAPA’s role in drug prevention and education whilst ensuring it is appropriate to learners’ needs;
- provide information and guidance about drug education;
- outline our procedures to respond to any drug-related incident,
- ensure that the approach taken on the issue of drugs is a provision wide one and is part of our commitment to, and concern for, the health, safety and well-being of the whole community;
- make clear procedures for responding to and managing drug-related incidents for learners, staff and external agencies or individuals. Sanctions for incidents will be consistent with our behaviour policy.

Teaching staff will need to be confident and skilled to teach drug education and learners need to receive up to date, relevant and accurate information as well as support.

This policy applies at all times to our premises, as well as on vocational/work experience placements and educational visits/trips/residentials etc.

3. Definitions

3.1 Drugs: This policy uses the term to refer to any psychotropic substance; all legal drugs, including alcohol and tobacco; all illegal drugs; volatile substances, and over-the-counter and prescription medication. The term 'drugs' will be used to describe substances which interfere with a learner's ability to learn, are potentially harmful, and/or are capable of misuse, including those whose possession and use are illegal. Substances alleged or believed to be drugs, as defined here, will be treated in the same way.

3.1.1 Legal Drugs: Young people are increasingly aware of, and in some cases using, new psychoactive substances (NPS). These are designed to mimic the effect of illegal drugs but are structurally different enough to be avoiding being classified as illegal substances under the Misuse of Drugs act. Despite being labelled as 'legal' these substances are not safe to use and often contain controlled drugs making them illegal to possess. If there is uncertainty about what the substance is, it is the DfE recommendation that it will be treated as a controlled drug.

3.2 Drug Taking: The consumption of any drug. All drug taking, including medicinal use, carries the potential for harm. Different interventions are appropriate to address drug taking by young people.

3.3 Drug Use: Drug use is drug taking through which harm may occur, whether through intoxication, breach of school rules or the law, or the possibility of future health problems, although such harm may not be immediately perceptible. Drug use will require interventions such as management, education, advice and information, and prevention work to reduce the potential for harm.

3.4 Drug Misuse: Drug taking which harms health or functioning. It may take the form of physical or psychological dependence or be part of a wider spectrum of problematic or harmful behaviour. Drug misuse will require a further range of interventions, which may include treatment.

3.5 Drug Incident: Evidence or suspicion of specific event at the academy involving one or more unauthorised drugs, and requiring immediate action by our staff.

4. Roles & Responsibilities

4.1 Local Governing Committee (LGC) is responsible for ensuring adequate resources are provided in order to meet the delivery of the drug education curriculum and learner welfare.

4.2 The Headteacher has a responsibility to:

- prevent illegal drug misuse and could be liable under Section 8 of the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 if they do not take action where illegal drug taking is knowingly permitted on the premises;

- ensures that appropriate 'Drug Use and Misuse' policy as well as the 'Relationship and Sex Education' policy is provided and leads the staff in realising the aims of the policy;
- makes disciplinary decisions regarding drug related incidents in the school and Trust's jurisdiction;
- inform the CEO of illegal drug incidents occurring within the academy and sanctioning exclusions.

4.3 The Head of PSHE is the subject leader for drug education, responsible for planning, resourcing, monitoring and evaluating the quality of programme delivery. This responsibility includes maintaining a current knowledge of locally relevant drug-related issues through liaison with the police and health professionals, and advising the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

5. Drugs Education

Drugs education is delivered as an aspect of the Science programme of study; the PSHE programme of study; the principle of making informed healthy choices pervades the pastoral curriculum/system.

Drugs education is undertaken by teachers who have specific training and expertise, and in association with partner agencies where appropriate. It is planned to provide continuity and progression whilst remaining age appropriate. A range of current and relevant teaching and learning resources is maintained for the use of teachers.

6. Range of Responses to incidents

The Headteacher will judge each incident on the facts. Where appropriate, they will apply a suspension for a learner involved in any drug related incident. Where a learner is found to be in possession of an unauthorised drug a suspension will be enforced following an investigation.

Any learner found to be in possession of a controlled substance is advised to seek professional support and advice about drug use and misuse in collaboration with parents/carers as part of a plan to address underlying factors. The headteacher may change the educational offer for a learner where there has been a serious or persistent breach of policy.

Where a learner is involved in supplying an unauthorised drug the headteacher carefully considers the necessity for varying the education package available and may consider permanent exclusion.

7. Educational Visits and Journeys

Visit leaders and other adults will be given a briefing by CLT on how to proceed in handling drug related incidents whilst away from the academy premises. Notably, they must contact the Headteacher or member of the CLT to liaise prior to taking anything other than emergency steps to secure health and safety of learners, staff and others.

Rules relating to illegal and other unauthorised drugs may be part of the consent form signed by the learner or parent/carer prior to the trip. If a learner breaches the rules and is returned home, parents/carers will need to meet the cost of these arrangements.

While on academy-based residential trips in this country, staff are advised to follow the procedures outlined above and to work in liaison with the manager of the residential location. Staff must be aware that laws on drugs and policing arrangements vary widely in other countries. The Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) should ensure that all participants on the trip are fully aware of these differences before departure, and should have considered in advance how they will respond to any drug incident. (On any overseas trips, advice should be sought from the British embassy or consulate staff).

8. Safeguarding Learners suspected of being under the influence

Any learner suspected of being **under the influence** of drugs will be dealt with in accordance with the severity of the incident.

Where a learner is suspected as being under the influence, they will be asked to discuss it immediately with a nominated member of staff (usually their Head of House) accompanied by a second member of staff (usually a member of CLT). A written record of the meeting will be kept on CPOMS and the Headteacher informed to ensure appropriate action can be taken.

If necessary the incident will be dealt with as a medical emergency, administering first aid and summoning appropriate support. Depending on the circumstances, parents/carers or the police may be contacted. If the child is felt to be at risk the school's safeguarding policy will be implemented and social services may be contacted.

8.1 Non-medical emergency

- keep learner calm and under observation/supervision;
- if intoxicated or high, contact parent/carer to inform them their child needs to be sent home and agree with the parents/carers how this will be done (the learner will be marked as "sick" in the register as they have not presented in any fit state of health to attend school);
- check if the learner is legally entitled to be in possession of the drug/substance;
- check if the drug/substance is suspected to be illegal and/or in breach of our behaviour policy – seek police advice if needed;
- take possession of any unused substance and store securely;
- return to school is dependent upon a meeting and agreed strategy between parents / carers, learner and the head of House / member of CLT.

8.2 Intoxication

It can be difficult to talk to a person who is intoxicated or 'high'. Be prepared for a range of behaviour from depressed and very quiet to excitable, and incoherent or volatile.

- sit the casualty down in a quiet, well ventilated space;
- do not shout at, threaten or cross-examine the casualty;
- talk quietly and be as reassuring as you can;

- summon help, be vigilant for deterioration.

8.3 Medical emergency:

- immediate request for a first aider;
- call for medical help/ambulance;
- do not leave the person unattended or panic;
- if unconscious, place the person in the recovery position and assist breathing by loosening clothing;
- if conscious, do not induce vomiting;
- do not give chase or over-excite them if intoxicated from inhaling volatile substance;
- do not give the casualty anything to drink;
- telephone parent/carer;
- any evidence should be kept, including vomit;
- ask what has happened, to identify the drug;
- when medical help arrives pass on the information and anything collected.

8.4 Needle stick (sharps) injuries:

In any case of needle stick injury the person must be taken to Accident & Emergency (A&E) for immediate medical attention; time delay can be the significant factor in long-term damage from blood borne infection. Care should be taken to bag the article and this should be taken with the patient and given to the medic.

9. Handling Incidents including Searches & Confiscation

Where there is suspicion a learner may have brought drugs or drug paraphernalia in to school, a search of their belongings will take place. All searches will follow the schools' Searching and Confiscation Policy and the DFE guidance on Screening, Searching and Confiscation. Section 91 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 enables a member of staff to confiscate, retain or dispose of a learner's property as a disciplinary penalty where it is reasonable to do so. All drugs and paraphernalia will be confiscated and passed to our police engagement officer.

Where a member of staff finds other substances which are not believed to be controlled drugs, but could be harmful or detrimental to a learner's wellbeing, these will be confiscated and the same procedure followed as outlined above. This will include psychoactive substances, 'legal highs' alcohol and alcohol induced drinks. If staff are unable to identify the legal status of a drug, it will be treated as a controlled drug and the police engagement officer notified.

Schools are not required by law to inform parents before a search takes place or to seek consent to search their child. However, where a search has been undertaken and items found, parents will be contacted and informed of the actions taken.

9.1 Searching TTAPA property

Staff may search school property, for example, learners' lockers or desks if they believe drugs to be stored there. Individuals should be made aware that if consent is refused we may proceed with a search. However, where consent is refused, we will need to balance

the likelihood that an offence has been committed against the risk of infringing the individual's privacy without just cause. Searches will only take place in the presence of another adult witness.

9.1.1 Where a suspect substance is found on school premises and no one can be associated with that substance, a member of the leadership team must be contacted and take responsibility for the disposal of the substance in the appropriate way. Staff should be aware of the possible contravention of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 and local Environmental Health guidelines if considering the disposal of suspected substances.

However, it is recommended that all drug disposals are undertaken by the police. Prescription drugs can be returned to pharmacists but suspected illegal drugs are better disposed of by the police who have clear policies for doing so. In the case of suspected illegal drugs it is recommended that these are stored in a suitably secure place for collection by the police as soon as reasonably practicable. This is in order that the drug can be identified and disposed of correctly.

All confiscations should be witnessed and corroborated by a second member of staff. This protects the integrity of staff against any possible allegations. If the substance confiscated is retained for the police, it must be held securely in a separate lockable container with limited access by two senior members of staff. Once notified, the police will arrange collection of the drugs.

9.1.2 Any drug paraphernalia which is found on our premises will be placed in a sturdy, secure container (e.g. a purpose made sharps container, or tin with a lid), using gloves and passed to the headteacher. Drinks cans or plastic bottles should not be used. Used needles and syringes should not be disposed of in domestic waste. The container must be kept away from the reach of others and disposal arranged via appropriate means.

No one member of staff should keep information regarding drug use to themselves: it should be shared with the Heads of House and CLT. It should also be recorded on CPOMs. Reports should contain full details of the incident, including where relevant the police incident reference number.

Whilst there is no legal duty on schools to do so, we will normally inform parents / carers and give them opportunity to collect the alcohol or tobacco, or medicine unless this would jeopardise the safety of the child.

9.2 Personal searches

DfE guidance is that it is not appropriate for a member of staff to carry out a personal search. Every effort should be made to persuade the person to hand over voluntarily any drugs, in the presence of a second adult witness.

Where the individual refuses and the drug is believed to be illegal, and the headteacher wishes to proceed along formal lines, then the police must be called. The police can conduct a personal search if they believe a crime has taken place, or to prevent harm to themselves or others following an arrest. TTAPA is not permitted to detain a person without

their consent unless a citizen's arrest is made; we do not expect to use the citizen's arrest procedure.

School staff can search a learner for any item if they agree. Only headteachers and staff authorised by them have a statutory power to search learners or their possessions, without consent, where they have reasonable grounds for suspecting that the learner may have a prohibited item. Prohibited items are:

- knives or weapons;
- alcohol;
- illegal drugs;
- stolen items;
- tobacco and cigarette papers;
- fireworks;
- pornographic images;
- any article that the member of staff reasonably suspects has been, or is likely to be, used:
 - to commit an offence, or
 - to cause personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the learner).

The headteacher and authorised staff can also search for any item banned by the school rules which has been identified in the rules as an item which may be searched for.

9.2.1 Where a suspect substance is found in a person's possession or in other circumstances where a 'possession offence' is identified, if in the opinion of the headteacher, the offence is minor they may handle the matter internally by dealing with the individual according to the Behaviour & Relationships Policy.

This also relates to illegal drugs found in a person's possession, however, this should typically be for isolated offences of a 'minor' nature, beyond this advice should be sought from the police. It is the responsibility of TTAPA to inform the young person's parents/carers and CEO of substance misuse incidents. Police also have a duty to involve parents/guardian when interviewing children.

9.3 Confiscation

School staff can seize any prohibited item found as a result of a search. They can also seize any item, they consider harmful or detrimental to school discipline.

9.4 Complaints

Any complaints about searching and/or confiscation will be dealt with through our Complaints Policy.

10. Monitoring & Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Headteacher. At every review, the policy will be shared with the LGC.

The review is supported by regular risk assessment that considers and reflects the risks learners face. This is important because drug use, and the risks and harms related to it, evolve and change rapidly.

11. Links to Other Policies

This online safety policy is linked to our:

- *Behaviour & Positive Relationships Policy*
- *Complaints Policy*
- *First Aid Policy*
- *Safeguarding Policy*
- *Screening, Searching & Confiscation Guidance from DfE*
- *Suspensions & Exclusions Policy*

UNICEF - UNCRC

The UN Convention of the Rights of the Child sets out human rights of every person under 18 (Article 1) and applies to every child without discrimination, whatever their ethnicity, gender, religion, language, abilities or any other status, whatever they think or say, whatever their family background (Article 2). Articles directly relating to this policy are:

2 (Non-discrimination)	29 (Goals of education)
3 (Best interests of the child)	31 (Leisure, play and culture)
16 (Right to privacy)	33 (Drug abuse)
24 (Health & health services)	36 (Other forms of exploitation)
28 (Right to education)	40 (Juvenile justice)