

UTC READING

Drugs Policy (including medical, alcohol and smoking)

Introduction

The definition of a drug given by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime is:

‘A substance that people take to change the way they feel, think or behave.’

The term ‘drug’ and ‘drug education’, unless otherwise stated, is used throughout this document to refer to all drugs:

- All illegal drugs (those controlled by the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971)
- All legal drugs, including alcohol, tobacco, volatile substances (those giving off a gas or vapour which can be inhaled), ketamine, khat and alkyl nitrates (known as poppers)
- All over-the-counter and prescription medicines

‘UTC boundaries’ is defined in this policy to include any time spent on the UTC site, journeys to and from the UTC, journeys in UTC time, work experience, residential and other trips or visits. This includes all the UTC grounds and the immediate local vicinity of the UTC, for example outside the UTC gates, the perimeter of the UTC and any time spent at another school, college, work place or provider during UTC hours.

The UTC is committed to ensuring that all members of the UTC and visitors to the UTC understand the ill-effects caused by smoking, and appreciate the quality of a non-smoking environment. The policy applies at all times, including evenings, weekends, holidays and lettings to other groups. This policy applies to all UTC members including staff, students, visitors, contractors and parents/families.

Aim

The UTC believes that the use and misuse of drugs and substances constitutes a major threat to individuals, families and the wider community. Education can play a key role in ensuring that young people know the risks and consequences of drug taking and are provided with the knowledge and skills to resist. The essential aims are to give students facts, emphasise the benefits of a healthy lifestyle and give them the knowledge and skills to make informed and responsible choices now and later in life.

The aims are:

- To create an environment within the UTC which is totally free from illegal drugs, cigarettes, alcohol and dangerous materials
- To achieve this, the UTC will neither accept nor condone the misuse of drugs and alcohol by members of the UTC, nor the illegal supply of these substances
- The UTC is committed to the health and safety of its members and will take action to safeguard their well-being
- the UTC acknowledges the importance of its pastoral role in the welfare of young people and, through the ethos of the UTC, will seek to persuade students in need of support to come forward

The UTC remains a totally non-smoking environment. There is no provision of any smoking space. This is to ensure that:

- There can be no ill-effects caused by passive smoking
- All members of the UTC realise that a smoking-free working life is both desirable and possible
- The potential damage to property and danger to life due to fire, are limited
- No positive role models of smokers are created, including members of staff - there are no images of smoking as a desirable social attitude

Operation

Drug Education at the UTC

The aim of our drug education is to provide opportunities for students to develop their knowledge, skills, attitudes and understanding about drugs and appreciate the benefits of a healthy lifestyle, relating this to their own and other's actions.

Drug education should increase student's knowledge and understanding and clarify misconceptions about:

- the short-term and long-term effects and risks of drugs
- the rules and laws relating to drugs
- the impact of drugs on individuals, families and communities
- the prevalence and acceptability of drug use among peers
- the complex moral, social, emotional and political issues surrounding drugs

Develop students' personal and social skills to make informed decisions and keep themselves safe and healthy, including:

- assessing, avoiding and managing risk
- communicating effectively
- resisting pressures
- finding information, help and advice
- devising problem-solving and coping strategies

- developing self-awareness and self-esteem

Enable students to explore their own and other peoples' attitudes towards drugs, drug use and drug users, including challenging stereotypes, and exploring media and social influences.

Drug education at the UTC will include the above and be consistent with the values and ethos of the UTC and the laws of society, as well as appropriate to the age and maturity of students. It will be delivered using the non-statutory framework for PHSE, the statutory Citizenship programme. Drug education in the classroom will be supported by a whole UT approach. It will cover all drugs and, when appropriate, should focus on drugs of particular significance such as alcohol, tobacco, cannabis, volatile substances and class A drugs.

The UTC will ensure that drug education is accessible to students with SEN. Particular attention will be given to drug education for students who are vulnerable to drug misuse, including those at risk of exclusion and those excluded from the UTC, to ensure that specific needs are addressed. Teachers will be the main providers of drug education. External contributors, if used, will be involved in a planned way to add value to the UTC's programme. The UTC will ensure that students have access to up-to-date information about sources of help and advice.

UTC's Position

It is an offence under section 8 of the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 for the management of establishments to knowingly permit the supply or production of any illegal drugs on their premises. It is also an offence to allow premises to be used for the smoking of cannabis or opium, and the preparation of opium.

Illegal drugs have no place at the UTC.

However, there are instances where other drugs may legitimately be in the UTC. Some students may require medicines that have been prescribed for their medical condition during the college day. These should be clearly named and be given, together with clear details as to dosage to the First Aider or in their absence the student's Director. The First Aider will keep appropriate accurate records of all medicines administered and if a student has refused medication. Records offer proof that the UTC has followed appropriate procedures.

Some students may need to carry essential medicines about their person. The UTC must be notified in writing by the student's parents/carers when this occurs. Staff will be informed of such students by their Director. If employees are potentially required to administer emergency medication, such as epi-pens, appropriate training will be provided.

Non-prescribed medicines will not be given to students by employees. If parents/guardians have given permission for students to bring small quantities of non-prescription drugs to school for their own use for a specific reason, the UTC accepts no responsibility for the administration of these drugs and permission must be given in writing from the parents/guardians for each day that they are brought to

the UTC. Otherwise, these drugs will be confiscated and parents/guardians contacted for collection.

Arrangements for the legitimate use of solvents or hazardous chemicals by students or employees are set out in the UTC's health and safety policy.

The UTC is a non-smoking site and this extends to the UTC boundaries. This is in keeping with a whole UTC approach advocated by the National Healthy School Standard and the Health Act 2006. Students are forbidden to bring cigarettes, lighters and matches onto the UTC grounds. Such items, if found, will be confiscated and parents/carers will be asked to collect them. Employees are asked to ensure that such items are kept out of sight of students and other UTC members. Students are not allowed to bring or consume alcohol within the UTC boundaries.

Drugs, including alcohol and tobacco must not be consumed by employees whilst they are providing a duty of care to the students. This includes UTC trips and visits. (Excluding dosed prescription and dosed non-prescription drugs).

Alcohol can only be consumed within the UTC boundaries by adult members of staff or community with the prior permission of the Principal. The Principal will ensure that all employees dealing with substance issues are adequately supported and trained.

Dealing with Drug Incidents

Confidentiality

The welfare of students will always be central to our policy and practice. However, employees will not be able to promise complete confidentiality. Information about a student in relation to drugs will follow the same procedure as for other sensitive information. The Director, Vice Principal and Principal will be informed as appropriate and further help sought if necessary.

Parents/guardians will be informed of the drugs education curriculum. Parents/guardians will be contacted if their child is found to be in breach of the UTC's position.

Opportunities will be made for parents/guardians and the students involved to get support and guidance concerning drugs.

Police

The police will not normally need to be involved in incidents involving legal drugs, but the UTC may wish to inform trading standards or the police about the inappropriate sale or supply of tobacco, alcohol or volatile substances in the local area.

The UTC will inform the police of any incident involving illegal drugs deemed of a serious nature. The police will always be involved in the disposal of suspected illegal drugs. The UTC will work in active partnership with the police.

Police can carry out personal searches if they believe a crime has taken place, or to prevent harm to themselves or others following an arrest.

In the event of an incident

Detection:

Searches must only be carried out by senior staff within the UTC with the permission of the Vice Principal or Principal. A second adult must be present. Consent must be sought prior to a search taking place. This includes the search of personal property such as bags or pencil cases and UTC property. It is NOT appropriate for a personal search to be carried out by a member of staff. Searches must be carried out in such a way as to minimise potential embarrassment or distress. Parents/guardians must be contacted in the event of any search, regardless of outcome.

If consent is refused: Employees may proceed with searches of property without consent but must balance the likelihood that an offence has been committed against the risk of infringing the individual's privacy without just cause. For a search involving personal property, parents/guardians should be contacted to seek their permission.

The law permits that UTC employees can take temporary possession of a substance suspected of being an illegal drug for the purposes of preventing an offence from being committed or continued in relation to that drug. If this occurs, the drug must be passed to the Principal or her representative until the police can collect it. The police would be notified without delay.

Alcohol and tobacco should normally be collected by the parent/guardians, unless this would jeopardise the safety of the child. Safe disposal is permitted of volatile substances given the level of danger posed. Parents/guardians are expected to collect and dispose of unused or date-expired medicines. Drugs paraphernalia, including needles should be disposed of safely in a sturdy, secure container, using gloves. Used needles or syringes should not be put into domestic waste.

Response

The UTC will respond to breaches of the UTC's position (set out within this policy) in a considered and appropriate way. Any response will balance the needs of the individual with those of the wider UTC community, and aim to provide students with the opportunity to learn from their mistakes and develop as individuals. A range of responses will be considered and the judgements will be at the discretion of the Principal or her representative. Given that drug issues rarely occur in isolation, responses will take into account a holistic approach if appropriate.

The student's welfare is paramount and in all incidents involving drugs, referral for counselling or support will be actively considered. It is hoped that, in most circumstances the UTC and parents/guardians can work together to support the student involved.

Employees found to be in breach of this policy will be dealt with using the disciplinary procedures and may be subject to possible criminal prosecution.

Exclusion will only be considered for serious breaches of the policy, and will not be imposed without a thorough investigation unless there is an immediate threat to the safety of others in the school or the student concerned. Supplying an illegal drug is a serious breach of this policy and it will be one of the exceptional circumstances where the Principal judges that it is appropriate to permanently exclude a student, even for a one-off or first time offence. The Principal will consider the precise circumstances of each case, including the nature of the incident and the evidence available.

Where students are permanently excluded for supplying an illegal drug, repeated possession and/or use of an illegal drug in school grounds, the Secretary of State would not normally expect the Board of Governors or an independent appeal panel to reinstate the student.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Board of Governors and Principal will monitor the operation and effectiveness of the UTC's Drugs Policy (including medical, alcohol and smoking).

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