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| **Document Control Sheet** |

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**Alcohol, Drugs and other Substance Misuse Policy**

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1. Aims of the policy

Suffolk County Council (SCC) is concerned to provide a safe and healthy working environment. It recognises that this can be put at risk by employees who misuse alcohol, drugs and / or other intoxicating substances. This policy, which applies to all SCC school employees, therefore aims to:

* Promote the health, safety and well-being of employees and to minimise problems at work arising from alcohol, drugs or other substance misuse.
* Make known to employees the harmful effects of the excessive consumption of alcohol, drugs or use of other intoxicating substances, whether illegal or legal.
* Identify employees with possible problems arising from alcohol, drugs or substance misuse at an early stage, offer guidance and actively encourage them to seek appropriate help.
* Offer employees known to have alcohol, drugs or substance misuse related problems affecting their work, a referral to an appropriate agency for assistance.
* Support those employees who recognise they may need help in overcoming substance misuse; but take prompt formal action against those employees whose conduct and/or capability are adversely affected by substance misuse but who may refuse help.

1. Definitions

For the purposes of this policy, alcohol, drugs and substance misuse are defined as:

* Alcohol misuse refers to a level of drinking which either persistently affects an employee’s work or affects it on a ‘one off’ or occasional basis.
* Drugs misuse refers to a medicine or other substance which has a physiological effect when [ingested](https://www.google.com/search?sca_esv=594424414&rlz=1C1GCEA_enGB1051GB1051&q=ingested&si=ALGXSlaYxyllm14_NEvUA9w95SVcpXkiAqAzVIP74sFz8D-QD-MybOmnvdDV_z8_B_uCW6B_C1AINV69y8W9mH-RsupWIEeGqJO37tpz9P8OvPllaReDCn8%3D&expnd=1) or otherwise introduced into the body.
* Substance misuse refers to the use of both illegal, legal, prescription drugs and other substances such as solvents and their misuse, whether deliberate or unintentional.

1. **Roles and Responsibilities**

The School has overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy.

Headteachers, or their senior staff, will have the main responsibility for identifying employees who may need help because of the effect of alcohol, drugs and/or substance misuse on their work performance.

Employees have a responsibility under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 to take reasonable care of themselves, regarding the actions they may take both in and outside of work that could affect others.

1. Identifying the problem

For an individual who may be at risk, there could be physical symptoms of misuse including bleary eyes, hand tremors, sweating, hallucinations, poor sleeping, slurred speech, and/or smell of alcohol on the breath, but the other latent signs of drink, drugs or substance misuse related problems could be lateness, absenteeism, inefficiency, poor working relationships, changes in behaviour and reduced performance level.

1. Problems related to alcohol and substance misuse

The following have been identified as inherent problems when dealing with alcohol and substance misuse:

* Difficulty in early detection.
* Stigma associated with alcohol misuse.
* Powerful nature of the dependence/addiction.
* Feeling bad or guilty about drinking

These factors combined may make the individual deny the existence of a problem and therefore resist any potential support or treatment.

1. Dealing with incidents of alcohol, drugs and/or substance misuse

Discuss the matter with the individual as soon as possible and keep a clear record of the discussion.

Each case should be dealt with on an individual basis depending on the circumstances, including the balance between offering support and taking any further action.

Consider a referral to the school’s occupational health provider and encourage the individual to seek further support from their GP, NHS or other agencies, the school’s well-being programme and/or their professional association.

Individuals who suspect, or know, that they have an alcohol, drug and/or substance misuse problem are encouraged to seek help and treatment voluntarily. Many well-being schemes include access to confidential counselling and the individual should be actively encouraged to explore such support. Any time off work for help and treatment under the policy will usually be regarded as sickness absence or leave of absence. Take HR advice from your provider.

Individuals who decline to seek treatment; accept referral for diagnosis and/or treatment or discontinue a course of treatment before its completion. The individual may be supported under a monitoring period in relation to unsatisfactory performance as per the school’s Capability policy.

The procedure above does not apply to individuals who following the misuse of alcohol, drugs and/or other substances, behave in an unacceptable manner contrary to the standards and conduct required by the school. Such cases will fall within the scope of the school’s Disciplinary procedure.

All parties need to respect the confidential nature of any individual’s records.

A flow chart of the support process is set out in Appendix 1.

1. Sources of further advice and support

* NHS Alcohol misuse

Alcohol misuse - NHS (www.nhs.uk)

* National Drugs Helpline

<http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/drugs/Pages/Drugtreatment.aspx>

* National Alcohol Helpline <http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/alcohol/Pages/Alcoholsupport.aspx>
* Live Well Suffolk <http://www.livewellsuffolk.org.uk/>
* Suffolk Services – information available on the Suffolk Health and Wellbeing Board website <http://www.healthysuffolk.org.uk/>
* Health & Safety Executive provides information in relation to the workplace <http://www.hse.gov.uk/alcoholdrugs/>
* The school’s wellbeing scheme provider.

**Appendix 1**

MONITOR PERFORMANCE

MEETING BETWEEN INDIVIDUAL AND HEADTEACHER Informal meeting held, although individual has no automatic right to be accompanied it may be beneficial to allow a union representative or work colleague for support.

* Discussion regarding work performance
* if appropriate, offer OH referral and signpost to EAP counselling service

Individual accepts referral to OH

Individual rejects referral to OH

Work performance concerns continue or recur

Work performance concerns do not recur

Drinking or other concern not confirmed

Other health or concern diagnosed

Alcohol related concern diagnosed

Employee given choice between accepting referral or possible action under the Capability Policy

Refer to appropriate treatment or agency

Employee does not co-operate, and work performance concerns continue.

Employee co-operates but work performance does not return to acceptable level

Employee co-operates and work performance returns to acceptable level

referral accepted

referral not accepted

Appropriate formal action taken

No further action taken

Investigate if any further treatment is justified

Employee referred back to supervisor

Problem resolved but monitor wellbeing.

Yes, refer to OH

No

**Summary of changes**

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| **Document control** | | | |
| **Date** | **Section(s)** | **Update(s)** | **Notes** |
| Sept 2024 | Title | Updated title wording |  |
| Sept 2024 | Contents | Updated contents and page numbers |  |
| Sept 2024 | 1. Aims of the Policy | Updated wording | Inserted ‘drugs’ and ‘intoxicating’ |
| Sept 2024 | 1. Aims of the Policy | Removed point c. updated other points |  |
| Sept 2024 | 1. Definitions | Moved section on definitions to section 2 | updated all other numbers to reflect change |
| Sept 2024 | 2.1 Roles and Responsibilities | Updated wording | Added head teacher / senior leadership team |
| Sept 2024 | 5. Problems related to alcohol, drug, and substance misuse | 5.3 Updated wording to include ‘dependency problems’ | Increased inclusivity of wider range of issues |
| Sept 2024 | 1. 6. Dealing with incidents of alcohol, drugs, and/or substance misuse | 6.5 changed from Disciplinary policy to Capability Policy | More appropriate policy as it is work performance not conduct. |
| Sept 2024 | 1. 7. Sources of Support | Updated links |  |
| Sept 2024 | 1. Appendix 1 | Changes to process | Change from formal to informal meeting in first step, changed from Disciplinary to Capability process |