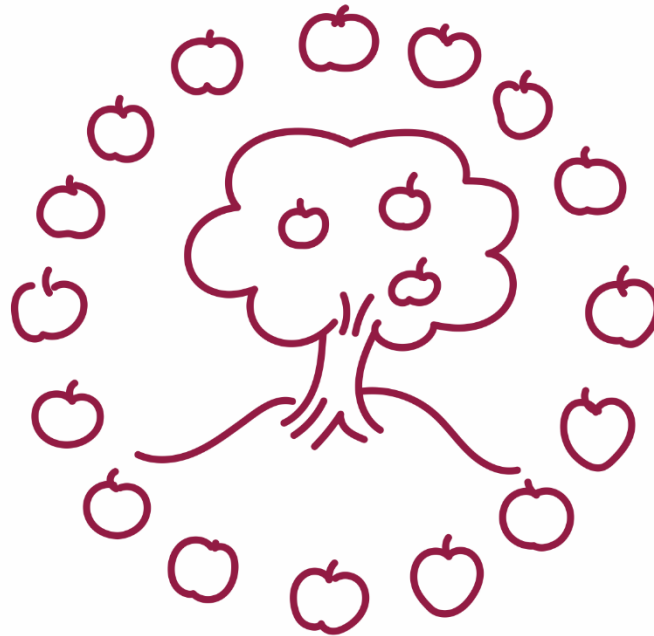


Kingsbury Episcopi Primary School

Alcohol and Substance Misuse Policy



Success Through Teamwork

Approved by the Governing Body of Kingsbury Episcopi Primary School	
Chair of Governors	Simon Faull
Signature	Simon Faull
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Alcohol and Substance Misuse Policy

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Effective Date	This is a Somerset County Council Policy that applies directly in maintained schools unless they have formally adopted an amended policy. For academies and non-maintained schools this policy is effective once it has been adopted by the governing body.
Consultation	The Alcohol and Substance Misuse Policy is in-line with Somerset County Council's Policy and has been subject to consultation and agreement with the recognised trade unions. As such only local consultation is required in academies and non-maintained schools if they wish to adopt this policy. If maintained schools wish to alter the policy they will also need to consult on changes locally.

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Policy Statement

Employees must not drink alcohol, misuse or promote drugs and or substances, whilst at work including, if appropriate, when 'on call'. They should arrive fit to undertake their duties without any direct or residual effects of alcohol or other substances which may impair their ability to perform their work. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action.

This policy aims to:

- protect the health, safety and welfare of its employees, service users/pupils, workers, contractors, volunteers and visitors in accordance with the 1974 Health and Safety at Work Act;
- take reasonable steps to reduce the risk of injuries or incidents occurring due to employees' alcohol or substance misuse;
- ensure that alcohol and substance misuse related problems are identified and recognised primarily as a health problem and addressed in a caring, positive and constructive manner;
- ensure the safe and efficient running of the school for its employees and pupils by preventing and, where relevant, eliminating alcohol and substance misuse;
- provide an environment which encourages employees to seek help voluntarily;
- ensure that employees who have alcohol and substance misuse related problems know where to seek confidential support and advice.

In order to meet these aims the policy has two approaches:

- to provide assistance to an employee with an alcohol or substance misuse problem who is willing to co-operate in the appropriate treatment for that problem;
- to manage performance and behavioural issues that are a direct result of alcohol and or substance misuse through the school's Disciplinary Procedures.

Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to all employees in the school irrespective of the position that an individual holds and does not discriminate at any level.

It recognises that substance misuse affects people of all ages regardless of income, social class, gender or ethnicity.

In order to achieve the safety and welfare aims, the safeguarding aspects of the policy should be applied to Governors and other volunteers when working with young people and vulnerable adults.

Definitions

Alcohol and Substance Misuse

For the purposes of this policy, alcohol and substance misuse is defined as any intoxicant, legal or otherwise, which may adversely influence performance or behaviour at work.

The impact may be intermittent, continual, repeated and may be a result of misuse taking place outside the working environment.

Random instances where employees, because of over-indulgence in alcohol or substance misuse, behave in a manner contrary to the standard of safety and conduct required by the school, will be dealt with in accordance with the school's Disciplinary Procedure.

Alcohol and drug dependency is not covered under the Equality Act 2010 but accompanying impairments (for example liver damage, depression) may be covered by the Act.

Managers' Responsibilities

Managers should:

- be alert to the possibility of and prevent alcohol and substance misuse among all employees;
- ensure that the safeguarding of children and young people is paramount, especially when responding to incidents of alcohol or substance misuse;
- be able to identify deteriorating work performance in terms of possible alcohol or substance misuse, ensure compliance with the policy and provide guidance, especially where specific service guidance is available;
- know how to act in order to direct the employee towards professional help as soon as the problem is suspected;
- be aware of the need to maintain confidentiality throughout these procedures.

Employees' Responsibilities

Employees should:

- take all reasonable steps to ensure they come to work fit for all their duties. Care should be taken that there are no direct or residual effects of alcohol or other substances which may impair their ability to perform their duties. This is especially relevant when driving or working with children;
- not drink alcohol, misuse drugs and or substances whilst at work including, if appropriate, when 'on call';
- not promote/sell illegal drugs and or substances at any time;
- seek help voluntarily at an early stage, either through the school's policy or through resources of the employee's own choosing, if they suspect or know that they have an alcohol or substance misuse related problem;
- comply with any safeguarding duty in their role e.g. ensuring the safe storage and use of intoxicating substances (such as solvents) within the workplace. This is particularly relevant when working with vulnerable service users, young adults, teenagers and children;

- inform their Manager if they are prescribed medication by their GP, which may affect their capabilities at work.

Alcohol and Substance Misuse Recovery Procedure

Step1: Recognition of a Problem

Managers, who suspect an employee has an alcohol or substance misuse problem, should offer the employee an opportunity to seek an assessment and, if necessary, support counselling and/or treatment from the appropriate agencies. Initial referral will normally be via the school's Occupational Health provider although an employee may wish to choose their own support agency. The same approach should be taken if an employee approaches their Manager for help. Guidance may be found at [Appendix B - Raising Concerns Investigatory Meeting](#)

Managers should not seek to, or be expected to, medically diagnose such misuse or to recommend treatment. Only those medically qualified to do so should make an assessment.

For further guidance see:

[Appendix A - Identifying and Managing Alcohol and Substance Misuse at Work](#)
[Appendix C - External Agencies Providing Support](#)

Step 2: Responding to the Problem

Occupational Health will deal with the medical aspects of the employee's problem, often in conjunction with the employee's own GP. They will advise on the most appropriate support, both in terms of treatment and at the workplace.

Employees who seek help and assistance through other sources should also meet with the Council's/school's Occupational Health provider at regular intervals to review progress. Occupational Health will then advise the Manager of appropriate workplace action and support.

Occupational Health will continue to review the progress with the employee and advise the Manager accordingly until it is determined that such support is no longer required on a regular basis or sustained abstinence (or if appropriate, controlled consumption) appears unlikely in a reasonable timeframe.

It is recognised that not all employees will require attendance on a full time recovery programme, and authorised time off from work as part of a support programme may be treated in accordance with the most appropriate policy (i.e. Sickness Absence Management, medical appointments).

Where the employee, having received support in accordance with the policy, suffers a relapse, or if the employee's work performance again suffers as a result of alcohol or substance misuse, the case will be considered on its individual merits.

Relapse is not uncommon in these situations and, therefore, Occupational Health advice should be sought before making any decisions.

Step 3: Final Considerations

Employees who have accepted support in line with the policy and have sustained an improvement in workplace performance or behaviour, will continue to develop and work successfully within the school.

In circumstances where an employee has accepted support and taken the action required of them in line with the policy, but there is medical evidence that satisfactory job performance/workplace behaviour is unlikely to be sustained or the employee's response to treatment is jeopardised by their job role, the Manager will discuss the situation with the employee. If appropriate, a Trade Union Representative or work colleague may also attend the meeting to agree a course of action. This may include the offer of suitable alternative employment, the consideration of premature retirement on the grounds of ill health or dismissal. Should dismissal on the grounds of ill health capability be under consideration, the Manager should refer to the Sickness Absence Management Policy.

Refusal of Treatment/Support

An employee who declines to accept the offer of referral for an assessment and/or help and treatment, or who discontinues a course of treatment before its satisfactory completion, should be informed that this conduct will be managed in accordance with the Disciplinary Procedure. This is because they are not taking reasonable steps to change their behaviour (e.g. moderate their drinking to a level where their behaviour at work, including their performance is satisfactory). Occupational Health advice should be sought when continued employment is under consideration.

Confidentiality

Employees with an alcohol or substance misuse related problem have the same right to confidentiality and privacy as they would if they had any other medical condition. Health information is considered as sensitive personal data under the Data Protection Act 1998.

Disciplinary Action

Employees must take all reasonable steps to ensure they come to work fit for all their duties. In line with the Council's Disciplinary Policy, the following will be treated as serious misconduct:

- attending work and carrying out duties under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs or from the misuse of other drugs (e.g. over the counter and prescription) or substances;

- the consumption of alcohol, illegal drugs, and the misuse of other drugs (e.g. over the counter and prescription) and substances such as solvents in the work place;
- the promotion and sale of illegal substances;
- falsely and maliciously suggesting a work colleague has an alcohol or substance problem or is working whilst under the influence of alcohol or substances;
- illegal or otherwise inappropriate behaviour brought about by the misuse and over-indulgence of alcohol and substances, illegal or otherwise, outside of work or for outside of the workplace but which could damage the school's reputation.

Matters listed above pertaining to illegal substance misuse (e.g. Heroin, Cocaine, Cannabis and Amphetamines) would be referred to the police under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971.

For guidance on responding to an occasion where an employee attends work under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs or from the misuse of other drugs (e.g. over the counter and prescription) or substances see: Alcohol and Substance Misuse- Managing Incidents at Work.

In addition, should an employee, who is required to drive as part of their job role (even if only on an occasional basis), lose their driving licence due to drink/drug driving, they must immediately inform their Manager, who will review their work position with the school. Failure to inform the school may lead to disciplinary action including dismissal.

Education and Training

The school will attempt to bring to all employees' attention the dangers associated with substance misuse and, from time to time, advise on sensible drinking limits via posters and health education leaflets. This will be carried out in line with a work life balance and healthy lifestyles.

Identifying and Managing Alcohol and Substance Misuse at Work

What is it?

Alcohol and substance misuse is defined as any intoxicating substance legal or otherwise which may adversely influence performance or behaviour at work. The impact may be intermittent, continual, repeated and may be a result of misuse taking place outside the working environment. Random instances where employees, because of over-indulgence in alcohol or substance misuse, behave in a manner contrary to the standard of safety and conduct required by the school, will be dealt with in accordance with the Disciplinary and Appeals Policy.

What do I need to know?

The Alcohol and Substance Misuse policy considers such problems to be health issues and should be addressed in a caring, positive and constructive manner. If an employee refuses to recognise a problem or is unwilling to accept appropriate support their behaviour should be managed using the Disciplinary Procedure.

If an employee's behaviour suggests they are under the influence of alcohol or substances at work, the behaviour should be treated in the first instance as serious misconduct. For further guidance see Appendix D: Alcohol and Substance Misuse - Managing Incidents at Work.

The Signs of Alcohol or Substance Misuse

Alcohol and substance misuse problems may come to light in a number of ways; alcohol and substance misuse is defined as any intoxicating substance legal or otherwise which may adversely influence performance or behaviour at work. The impact may be intermittent, continual, repeated and may be a result of misuse taking place outside the working environment. Random instances where employees, because of over-indulgence in alcohol or substance misuse, behave in a manner contrary to the standard of safety and conduct required by the County Council and will be dealt with in accordance with the Council's Disciplinary and Appeals Policy.

A colleague may raise a concern, there may be a complaint from a pupil / parent or a member of the public or your personal observations may arouse suspicion. No single characteristic exists to identify those who misuse alcohol or substances, but the following characteristics, especially when occurring over a period of time, may be symptomatic of a problem or related issue.

<u>Absenteeism</u> • multiple instances of unauthorised leave; • frequent Monday or Friday absences; • excessive lateness, for example on Monday mornings or returning from lunch and leaving work early; • peculiar and increasingly improbable excuses for absences; • unusually high absenteeism, eg, for colds, flu and general malaise.	<u>Generally deteriorating job efficiency</u> • missed deadlines; • mistakes due to inattention or poor judgement; • making bad decisions; • complaints from customers; • improbable excuses for poor job performance.
<u>Difficulty in concentration</u> • work requires greater effort; • jobs take more time.	<u>Spasmodic work patterns</u> • alternate periods of high and low productivity; • increasing general unreliability and unpredictability.
<u>Reporting to work</u> • coming to work in an obviously abnormal condition; • aroma of alcohol; • increasingly unkempt appearance/lack of hygiene; • hand tremor, facial flushing and bleary eyes; • proneness to accidents.	<u>Poor employee relations</u> • over-reaction to real or imagined criticism; • irritability and/or moodiness; • complaints from colleagues; • attempting to borrow money from colleagues; • avoidance of manager or colleagues.

Managers should be aware that this is not a checklist and it does not necessarily follow that employees exhibiting any of these characteristics are misusing alcohol or other substances. Care and tact should be exercised when raising concerns with an employee.

What do I need to do?

- Raise your concern and hold an investigatory meeting. Please refer to Appendix B: Alcohol and Substance Misuse – Raising Concerns Investigatory Meeting.
- Direct the employee towards professional help for assessment and/or treatment, initially from Occupational Health. For further information see Occupational Health.
- Occupational Health guidance on appropriate support measures for the employee should be discussed with the employee and an action plan agreed, which should include regular review meetings.

Raising Concerns Investigatory Meeting

Investigatory Meeting

The initial investigatory meeting should be sensitive and confidential. It requires the Manager to keep an open mind whilst providing examples of the behaviour/work performance concerns which indicate there may be a problem. The Manager should use effective open-ended questions such as: Why? How did you feel? to probe and 'enable' the discussion in order to gather all the necessary information to make a decision on how to proceed.

Managers need to be aware of possible reactions from the employee and be emotionally prepared. When confronted, some employees may be silent, others angry or tearful. Open questions and maintaining eye contact will help a discussion in most situations. In order to diffuse emotionally volatile situations, the tone of voice should be calm and its volume moderate. If necessary, make 'lowering' gestures with your hands and let their anger wash over you. Use the 'mirroring' technique to acknowledge the employee's views e.g. "If I am hearing you correctly, you are saying-----". This can convey that you are okay with their feelings and create a sense of safety. Those who are tearful should be allowed to work through their emotions as these usually come to a natural end. Once the emotion has started to ebb, begin to ask open questions again and show you are really listening.

At the end of the meeting the manager should be able to decide if an OH referral is appropriate; is the situation a 'can't do' (capability—ill health or other) or 'won't do' (disciplinary)?

The meeting does not form part of any formal procedure. Consequently, the employee does not necessarily require any advanced warning of the meeting or the opportunity to be accompanied by a Trade Union representative or work colleague but in some circumstances, it may be appropriate.

Good preparation is essential to the meeting. It may be useful to practice asking the questions you have prepared so the meeting flows. Further guidance is outlined below, and additional advice may be obtained from your HR Advisory Team.

Preparation:

- Arrange to hold the meeting in a private room, free from interruptions and consider the timing of the meeting in relation to the employee on the chosen date.
- Plan the structure of the meeting in advance; consider how you are going to open the meeting and the possible reaction of the employee.
- Have to hand all documentary information of work deterioration and written standards of job performance.

- Have available any information for referral, e.g. Alcohol and Substance Misuse- External Agencies Providing Help_and, if applicable, details of your Occupational Health and Employee Counselling/Assistance Programme (EAP).

At the Meeting:

- Explain the purpose of the meeting.
- If you have identified a deteriorating pattern of work performance or conduct, restrict the discussion to such issues.
- Ask the employee for their view of the problems, their nature and the reasons behind them.
- Adopt a non - judgmental approach.
- If personal problems are admitted, express concern and listen – do not give advice other than to refer towards professional help.
- If problems are denied, explain the consequences of continued lowered work performance or poor conduct in disciplinary terms.
- Confirm that there will be a review meeting to follow up on OH or on performance/conduct observations.
- If appropriate, reassure the employee that support is available should they want the help.

After the Meeting:

- Complete any referral documentation.
- If possible, confirm a review date.

External Agencies Providing Support

Turning Point:

Maltravers House
Petters Way
Yeovil BA20 1SH
Tel No: 01935 383 360

Frome Office: 01373 475 560
Taunton Office: 01823 328 463
Bridgwater Office: 01278 456 561

Frank:

www.talktofrank.com
Tel No: 0800 77 66 00

Alcoholics Anonymous:

PO Box 1
10 Toft Green
York YO1 7ND
Tel No: 0845 769 7555

Avon and Somerset Office
PO Box 42
Bristol
Tel No: 0117 926 5520

Narcotics Anonymous:

www.ukna.org
Tel No: 0845 373 3366

Managing Incidents at Work

In line with the Alcohol and Substance Misuse Policy, if an employee's behaviour raises concerns that they may be under the influence of alcohol or substances at work, the behaviour should, in the first instance, be treated as serious misconduct. In these circumstances you should:

- Check your assessment that the employee appears to be under the influence of alcohol or another substance with work colleagues.
- In a private office, advise the employee that their behaviour is a concern and you will arrange for them to be taken home and the remainder of the day will be treated as paid authorised leave and the matter will be discussed upon their return to work. If appropriate, they may remain at work in, for example, a medical room until fit to travel by taxi, bus or other appropriate transport.
- If appropriate, and in order to diffuse emotionally volatile situations, the tone of voice should be calm and its volume moderate. If necessary, make 'lowering' gestures with your hands and do not respond to any anger directed at you.
- As soon as possible, write a full and detailed (dated) report of the incident, including records of witnesses.
- Seek advice from your HR Advisory Team on instigating a disciplinary investigation and/or referring the matter to the Police.
- In the absence of mitigating circumstances, and depending upon the facts of the case, the employee's behaviour may be deemed to be gross misconduct. Summary dismissal is a possible outcome of a Gross Misconduct Disciplinary Hearing following a full investigation.
- If the employee remains in employment, highlight to them the support agencies listed in Appendix C, if appropriate.

Guidelines for Managers Dealing with Alcohol or Substance Misuse Problems

Objectives

A manager should:

- be alert to the possibility of alcohol and substance misuse among staff at all levels;
- be able to identify deteriorating work performance in terms of possible alcohol or substance misuse;
- know how to act to direct the employee towards professional help as soon as the problem is suspected;
- maintain confidentiality throughout these procedures.

Identifying the Problem

Alcohol and substance misuse problems may come to light in a number of ways, and in particular:

- a) The employee may choose to seek help on a voluntary basis. They can ask for confidential help from the Council's Occupational Health Physician or from an outside agency.
- b) The employee's colleagues and/or Manager may identify a pattern of deteriorating work performance or obvious signs of alcohol or substance misuse.
- c) A complaint from a member of the public, pupil or parent.

No single characteristic exists to identify alcohol or substance misusers, but the following characteristics and work-related problems, especially when occurring in combination or as a pattern over a period of time, may indicate the presence of an alcohol or substance misuse problem.

Exercise care and tact when talking to a member of staff. It should be noted that the list below are also signs of other illnesses/stress:

Absenteeism -

- multiple instances of unauthorised leave;
- frequent Monday or Friday absences;
- excessive lateness, for example on Monday mornings or returning from lunch and leaving work early;
- peculiar and increasingly improbable excuses for absences;
- unusually high absenteeism, e.g., for colds, flu and general malaise.

Difficulty in concentration -

- work requires greater effort;
- jobs take more time.

Confusion -

- difficulty in recalling instructions and details;
- increasing difficulty in handling complex assignments;
- difficulty in recalling own mistakes.

Spasmodic work patterns -

- alternate periods of high and low productivity;
- increasing general unreliability and unpredictability.

Reporting to work -

- coming to work in an obviously abnormal condition;
- aroma of alcohol;
- increasingly unkempt appearance/lack of hygiene;
- hand tremor, facial flushing and bleary eyes;
- proneness to accidents.

Generally deteriorating job efficiency -

- missed deadlines;
- mistakes due to inattention or poor judgement;
- making bad decisions;
- complaints from customers;
- improbable excuses for poor job performance.

Poor employee relations -

- over-reaction to real or imagined criticism;
- irritability and/or moodiness;
- complaints from colleagues;
- attempting to borrow money from colleagues;
- avoidance of Manager or colleagues.

Application of Procedure

If you suspect that an employee has an alcohol or substance misuse related problem which is affecting his/her work performance, you should set up an investigatory meeting with the employee, and their representative if requested:

- a) Inform the employee that you have identified a problem, e.g., that their work performance has deteriorated to an unacceptable level, specifying the incidents, or that you have detected possible signs of alcohol or substance misuse. **Do NOT accuse the employee of alcohol or substance misuse.**
- b) In the case of deteriorating work performance, attempt to assess whether alcohol or substance misuse are a factor, or if there is some other underlying problem.

- c) Explain the consequences of failing to improve work performance and give a time frame for improvement or explain the implications of the alcohol and substance misuse recovery policy.
- d) If appropriate, suggest sources of help or offer referral to the Occupational Health Physician.
- e) Inform the employee that his/her work performance will continue to be monitored.
- f) Set a date to meet again to review progress.

The following guidelines for this initial investigatory meeting may be useful:

Preparation:

- Arrange for the meeting in a private room, free from interruptions.
- Plan the structure of the meeting in advance.
- Have to hand all documentary information of work deterioration and any written standards of job performance.
- Have available any information for referral, e.g. local agencies who can offer support.

At the Meeting:

- Explain the purpose of the interview.
- If you have identified a deteriorating pattern of work performance or conduct, restrict the discussion to such issues.
- Ask the employee for their view of the problems, their nature and the reasons behind them.
- Adopt a non-judgmental approach.
- If personal problems are admitted, express concern and listen - try not to give advice other than to refer towards professional medical help.
- If problems are denied, explain the consequences of continued lowered work performance or poor conduct in disciplinary terms.
- Keep a detailed, confidential record of the meeting, a copy of which should be given to those present.

Referral:

If, as a result of the initial investigatory meeting, you suspect a drinking, substance misuse or health problem, with the agreement of the employee, you should write to the Occupational Health Physician in the usual way. (Refer to the school's guidelines on Monitoring and Dealing with Sickness Absence). Enclose a full description of the evidence noted, stating whether the subject of alcohol or substance misuse has been broached. Alternatively, the employee may prefer to seek help from an outside agency or his/her general practitioner.

Note that if the employee refuses to seek help, then action under the Disciplinary and Appeals Procedure may be necessary.