



WENDYWOOD HIGH SCHOOL - POLICY ON SUBSTANCE ABUSE

1. Introduction

The School recognises the extreme seriousness of the abuse of drugs, and in view of the implications of this, is committed to dealing with the problem through this policy provision. This document is thus designed to provide learners, parents, teachers and others associated with the school, with a clear guideline as to the principles and procedures and the school's approach in dealing with the escalating problem of drug and alcohol abuse.

The word 'drug' refers to any chemical substance which has the potential of being abused. This includes cocaine, marijuana, ecstasy, appetite suppressants, cough mixtures, glue and tippex thinners (i.e. not only illegal substances). The word 'alcohol' refers to any liquid substance which contains alcohol. Drug abuse is the excessive or inappropriate use of a chemical substance which results in the impairment of an individual's physical, mental or emotional state of well-being.

2. Principles of the School Policy

The following policy statements will provide the background and context for the school's approach in dealing with all reported cases of drug and alcohol abuse at the school.

2.1. Confidentiality

The school is conscious of the sensitivity and the complexity of the issue that cuts across all economic, gender and race barriers and will do everything in its power to ensure that learners affected, or perceived to be affected by the use of drugs, will be protected from stigmatisation and discrimination. The confidentiality of the learner and the family will be safeguarded at all times, unless the pupil becomes a danger to him/herself or others - in which case it may be necessary to discuss the case with the appropriate persons.

2.2. Prevention is better than Cure

The school is committed to education and informing learners on the various types of drugs, the methods by which drugs are made available and the dangers of using drugs. Educational methods will include: posters, news articles, guest speakers and Life Orientation lessons. The school social worker Mrs Gibbins and the Care Team will also be available to provide pupils with education on the dangers of using drugs. This service will be provided to groups of learners and or individual employees as might be decided during disciplinary cases, in cases where a learner seeks information or any other situation that might arise.

2.3. A programme of compassion and support

The school, in association with accredited professionals and organisations and with the consent and participation of parents, will assist learners with abuse and dependency problems. The cost of such services shall be determined on a case by case basis taking into account the extent of the

problem, the implications to the learner and her/his peers and the family circumstances from which the learner comes from.

2.4. Disciplinary Action

Disciplinary action will be taken in the case of learners who abuse drugs at school, who come to school under the influence, or are in possession of drugs. Action will be fair and just and will be determined according to the norms and procedures of discipline applicable at the school and may involve a contract, suspension, school community service or expulsion in serious cases.

3. Procedures for dealing with problems of drug abuse

The following procedure will be followed in all cases where the drug abuse is reported and or suspected.

3.1. Counselling and rehabilitation

When there is reason to believe a learner is at risk of experimenting with drugs, or is associating with others believed to be experimenting, the Care Team will approach the learner and parents with their concerns and suggest professional counselling in matters relating to the dangers of drugs, life skills, peer pressure etc. Such a programme will be undertaken on basis voluntary and will be kept in the strictest confidence.

When there is reason to believe that a learner is abusing drugs, or is suffering at the hands of others who are doing so, the matter can be referred to the Grade Tutor, HOD Guidance or a member of the school's Care Team. Steps will be taken to investigate and verify the seriousness or otherwise of the problem. The Care team member will then provide assistance in determining the best possible course of rehabilitative action.

The identity of any user of drugs who approaches the Care Team directly, will not appear on school records except in the case of a learner who is not co-operative and does not comply with a rehabilitation programme agreed on between the Care Team and parents of the learner.

3.2. Drug Testing

If there is evidence of suspected drug abuse the Principal, Grade Tutor, HOD Life Orientation may request a search or urine test. According to the Amendment of Section 1 of Act 24 of 2005, the Principal or her delegate may, at random, search or test any learner for illegal drugs if there is reasonable evidence of illegal activity. The Principal will, within one day, inform the parents that a random test or search and seizure was done. If the learner tests positive the parents will be liable for the cost of the testing.

If learners volunteer to go for testing via the Care Team, the results will remain confidential and a rehabilitation programme discussed with the parents and agreed to by the parents, will be organised.

3.3. Disciplinary action

Disciplinary action will be taken in the following circumstances:

- Where the learner has tested positive for drugs,
- Where the learner makes drugs available to other learners,
- Where a user has a negative effect on any other learner e.g. influencing them to use drugs,

Appendix A – Substance Abuse Policy

- If a learner comes to school under the influence of drugs, (this includes on any organized school outing, event or camp),
- If a learner fails to meet the conditions for rehabilitation as agreed to by the pupil, parents and the school.

Any disciplinary hearing in respect of a learner will be conducted in terms of the Code of Conduct. Action may involve a contract for rehabilitation which will be signed by the learner, the parents/guardian, and the school Principal.

Where a learner is in possession of, distributing and/selling illegal drugs or alcohol at school, that learner will be liable for immediate suspension and possible expulsion. In such a case the school will contact the parents and refer the matter to the police for further investigation.

4. Conclusion

Agreement to abide by the spirit and terms of this policy as part of the general Code of Conduct of Wendywood High School, is a fundamental condition for acceptance into the school and for participation in all its programmes and activities.

5. Sign-Off

On the 18th November 2014 at Wendywood High School

The Principal of the School	For the SGB
Mr S Prince	Mr E Goldstone – The Chairperson