



## Drugs, Alcohol and Smoking Policy

### Statement of intent

MELHC has a zero tolerance policy on the buying, selling, possession and use of drugs. This applies to both staff and students and to all activities, trips, travel, excursions, events and any other MELHC related activity.

### MELHC procedure for dealing with substance misuse

#### Alcohol

Alcohol is easily accessible and socially acceptable in most cultural groups. It is associated with risk taking behaviour and most young people have an awareness of alcohol and “drinking behaviour”. It is a significant factor in deaths of young people and youth binge drinking is a UK national concern.

If pupils are found with alcohol at MELHC, this will be confiscated and parents/guardians informed. Pupils misusing alcohol in school, coming into school under the influence of alcohol or bringing alcohol into school to give or sell to other pupils or any arising anti-social behaviour as a result may lead to expulsion.

#### Smoking

The school is designated a “no smoking” area for staff, visitors and students. If a pupil were to be found smoking on campus, or were suspected of smoking, the Centre Manager should be informed immediately. The Centre Manager should warn the student about the health risk to themselves and others, their parents would be contacted and cigarettes and matches/lighters confiscated with immediate effect.

#### Volatile Substance Abuse

The most common acts of volatile substance abuse are glue or solvent sniffing, which carry a high risk of sudden death. They are often a gateway to illegal drug misuse. The possession of volatile substances is not illegal in the UK; it is an offence to supply to a person under 18 however.

As part of Health and Safety measures, MELHC will take the steps to control the movement and safe storage of volatile substances on school premises. Pupils caught with volatile substances on site will have them confiscated; parents contacted and they may then be



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referred to other agencies for help. A range of other measures may be taken, including exclusion from the school.

## **Sanctions**

Permanent Exclusion will, in all but the most exceptional circumstances, be the result of a student buying, selling, offering, using or possessing drugs at school or on any trip organised by MELHC. The Director of Holiday Courses has a legal duty inform the police of any offence under the Misuse of Drugs Act.

## **Reporting drug misuse**

The misuse of any drug is a drug related incident. Staff must inform their Line Manager, Centre Manger, MELHC Manger or Director of Holiday Courses immediately if any evidence of drug/substance misuse is found on school property or a child is thought to possess such evidence.

The Director of Holiday Courses will then assess the legal requirements, liaison with outside agencies, contact with parents, health, welfare and safety procedures including the safe handling of suspect substances.

The Director of Holiday Courses should take responsibility for liaison with the media. The school will take appropriate advice and guidance from the Legal Departments to ensure that any reporting of incidents remains in the best interest of all parties concerned.

## **Emergency procedures for suspected misuse of drugs**

Summon help from the medical centre but do not leave the pupil alone. Make the pupil and the space safe. Check airways are not blocked and place pupil in recovery position. Keep the pupil warm to prevent shock. An ambulance should be called by dialling 999.