



“Inspiring learning, developing character, building futures”

Student Support policies and procedures

Alcohol and substance misuse policy and procedures

Aim: The aim of this policy is to ensure any incident relating to substance misuse is dealt with in a consistent and fair manner and to support those individuals who have a personal substance misuse related problem or who are affected by substance misuse issues.

Policy authorisation:	Management: Senior Leadership Team
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Date of next policy review:	June 2025
Policy author	College Lead for Safeguarding & Student Standards

Alcohol and substance misuse policy and procedures

1. Background

The risks of alcohol and substance misuse are real and all members of college must be prepared and equipped to address these risks. Blackpool Sixth is committed to providing a safe working environment and promoting the health and well-being of its students and staff. The college will work to protect students and its employees from the dangers of alcohol and substance misuse and will encourage those with a problem to access appropriate support.

The purpose of this policy and procedures is to outline the college's duty and position with regard to substance misuse and to provide guidance to help keep members of college safe from direct or indirect substance-related harm. The Department for Education and Association of Chief Police Officers drug advice for schools guidance has been used in writing this policy.

2. Scope of the policy

This Policy applies to all members of college including students, staff, visitors and contractors. It applies to the incidence of substance misuse within the grounds and premises of the college. This includes all settings where college activities take place including work placements and off-site visits and trips. This policy covers the following substances:

- All illegal drugs (those controlled by Misuse of Drugs Act 1971)
- Legal drugs, including alcohol, volatile substances (those giving off a gas or vapour which can be inhaled)
- All over the counter medicines and prescription medicines not prescribed to the individual.
- Drugs understood to be new psychoactive substances (see Psychoactive Substances Act 2016). These are designed to mimic the effect of illegal drugs but are structurally different enough to avoid being classified as illegal substances under the Misuse of Drugs Act. Despite being labelled as legal these substances are not always safe to use and often contain controlled drugs making them illegal to possess.

The above substances will be referred to as controlled drugs throughout this policy. The possession, being under the influence or distributing of any controlled drugs in college, or on college activities, is inappropriate and unacceptable.

3. Objectives

- To deliver substance misuse education and information for staff and students.
- To ensure each student is dealt with individually in a consistent and fair manner.
- To ensure any drug-related incident will be managed in accordance with this policy and investigated thoroughly by the college. The police may also be involved depending on circumstances.

- To support those individuals who have a personal substance misuse related problem or who are affected by substance misuse issues.
- To disseminate the policy across the college, and provide training on implementation, guidelines, recording of incidents and internal procedures.
- To deliver substance misuse education and information for staff and students.

4. Implementation of the policy

All members of staff are required to be aware of and enforce the alcohol and substance misuse policy, taking steps to prevent the possession and use of controlled drugs and abuse of alcohol and other substances on college premises. Incidents involving alcohol or substance misuse should not be viewed as just the responsibility of a small number of individuals within the college. In order to ensure effective implementation of the policy, staff development will be delivered as part of the annual safeguarding update training.

4.1. Designated member of staff

The College Lead for Safeguarding & Student Standards is the designated member of staff who ensures dissemination of this policy and will support staff by providing appropriate advice to staff on drug-related issues/concerns within college. Guidance will be provided to staff about the recognition of drug and alcohol misuse, the support available to students and the college's procedure for responding to misuse.

4.2. Drug Information, advice and guidance to students

Drugs information, advice and guidance will be delivered through the tutorial programme and other activities. The Head of Student Services will ensure that students have access to knowledge of up-to-date information on sources of help and support. This includes local and national support for drug, smoking and alcohol services.

It will be made clear during the induction period that the college does not tolerate the possession of and use of controlled drugs or alcohol and that students who are in breach of these college regulations will be subject to the normal disciplinary procedures.

The college counsellors will provide confidential support to students or staff with drug or alcohol-related problems and support from outside agencies will also be offered.

4.3. Dealing with suspicion of alcohol or substance abuse

All members of college play a key role in identifying people at risk of drug misuse. The process of identifying those in need of support aims to distinguish between those who require general information and education and those who require more targeted or intensive support.

If a student suspects an individual of alcohol or substance misuse they should discuss their concerns with their Pastoral Mentor or any other member of staff. Additional advice may be sought from a member of the safeguarding team.

If a member of staff suspects an individual of alcohol or substance misuse they should report immediately their concerns to a member of the safeguarding team.

If it is a member of staff who is suspected of being involved in substance misuse then their line manager should be notified as soon as possible. Line managers should consult with the Deputy Principal to agree appropriate action.

Any member of staff receiving information, in confidence, about alcohol or substance misuse by a student away from college premises, the information should be considered as 'hearsay' rather than evidence. Staff should consult with the safeguarding team to get advice on the next steps to be taken.

4.4. Discovery of suspected substances within college premises

Where a suspected controlled drug or the equipment used in the consumption of illegal substances is found within college premises, the safeguarding team must be informed as soon as possible so appropriate action can be taken to ensure that the substances are removed, stored or disposed of safely.

In taking possession of the controlled drug, the member of the safeguarding team will:

- ensure that a second adult witness is present throughout.
- seal the sample in a plastic bag and include details of the date and time of the seizure/find and witness present.
- store it in a secure location, such as a safe or another lockable container with access limited to the Head of Estates.
- inform the Deputy Principal or another member of the Senior Leadership Team.
- notify the police without delay, who will collect it and then store or dispose of it in line with locally agreed protocols. The law does not require a school to divulge to the police the name of the pupil from whom the drugs were taken but it is advisable to do so.
- record full details of the incident, including the police incident reference number; inform parents/carers, unless this is not in the best interests of the student.
- identify any safeguarding concerns and develop support and disciplinary response.

4.5. Students suspected of being under the influence of a controlled drug

If a student is suspected of being under the influence of drugs or alcohol on college premises, staff will prioritise the safety of the young person and those around them.

Anyone suspecting that a student is under the influence of controlled drugs whilst on college premises should ensure that the person is safe. If necessary it should be dealt with as a medical emergency, administering First Aid and summoning appropriate support.

A member of the pastoral leadership team should be informed as soon as possible and the following procedures will be pursued:

- A member of the pastoral leadership team will begin an investigation.
- A search may be conducted in line with the college's disciplinary procedures. Any controlled drugs will be confiscated and stored safely (see 4.3).
- Parent(s)/Carer(s) will be informed.
- If, in the professional judgement of the member of the pastoral leadership team, there are concerns about health and safety of the young person or others then arrangements will be made for the student to return home safely.
- The student may be suspended from college pending a full investigation.

The individual may be subject to disciplinary action in line with the college's disciplinary procedures. However, supportive as well as disciplinary measures will also be put in place.

If the police need to be contacted, a member of the pastoral leadership team will contact them after consultation with the Deputy Principal or another member of the Senior Leadership Team.

4.6. Individual suspected to be in possession of a banned substance on college premises

Students suspected to be in possession of alcohol or - a controlled drug must be reported to a member of the safeguarding team.

- A member of the safeguarding team - will begin a full investigation.
- A search will usually be conducted in line with the college's disciplinary procedures. Any banned or illegal substances will be confiscated, stored safely by the Head of Estates (see 4.3) and the student may be suspended from college pending a full investigation.
- Parent(s)/Carer(s) will be informed and arrangements confirmed for the student to return home safely.
- If the police need to be contacted, a member of the pastoral leadership team will contact them after consultation with the Deputy Principal or another member of the Senior Leadership Team.
- Disciplinary action will be taken in line with the college's disciplinary procedures and the outcome could be permanent exclusion.

4.7. Individuals suspected to be selling or distributing banned substances

Students suspected to be involved in the selling or distribution of illegal substances must be referred to a member of the safeguarding team who will consult with a member of Senior Leadership Team before starting a full investigation.

- A member of the safeguarding team will begin a full investigation.
- A suspected student may be searched in line with the college's disciplinary procedures.
- If the police need to be contacted, a member of the pastoral leadership team will contact them after consultation with the Deputy Principal or another member of the Senior Leadership Team.
- The student may be suspended from college pending a full investigation.
- Parent(s)/Carer(s) will be informed and arrangements confirmed for the student to return home safely.
- Disciplinary action will be taken in line with the college's disciplinary procedures.
- A student found to be involved in the selling or distribution of controlled drugs would normally be excluded permanently from college but the outcome of any police investigation will be taken into account during the disciplinary hearing.

4.8. Students whose parents/carers or family members misuse drugs

Staff at college will be alert to behaviour which might indicate that a student is experiencing difficult home circumstances related to drug use and be proactive in the early identification of need.

Where problems are observed or suspected (or if a student chooses to disclose that there are difficulties at home related to substance misuse) and it is not deemed a safeguarding issue, staff will assess the student's welfare and support needs and when and how to involve other sources of support for the young person and, where appropriate, their family.

4.9. Confidentiality

Information will only be shared with colleagues or other organisations on a 'need to know' basis and only to ensure the safety of all members of the college.

Students and staff at the college will be able to talk in confidence to a college counsellor about a substance misuse related problem. The right to confidentiality will be maintained wherever possible unless the counsellor believes that keeping something confidential puts the individual, or another person, at risk of serious harm.

Any communications referrals to external support services, such as The Hub or Addaction will be carried out with the individual's full knowledge and consent.