

Our Lady and St Patrick's College, Knock



Drugs Policy

Policy Details

Legal Status	Adopted	Version Date	Last Review	Next Review	Responsible
Statutory	4 th June 2025	May 2025	December 2021	June 2028	Ms McCarthy

Related Documents

1. Child Protection/Safeguarding Policy
2. Pastoral Care Policy
3. Managing Critical Incidents Policy
4. Pastoral Care Policy
5. Administration of Medication in School Policy
6. Positive Behaviour Policy
7. Educational Visits Policy
8. Health and Safety Policy
9. Addressing Bullying Policy
10. DE Guidance and Circulars (Appendix 1)

All policies are available on the College Website and Private Folders.

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1. Introduction and Rationale

It is a statutory requirement for all schools in Northern Ireland to have a Drugs Policy and to provide drugs education as part of the school's curricular provision. Our Lady and St Patrick's College, Knock is committed to providing a safe, caring environment which promotes the protection and safeguarding of each individual child.

One of the key aims of the College's Drugs Policy is to keep all our students safe. It is increasingly important that we equip our students, through drugs education, to make informed and responsible decisions to help them cope with living in an increasingly substance-tolerant society. According to Drugs: Guidance for Schools in Northern Ireland (CCEA, Revised Edition 2015), *"In today's society, most people will be exposed to and/or use some sort of drug at some time in their lives. Substance misuse affects all communities in Northern Ireland, crossing gender, cultural and social boundaries. No school, parent or carer can afford to be complacent or think that children and young people are not at risk. Research continues to show that by post-primary school age a significant number of young people are engaging with substances such as alcohol, cigarettes, including electronic cigarettes, or solvents and/or have misused prescribed medicines or other substances."*

This policy reflects the guidance and procedures set out in Drugs: Guidance for Schools in Northern Ireland (CCEA, Revised Edition 2015) and the DE Guidance and Circulars listed on Page 13. It should be considered with the Related Documents listed on Page 1, in particular the College's Managing Critical Incidents Policy and Child Protection/Safeguarding Policy.

Students, parents, staff and governors were consulted in the drafting of this policy.

2. College Ethos

Vision Statement: To Achieve 'Excellence through Care'.

Mission Statement: "Our Lady and St Patrick's College, Knock cares for young people in a way that encourages them to develop to their full potential within a supportive Christian community. We seek to prepare our students to play an active and responsible role in society, and to use their talents for the service of others."

This College Vision Statement and Mission Statement guide us in the task of enabling our students to realise "their full potential" and be prepared to "play an active and responsible role in society". In accordance with the aims and objectives of the College, the College Drugs Policy and our Drugs Education Programme aim to "prepare young people to be confident and creative contributors to society" and "prepare students for adulthood by enabling them to acquire the relevant knowledge and skills". This policy also reflects the College aim to "engage positively with the local and wider community".

3. Designated Teacher for Drugs

The Designated Teacher for Drugs has responsibility for overseeing and monitoring this policy and for coordinating the College's procedures for handling suspected drug-related incidents.

Designated Teacher for Drugs	Ms G McCarthy
Deputy Designated Teacher for Drugs	Mr S Hughes

4. Definitions

The terms **Drug** and **Substance** include any product that, when taken, has the effect of altering the way the body works or how a person behaves, feels, sees or thinks. As well as everyday products such as tea and coffee, **Substances** include:

- alcohol, tobacco and tobacco-related products, including nicotine replacement therapy (NRT), and electronic cigarettes;
- over-the-counter medicines such as paracetamol and cough medicine;
- prescribed drugs, such as antibiotics, painkillers, antidepressants, antipsychotics, inhalers and stimulants such as Ritalin;
- volatile substances such as correcting fluids or thinners, gas lighter fuel, aerosols, glues and petrol;
- controlled drugs such as cannabis, LSD, ecstasy, amphetamine sulphate (speed), magic mushrooms, heroin and cocaine;
- new psychoactive substances (NPS), formerly known as legal highs*, which contain one or more chemical substances that produce similar effects to illegal drugs;
- other substances such as amyl or butyl nitrite (known as poppers) and unprocessed magic mushrooms.

Controlled Substances are legally classified according to their benefit when used in medical treatment or harm if misused. The Misuse of Drugs Act (1971) sets out a range of substances that are controlled under the Act. It is an offence to possess, possess with intent to supply, supply, or allow premises you occupy or manage to be used unlawfully for the purpose of producing or supplying controlled drugs. The Act has four separate categories; Class A, Class B, Class C and temporary class drugs. Substances may be reclassified.

Drug Use refers to taking a drug; there is no value judgement, although all drug use has an element of risk.

Drug Misuse refers to legal, illegal or illicit drug taking or alcohol consumption, which leads a person to experience social, psychological, physical or legal problems related to intoxication or regular excessive consumption and/or dependence. Drug misuse is therefore taking drugs, including prescribed drugs and NPS, that cause harm to the individual, their significant others or the wider community.

5. Aims and Objectives

1. To protect our students from the harm associated with the use and misuse of drugs and substances.
2. To develop a consistent approach to drug-related issues in line with the College's pastoral care provision.
3. To ensure that students, parents and staff are clear about the College's Drugs Policy and how it applies to them.
4. To establish procedures for managing specific incidents of suspected drug/substance misuse.
5. To provide a Drugs Education Programme to help students develop appropriate skills, attitudes and behaviours to resist societal pressures to drink alcohol and/or misuse drugs.
6. To enable students to make informed and responsible decisions and help them cope with living in an increasingly substance-tolerant society.
7. To help to build the factors that protect young people from becoming involved in drug/substance misuse.
8. To provide additional pastoral support for those students identified as potentially vulnerable.
9. To direct students to appropriate services and support, where misuse has been identified.
10. To monitor, evaluate and review this policy and the Drugs Education Programme within agreed timeframes.

*The term 'legal high' is no longer used as it is misleading. These substances are not regulated and there is no way of knowing what chemicals they contain.

6. Roles, Responsibilities and Legal Duties

6.1 Roles and Responsibilities

In accordance with Drugs: Guidance for Schools in Northern Ireland (CCEA, Revised Edition 2015), **All Staff** (teaching and support) should be familiar through training with the content of the College's Drugs Policy. They should also be aware of their legal responsibilities and College procedures, should a suspected drug-related incident occur. They should know who to contact and what to do when a student is suspected either of being in possession of drugs or being under the influence of drugs, including alcohol. It is not the member of staff's responsibility to determine the circumstances surrounding the incident but he/she should:

- assess the situation and decide on the appropriate actions to take;
- notify the Principal/Designated Teacher for Drugs at the earliest opportunity;
- deal with any emergency procedures to ensure the safety of students and staff (Appendix 9);
- forward any information, substance or paraphernalia received to the Designated Teacher for Drugs;
- write a brief factual report on the suspected incident and forward this to the Designated Teacher for Drugs;
- consider the needs and safety of a student when discharging him or her into the care of a parent who appears to be under the influence of alcohol or another substance (staff, who are in loco parentis, should maintain a calm atmosphere when dealing with the parent); and
- invoke safeguarding procedures if a parent's behaviour may place a student at risk.

Staff must be aware of the legal implications of:

- receiving information about a controlled drug;
- discovering a student in possession of a controlled drug; or
- discovering a student is involved in supplying a controlled drug.

A summary of relevant legislation is available at www.ccea.org.uk.

The **Designated Teacher for Drugs** is responsible for:

- coordinating the College's procedures for handling suspected drug-related incidents;
- responding to advice from first-aiders, in the event of an incident;
- informing the Principal, who should contact the student's parent(s) immediately;
- training and inducting new and existing staff in these procedures;
- ensuring that the College's Positive Behaviour Policy has an appropriate statement about any disciplinary response resulting from suspected drug-related incidents;
- ensuring that the College's Pastoral Care Policy has an appropriate statement about any pastoral response resulting from suspected drug-related incidents;
- liaising with other staff responsible for Pastoral Care and the implementation of the Positive Behaviour Policy;
- being the contact point for outside agencies that may have to work with the College or with the student(s) concerned;
- taking possession of any substance(s) and associated paraphernalia found in a suspected incident;
- the student/students involved in a suspected incident;
- completing the College's Drugs Incident Report Form (Appendix 10), which she forwards to the Principal; and
- reviewing and, if required, updating this policy every three years and after a drug-related incident, where learning from the experience could improve practice.

- * The Deputy Designated Teacher for Drugs will work in collaboration with the Designated Teacher for Drugs, and will assume the above responsibilities in the absence of the Designated Teacher for Drugs.

The **Principal** is responsible for:

- determining the circumstances of all incidents;
- contacting the parent(s) of those students involved in any suspected drug-related incident;
- liaising with the PSNI with regards to any incident involving a controlled substance. Failure to inform the PSNI of a suspected incident involving controlled drugs is a criminal offence.

It is the role of the **PSNI** to investigate any criminal or suspected criminal offence. After contacting the PSNI, the **Principal** should confine her responsibility to:

- the welfare of the student(s) involved in the incident and the other students in the College;
- health and safety during the handling, storage and safe disposal of any drug or drug-related paraphernalia, using protective gloves at all times;
- informing the Board of Governors;
- deciding any pastoral or disciplinary response;
- reporting the incident to the Education Authority, if appropriate;
- completing a written report and forwarding a copy to the Chair of the Board of Governors and the Designated Officer in the Education Authority.

The **Board of Governors** should:

- collaborate with appropriate staff, students and parents to support the development and review of the College's Drugs Policy;
- facilitate the consultative process where the College community can respond and contribute to the effectiveness and quality of the College's Drugs Policy;
- ensure that details of this policy are published in the information booklet with the College prospectus;
- ensure this policy is reviewed every three years and after a drug-related incident;
- be fully aware of and adequately trained to deal with suspected drug-related incidents, including alcohol and tobacco, tobacco-related products, electronic cigarettes, and their appropriate disciplinary response.

Parents have the right to expect that the College is a safe and caring environment for their children. They also have a vital role to play in the prevention of drug misuse. Parents should:

- ensure that their child acts in accordance with the College's Drugs Policy, the College's Administration of Medication in School Policy, the College Rules for Students and the College's Positive Behaviour Policy;
- report any alleged drug-related incident of which they are aware to the Designated Teacher for Drugs;
- inform the Designated Teacher for Drugs if they suspect their child is involved in drug misuse;
- liaise with external agencies, as appropriate, to access additional support.

Students have specific responsibilities to ensure the College environment is safe and free from drugs and alcohol. Students must at all times:

- behave in a safe and appropriate manner to ensure their safety and the safety of all members of the College community;
- report immediately to a member of staff when a student is suspected either of being in possession of drugs or being under the influence of drugs, including alcohol;
- act in accordance with the College's Drugs Policy, the College's Administration of Medication in School Policy, the College Rules for Students and the College's Positive Behaviour Policy;
- adhere to the College's agreed Code of Conduct for Students on an Educational Visit;
- make informed and responsible decisions in an increasingly substance-tolerant society;
- engage positively in the curricular opportunities provided to develop appropriate skills, attitudes and behaviours to resist societal pressures to drink alcohol and/or misuse drugs.

6.2 The College's Legal Duties

It is a statutory requirement for all schools in Northern Ireland to:

- have a Drugs Policy and publish details in relation to the policy in their prospectus (Education (School Information and Prospectuses) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2003);
- deliver drugs education to include legal and illegal substances (The Education (Curriculum Minimum Content) Order (Northern Ireland) 2007); and
- inform the PSNI if they believe or suspect a student to be in possession of a controlled substance (Criminal Law Act (Northern Ireland) 1967).

7. Drugs Education in the Curriculum

In accordance with the statutory requirement of the Northern Ireland Curriculum, drugs education is delivered through the Personal Development strand of Learning for Life and Work, to shape attitudes, values and aspirations that bring about resilience in young people.

Drugs education is also actively promoted through:

- Personal Development lessons;
- Learning for Life and Work (GCSE);
- Relationship and Sexuality Education lessons;
- Mentor lessons;
- Assembly;
- Talks by external agencies (approved by SLT);
- Focus of the Week;
- English/Drama/Home Economics/Science/PE.

8. Procedures for Managing Suspected Drug-Related Incidents

8.1 Managing Suspected Drug-Related Incidents

Dealing with suspected drug-related incidents requires extreme sensitivity and the following procedures will help those charged with handling difficult and complex issues to be fair and consistent in their dealings with students.

For the purposes of this policy, a drug-related incident may include:

- a student displaying unusual or uncharacteristic behaviour;
- an allegation;
- suspicion of possession, possession with intent to supply and/or supply of any substance as defined on Page 4;
- finding substance-related paraphernalia.

A Checklist of Roles and Responsibilities When Managing an Incident is provided in Appendix 2. Appendices 3-7 outline how the College will manage suspected drug-related incidents on College premises*, when travelling to and/or from the College and/or when engaged in authorised school-related activities.

Appendix 3	Finding a suspected substance or drug-related paraphernalia on or close to College premises.
Appendix 4	Student suspected of having taken drugs/alcohol on College premises*, when travelling to and/or from the College and/or when engaged in authorised school-related activities.
Appendix 5	Student suspected of possessing/distributing an illegal substance on College premises*, when travelling to and/or from the College and/or when engaged in authorised school-related activities.
Appendix 6	Student in possession of alcohol or unauthorised prescribed medication on College premises*, when travelling to and/or from the College and/or when engaged in authorised school-related activities.
Appendix 7	A parent or carer arrives at school to collect a child and appears to be under the influence of alcohol or another substance.

8.2 Taking Possession of a Suspected Controlled Substance and/or Associated Paraphernalia

The law permits school staff to take temporary possession of a substance suspected of being a controlled drug to protect a student from harm and prevent the student committing the offence of possession. The member of staff should, using appropriate safety precautions, take the suspected substance and any associated equipment and/or paraphernalia to the Designated Teacher for Drugs as soon as possible. She should arrange for its safe storage until the school can hand it over to a PSNI officer to identify whether it is a controlled substance. School staff should not attempt to analyse or taste an unidentified substance. An adult witness should be present when staff confiscate the substance and the school should keep a record of the details, using the College's Drugs Incident Report Form (Appendix 10).

8.3 An Allegation of a Suspected Controlled Drug-Related Incident: Carrying Out a Search

If the Principal/Designated Teacher for Drugs receives an allegation of possession, he/she may need to search a student's locker, if he/she has cause to believe it contains unlawful items, including controlled drugs. However, staff should only search the student's personal belongings, including schoolbag, coat or other items with the student's consent. The Principal/Designated Teacher for Drugs should carry out this search in the presence of the student and another adult witness.

If the College suspects a student of concealing controlled drugs on his/her person or in his/her personal belongings, staff should make every effort to encourage the student to produce these substances voluntarily. The Principal/Designated Teacher for Drugs should ask the student to turn out his/her pockets or schoolbag(s). If the student refuses, the Principal should contact a parent and the PSNI to deal with the situation. **A member of staff should never carry out a physical search of a student, unless there is compelling evidence that the student has committed an offence.** If staff recover a substance or an object that they suspect has a connection with drugs, they should take possession of it and make a full record using the College's Drug Incident Report Form.

8.4 Detaining a Student

When managing a suspected drug-related incident, the College should invite the student(s) concerned to remain in school under the supervision of appropriate members of staff until their parent(s) and the PSNI arrive. If a student refuses to remain, the College cannot detain him/her against his/her will. However, if a member of staff has reasonable grounds to suspect that the student has in his/her possession or has taken a controlled substance, he/she can make a citizen's arrest under Article 26A of the Police and Criminal Evidence (Northern Ireland) Order (PACE) 1989.

The member of staff should make the student fully aware of the implications before making the arrest, confirming:

- that the student is not free to leave once he/she has been informed by the arresting person why he/she is being arrested; and
- that he/she will be detained until he/she is handed over to a PSNI officer who will then deal with the investigation.

Staff must be able to recognise the point where a young person becomes a danger to either him/herself or others. They should also be aware of their duty of protection because they are in loco parentis.

9. Confidentiality

Staff should not give a student any undertaking of confidentiality when dealing with a drug-related incident. They should make the boundaries of confidentiality clear to students and reassure the student that only those who need to know will be informed. If a student discloses information concerning controlled substances, the member of staff must notify the Principal/Designated Teacher for Drugs who will then coordinate the College's procedures for handling suspected drug-related incidents.

When an allegation is made against a student or a member of staff, the College will make every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity while an allegation is being investigated or considered.

10. Disciplinary or Pastoral Care Responses

10.1 Disciplinary Responses

In accordance with Drugs: Guidance for Schools in Northern Ireland (CCEA, Revised Edition 2015), the College has developed a repertoire of responses to reflect different kinds of substance/drug-related offences and to ensure the safety and well-being of other students. In all cases, the Principal, having taken account of various factors, reserves the right to apply what she considers to be the most appropriate sanctions in relation to any incident/behaviour which is deemed unacceptable. The sanctions outlined below apply to a student who is on College premises*, travelling to and/or from the College and/or engaged in authorised school-related activities.

- Any student found to be in possession of and/or possession with the intent to supply a controlled drug/new psychoactive substances will be suspended. The PSNI will be notified and he/she will be recommended for immediate expulsion.
- Any student found to be under the influence of a controlled drug/new psychoactive substances will be suspended. The PSNI will be notified and he/she will be recommended for immediate expulsion.
- Any student who supplies (either gives or sells) a controlled drug/new psychoactive substances to others will be suspended. The PSNI will be notified and he/she will be recommended for immediate expulsion.
- Any student found to be in possession of alcohol will be suspended. He/she may be recommended for expulsion.
- Any student found to be under the influence of alcohol will be suspended. He/she may be recommended for expulsion.
- Any student who sells or shares alcohol with other students will be suspended. He/she may be recommended for expulsion.

10.2 Pastoral Care Responses

During and after any incident, the College will consider the individual needs of any student involved. Where appropriate, this may involve discussion with the student, his/her parent(s), a PSNI officer, the Designated Teacher for Drugs and appropriate pastoral care staff. A referral to counselling or a referral pathway to specific support agencies, including Social Services, may be part of a pastoral care response.

11. Provision of Counselling Services in the College

The College has a Pastoral Support Team who provide Time to Talk sessions, as well as an external counsellor from HOPE who attends weekly. The HOPE provision is part of the DE funded Independent Counselling Service for Schools (ICSS) - an independent, confidential, school-based professional counselling service which uses a process of talking, listening and empowerment to help students make their own decisions. Students are encouraged to self-refer to the Counselling Services or ask a teacher to arrange an initial meeting. The HOPE counsellor is also available to students for 'drop-in' sessions during lunch or break. The College counsellors are happy to support students with any issue which may cause worry or concern. The Counselling Services provided in the College are monitored and evaluated by the Vice Principal (Pastoral Care) and Heads of School. The Vice Principal (Pastoral Care) meets weekly with the HOPE counsellor and keeps a record of all students in receipt of counselling. The Vice Principal also works closely with the Pastoral Support Coordinator who keeps a record of all students in receipt of Time to Talk. Annual HOPE and Time to Talk reports are submitted to the Principal. A list of useful contacts for parents is provided in Appendix 11. Where appropriate, a parent may be advised to consult with a GP and/or secure a referral to an external agency.

12. Guidelines for Administering Prescribed Medication

The College is committed to working in partnership with parents/guardians, health professionals and other agencies to provide a supportive environment for students with medication needs. Prescription and non-prescription medication, as outlined in Section 7.6 of the College's Administration of Medication in School Policy, will be administered in the Medical Inspection suite under the supervision of the College First-Aider. The First-Aider will keep a record (Form AM4) of the date, time and dosage of the administration of medication.

The College will endeavour to support students engaged in a smoking and/or vaping cessation programme on receipt of written advice from his/her GP. Further information is available for students and parents on 'Stopping Smoking Made Easier' - www.publichealth.hscni.net.

13. Emergency First-Aid Procedures

As per the College's Administration of Medication in School Policy, "In all emergency situations a teacher or other member of school staff will be expected to act as a responsible adult or parent in the best interests of the child in recognition of their duty of care".

In the event of a medical emergency, staff should contact the College First-Aider (Mrs C Hughes) and follow the procedures outlined in Appendix 9.

The emergency services should be contacted, if appropriate.

14. Staff Use of Alcohol and Smoking on College Premises, on Educational Visits and Other Social Events

In accordance with DE Circulars 2004/01 (21/01/04) and 2014/25 (15/12/14), the College is a smoke-free and e-cigarette-free environment. The consumption of alcohol is also prohibited on College premises during the school day. Alcohol may be served to adults at specified events with the permission of the Principal.

Staff/volunteers are at all times bound to follow the Code of Conduct for Staff/Volunteers from the College's Child Protection/Safeguarding Policy. This directs staff/volunteers "not to socialise with students who currently attend the College. They should be aware of the potential for actions or speech to be misconstrued in a social setting and, therefore, should avoid such contact, e.g. Year 14 leavers party, Years 13 and 14 formals and pre-formals".

Moreover, taking into account the special circumstances of an educational visit, accompanying staff/volunteers must adhere to the Code of Conduct for Leaders on an Educational Visit (Categories 3, 4 and 5) (Educational Visits Policy - Appendix 10).

Leaders:

- must not use illegal drugs/new psychoactive substances (NPS) during the educational visit;
- must not drink alcohol during the educational visit;
- must not smoke or use nicotine containing products (e-cigarettes) in the presence of students during the educational visit.

When dealing with drug and/or alcohol use/misuse by staff, the Principal and the Board of Governors may consider:

- the College Work Place Policy on Smoking, Drugs and Alcohol (www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk);
- Don't Mix It: A Guide for Employers on Alcohol at Work (www.hse.gov.uk);
- Drugs Misuse at Work: A Guide for Employers (www.hse.gov.uk).

15. Procedures for Communicating to Staff, Parents or Other Relevant Agencies

15.1 Policy: This policy is available for students, parents and staff on the College Website and Private Folders (staff only). A copy of the College's Drugs Policy is also available on request from the school office. A summary of this policy is included in the information booklet with the College prospectus and in the Student Planner.

15.2 Communication Following a Suspected or Confirmed Drug-Related Incident: The College should carefully consider how it communicates information about a suspected or confirmed drug-related incident to staff, students and parents. It should only disclose information to members of staff concerned with the pastoral needs of the individual student(s). It should inform only the parents of the student(s) directly involved of the incident and the subsequent outcomes. Staff should not discuss individual cases with other students. The College may, however, need to make a general statement informing the school community after an incident where rumours may create a negative atmosphere.

15.3 Dealing with the Media: The Principal will deal with enquiries from the media. She will respect the privacy of students and their families and may liaise with the PSNI before issuing a statement.

16. Procedures for Monitoring, Evaluating and Reviewing this Policy

The Designated Teacher for Drugs and Heads of School will monitor and evaluate the success of this policy and its implementation by means of:

- the number of drug-related incidents relating to students of the College;
- feedback from Student Councils;
- student and parental questionnaires;
- discussion at Pastoral Care Meetings;
- post-incident reviews to monitor how effectively drug-related incidents have been dealt with.

The Designated Teacher for Drugs and Heads of School will review and, if required, update this policy every three years and after a drug-related incident, where learning from the experience could improve practice. This review should reflect changing circumstances and trends in substance use in the local community. Any recommendations for significant change are made to the Principal and the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) prior to consultation with students and parents.

Students and parents are encouraged to contact the Vice Principal (Pastoral Care) at any time to express their views on the policy.

17. Procedures for Monitoring, Evaluating and Reviewing the Drugs Education Programme

The Vice Principal (Pastoral) and Heads of School will monitor and evaluate the Drugs Education Programme as part of the annual review of the Personal Development Programmes by means of:

- student and parental questionnaires;
- student focus group meetings with Heads of Year;
- discussion at Pastoral Care Meetings.

The Heads of School will review and, if required, update the Drugs Education Programme to reflect the needs of students and the local community.

18. Training

Training to support staff and Governors in the implementation of the College's Drugs Policy will be provided as deemed necessary by the Principal of the College.

Heads of School train Tutors in the delivery of the Drugs Education Programme as part of staff INSET training in the Personal Development Programmes at the start of each academic year.

A list of useful contacts for parents is provided in Appendix 11.

19. How to Raise a Concern or Make a Complaint about the Administration of this Policy

If you have a concern or complaint about the administration of this policy please contact Ms McCarthy, Vice Principal, in the first instance. If necessary, you may then access and follow the College's Parental Complaints Procedure which is available on the College website at www.knock.co.uk. Should you remain dissatisfied with the College's response after completing the internal complaints procedure, you can bring your complaint to the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman within six months. Contact details for the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman are provided on Page 11 of the Parental Complaints Procedure.

Signed: Mr Leo O'Reilly
(Chairperson of the Board of Governors)

Date: 4th June 2025

Signed: Miss Deborah McLaughlin
(Principal)

Date: 4th June 2025

DE Guidance and Circulars

DE: Pastoral Care in Schools: Child Protection (1999)

DE: Pastoral Care in Schools: Promoting Positive Behaviour (2001)

DE: Supporting Pupils with Medication Needs (2008)

New Strategic Direction for Alcohol and Drugs, Phase 2, 2011-2016 (DHSSPS)

Young Persons' Behaviour and Attitudes Survey (YPBAS) (2013)

Drugs: Guidance for Schools in Northern Ireland (CCEA, Revised Edition 2015)

New Psychoactive Substances (NPS) Factsheet: Public Health Agency (May 2016)

DE Circular 2003/15 (05/09/03) - Education (School Information and Prospectuses) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2003

DE Circular 2004/01 (21/01/04) - Encouraging a Smoke-Free Environment in Schools

DE Circular 2014/25 (15/12/14) - Encouraging a Smoke-free and E-cigarette-free Environment in Schools and Youth Organisations

DE Circular 2015/23 (26/08/15) - Drugs Guidance

DE Circular 2017/04 (Updated 02/09/24) - Safeguarding/Child Protection - A Guide for Schools - Update

DE Circular 2021/13 (10/05/21) - Interim Guidance on the Use of Restraint and Seclusion in Educational Settings

CPSS School Governor Handbook: Safeguarding and Child Protection (Revised September 2021)

EA Health and Safety Manual for Principals and Governors (February 2025)

DE Circular 2025/06 (31/03/25) - Pre-Employment/AccessNI Check Requirements and Safer Recruitment Practices for Staff and Volunteers Working in or Providing a Service for Schools/Education Settings

Checklist of Roles and Responsibilities **When Managing an Incident**

Individual **staff members** should:

- assess the situation and decide on the appropriate actions to take;
- notify the Principal/Designated Teacher for Drugs at the earliest opportunity;
- deal with any emergency procedures to ensure the safety of students and staff (Appendix 9);
- forward any information, substance or paraphernalia received to the Designated Teacher for Drugs;
- write a brief factual report on the suspected incident and forward this to the Designated Teacher for Drugs.

The **Designated Teacher for Drugs** should:

- coordinate the College's procedures for handling suspected drug-related incidents;
- respond to advice from first-aiders, in the event of an incident;
- inform the Principal, who should contact the student's parent(s) immediately;
- take possession of any substance(s) and associated paraphernalia found;
- take initial responsibility for student(s) involved in the suspected incident; and
- complete the College's Drugs Incident Report Form (Appendix 10) and forward it to the Principal.

The **Principal** should:

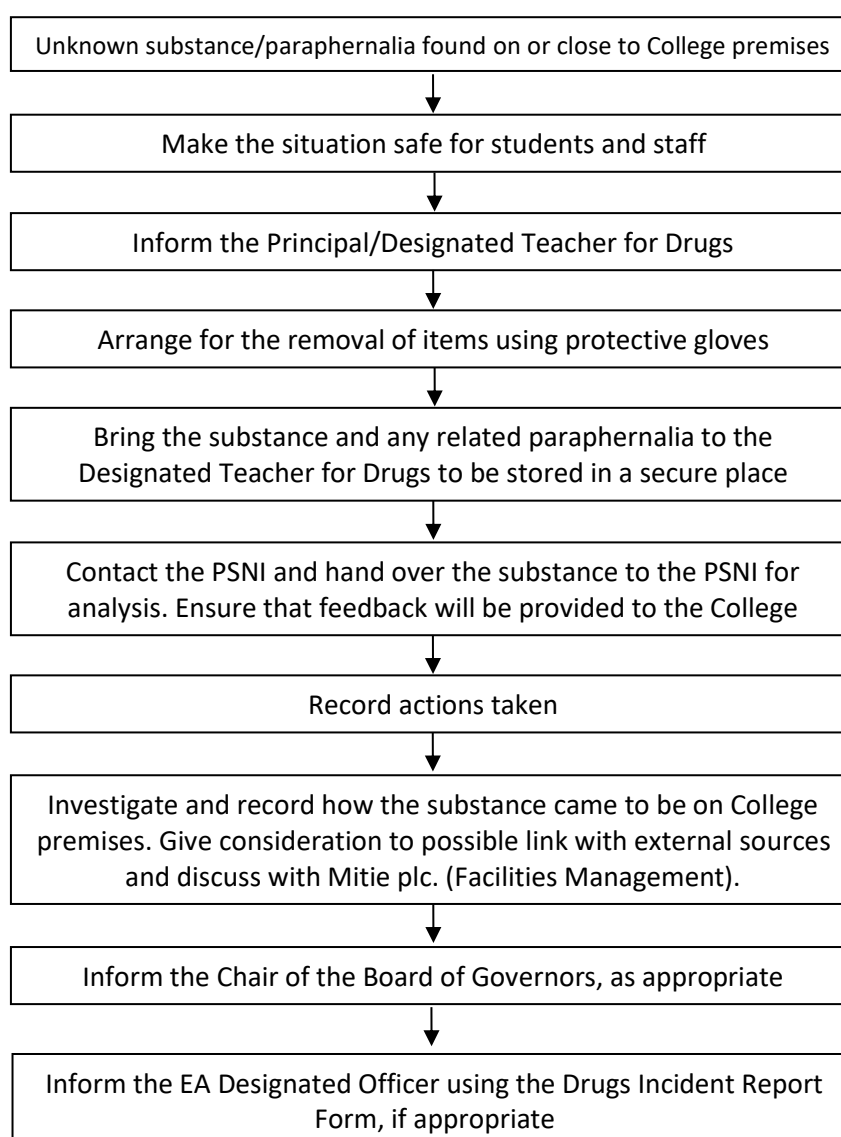
- determine the circumstances surrounding the incident;
- contact the parent(s) of those students involved in any suspected drug-related incident;
- liaise with the PSNI with regards to any incident involving a controlled substance;
- consider the welfare of the student(s) involved in the incident and the other students in the College;
- oversee health and safety during the handling, storage and safe disposal of any drug or drug-related paraphernalia, using protective gloves at all times;
- inform the Board of Governors;
- decide any pastoral or disciplinary response;
- complete a written report and forward a copy to the Chair of the Board of Governors and the Designated Officer in the Education Authority;
- ensure procedures are reviewed and amended, if necessary.

Finding a Suspected Substance or Drug-Related Paraphernalia

On or Close to College Premises

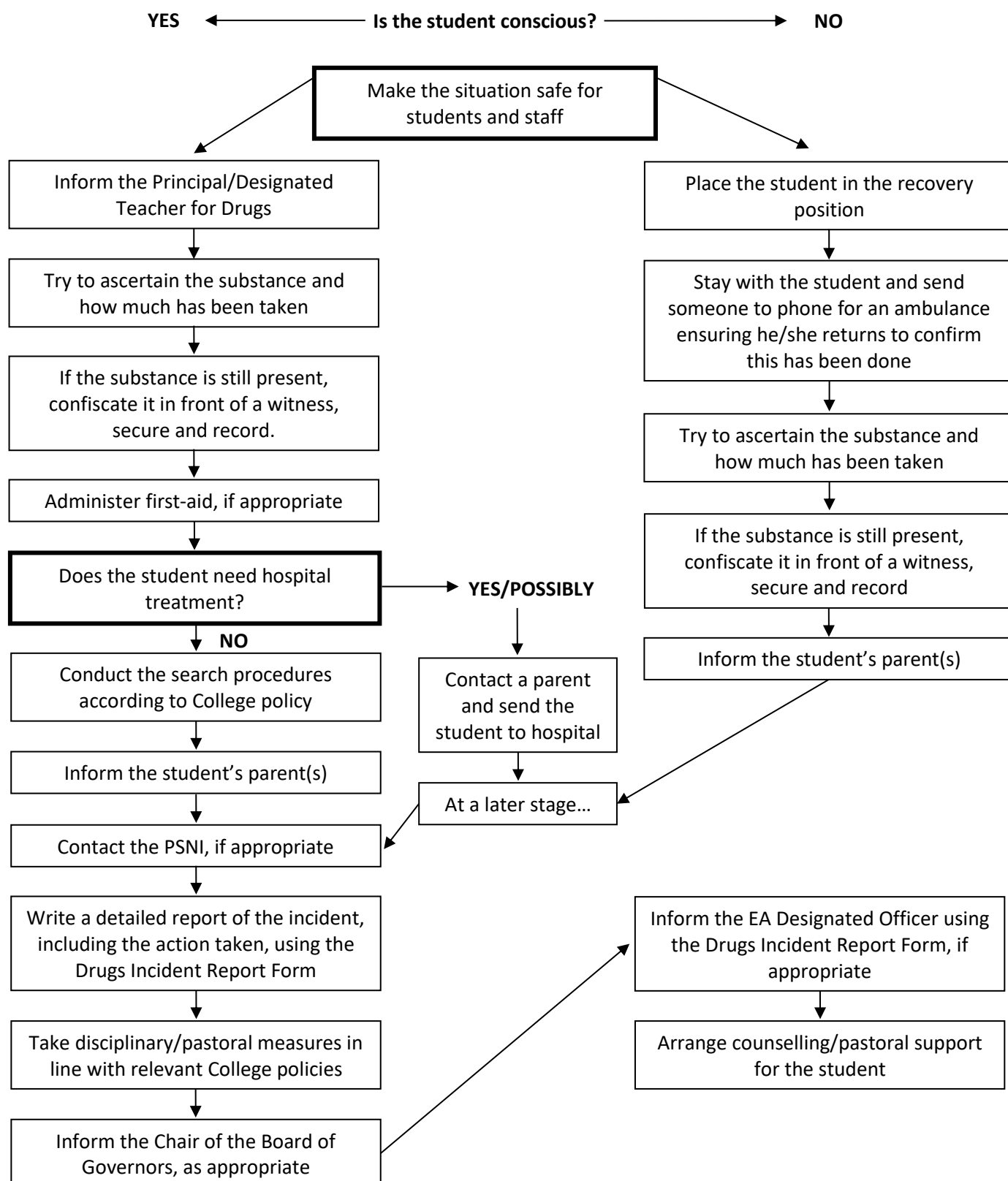
Paraphernalia on College premises is an indication of drug use or misuse. Any member of the College community who encounters any paraphernalia should exercise extreme care, as these items may be hazardous. Anyone who finds a suspected substance or paraphernalia associated with drug use or misuse should report it to the Principal/Designated Teacher for Drugs, who will assess the situation and respond accordingly. This response may include contacting the PSNI.

The following list is not exhaustive. It gives staff an idea of what may indicate the presence of controlled substances: small bottles or pill boxes; hypodermic needles; twists of paper; cigarette papers, lighters and spent matches; electronic cigarette liquid refill bottles (there is a potential risk that refillable cartridges used in some electronic cigarettes could be filled with substances other than nicotine, serving as a new and potentially dangerous way to deliver drugs); roaches (ends of rolled-up cigarettes); punctured cans, plastic bottles or containers; aerosols or butane gas refills; and drugs themselves.



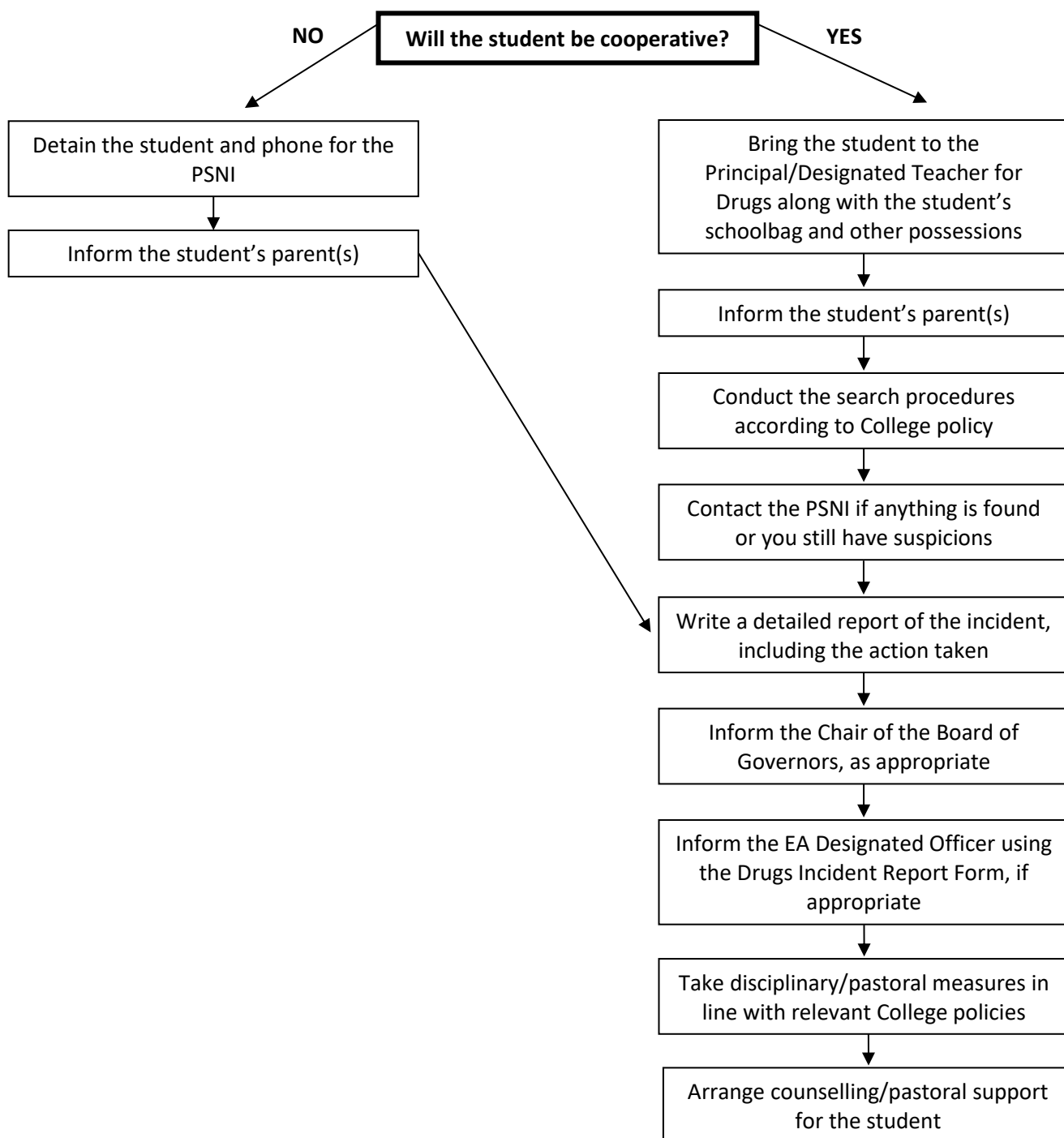
Student Suspected of Having Taken Drugs/Alcohol on College Premises*,
When Travelling To and/or From the College and/or
When Engaged in Authorised School-Related Activities

*or absent from College premises during the school day without permission



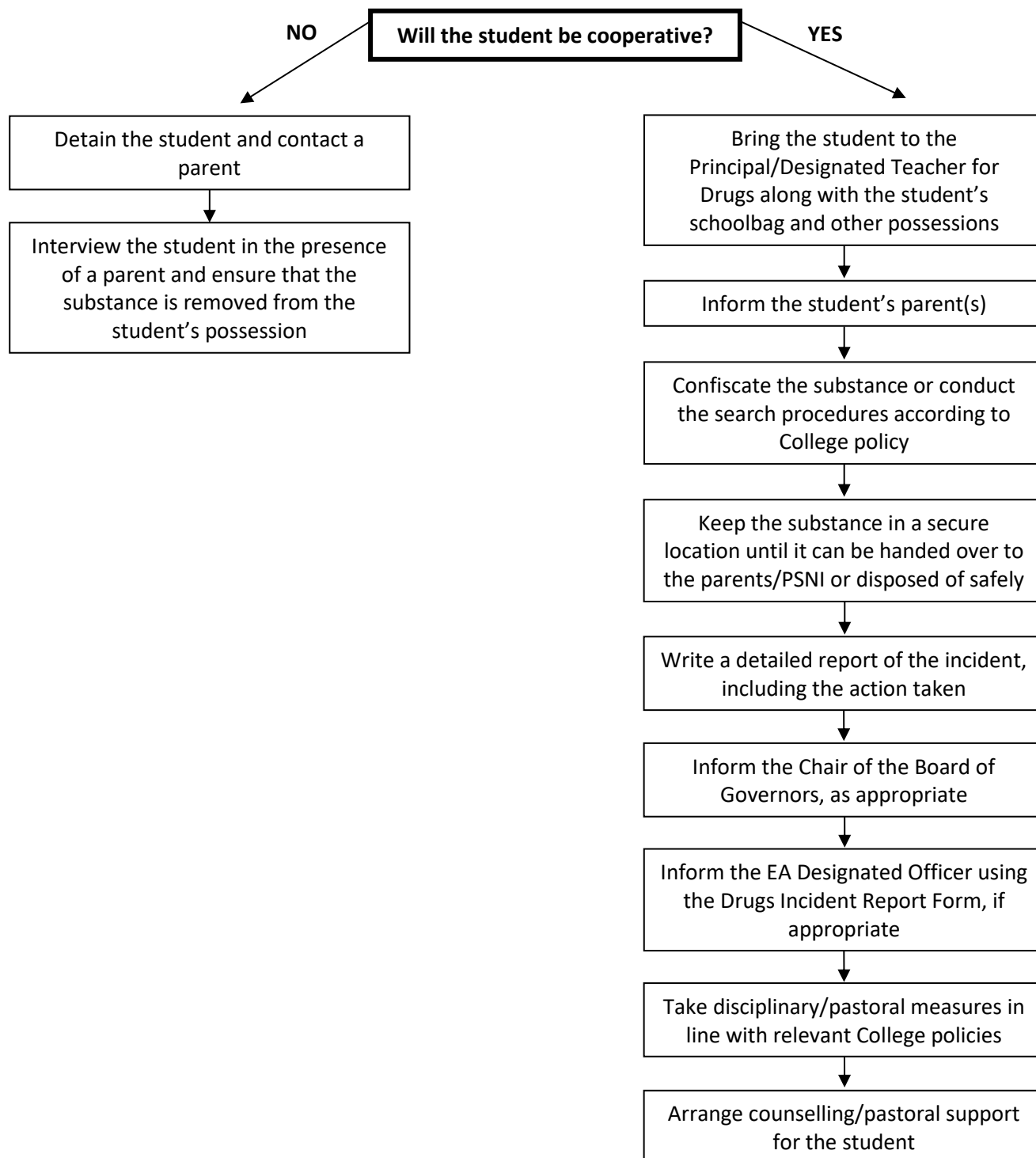
Student Suspected of Possessing/Distributing an Illegal Substance on College Premises*, When Travelling To and/or From the College and/or When Engaged in Authorised School-Related Activities

*or absent from College premises during the school day without permission

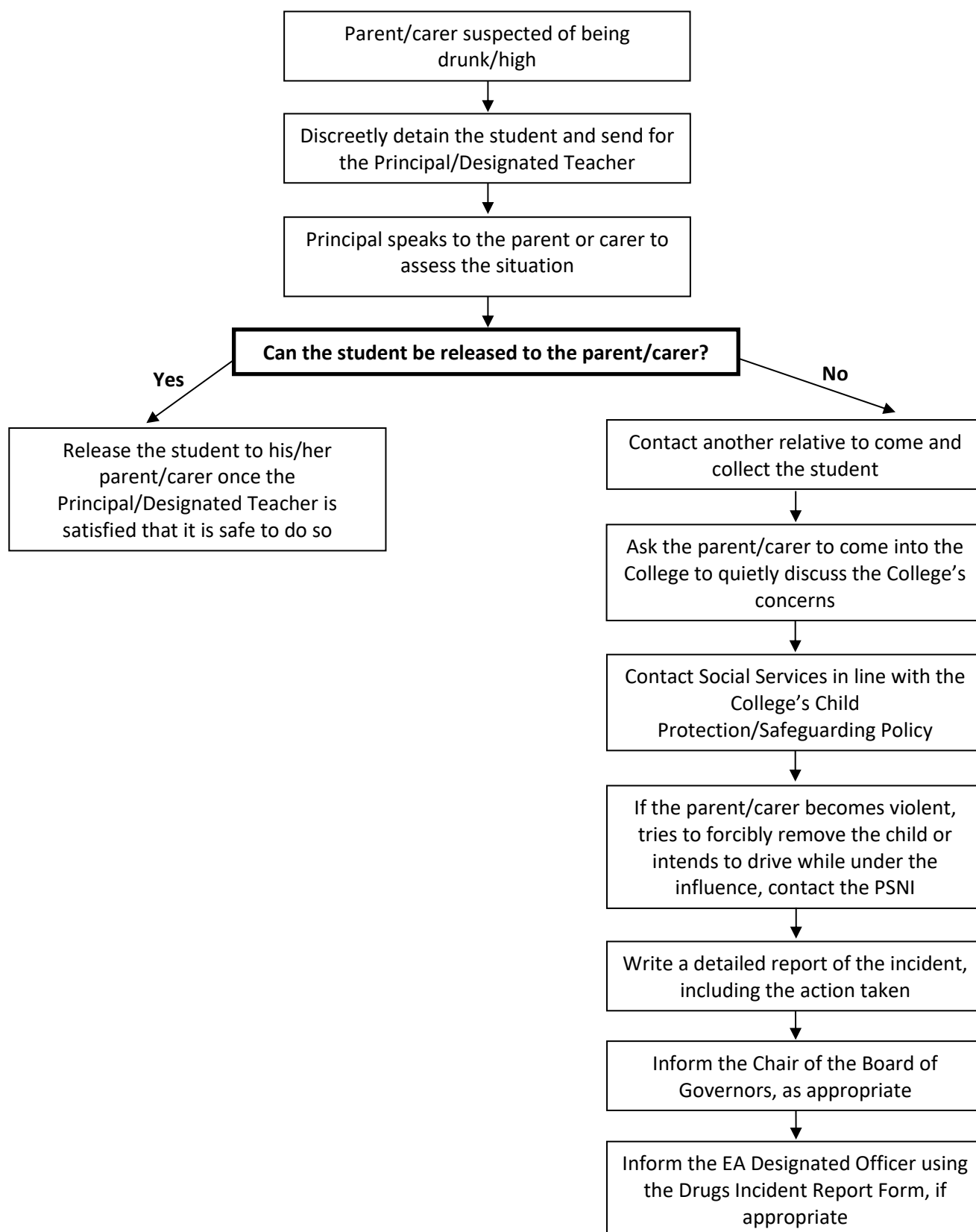


**Student in Possession of Alcohol or Unauthorised Prescribed Medication
on College Premises*, When Travelling To and/or From the College and/or
When Engaged in Authorised School-Related Activities**

*or absent from College premises during the school day without permission



**A Parent or Carer Arrives at School to Collect a Child and
Appears to Be Under the Influence of Alcohol or Another Substance**



Recognising Signs of Substance Use

What to look out for

If someone is having a bad time on drugs, he/she may be:

- anxious;
- tense;
- panicky;
- overheated and dehydrated;
- drowsy; or
- having difficulty with breathing.

What to do

The first things you should do are:

- stay calm;
- calm them and be reassuring, don't scare them or chase after them;
- try to find out what they've taken; and
- stay with them.

If they are anxious, tense or panicky, you should:

- sit them in a quiet and calm room;
- keep them away from crowds, bright lights and loud noises;
- tell them to take slow deep breaths; and
- stay with them.

If they are **really drowsy**, you should:

- sit them in a quiet place and keep them awake;
- if they become unconscious or don't respond, call an ambulance immediately and place them in the recovery position;
- **not** scare them, shout at them or shock them;
- **not** give them coffee to wake them up; and
- **not** put them in a cold shower to 'wake them up'.

If they are **unconscious** or having difficulty breathing, you should:

- call an ambulance immediately;
- place them into the recovery position;
- stay with them until the ambulance arrives; and
- if you know what drug they've taken, tell the ambulance crew; this can help make sure that they get the right treatment straight away.

Emergency First-Aid Procedures

According to Drugs: Guidance for Schools in Northern Ireland (CCEA, Revised Edition 2015), this is the current best advice available on what to do if someone is in difficulty because of misusing drugs.

- It is important to find out what they have taken as this could affect emergency aid, for example, it will help the ambulance crew. Loosen clothing and call for an ambulance immediately.
- If the person has taken a depressant substance, for example, solvents, alcohol, sleeping pills or painkillers, it is likely that they will be drowsy or unconscious. If the person is drowsy, it is important to try to keep them awake by talking to them or applying a cool damp cloth or towel to the back of their neck. You should not give them anything to eat or drink as this could lead to vomiting or choking.
- If they are or become unconscious, put them into the recovery position, clear their airway if blocked and keep checking on any changes to pulse and breathing rates.
- If they stop breathing, begin mouth-to-mouth resuscitation, starting with chest compressions. (If you have not been trained in CPR or are worried about giving mouth-to-mouth resuscitation to a stranger, you can do chest compression-only (or hands-only) CPR). Stay with the person until the ambulance crew arrive and then tell them all the facts, including what the person has taken. This is very important as it could save his or her life.
- If the person has taken a stimulant, such as amphetamines (speed) or ecstasy, they may show various signs of distress. If the person is panicking, try to reassure them. It is important that they calm down and relax. Get them to breathe in and out, deeply and slowly. Help them by counting aloud slowly. If they start to hyperventilate and can't control their breathing, ask them to breathe in and out of a paper (not a plastic) bag, if there is one available.
- If the person has taken a hallucinogen, such as LSD, magic mushrooms or cannabis in combination with ecstasy, they may become very anxious, distressed and fearful. They may act in an unusual way. It is very important to reassure the person – tell them that you will look after them, that they are in no danger, that it is the effects of the substance and that these will soon wear off. You may want to take them to a quiet place, keep other people away and continue to reassure them. Just stay with them and talk calmly to them until the ambulance arrives.



Drugs Incident Report Form

Student Details			
Student Name		Tutor Group	
Date of Birth		Address	

Incident Details			
Date of Incident		Reported by:	
Time of Incident		Location of Incident	

First-Aid Given	YES / NO	Administered by:	
Ambulance Called	YES / NO	Time of Call	

Parent Informed	YES / NO	By whom: Date and Time	
PSNI Informed	YES / NO	By whom: Date and Time	
Name of PSNI Officer		Referral Number	
EA Informed	YES / NO	By whom: Date and Time	

Where Substance is Retained OR		Witnessed by:	
Destroyed/ Passed to PSNI	SUBSTANCE DESTROYED /PASSED to PSNI	Date and Time	

Form Completed by:		Position	
Signature		Date	
Principal's Signature		Date	

Description of the Incident

Actions Taken

Form Completed by:		Position	
Signature		Date	
Principal's Signature		Date	

Useful Contacts

Local/national organisations that provide information and advice and/or resources about cigarettes, alcohol and drugs:

www.ash.org.uk (Action on Smoking and Health)

www.camh.org.uk (Child and Adolescent Mental Health)

www.ccea.org.uk (Dealing with Young People's Alcohol and Other Drug Misuse - a guide for parents and carers)

www.ccea.org.uk (The Power of Teachers in a Young Person's World)

www.deni.gov.uk (iMatter programme)

www.drugsandalcoholni.info

www.drugscope.org.uk

www.gov.uk/penalties-drug-possession-dealing

www.lifeline.org.uk

www.mindingyourhead.info

www.nhs.uk

www.publichealth.hscni.net (Stopping Smoking Made Easier)

www.talktofrank.com (Call FRANK: Tel: 0300 123 6600)