



Schools Department

Substance Misuse Guidelines for Schools 2013

Part 2: Responding to Substance Misuse Incidents in Schools

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Responding to Substance Misuse Incidents in Schools

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.0.1 This document offers guidance on the management of substance misuse related incidents. Incidents may relate to children and young people, a member of staff or other adult.
- 1.0.2 Most children and young people will go through life without being involved in any incident involving substance misuse. However, substances are readily available and accessible within communities and it is good practice for organisations to prepare for managing incidents involving legal and illegal substances.
- 1.0.3 It is also good practice to ensure that a system for recording an incident of substance misuse is in place. Accurate and factual records of substance misuse related incidents are essential. Records should be completed and filed as soon as possible after the incident.

1.1 What is a substance misuse related incident?

- 1.1.1 The types of incidents will vary from an early warning of suspected misuse to overt illegal substance misuse with threats to the health of children and young people. Organisations must be prepared for all possibilities. The types of incidents include the following:
- Litter related to substance misuse around premises e.g cans, syringes, etc.
 - Suspicion, rumour or allegations about an individuals activities.
 - Disclosure about substance misuse on the premises or while the children/young people are the responsibility of the school.
 - Children and young people clearly displaying signs of substance misuse or under the influence of substances.
 - Possession of substances while children, young people or adults are the responsibility of the school.
 - Use of substances while children, young people or adults are the responsibility of the school.
 - Selling or dealing substances while children, young people and adults are the responsibility of the organisation.
 - Possession, use or selling of substances by individuals who are not the responsibility of the organisation but are on the premises (e.g. parents/carers, members of the public).

2.0 DEALING WITH AN INCIDENT INVOLVING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

2.1 Suspicion and rumour

It is important that the greatest care is taken in any attempt to substantiate rumour. False accusations can lead to repercussions or breakdown of communication and trust. It is vital not to promote further rumours. Discretion and sensitivity are paramount.

2.1.1 Key questions to ask

2.1.2 Is the incident concerning a pupil at the school?

If not, notify the appropriate organisation.

2.1.3 How did you hear about it or find out about it?

How reliable is the source of information?

2.1.4 Can the suspicion/rumour be substantiated (bearing in mind the need for confidentiality?)

- Are there any witnesses?
- Is the incident confirmed by other staff or pupils?
- Is there any physical evidence, such as the condition/behaviour of the pupil, or substance(s) still being present?

2.2 Suggested procedures for managing incidents of substance misuse by pupils

If Medical Help is Required	If Medical Help is Not Required
1. a. Provide first aid as necessary, minimise risk of pupil harming him/herself or others. AND/OR b. If appropriate and necessary send for an ambulance. Arrange for an appropriate adult to accompany the pupil to hospital. 2. Provide as much information about the substance(s) taken to the hospital staff. 3. Inform the Headteacher (if unavailable, the deputy Headteacher). 4. Access another member of staff as witness if available. Headteacher or Designated Lead 5. Arrange for safe removal of the substance(s) (see Handling of Substances Pg 9). 6. Contact the police for advice and/or involvement (see Involvement of the Police Pg 15). 7. Inform the parent/carer of the incident and whether the police have/have not been contacted. Invite the parent/carer to come to the school to discuss the incident further. 8. Arrange for staff and other pupils involved in the incident to be interviewed with witnesses/parental consent, to establish the facts of the incidents and obtain corroboration. Records of these meetings must be kept. 9. Inform the Inclusion Manager of the incident as soon as possible. If it is a safeguarding issue, contact Head of Safeguarding.	1. Inform the Headteacher (if unavailable, the deputy Headteacher). 2. Access another member of staff for assistance. 3. Minimise the risk of the pupil harming him/herself or others. Retain evidence if at all possible. 4. The pupil (and their belongings) should be taken to a private room and supervised preferably by two members of staff. Headteacher or Designated Lead 5. Arrange for safe removal of the substance(s) (see Handling of Substances Pg 9). 6. Remind the pupil of the school policy regarding substance misuse and the procedures to be followed to investigate the incident, including the intention to contact the parent/carer and the police. 7. Ask pupil to hand over any substance. If reluctant to do so, explain that the request will be repeated in presence of parents and possibly Police. 8. Contact the police for advice and/or involvement (see Involvement of the Police Pg 15). 9. Inform the parent/carer of the incident and whether the police have/have not been contacted. Invite the parent/carer to come to the school to discuss the incident further. 10. Inform the Inclusion Manager of the incident as soon as possible. If it is a safeguarding issue, contact Head of Safeguarding.
If Medical Help is Required	If Medical Help is Not Required
10. Arrange interview of pupil(s) concerned (it would not be appropriate to interview the young person when intoxicated). Records must be kept. 11. Fully record all details of incident, misuse or seizure on incident report form. (Incident Report form in Appendix 2, page 20). 12. Send anonymised incident report form to the Inclusion Manager.	11. Arrange interview of pupil(s) (it would not be appropriate to interview the young person when intoxicated). Records must be kept. 12. Fully record all details of incident, misuse or seizure on incident report form. (Incident Report form in Appendix 2, page 20). 13. Send anonymised incident report form to the Inclusion Manager.

2.2.1 Checklist for interviewing pupils over a substance misuse incident

- Remind child/young person of the policy and procedures regarding substance misuse including the intention to contact parents/carers and police where necessary.
- Ask child/young person to hand over any substances. If reluctant to do so, explain that the request will be repeated in the presence of parents/carers and possibly the police.
- Parents/carers should be allowed access to the child/young person with a member of staff present at all times.
- Where police involvement is necessary every attempt should be made to have parents/carers present.
- If a formal police investigation is necessary, then questioning of witnesses and offenders should be kept to a minimum.
- Once the investigation has finished, give consideration to the guidance, which has been given in terms of sanctions and the involvement of other agencies.

3.0 CONFIDENTIALITY

As far as possible staff should make it clear to the pupil what degree of confidentiality can be expected at the time of the discussion. **Teachers should be aware that they cannot guarantee complete confidentiality in all situations as this is dependant upon age and circumstance.**

3.1 Key questions to consider when developing a confidentiality statement

3.1.1

- What degree of confidentiality can pupils expect?
- Who needs to know about the substance related incident?
- How much personal information should be disclosed?
- Are there safeguarding considerations?
- Does the young person need to be referred to the relevant substance misuse agency? (Sources of Help, Support and Further Information).
- Consideration also needs to be given to the appropriateness of discussing any incident where the conversation may be overheard, for example, in the staff room, in the playground, etc.
- These recommendations also apply to School Governors and other school staff.
- Any records of confirmed substance misuse incidents must be stored securely to ensure confidentiality.

- 3.1.2 Schools also need to distinguish between behaviour that breaks school rules and criminal behaviour. Criminal activity, such as the dealing of substances, should always be reported to the police, irrespective of whether the child is excluded from school (Please see section Involvement of the Police pg 15).

4.0 INCIDENTS INVOLVING ADULTS AND STAFF

4.1 Incidents involving adults

When responding to situations involving adults (including visitors), safety should be a priority. Some situations will require action in collaboration with other agencies to ensure the safety and protection of any children and young people. Other incidents will require observation, data collection and discussion before proceeding.

4.2 Incidents involving staff

Substance misuse related incidents involving staff should be covered by the organisation's Employment and Disciplinary Policy and linked to the Drug and Alcohol at Work Policy. All organisations should ensure guidance and procedures are in place to respond to allegations, concerns about, or evidence of substance misuse by staff, or supply of substances to children and young people. These should set out the separate processes, which may be initiated in response to any allegations, concerns or evidence. The primary concern should be the welfare of the children and young people. This is of greater urgency than staff disciplinary procedures. (For support, please see Employment Support Service, Appendix 3 pg 23).

5.0 RECORDING OF INCIDENTS

All confirmed incidents should be recorded on the **Incident Recording Form** (Appendix 2 pg 20). Categories of incidents may include:

5.1 Drug and/or alcohol related litter

- 5.1.1 Any drug and/or alcohol related litter found on or near school premises. This could include; smoking related equipment e.g. bongs, pipes, needles, syringes or burnt foil.

5.2 Possession

- 5.2.1 Evidence that a pupil is in possession of substances (legal or illegal) whilst on school premises, on a school-organised trip, or on school transport.

5.3 Supply

- 5.3.1 Evidence that a pupil has passed on illegal drugs to another pupil on or near school premises, on a school-organised trip or on school transport.

5.4 Under the influence

- 5.4.1 Evidence that a pupil is under the influence of substances (legal or illegal). Evidence of a change in behaviour, mood or cognitive processes that cannot be explained as a result of other influences e.g. illness, bullying, problems at home etc.

5.5 Incidents involving non-pupils

- 5.5.1 Evidence that an individual who is not a pupil of the school (e.g. parent/carer, ex-pupils, visiting pupils from other schools, general public, etc) is in possession, is supplying or is under the influence of substances, on or near school premises, on a school-organised trip or on school transport.
- 5.5.2 Any confiscation or disposal of substances should also be recorded on the incident report form. Incident Recording Forms should be kept in a central file to ensure confidentiality and enable accurate monitoring. This can also be used as a tool to inform future revision or development of substance misuse education. Please ensure that a copy of the form is sent to the Local Authority's Inclusion Manager within 24 hours.

6.0 HANDLING OF SUBSTANCES

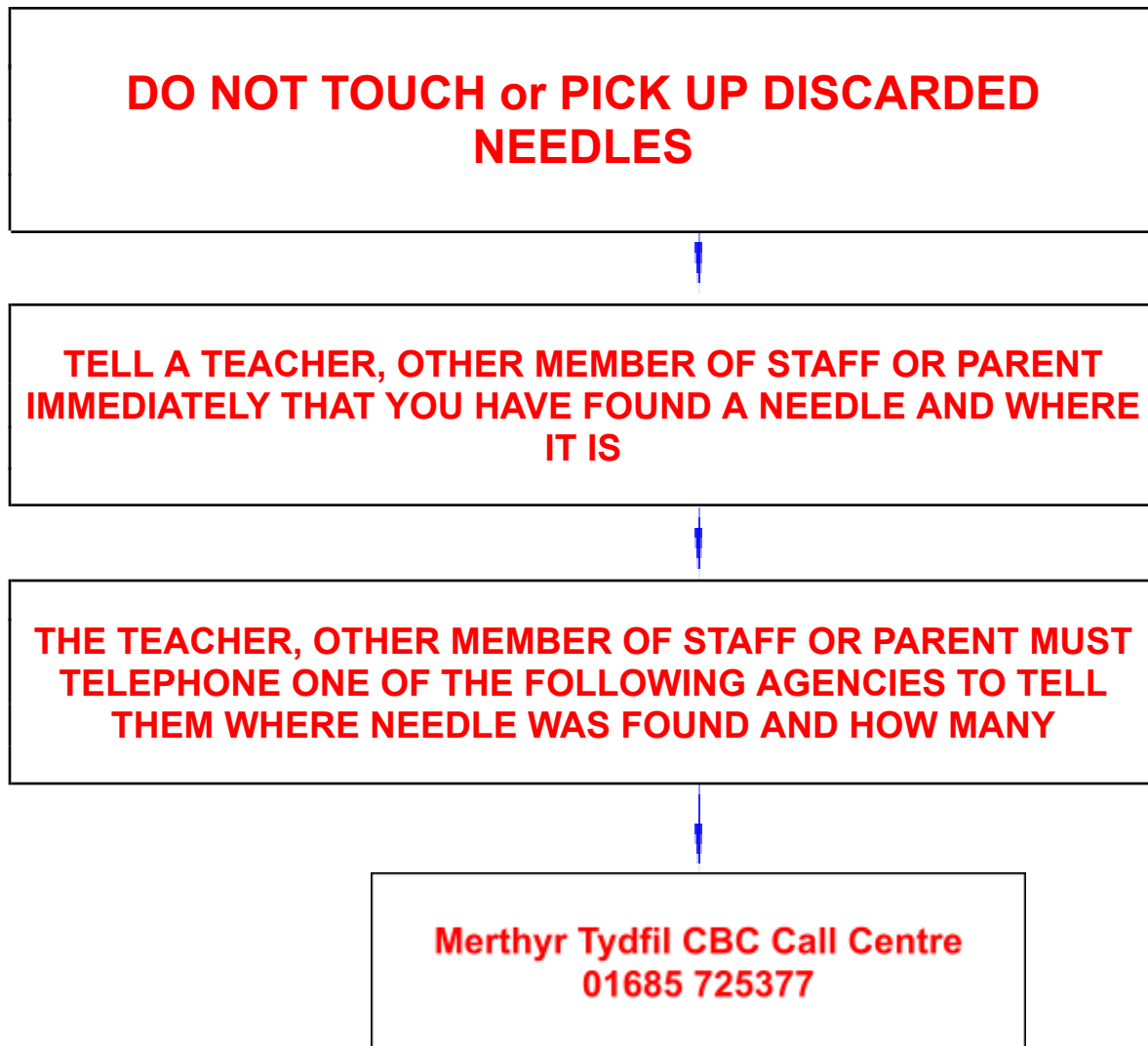
6.1 Confiscating substances

- A teacher may take possession of a suspected substance if that action has the purpose of preventing another person from committing or continuing to commit an offence.
- When a member of staff confiscates a suspected substance every attempt should be made to obtain an adult witness to confirm the substance has been placed in a secure place.
- Information on the above should be recorded and countersigned immediately.
- The substance should be held until a decision has been made as to the appropriate course of action unless the pupil has been admitted to hospital.
- The best practice would be for the teacher to inform the local police and ask advice on the action to be taken regarding destruction.

6.2 Litter disposal – needles & syringes

- Discarded needles and used syringes present health and safety implications.
- Advice should be obtained from the local authority's Environmental Health Department (**contact Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Call Centre on 01685 725377**) or your local substance misuse service providers who will be able to provide guidance, training and equipment relating to the safe disposal of needles and syringes.
- Training and guidance for staff around these aspects of incident management are imperative.
- It is strongly advised that the flow chart below is displayed within the school and that all staff are made aware of this County Borough wide protocol.

6.3 Flowchart - what to do if you find discarded needles/syringes



REMEMBER

**IF BEFORE 9AM or AFTER 5PM TELEPHONE THE FOLLOWING
NUMBER
Lifeline
01685 385231**

**ONLY A PERSON FROM ONE OF THE AGENCIES ABOVE MUST
TOUCH OR PICK UP THE NEEDLE**

They have special equipment to do this with. If needle(s) are found in a dangerous place where other/ younger children can get access then ensure that access to this area is restricted until cleared.

IF YOU INJURE YOURSELF ON A SYRINGE – The first thing is DO NOT PANIC. Wash the wound with clean running water. Encourage bleeding. Do not suck the wound. Cover with a dressing and seek medical advice immediately from your GP or Accident and Emergency department.

7.0 LINKED PROCEDURES

Managing substance misuse incidents will cross the boundaries of other procedures carried out by organisations. The following list suggests those that need to be cross referenced to the substance misuse incident procedure.

- Administration of medication
- Bullying
- Arrangements for reporting absence and keeping confidential records
- Extra-curricular activities including residential excursions
- Child protection and safeguarding including contact with health, social services and police
- Support for learners, discipline and exclusion
- Staff welfare and disciplinary arrangements
- Health and safety at work
- Handbooks or other information produced by the organisation for children and young people and/or their parents/carers
- Lone worker policies

8.0 DEALING WITH THE MEDIA

8.0.1 Substance misuse incidents receive a high level of media attention.

8.0.2 If you receive a telephone call or visit from any media source, do not be put under any pressure. You do not have to respond there and then. The Headteacher should refer the journalist or reporter to the following individuals in line with the Media Protocol that exists within the Local Authority.

Corporate Communications Team, Room 415, Civic Centre, Merthyr Tydfil.

PR & Marketing Officer, Tel: 01685 725166

E-mail: corporate.communications@merthyr.gov.uk

- 8.0.3 The press may treat any incidence of substance misuse involving young people as sensational material. Consideration for the best interests of the young person may not be their priority.
- 8.0.4 Enquiries from parents of participating pupils should be met with straightforward factual information and a clear account of action taken. Names should not be disclosed to parents except to the parents of the pupil(s) concerned.
- 8.0.5 Confidentiality can be hard to uphold amongst the group as young people will often share information between themselves. It is usually best to give a clear, brief and simple account of what has happened to all members of the group, omitting names as soon as possible, to avoid rumours and misunderstandings, e.g., 'Two pupils were found last night drinking alcohol. As this is strictly against the rules, they have been sent home.'

8.1 Sensitive or difficult issues

- 8.1.1 It is important that a high standard of behaviour is maintained and that parents feel confident that substance misuse will not be tolerated at school events/activities.
- 8.1.2 Some of the courses of action may seem harsh or unacceptable to some staff, especially with respect to alcohol. However, when responsible for young people it is important to remember that alcohol use/misuse can be a serious issue for young people who respond to positive examples set by staff.

9.0 SANCTIONS/EXCLUSIONS

- The Welsh Government for Wales Circular 076/2012 'Guidance for Substance Misuse Education' identifies the need for schools to have a clear procedure for the management of substance misuse related incidents within their policy documents.
- A school's substance misuse policy should clearly state the school's position on substance use/misuse and the disciplinary measures which will be applied to related incidents. Schools should not only develop a variety of responses, incorporating both sanctions and support, reflecting the different kinds of substance related offences,

but also take steps to ensure that any excluded pupil has access to professional advice and support from health and appropriate agencies. A full list of agencies to contact can be found in Part 1 of the Substance Misuse School Guidelines.

- **It is important that pupils have a clear understanding of the sanctions that apply to substance use/misuse and that these sanctions are displayed in school, as well as in the school prospectus.**
- The Headteacher retains the responsibility for deciding how to respond to particular incidents, taking into account factors such as the age of the pupil concerned, whether the incident involves one pupil or a group of pupils and whether there is evidence of particular peer pressure.
- Guidance for Headteachers on exclusions can be found in the Authority's Procedural Handbook on Exclusion of Pupils.
- **The Local Authority's Schools department strongly advises that pupils involved in such incidents should not be automatically excluded from school, but where such exclusions do occur, they should be for a fixed term, and that permanent exclusion should only be warranted as a final sanction when all reasonable steps have been taken.**

10.0 POWERS TO SEARCH AND OBTAIN EVIDENCE

- Teachers, Headteachers or other staff **SHOULD NOT** remove or search personal belongings of a pupil or conduct body searches.
- This could be considered an assault.
- If it is felt a pupil is concealing any substance, the police should be contacted for advice.

11.0 SUPPORT FOR PUPILS AND PARENTS/CARERS

- The parents/carers of pupils involved in substance use and misuse incidents should be contacted at the earliest opportunity.
- Schools should consider the most appropriate method of informing/involving parents/carers.
- Every support should be given to both the pupil and the parents/carers by the school. The family may also need the help and support of other specialist agencies (in Part 1 of the Substance Misuse School Guidelines). These agencies/organisations will be able to offer re-assurance and accurate information.
- Where it is considered that a pupil may be at risk of significant harm it will be necessary for a referral to be made in accordance with the Authority's Safeguarding Procedures (see Appendix 1 Pg 16).
- Although the normal practice would be to involve parents/carers, there will be circumstances where this is inappropriate. This includes

the situation where, for example, the parent is likely to over-react causing physical injury to the pupil, or if the parents/carers are significantly contributing to problems experienced by the young person.

12.0 SUBSTANCE MISUSE IN THE FAMILY

- Parent/carer substance misuse can have a huge impact on a child or young person.
- It is important that where a school becomes aware that a pupil is experiencing difficulties because of substance use and misuse by other family members, they may wish to offer help by accessing support for pupils and parents from agencies. A full list can be found in Part 1 of the Substance Misuse School Guidelines.
- If there is evidence or it is suspected that a child may be at risk of significant harm as a consequence of substance use or misuse within the family, it will be necessary for a referral to be made in accordance with the Authority's Safeguarding Procedures (Appendix 1)

13.0 INVOLVEMENT OF GOVERNING BODY

- 13.0.1 Headteachers should notify the chairperson (or vice chair if not available) of the governing body about any substance-related incident. This should be done in advance of any information being generally known.
- 13.0.2 Details should be provided in such a way that the identities of the pupils are not disclosed. This will ensure:
- confidentiality is preserved (pg 6); and
 - the chairperson is not compromised or precluded from considering any subsequent decision of the Headteacher to exclude the pupil from school.
- 13.0.3 If individual governors enquire about an incident, the Headteacher should refer them to the chairperson of the governing body.
- 13.0.4 Schools should involve the governing body in the development of a whole school policy on substance misuse. Subsequently, governors will be involved in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the school's policy.

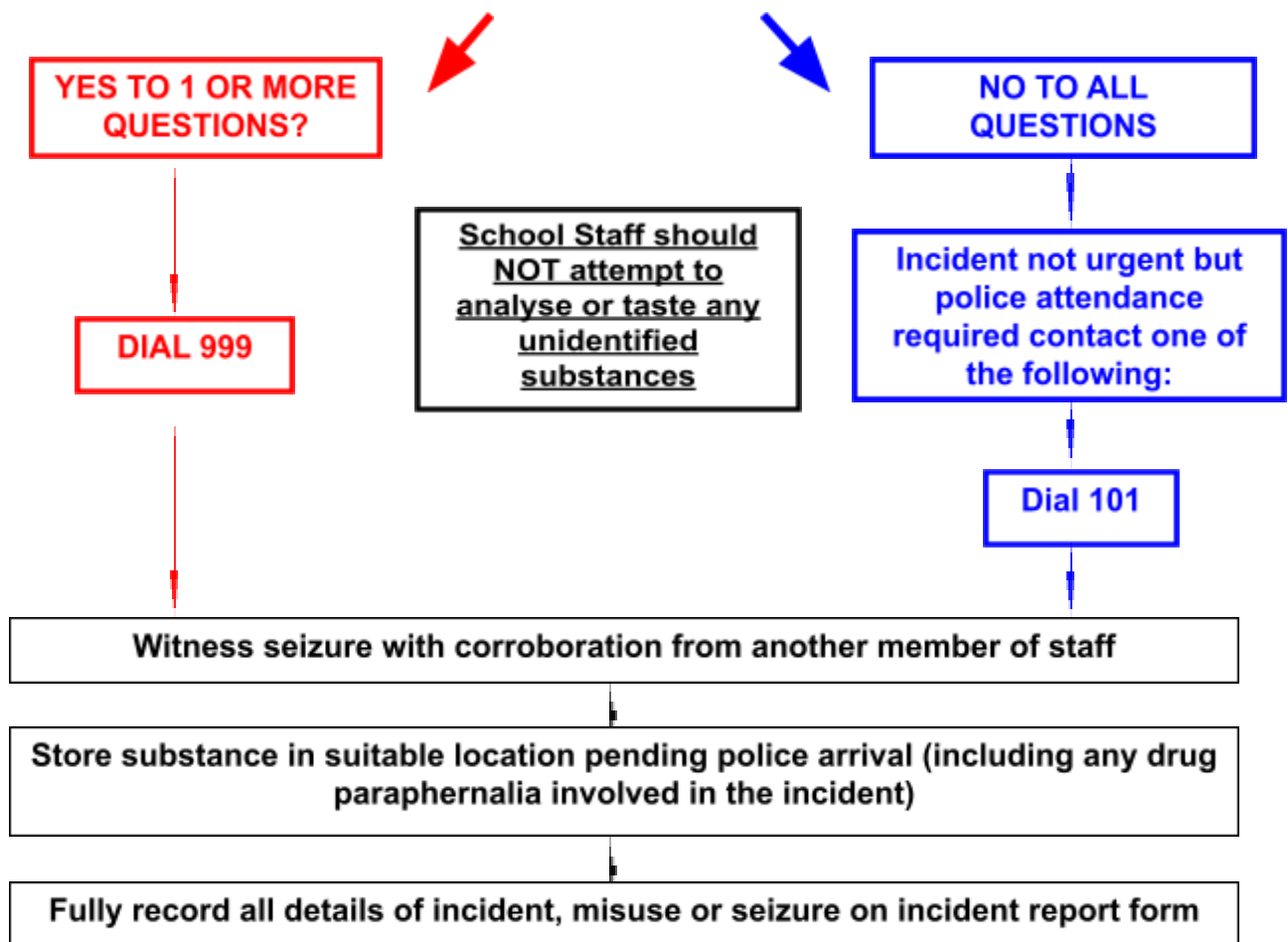
14.0 INVOLVEMENT OF THE POLICE

(This information is taken from South Wales Police Protocol and may be subject to change)

14.0.1 In all cases criminal activity should be reported to the police. The following flowchart provides guideline only for when to involve the police in an incident.

14.0.2 **ASK THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:**

- Is there immediate danger present?
- Has serious injury occurred or is there clear potential for injury?
- Is a crime in progress or imminent?
- Is a suspect present?
- Will a witness be lost if police do not arrive quickly?
- Is there clear potential for further crime to be committed?
- Is a victim of crime suffering from extreme distress?



YOU NEED TO COMPLY WITH THIS PROCESS TO ENSURE YOU CANNOT BE ACCUSED OF COMMITTING AN OFFENCE OF POSSESSION OR SUPPLY YOURSELF

14.0.3 For advice, the contact numbers for the School Police Liaison Officers:

- For Bishop Hedley, Afon Taf or Greenfield please contact PC Angela Rogers on 01685 724257.
- For Cyfarthfa, Pen Y Dre or EOTAS please contact PC Wayne Matthews on 01685 724805.

Please leave a message if you reach answer phone.

SECTION FOUR: Appendices

Appendix 1 – Safeguarding Issues

Children Whose Own Behaviour Places Them At Risk of Significant Harm: Misuse of Substances

The Cwm Taf Safeguarding Children Board acknowledges the serious concern about the increased misuse of substances by children and young people. The Child Protection Procedures provide an appropriate framework for inter-agency working together in respect of such children where they are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.

Involvement with drugs by children and young people does not necessarily of itself constitute significant harm. For these purposes, Section 31(9) of the Children Act 1989 defines harm as the impairment of health or development. Health is defined as physical or mental health, development as physical, intellectual, emotional or social.

Significant harm, or its likelihood, must be assessed in respect of the individual child. Some factors to be taken into consideration during this assessment are:

- The child's age and level of understanding;
- The pattern of use e.g. the type, quantity and method of administration, issues of frequency, escalation of misuse, chaotic or stable use, methods of procurement;
- The impact of drug misuse on the child's physical and mental state e.g. noticeable and serious deterioration in child/young person's health, impaired emotional or behavioural developments etc;
- The effectiveness of support currently provided.

Drug/substance misuse by parents does not automatically indicate child neglect or abuse. In families where drug use is a factor, a comprehensive assessment of

the relationship between parental drug use and child care is needed. Each case should be assessed individually.

Any child involved in misusing drugs may be a child in need and as such require assessment and the provision of services outside the child protection procedures.

Drug or alcohol use by children and young people, or their parents/carers, may require a child protection investigation, following the guidelines when referring to Community Services.

All staff should be aware of the All Wales Child Protection Procedures.

Copies are available in each school from the headteacher and/or the designated child protection teacher. Copies are also available from the All Wales Child Protection Procedures website (www.awcpp.org.uk).

WHAT DO YOU DO IF A CHILD MAKES AN ALLEGATION OF ABUSE OR YOU SUSPECT ABUSE?

You must report the allegation made to your Designated Child Protection Liaison Teacher/Deputy. They will take the responsibility for making any referrals required. Your Designated Child Protection Liaison Teacher/Deputy will support you and advise you on how to continue working with the child concerned and decide on action to be taken.

If it is urgent and you cannot contact your Designated Child Protection Liaison Teacher/Deputy, you must call the Social Services Intake Team or the Police direct. The contact telephone number and email address are included in **the flowchart below**.

Complete a written record of your concerns using the 'Multi Agency Referral Form' as soon as you are able and send to the Children's Services Intake Team, also send a copy to the Chief Education Officer and Principal and Senior Officer Education Welfare Service.

- You must explain that you cannot keep the information confidential
- You should explain to the child that you are going to tell someone and explain who and why
- The child is not always in a position to judge risks themselves and they have a right to protection

The following are good practice guidelines when talking to the child:

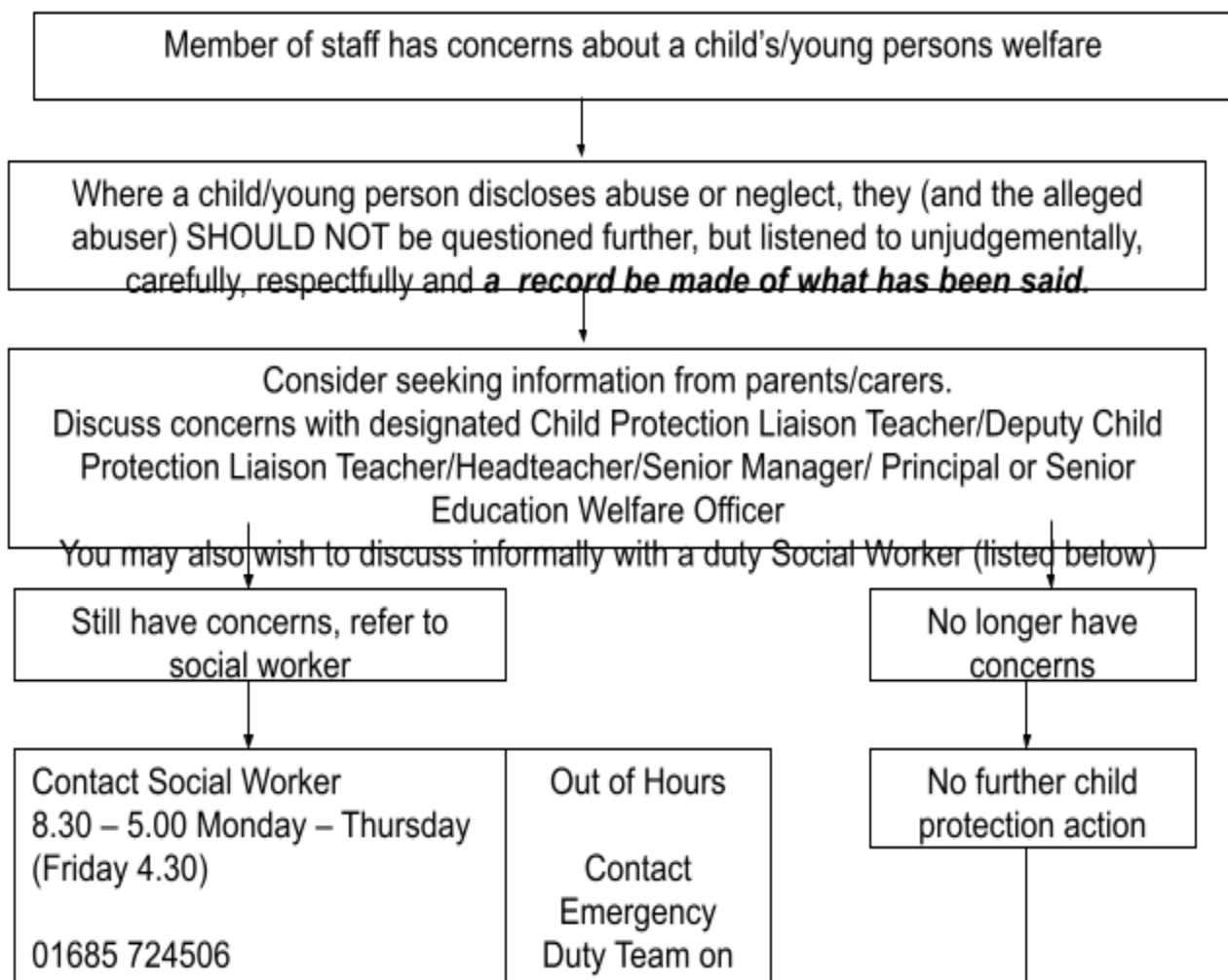
- Avoid 'closed' or 'leading' questions - don't ask any more than you have to as this could prejudice an enquiry made by Social Services and/or the Police.
- Be attentive, calm and reassuring.
- Do not be judgmental.
- Take the child seriously.
- Avoid condemning the alleged abuser.
- Avoid promises you cannot keep.
- Don't make assumptions about the child's feelings.
- Tell the child he/she that it's not his/her fault.
- Never promise to keep the abuse a secret.
- Tell the child what will happen next.
- Don't ask why.
- Have time.

IF A CHILD IS AT IMMEDIATE RISK CONTACT THE POLICE OR SOCIAL SERVICES.

DO NOT CONTACT THE ALLEGED ABUSER.

DO NOT INVESTIGATE. YOUR ROLE IS TO LISTEN, REFLECT AND ACT.

What to do if you are worried a child/young person is being abused or neglected



Appendix 2 – Incident Recording Form

SCHOOL:	DATE OF INCIDENT:	DATE AND TIME REPORTED:	
		REPORTED BY:	
YOUNG PERSON(S) INVOLVED:	NAMES AND ADDRESSES:	HOME (AND MOBILE) CONTACT NUMBER:	
DESCRIPTION OF INCIDENT:			
CATEGORY OF INCIDENT (Please circle one)	ACTION TAKEN	BY WHOM	CONTACTED
Drug Related Litter Possession Supply Under Influence Other			
Drug Related Litter Possession Supply Under Influence Other			
Drug Related Litter Possession Supply Under Influence Other			
CATEGORIES: Drug Related Litter / Possession / Supply / Under Influence / Non learner			
NAME / DESCRIPTION OF SUBSTANCE:	AMOUNT / SIZE:	REMOVED BY:	WHERE RETAINED:
SIGNED: _____		WITNESSED BY: _____	
TITLE: _____		TITLE: _____	
DATE: _____		DATE: _____	

CONTACTS MADE (where appropriate)

CONTACTS	CONTACT NAME & NUMBER	CONTACT MADE BY	TIME & DATE CONTACT MADE	ENQUIRY / REFERRAL (APPOINTMENT TIME)
PARENTS/CARERS				
POLICE				
AMBULANCE				
OTHER HEALTH PROFESSIONAL				
SOCIAL SERVICES DUTY TEAM				
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH				
EDUCATION DEPARTMENT				
DRUG SUPPORT AGENCY				
OTHER:				

OUTCOME: ATTACH ANY DETAILS OF ACTION / PLANS AS APPROPRIATE

SIGNED: _____

WITNESSED BY: _____

TITLE: _____

TITLE: _____

DATE: _____

DATE: _____

Form to be returned immediately following incident and copy to be held centrally:
Sarah Bowen, Inclusion Manager
Schools Dept,
Education Office
Unit 5

**Room 105
Pentrebach
Merthyr Tydfil
CF48 4TQ**

Appendix 3 – The Employment Support Service



The Employment Support Service:

- Offers training to all levels of staff in order to promote awareness of substance misuse issues and to encourage a safe and healthy working environment
- Provides support to staff affected by substance misuse (or have significant others who are affected) to enable them to remain in employment and to improve their general health

This is a free, confidential service offering advice and support

Is it for you?

- Are you worried about your alcohol &/or drug use?
- Have you missed work or been late because of a hangover?
- Do you feel your concentration is affected by alcohol, drugs or prescribed medication?
- Is the alcohol &/or drug use of someone close to you having an impact on your life?

For more information:

Email ess@drugaidcymru.com

Call 01685 721991

www.drugaidcymru.com