

# ST. VINCENT DE PAUL CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL



## Alcohol, Drugs & Gambling at Work Policy

*(Last update from HfL: March 2020)*

*The Professional Associations/Trade Unions have been consulted on this document, and HfL recommends it for adoption.)*

### **Mission Statement**

*"We are called to be the hands and face of Jesus as we learn,  
love and grow together"*

Reviewed: Autumn 2020  
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Reviewed by: Resource Committee

Signature:



Chair of Governors

Date ratified: 8<sup>th</sup> December 2020

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## **1. Scope and Objectives**

The Governing Body is committed to providing a safe and productive work environment and to promoting the health, safety and wellbeing of its employees. The Alcohol Drugs and Gambling at Work Policy is designed to ensure that employees are aware of the risks associated with alcohol /drug misuse and compulsive gambling and the consequences of their actions.

Alcohol and drug misuse has a detrimental effect on health, influences work performance, employee relationships, reduces efficiency, increases sickness absence and increases health and safety risks not only for the individual concerned but also for others, for example colleagues, pupils, parents and contractors. Furthermore, the effects of alcohol or drug misuse are likely to be detrimental to the schools' reputation.

Compulsive gamblers, unlike most casual gamblers who stop when losing or set a loss limit, are compelled to keep playing to recover their money which is a pattern that becomes increasingly destructive over time and risks the ongoing employment relationship through financial problems including bankruptcy, legal problems including imprisonment, poor work performance and relationship problems with colleagues.

The policy applies to all employees of the school. This policy does not form part of any employees' contract of employment.

This policy is supported by and should be read in conjunction with other school policies, particularly; Health and Safety, Disciplinary and Code of Conduct.

This policy is not intended to apply to "one off" incidents or offences caused by alcohol or drug misuse at or outside work where there is no evidence of an ongoing problem and which may damage the School's reputation which will be dealt with under the disciplinary policy and procedure.

## **2. Purpose**

This policy covers the use and misuse of intoxicating substances, which include alcohol, solvents, legal and illegal drugs, prescription and over the counter medicines and other substances that could adversely affect work performance and/or health and safety. It also covers gambling addiction.

It is school policy to:

- Promote a responsible attitude to the consumption of alcohol and gambling
- Prohibit gambling, the taking of or being under the influence illegal drugs or alcohol during working hours
- Offer help and support to those with an alcohol, drug related or gambling problem
- Treat addiction to gambling alcohol and or drugs as a health problem and arrange for employees to seek professional advice

## Definition

Drug misuse refers to the use of illegal drugs and the misuse, of prescribed drugs and substances which change how the body works or feels such as solvents. Drug misuse can harm the misuser both physically and mentally and through the misuser's actions, other people's environments.

Alcohol misuse is defined as a level of consumption which affects an employee's ability to carry out their duties. The simultaneous use of alcohol and drugs is particularly dangerous.

Compulsive gambling/gambling disorder is the uncontrollable urge to keep gambling even when something of value is at stake, such as a relationship or work. Compulsive gambling is a serious condition which can destroy lives.

### 3. Employee Responsibilities

All employees are expected to ensure that their personal consumption of alcohol or use of prescribed drugs does not interfere with their ability to perform their duties safely and competently. Being under the influence of drink and or drugs while at work could lead to suspension from employment while a disciplinary investigation takes place.

Any employee suffering from gambling drug and or alcohol addiction should declare such dependency to the Headteacher. Failure to accept support or continue with treatment could lead to disciplinary procedures.

Employees are responsible for allowing sufficient time for intoxicating substances to leave their system before reporting for work, this can apply to the next day.

Employees are forbidden from gambling, consuming alcohol or taking illegal drugs at any time during the working day (including breaks). Employees must not use Trust property for online gambling.

Where it is suspected that a member of staff may be under the influence of either drugs or alcohol they will be offered a voluntary alcohol breath test or saliva drug test in order to refute the allegation.

If there is any doubt about the individual's ability to drive safely, following suspected alcohol or drugs use, the school will arrange and pay for a taxi for the individual to be transported home. If this is refused, and the school believes the member of staff intends to drive then the school will have no option other than to inform the police.

*(Adopted by the school in consultation with Diocese)*

Any breach of these conditions are likely to be investigated under the schools disciplinary procedure.

Exceptions apply to prescribed drugs for the individual or over the counter medicines used for their intended purpose (in accordance with the instructions given by the prescriber, pharmacist or manufacturer) and where the safety of the individual or others with whom they come into contact is not compromised. Employees must notify their Headteacher if the medication is likely to cause side effects prior to its use.

The Headteacher must be informed in all cases where Class A or B drugs have been prescribed for medical use. eg, Methadone.

Any breach of employees' responsibilities under this policy are likely to be dealt with in accordance with the School's Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.

All employees have the duty to report any concerns relating to any breach of the principles in this policy to ensure a safe environment and in recognition of a duty of care for others. All reports should be made to a member of the senior leadership team.

#### **4. Possession or Dealing in Drugs**

Possession or dealing in drugs should be reported to the Police and the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) immediately. The School will inform its HR Adviser. The School should not alert the employee of their intention to call the police and should avoid sending them home until advice has been sought. The employee will not be alerted of the School's intention to call the police and will not be sent home.

#### **5. Driving Bans related to Drugs and/or Alcohol**

Where employees are required to drive as part of their conditions of employment are disqualified from driving as a result of an alcohol or drugs related offence the School may consider redeployment, if appropriate within school. If redeployment within school is not an option then the employee's continuing employment may be at risk.

#### **6. Consumption of Alcohol at School events etc.**

Whilst this policy stresses that the consumption of alcohol during the working day, including breaks is forbidden, there may be circumstances where the consumption of alcohol may be permitted at the discretion of the Governing Body. The Governing Body will approve each occasion when the sensible consumption of alcohol will be permitted e.g. PSA social events (see Alcohol on Site Form – if short notice then the form may be approved by the Headteacher and the Chair of Safeguarding Committee and decision reported back to FGB). Clear guidelines must be put in place so that all employees are fully aware of what the expectations are for the consumption of alcohol at such events and the consequences of a breach of such

guidelines e.g. investigation under the schools disciplinary procedures. However all employees must demonstrate responsible behaviour and remain professional throughout any social event where despite alcohol being present the employee is considered to be “at work”

## **Appendix 1 - Procedure**

### **1. An employee who appears to be under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol while at work.**

The Health and Safety Executive guidance states that if an employer knowingly allows an employee under the influence of excess alcohol or drugs to continue working and thereby placing the employee or others at risk, the employer could be prosecuted. Therefore, where suspected consumption of alcohol or drugs is judged to affect work performance or conduct, the Headteacher or designated person will need to take immediate action.

- 1.1** Send the employee home so that they and others are removed from potential risks. Consideration should be given to their ability to return home safely, e.g. for them not to drive themselves home.
- 1.2** Consider whether it is appropriate to initiate a disciplinary investigation in accordance with the school's Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.

### **2. An employee who appears to have a drug and/or alcohol problem**

Employees who are identified as possibly experiencing alcohol/drug related problems, whether by observation, poor performance, conduct or by their own voluntary admission, must be given the following assistance:

- 2.1** If the Headteacher has concerns that an employee may have a drug or alcohol problem, he/she must first arrange an informal meeting to discuss his/her concerns with that employee. The employee may be accompanied by a Union or Professional Association representative or a work colleague and no one else.
- 2.2** During the initial meeting, the Headteacher should suggest to the employee that support is provided by way of a referral to the Occupational Health Unit. The employee should be made aware that his/her co-operation is required during the referral process in order for the Occupational Health Unit to be able to provide full support and advice
- 2.3** The Headteacher should make it clear to the employee that any necessary time off will be granted for treatment / support in accordance with the leave of absence policy.

The employee should return, as far as possible, to their normal duties during and after treatment, following a risk assessment. This will depend on their ability to perform those duties or on the consequent risk of relapse due to a return to those duties. If a return to normal duties is not considered to be appropriate, redeployment or other suitable options may be considered by the governing body.

### **3. When to Apply the Disciplinary Procedure**

The school will, where appropriate to do so, adopt a constructive and supportive approach when dealing with employees who may be experiencing drug or alcohol dependency/addiction. This means that employees seeking assistance for a substance misuse problem will not have their employment terminated simply because of their dependence/addiction.

Notwithstanding the above, there will be circumstances where breaches of conduct whether dependency-related or not, will be treated as a disciplinary matter and may result in the summary dismissal of the employee. Examples of issues that will be subject to disciplinary action, including the possibility of dismissal, are:

- working under the influence of alcohol or drugs;
- incapacity through alcohol or being under the influence of illegal drugs;
- being convicted of any criminal offence connected with alcohol or drugs, regardless of whether the offence took place inside or outside the workplace;
- reasonable suspicion of activities, such as possession, consumption, dealing/trafficking, selling, storage of controlled drugs, either on work premises or engaging in such activities outside of work.

This list is not exclusive or exhaustive. Disciplinary action will in all cases be proportionate to the circumstances of the breach of this policy.



## **Appendix 2 – Signs of Alcohol, Drug Abuse and Compulsive Gambling**

Listed below are examples of the kind of symptoms, which someone with an alcohol, drugs or gambling related problem may present. **Not all these symptoms will appear in every instance and some of these symptoms may not be connected with alcohol or drugs** in which case signs, which give cause for concern, should be addressed appropriately.

### **Absenteeism/Irregular attendance**

- Multiple instances of unauthorised leave
- Frequent Monday or Friday absences
- Unusually high absenteeism (e.g. for colds, flu, gastritis and general malaise)

### **Reporting for work**

- Excessive lateness, for example on a Monday morning or returning from lunch
- Smelling of alcohol
- Unkempt appearance/lack of hygiene

### **Absenteeism whilst at work**

- Repeated absences from the post, more often than necessary during working hours
- Frequent trips to the toilet
- Overlong tea/coffee breaks
- Leaving work early

### **Lack of concentration and confusion**

- Work requires greater effort
- Jobs take an unreasonable time to complete
- Difficulty in recalling instructions and details
- Increasing difficulty in handling complex assignments
- Difficulty in recalling errors

### **Spasmodic work patterns and deteriorating performance**

- Alternate periods of high and low productivity
- Increasing general unreliability and unpredictability
- Missed deadlines
- Mistakes due to inattentiveness or poor judgement
- Complaints from colleagues about behaviour
- Avoidance of manager or colleagues

### **Impact on colleagues**

- Repetitively asking colleagues for loans
  - Delays in repaying colleague loans
  - Being pre-occupied with gambling but denying any problems
- Being part of a group/work section where money/equipment begins to go missing

## Appendix 1– Support Groups

Organisation	Details	Telephone	Website
<b>Optum UK Employee Assistance Programme</b>	Schools have the option of buying into the Employee Assistance Programme provided by Optum UK. It offers online, telephone and face to face counselling on a range of personal and professional themes such as financial advice, relationship and bereavement support, stress counselling, work/life balance, increasing confidence etc. and supports both the employee and their family.		<a href="http://www.optum-uk.com">www.optum-uk.com</a>
<b>HSE (Health &amp; Safety Executive)</b>	Useful section on drugs and alcohol in the workplace	NA	<a href="http://www.hse.gov.uk/alcoholdrugs/links.htm">www.hse.gov.uk/alcoholdrugs/links.htm</a>
<b>Alcohol Concern</b>	A national agency working to reduce the incidence and cost of alcohol misuse and improve services to those with alcohol misuse problems.	0300 1231110	<a href="http://www.alcoholconcern.org.uk">www.alcoholconcern.org.uk</a>
<b>Alcoholics Anonymous (AA)</b>	Website and telephone line supporting a network of local AA groups in the UK.	0845 769 7555	<a href="http://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk">www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk</a>
<b>NHS</b>	'Alcohol – Know your Limits' website	NA	<a href="http://www.nhs.uk/units">www.nhs.uk/units</a>
<b>The Drinkaware Trust</b>	An independent charity, Drinkaware aims to increase awareness and understanding of the role of alcohol in society, enabling individuals to make informed choices about their drinking.	0207 7669900	<a href="http://www.drinkaware.co.uk">www.drinkaware.co.uk</a>
<b>FRANK</b>	A free, confidential 24 hour drugs helpline and informative website	0300 1236600	<a href="http://www.talktofrank.com">www.talktofrank.com</a>
<b>Gamblers Anonymous</b>	Gamblers Anonymous is a fellowship of men and women who have joined together to do something about their own gambling problem and to help other compulsive gamblers do the same.	N/A	<a href="http://www.gamblersanonymous.org.uk">www.gamblersanonymous.org.uk</a>
<b>Gamble Aware</b>	Informative website on Gambling and how to find help.	0808 8020133	<a href="http://www.gambleaware.co.uk">www.gambleaware.co.uk</a>
<b>Gamcare</b>	Gamcare provides support, information and advice to anyone suffering through a gambling problem.	0808 8020133	<a href="http://www.gamcare.org.uk">www.gamcare.org.uk</a>
<b>Education Support Partnership</b>	Free telephone support line for all education staff in England, Wales and Scotland	08000 562561	<a href="http://www.educationsupportpartnership.org.uk">www.educationsupportpartnership.org.uk</a>
<b>Samaritans</b>	Free 24 hour helpline to provide emotional support for people who are experiencing feelings of emotional distress or despair, including those which may lead to suicide	08457 909090	<a href="http://www.samaritans.org">www.samaritans.org</a>

