

Cambridge Meridian Academies Trust

Substance Misuse & Education Policy

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Contents page

REF	DESCRIPTION	PAGE
1	Introduction	3
2	Educational Aims	3
3	The Role of the Principal & Governing Body	3
4	Liaison with outside agencies	3
5	Procedures for staff on the discovery of substances	4
6	Guidelines to be observed	4
7	Confidentiality	4
8	Conclusion	4

1. Introduction

Set in the broader context of a programme for Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education, Citizenship and Science, our drug education reflects whole academy aims to provide a caring community in which young people can learn to respect themselves and others and take responsibility for their own actions.

- a. The academy does not condone the possession or misuse of drugs and alcohol by members of the academy, nor the illegal supply of these substances. The academy is legally required to be smoke-free, following changes to legislation in July 2007.
- b. The academy is committed to the health and safety of all students and will take action to safeguard their well-being.
- c. The academy acknowledges the importance of its pastoral role in the welfare of young people, and through the general ethos of the academy, will seek to persuade students in need of support to come forward.
- d. This academy defines the term 'drug' as: "**A substance people take to change the way they feel, think or behave**" and therefore includes tobacco, alcohol, solvents, over-the-counter and prescribed medicines as well as illicit substances.

2. Educational aims

We believe and support the following educational aims in respect of substance use and misuse. Fundamental to our values and practice is the principle of sharing the responsibility for drug education with parents and carers. We strive for effective communication and co-operation.

- a. To enable students to make healthy, informed choices by increasing knowledge, challenging attitudes and developing and practising skills.
- b. To provide accurate information about substances and sources of help.
- c. To increase understanding about the implications and possible consequences of use and misuse.
- d. To encourage an understanding for those experiencing or likely to experience substance use.
- e. To widen understanding about related health and social issues e.g. sex and sexuality, crime, HIV and AIDS.
- f. To ensure that young people understand that certain types of behaviour can result in high risk activities.
- g. To enable young people to identify sources of appropriate personal support.

We aim to provide a co-ordinated, integrated and consistent approach to the curriculum and to possible drug and alcohol related incidents. The academy actively co-operates with other agencies such as Community Police, Social Services, LEA and Health and Drug agencies to deliver its commitment to Drugs Education and to deal with incidents of substance use and misuse.

3. The role of the Principal and Governing Body

- a. The Principal takes overall responsibility for the policy and its implementation, for liaison with the Governing Body / Trust, parents, LA and appropriate outside agencies.
- b. The academy will consider each substance incident individually and recognise that a variety of responses will be necessary to deal with incidents. The academy will consider very carefully the implications of any action it may take. It seeks to act in the interests of the student involved, the other academy members and the local community. Permanent exclusion is seen as a last resort.

4. Liaison with outside agencies

- a. The Principal will take responsibility for liaison with the media and the LEA.

- b. Although there is not always a legal obligation to inform the Police they may be able to give relevant support and advice. Where it is suspected that substances are continuing to be sold on the premises, details regarding those involved as well as much information as possible, will be passed to the Police.

5. Procedures for staff on discovery of substances

Where a person finds substances which are not believed to be controlled drugs, these can be confiscated where it is suspected they are harmful or detrimental to good order and discipline. This includes psychoactive substances or legal highs. Substances will be removed from either a place or a person:

a. Place

If possible, remove the substance from where it was discovered in the presence of a witness. If this is not possible, do not leave the substance there while you enlist the support of a colleague or other adult as a witness. Continue with the procedure below.

b. Person

When receiving or retrieving substances from a student, do so, if possible in the presence of a witness. In the absence of a witness, do not put off receiving substances, or, within bounds of your professional discretion, removing a suspicious substance from a student's possession.

6. The following guidelines should be observed at all times:

- a. Remove the substance, and record the time, place and circumstance (including visual evidence) when the substance came into your possession.
- b. Do not investigate the nature of the substance, but do record its approximate size and appearance.
- c. When possible, have the actions and recordings countersigned by an adult as a witness.
- d. Take the substance immediately to the Principal or Deputy. Do not keep the substance on your person or in a place of safe keeping; to do so may place you at risk.
- e. In the presence of the Principal, place the substance in a suitable sealed container. The Principal, yourself and when possible, the witness, should sign and date the package. Store the item in a secure location with limited access. An official report (which may contain the visual evidence referred to at 6(a) above) should be completed, recording the time, date and circumstances of the findings.
- f. The Principal is advised to notify the Police to remove the substance from the premises.
- g. Record full details of the incident, including the Police incident number where applicable.
- h. Inform parents / carers unless it is not in the best interests of the pupil.
- i. In the event of a discovery of any equipment associated with substance use, especially needles and syringes students should not be allowed to handle such items. All equipment found must be handled by adults with utmost care. The Principal must ensure that materials are placed in a secure and rigid container to await collection by the appropriate service.

7. Confidentiality

Some students may choose to mention instances of drug use in class or to individual members of the academy community. While staff will want to be supportive, they need to follow Child Protection guidelines and clearly state that they may not be able to guarantee confidentiality.

8. Conclusion

This policy will apply on the academy premises and beyond, wherever students are within the care of academy staff. This includes academy trips and educational visits. The academy will also have

an interest in the health and well-being of the students beyond these academy boundaries and we would encourage parents and others in the community to adopt the same principles.