



POLICY ON THE MANAGEMENT OF DRUG USE AND ABUSE BY PUPILS AT MOUNTAIN VIEW ACADEMY

Introduction

Mountain View Academy recognises that:

A safe and disciplined learning environment is one of the critical elements to the successful delivery of quality education and acknowledges the role played by drugs in undermining this.

Available evidence indicates that school communities are particularly vulnerable and drug use by pupils is on the increase in schools.

There is a high correlation between drug abuse and other anti-social and high-risk behaviour, including dishonesty, theft, violence, gangsterism and the occult.

Purely punitive approaches to drug abuse can only produce part of the solution.

Drug abuse is detrimental to individuals on social, physical, emotional, academic and psychological levels.

Drug screening

All parents will be expected to give written consent to drug screening in accordance with this policy.

If a drug screen is considered necessary, it will form part of a structured intervention or relapse prevention programme and will be carried out according to the following procedure.

1. A teacher, who has reason to believe that a pupil is using drugs, will discuss this, in confidence with the school principal.
2. The school principal/counsellor will be responsible for making contact with the pupil, collecting relevant information and making an assessment of the situation.
3. If the principal/counsellor feels that it is appropriate, she will ask the pupil to consent to a drug screening test.
4. The principal will ensure that the pupil's parents have given written consent for drug screening tests to be conducted. Permission is compulsory and is a proviso for acceptance into Mountain View Academy.
5. The urine specimen for the drug screen will be collected by the principal or representative of this post in such a way that the pupil's dignity is maintained and the integrity of the sample is not compromised.

6. The drug screen will be conducted in such a way that the pupil's privacy is protected.
7. The results of the drug screen will be made known to the principal/counsellor, the pupil and the parents.
8. In the case of a positive result on a drug screen, the principal and/or counsellor, pupil and the parents will discuss and agree on an appropriate management plan to ensure that the pupil is rehabilitated. The plan should include follow-up drug screens.
9. The pupil will be cautioned that if he/she tests positive on a follow-up drug screen, then the principal will have the right to determine whether further action needs to be taken.

Drug Searches

In instances where a member of staff has reason to suspect that a pupil has in his/her possession an illegal or controlled substance he/she will approach the principal and discuss the situation with her. If the principal believes that there is reasonable suspicion that the pupil is in possession of a prohibited substance she may carry out a search, but only in accordance with the procedure outlined below:

1. The search must be carried out by a person of the same gender.
2. The search should take place in the presence of the pupil concerned, a person of their choice to support them and a second adult witness of the same gender.
3. On admission of the child to Mountain View Academy, parents should be asked to give their written consent to their child being searched, in accordance with this policy.
4. In the case of a pupil being found to be in possession of a prohibited substance, the principal will inform the pupil's parents.

Disciplinary measures

Should the drug testing or searches prove to be positive, the principal, together with the school counsellor will decide on the appropriate discipline. Each case will be considered on its individual merits taking into account:

1. the nature of the incident.
2. the pupil's school and family history.
3. mental health and intellectual development
4. any other relevant information.

The following sanctions will serve as a guideline for discipline.

1st Offence:

- Referral for complete Psychological assessment, to be paid for by the parents
- Suspension from School for a period of up to 1 term
- Follow-up drug screens as part of a structured intervention to prevent continued use of substances. This will be at the expense of the parent.
- A final warning for substance abuse.

2nd Offence:

Expulsion

Pupils who have experienced or are experiencing problems as a result of drug use, misuse will not be denied the opportunity to receive an education but will receive appropriate assistance paid for by the parent.

However, in cases where the pupil does not wish to make use of such help and support offered to him, Mountain View Academy will have no choice but to take the necessary action, which may include suspension or expulsion.

Amnesty

Mountain View Academy will support any individual who voluntarily comes forward, is honest about his substance use and shows a willingness to receive help with a substance abuse problem.

A pupil who approaches any staff member and asks for assistance with a substance use or abuse problem, will not be subjected to any disciplinary action. The matter will be treated as confidential, provided the pupil agrees to the management plan outlined by the principal. This management plan will include:

1. a contract to discontinue substance use.
2. counselling to address underlying issues.
3. consent to follow up drug screens.

In cases where the pupil does not comply with the management plan, the principal or counsellor will have no option but to implement disciplinary action as stated in this policy.

Trafficking, supplying and selling of substances at school

The trafficking of substances on the campus, supplying substances to other pupils, offering substances to other pupils and the sale of substances to other pupils are serious offences because of the threat they provide to the safety of other pupils in the school. As such these offences will always lead to most serious disciplinary action in the form of immediate expulsion from Mountain View Academy and the involvement of the relevant state authorities.

Iparent/guardian of

Hereby give permission for any of the above measures to be conducted, should the situation arise.

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Signatures of parent and learner