



Regent House School
Preparatory Department

Drugs Policy

'Achieving excellence together'

DRUGS POLICY

1. Introduction and Ethos.

The agreed aims of the school will be developed through a broad and balanced curriculum in an atmosphere which is inclusive. We believe pupils and staff have the right to learn and teach in an environment which is safe, friendly, peaceful and fair.

Staff will contribute to the development of this ethos by:

- Providing a happy, safe and stimulating working environment in which each child feels secure and valued as they develop.
- Encouraging positive relationships between staff and pupils and amongst the pupils themselves.
- Nurturing and celebrating children's success and achievements to build self confidence and self esteem.
- Our procedures and organisation to encourage pupils to contribute positively to school life and to develop a strong sense of identity within our school family.
- Setting clear standards for discipline and to enforce these consistently for the good of all and in a way which is understood by the pupils.
- Maintaining, nurturing and valuing partnership with parents and the wider community.

2. Rationale

We, at Regent House School Preparatory Department, take a serious and professional approach to our responsibilities in relation to drugs education.

We recognise that children may be exposed, at an early age, to the risks associated with the drug culture which exists in our society today. Young children may come to school with a knowledge, attitudes and experiences relating to the world of drugs, having their own perceptions of drugs which may be inaccurate, gained from parents/guardians, older brothers or sisters, friends, the media and through popular music.

Drugs education is therefore a statutory requirement for all schools and recent research has shown that such education is beneficial in preventing some children from experimenting with drugs and delaying the onset of drug abuse with others.

3. Definitions

Our drugs policy considers a drug to be "any substance which, when taken, has the effect of altering the way a person behaves, feels or thinks".

(Drugs: Guidance for schools: 2004)

While this definition encompasses substances such as tea and coffee, for the purposes of this policy it will include:

- “over the counter” medicines e.g., paracetamol
- Prescription drugs as issued on prescription by a doctor e.g. antibiotics, tranquillisers
- Illicit drugs include socially unacceptable legal drugs e.g. solvents, correcting fluids/thinners, aerosols, poppers, gas lighter fuel, petrol, underage consumption of alcohol and tobacco and those prescribed by a doctor but used incorrectly e.g., diazepam.
- Illegal drugs are those substances listed as controlled drug (e.g. ecstasy, cannabis, LSD, heroin, magic mushrooms)
- ‘Psychoactive Substances’.... substances not controlled under the Misuse of Drugs Act and are therefore legal to possess. The term is misleading as most are regulated by the Medicines Act which make them illegal to sell, supply or advertise them for human consumption.) e.g. mephedrone (which has now been classified as a Class B drug), BZP (now classified as a Class C drug) and salvia (which is under review)

4.Aims

This policy is designed to:

- Outline the school’s attitude to the misuse/abuse of drugs
- Provide a clear statement to all as to how any drugs incident would be addressed.
- Ensure a consistent approach by all members of staff to drugs education
- Develop an effective partnership with parents/guardians
- Safeguard good practice in the future.

5.Roles and Responsibilities

Board of Governors:

- Support the development and on-going review of the drugs policy and programme.
- Ensure a summary of the policy is made available to parents
- Ensure they are fully aware of procedures to deal with any drug related incident including alcohol and tobacco.
- Aim to have one member of the Board specifically trained in drugs-related issues.

The Headmaster / HOD:

- Determine (not investigate) any drug-related incident. (The PSNI will investigate)
- Contact the parents and/or guardians of any pupils involved in any drugs-related incident.
- Contact the PSNI, then confine his/her responsibilities to the welfare of the pupil(s) involved
- Inform the Board of Governors about the incident
- Agree, with Governors, any appropriate pastoral or disciplinary measures to be

- taken
- Appropriately store or dispose of any drug or drug related paraphernalia
- Report the incident to Child Protection team at EA.

The **Designated Teacher for Drugs**

The Designated Teacher is also the HOD, Ms Rudewicz. As Designated Teacher her responsibilities will be:

- To co-ordinate the school's procedures for handling suspected drugs-related incidents
- Training and induction of the above named procedures with new and existing staff.
- To take possession of any substance or drugs paraphernalia found in the event of any drugs-related incident.
- To complete a report following any drug-related incident.
- To oversee and co-ordinate the drugs education programme
- To act as contact point for outside agencies coming into the school
- To review and amend the programme/policy if necessary, following an incident.

(d) **Individual Staff Members** (teaching and non-teachers)

- Be aware of procedures to follow in the case of a drugs-related incident.
- Deal with any emergency procedures surrounding the incident encountered.
- Forward any information, substance or paraphernalia to the designated teacher/HOD/Headmaster.
- Complete a factual report.

6. Staff Training

At Regent House School Preparatory Department, we appreciate the need for staff training in the area of drugs education. Staff (both teaching and non-teaching) will engage in school-based training in drugs awareness every three years. This training will also be offered to non-teaching staff and to parents. Training can be provided by the designated teacher, PSNI or other outside agency, where appropriate.

7. Overview of Drugs Education Programme

The over-riding aim of our Drugs Education programme is to prevent the misuse/abuse of drugs and to provide an environment where our pupils benefit from a drug-free lifestyle.

The Drugs Education programme is a statutory requirement within the Northern Ireland Curriculum and it is contained in the Area of Learning - PDMU. We believe, for it to be effective, such education must start early as, in our current culture, the possibility exists that some of our children may begin to experiment with drugs.

For Key Stage 1 pupils, as part of Personal Development, we cover Keeping Safe which includes looking at what we put into our bodies such as medicines etc. The resource, Living Learning Together provided by CCEA, is used to deliver this.

In KS2, also using the Living Learning Together resource and other appropriate resources. Pupils learn about tobacco, alcohol and solvents.

The Drugs Programme will continue to be integrated into other curricular areas such as The World Around Us, Literacy, P.E. and R.E, where and when appropriate.

- A variety of teaching strategies appropriate to the subject matter, the maturity of the pupils and their individual circumstances will be employed.
- A range of class management techniques, incorporating whole class, group or individual teaching will be used.
- Each class teacher has the responsibility for delivering the drugs education programme.

We believe in the importance of developing, in our pupils, self-esteem, assertive skills and peer preference rather than peer pressure therefore our aims are:

- To help young people distinguish between useful and harmful drugs
- To inform children of the effects of drug abuse and provide accurate and up-to-date information on drugs and their effects on health
- To help pupils acquire skills in managing any negative pressures from the society in which they live.
- To establish skills and behaviour which enable children to communicate effectively, assert themselves and make responsible decisions
- To help pupils come to an understanding of the inappropriateness of certain behaviours
- To help pupils acquire skills in managing peer pressure
- To create a climate where a young person feels comfortable to discuss drugs
- To build the self-esteem and confidence of our children
- To ensure progression and continuity in knowledge and understanding, matching these to the age, maturity and circumstances of the pupils concerned

8. Staff Use of Smoking and Alcohol

It is now a legal requirement that our premises are completely smoke free. No-Smoking signs have been displayed, clearly visible to all members of staff or visitors to the school. Anyone smoking will be advised that they are committing an offence and will be politely asked to stop smoking and advised that it is also an offence for the school to allow anyone to smoke.

For issues relating to staff use of alcohol, we refer them to the Alcohol and Drug Misuse Policy (TNC 2005/5) available from the D.E. website.

9. Communicating the Policy to Parents and Other Related Agencies

A copy the Drugs Policy will be made available on the school website. The views of parents will be sought whenever the policy is being reviewed. A selection of pupils' views will also be sought via the Pupil Council.

The policy will be reviewed and ratified every three years by the Board of Governors. All outside agencies will be made aware of the policy to ensure that what they offer is part of the ongoing drugs programme and is always appropriate.

10.Procedures for Managing Drug-Related Incidents

All staff should know and refer to the procedures for dealing with drug related incidents, should such an issue occur. These can be found in the appendices of this document.

Appendix 1: Finding a substance on school premises.

Appendix 2: Pupil suspected of possessing / distributing an illegal substance.

Appendix 3: Pupil suspected of having taken drugs in school.

11.Disciplinary Procedures

Our school views very seriously any pupil being in possession of any illegal/illicit drug and would expect the support of parents in this matter. While keeping in mind the pastoral care element, appropriate disciplinary measures would reflect the seriousness of the school's viewpoint.

It may never be appropriate to prescribe specific sanctions for drug-related incidents. The Headmaster will decide how to respond to any such incident after taking into account a range of factors such as: -

- Age of pupil
- What was the motivation?
- Was there peer pressure?
- Does the pupil have a parent/carer/guardian who misuses drugs?
- Does the pupil know and understand the school policy and rules?
- Is it a first or subsequent offence?
- Quantity of drug
- Is the drug legal/illegal?
- Is it possession or supply?

12.Searching and Detaining

Staff may ask a child to turn out the contents of a bag or pocket and with the pupil's consent, may search these in the presence of the pupil **and another adult**. If the pupil refuses, the police and parents will be called. Only members of the PSNI have the right to carry out a physical search of the pupil.

- A child may be detained if there is reasonable suspicion that the pupil is in possession of an illegal substance (not alcohol or tobacco). In the event of the pupil refusing and appropriate reasonable force is not possible, the police will deal with the incident.
- A witness will always be present.

13.Media Response

Only the Headmaster or an EA advisor will speak to press and only if it is deemed necessary:

- A written statement will be prepared beforehand
- It will be positive, short and factual
- No further questions will be answered
- The privacy of the pupil/family will be respected
- The statement will conclude on a reassuring note that the incident had been managed effectively

14. Confidentiality

Teachers cannot and should not promise total confidentiality. These boundaries should be made clear to the pupils. In the case of information revealed about controlled drugs, this must be passed on to the designated teacher for drugs. Any visitor to the school must also follow these directions.

Where a pupil seeks help, the matter will be handled discretely and sensitively with the intention that the pupil receives the offer of help in the form of counselling.

15. Some Procedures for Using Outside Agencies/Visitors

Visitor/Agency will:

- Have Safeguarding/ Child Protection policy
- Be given copy of policy to ensure school's views on confidentiality
- Have appropriate resources
- Have a clear set of aims and objectives and the impact it had on the children
- Ensure their programme is part of the school's drugs programme
- Report to teacher if any information on illegal drugs is received

The teacher will:

- Always be present in the room
- Ensure the content is appropriate
- Evaluate the programme and the impact it made on the children.
- Provide introductory/follow-up activities before and after the visit.

16. Emergency/First Aid Procedures

- Send for the school matron / teacher trained in first aid (currently all Preparatory Department staff members have up-to-date first aid training)
- Find out what has been taken. This will help the emergency crew
- If a depressant drug (alcohol, solvents, sleeping pills or painkillers) has been taken, they will feel drowsy. Keep the pupil awake by getting them to walk or by applying a cool damp cloth to the back of their neck
- Do **not** give anything to eat or drink.
- If unconscious, put in recovery position, clear airways and call an ambulance immediately

- If they stop breathing, begin mouth-to-mouth resuscitation. Stay until ambulance arrives and inform medics of the facts.
- If a stimulant (Amphetamines or ecstasy) has been taken, the person will be distressed. It is important they remain calm and relaxed. Get them to breathe in and out slowly. If hyperventilating occurs, get them to breathe in and out of a **paper** bag.
- If LSD or a hallucinogen has been taken, keep them in a darkened, quiet room to avoid sensory stimulation. They should be supervised at all times and kept reassured that the effects will wear off and they are in no danger.

17.Guidance on Storage, Handling and Disposal of Harmful Substances

This includes:

- (1) Glues / adhesives
- (2) Marker / felt tip pens
- (3) Aerosols
- (4) Cleaning / degreasing agents
- (5) Illegal substances

Teachers:

- There will be close supervision throughout the school of materials such as glue, felt-tips, aerosols etc when used by pupils
- In classrooms, teachers will be expected to monitor closely the distribution, use and collection of all potentially hazardous substances.
- Such materials will be kept in a cupboard, accessed only by the teacher.

Caretaker / Cleaner's Stores:

All school solvents are to be kept in the school storerooms, which are kept securely locked during school hours. It is the responsibility of the cleaning staff to ensure the stores are locked before school begins or supervised at all times during school hours.

Headmaster (Illegal substances):

Should the need arise, the headmaster will ensure grounds are checked for evidence of drug misuse which may have occurred outside school hours and he will make the necessary arrangements for the safe disposal of dangerous materials

- Any illegal substance found will be kept in safe storage by the Headmaster until it can be handed over to the PSNI. This will be done as soon as possible following the incident.

18.The Management of Prescribed Medicines in School

Please refer to the school's Health & Safety Policy regarding the storage and administration of medication in school.

Medicines in school

The school follows the Department of Education guidance on the administration of medication in school.

- The school will dispense medication which has been prescribed by a medical practitioner with written instructions for its use.
- The school will dispense non-prescription medication to pupils only if it is supplied by a parent or carer with written instructions for its use. These are kept in a locked cabinet.
- The school does not keep any other medication.
- All requests for dispensing of medication must be accompanied by a consent form completed, signed and dated by the pupil's parent or carer.
- All medication will be kept in the school office.
- Medication for personal use by members of staff must also be kept in a secure location e.g. handbags, etc. containing such items must be locked away and not left in the classroom where pupils could gain access to them.

Medical book

Consent forms will be kept in the medical file and will be kept for the duration of the pupil's attendance at the school.

The medical book will also contain a log of medication dispensed which will include:

- Name of student;
- Name of medication;
- Use by date;
- Dose;
- Time;
- Date;
- Signature of dispenser; and
- Comments/reactions.

Medical Procedures

The school has identified a suitable place for the dispensing/application of medicines. Where necessary, arrangements have been made for pupils with particular conditions and these are detailed in individual care plans.

19.Reviewing the Policy and Procedures

This policy will be constantly monitored. It will be reviewed and evaluated immediately following any incident and approximately every three years when staff, pupils, parents, governors and any other relevant agencies will be consulted and any necessary changes will be implemented.

20.Evaluating the Drugs Education Programme

The evaluation process will be assisted by information from teaching and non-teaching staff. Knowledge will have been gained through teaching and evaluating. Both the Teacher's and Pupil's Evaluation Sheets (Appendix 6a/b) will be used at the end of each module to assist in the evaluation. Necessary changes in practices and content arising from the review will be implemented.

APPENDICES

- Appendix 1 Finding a substance on the school premises

- Appendix 2 Pupil suspected of having taken drugs in school

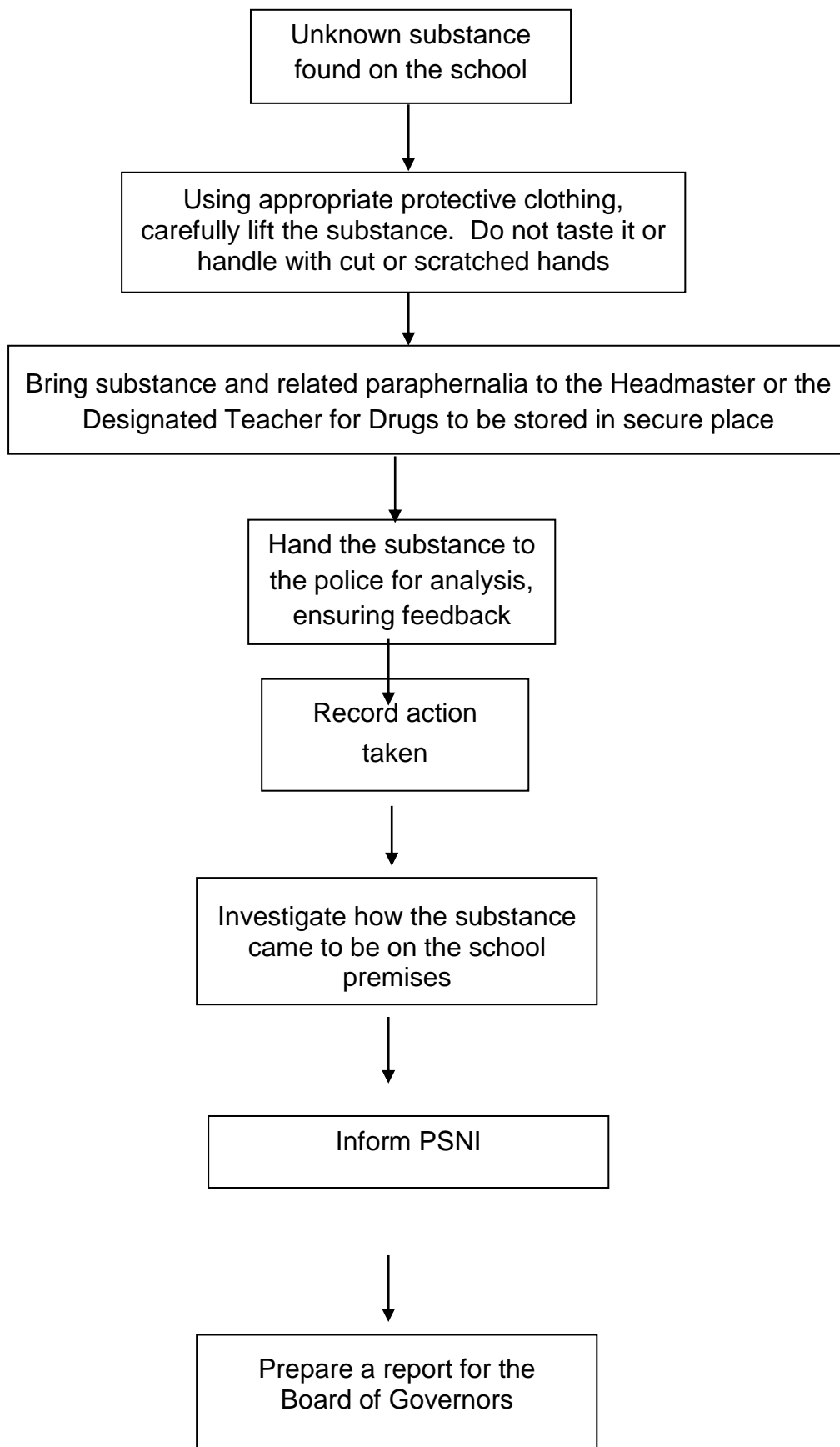
- Appendix 3 Pupil suspected of possessing/distributing an illegal substance

- Appendix 4 Drugs Incident Report Form

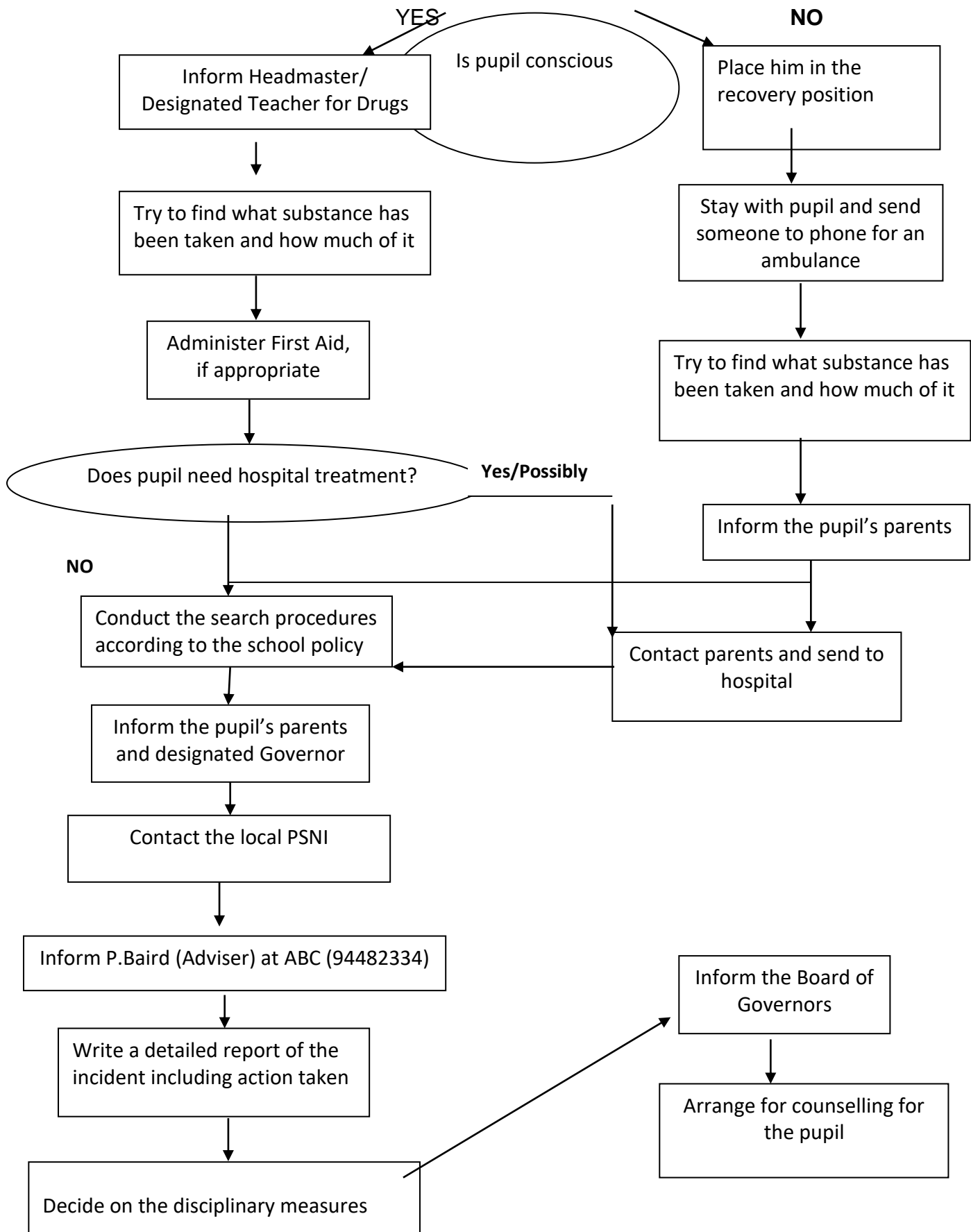
- Appendix 5 Drugs Programme Evaluation Forms..... Pupil/Teacher

APPENDIX 1

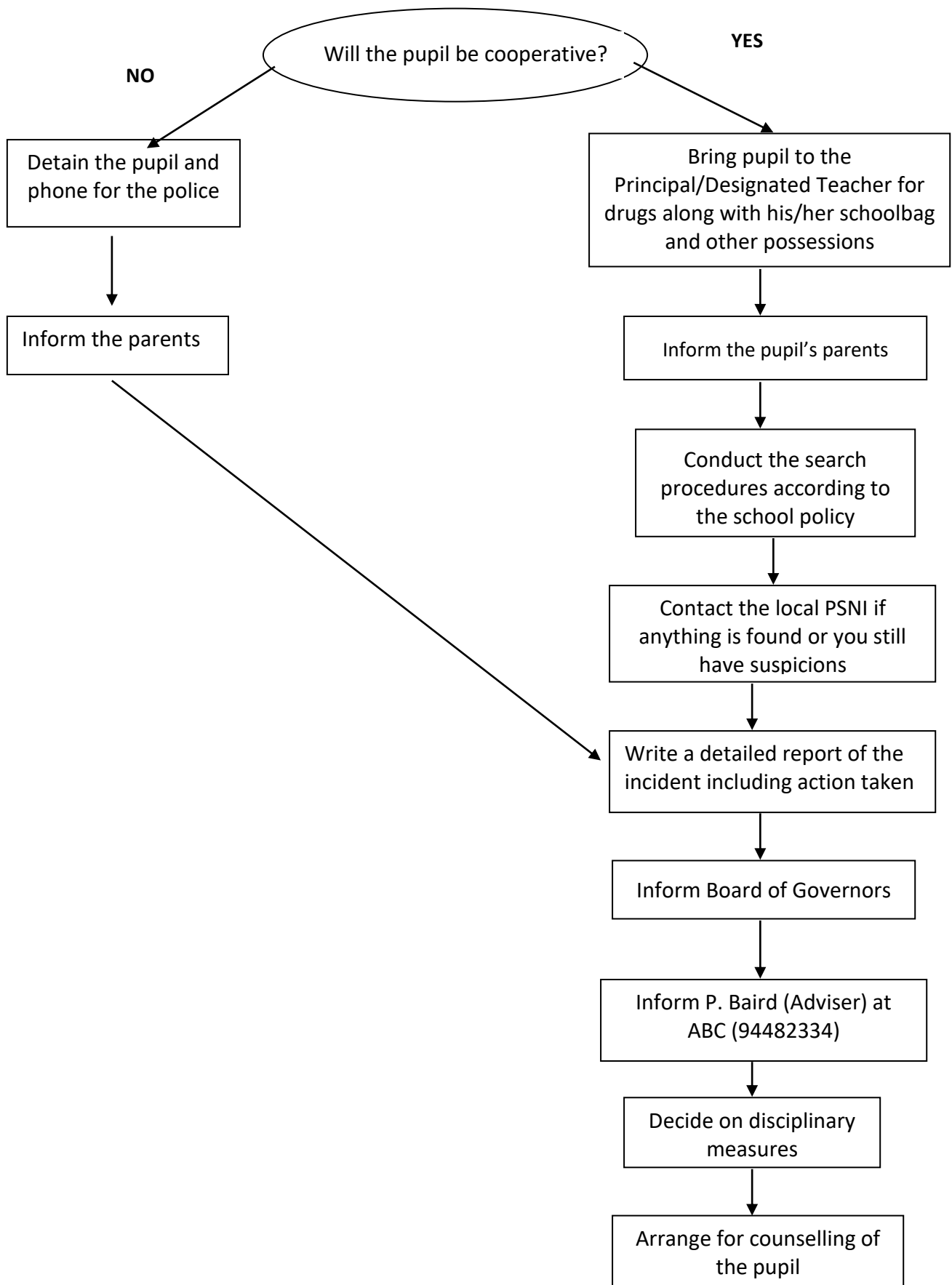
Finding a substance on the school premises



APPENDIX 2 Pupil suspected of having taken drugs in school



APPENDIX 3 Pupil suspected of possessing/distributing an illegal substance



APPENDIX 4 Drugs Incident Report Form

Name of Pupil _____ Class _____

Address _____

Date/time of
Incident _____

Reported
by _____

First Aid given
by _____

Incident
details _____

PSNI informed by _____

EA informed by _____

Disciplinary/pastoral/other response

Details _____

DESCRIPTION OF THE INCIDENT and ACTION TAKEN

Form completed by _____

APPENDIX 5 (a)

Drugs Education Evaluation Sheet (Pupil)

1. What interested you most about the drug lessons you have been studying?

2. What did you like least about the lessons?

3. What was the most important thing you learnt?

4. Has your attitude to drugs changed because of the lessons? Yes No

5. If 'Yes', state how? _____

6. Would you be more or less likely to use the drug studied in the future?

More likely

Unsure

Less likely

APPENDIX 5 (b) EA Drugs Education (Teacher Evaluation)

Year Group _____

Unit(s) taught

Key Stage 1 Key Stage 2

Smoking Alcohol Solvents Drugs

Please comment on the following:

Content Length/amount Easy to follow Age appropriateness Links to curriculum	
Activities Suitability Effectiveness	
Pupil's Response Involvement Learning Homework	
Resources Suitability Ease of Use	
Other Further Suggestions Good Practice	