

# Plymouth CAST

Multi Academy Trust, Diocese of Plymouth

## Alcohol and Substance Misuse Policy

Guidance on the application of this policy can be obtained from Plymouth  
CAST HR

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Policy adopted by Plymouth CAST Board of Directors at the meeting dated:  
14<sup>th</sup> September 2017

Signed  (Chair)

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## **Contents**

1. Introduction
2. Purpose
3. Scope
4. Equal Opportunities
5. Responsibilities
6. Guiding Principles
7. Standards and Expectations
8. Breach of Policy
9. How to Raise Concerns
10. The Procedure
11. Screening and Testing
12. Confidentiality
13. Support and Guidance
14. Review

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1. As a key element of our health and safety responsibilities, duty of care, wellbeing and workplace health promotion initiatives, Plymouth CAST strives to offer information and support to employees regarding alcohol and substance misuse.
- 1.2. This policy, procedure and guidance provides an overview of the risks associated with alcohol and substance misuse, gives information to recognise potential misuse, highlights the duty to ensure fitness for work, supports employees to carry out their work safely and responsibly, offers a route to seek assistance and clarifies the approach to be taken by management should misuse be suspected or identified.

## 2. Purpose

- 2.1. Alcohol and substance misuse is a sensitive issue and Plymouth CAST recognises the potential dangers to individuals and the Multi-Academy Trust. This policy aims to:
  - 2.1.1. set out the framework for a clear and consistent application of the Alcohol and Substance Misuse policy across Plymouth CAST.
  - 2.1.2. Provide guidance and routes for support to:
    - promote and protect employee wellbeing/safety
    - develop a culture that is supportive, open and non-judgemental
    - raise awareness of the safety and health-risk issues
    - provide information and support to employees
    - encourage insight and early recognition
    - highlight routes for employees to address concern for colleagues
    - give assurance and assistance to individual employees seeking help
    - establish expectations of conduct
    - outline the approach and procedure to be applied
    - clarify management responsibility and actions
    - suggest sources of further advice and information
    - restore capability to an acceptable level within a reasonable timescale.

## 3. Scope

- 3.1. This policy applies to all employees directly employed by Plymouth CAST.

## 4. Equal Opportunities

- 4.1. The Alcohol and Substance Misuse policy must always be applied fairly and in accordance with employment law and Plymouth CAST Equal Opportunities Policy

including the duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled employees.

## **5. Responsibilities**

- 5.1. At individual Academy level, the day to day operation of each Plymouth CAST school is the responsibility of each Local Governing Body and this is discharged through each school's Senior Management Team. It is important that pupils, staff, parents and local stakeholders recognise and support this. However, ultimate accountability for Plymouth CAST as a whole multi-Academy Trust rests with the Plymouth CAST Board. Therefore any decisions that have an impact on resources, such as staffing, structures, or compliance must be referred to the Plymouth CAST Board if they exceed delegated authority. This is essential to ensure that the legal obligations of Plymouth CAST are met and that the Trust maintains robust systems and processes that deliver effective governance.
- 5.2. It is the School Improvement Officer's responsibility to work closely with the Local Governing Body and management team to ensure everyone concerned has a full and accurate picture of each school's strengths and any areas for improvement. School Improvement Officers will work with schools to identify strategies for improvement, with support, where appropriate, from within the Plymouth CAST network.
- 5.3. It is the role of Plymouth CAST HR to provide clear HR policies and procedures and where appropriate guidance, to support schools in the delivery of consistent and high standards of performance within a dignified working environment, in which all employees can take pride and enjoyment in their work.
- 5.4. Management and employee representatives who may be involved in responding to alcohol and substance misuse issues should be trained and competent for the task. They should be familiar with the provisions of the Alcohol and Substance Misuse policy. However, as cases are expected to be rare, external support may be necessary.
- 5.5. Advice must be sought from Plymouth CAST HR about how to respond to an alcohol or substance misuse matter.

## **6. Guiding Principles: Alcohol and Substance Misuse**

- 6.1 Plymouth CAST will initially address alcohol and substance misuse as a health issue, deploy skilled and compassionate management intervention, seek expert advice via Occupational Health and other sources, and, where appropriate, offer reasonable adjustment(s) to support treatment and recovery.
- 6.2 In addition, Plymouth CAST seeks to clarify expectations of sobriety, to apply suitable testing procedures should a cause be determined and to apply performance management policies, e.g. the disciplinary procedure, where improvements are not

being achieved through the application of this policy or where a serious breach has occurred.

## 7 Standards and Expectations

7.1 It is a requirement and expectation that employees will not:

- report for or remain at work under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs any prohibited substance, or legal highs;
- be affected by prescribed drugs without alerting their line manager;
- with the exception of work social events and residential conferences as per 7.2.1 below, employees will not consume alcohol or any prohibited substance whilst on work duty, on work premises or representing Plymouth CAST or any of its schools in a professional capacity, including on school trips and accompanying pupils on residential trips;
- use, possess, conceal, transport, promote, sell or buy any prohibited substance e.g. illegal drugs, whilst on work duty, on work premises or representing Plymouth CAST or any of its schools in a professional capacity, including on school trips and accompanying pupils on residential trips;

7.2 Work Social Events and Residential Conferences

7.2.1 When consuming alcohol whilst representing Plymouth CAST in a professional capacity, employees are reminded of their responsibility for the safety and wellbeing of themselves and others. This awareness should inform practical arrangements, e.g. for travel to and/or from a work related social event. In addition, consideration should be given to the requirement to represent Plymouth CAST at all times in a positive light and to behave in a responsible manner. The decision to consume alcohol is the responsibility of the employee.

7.3 Personal Use of Alcohol

7.3.1 Employees should be aware of the need to ensure they are not under the influence of alcohol at work. This may be of particular relevance on attendance at work following a personal social engagement or day off i.e. 'next day danger' and employees must ensure they are free from the effects of alcohol.

7.4 Prescribed Drugs

7.4.1 It is recognised that an employee may be affected, on occasion, by the use of prescribed or over the counter medicines. If the information provided with such medicine, or the advice of a GP/medical adviser, highlights possible side effects which may affect behaviour or

performance, employees should inform their direct manager and describe the potential effects.

7.4.2 In these circumstances, the direct manager may decide to seek further information by a referral to Occupational Health or other sources, for advice on any adjustments or special arrangements which may be required to ensure the continued wellbeing and safety at work of the individual employee and others.

#### 7.5 Substances Used for Work

7.5.1 If an employee is required to use or have access to solvents and/or substances as part of their work duties, the employee must ensure they have followed Plymouth CAST's Health and Safety requirements, including COSHH assessments.

### 8 Breach of Policy

8.1 Where possible and appropriate, a supportive and rehabilitative approach as outlined in this policy will be applied. However, the following circumstances are considered serious and will be dealt with appropriately:

#### 8.2 Not Meeting Role or Contractual Requirements

8.2.1 An inability to meet work or contractual requirements will be addressed via the capability policy and may, if essential requirements of the role cannot be fulfilled, result in transfer to an alternative role or dismissal.

#### 8.3 Serious Misconduct

8.3.1 If an employee is known or observed to be intoxicated during working hours, under the influence of illegal drugs, legal highs or using, possessing, transporting, promoting, buying or selling illegal drugs, these actions will be treated as gross misconduct and the employee may be suspended from work, as a precaution, whilst the circumstances are investigated in line with the disciplinary procedure. Employees should be mindful of any actions which, by association, bring Plymouth CAST into disrepute as these may lead to disciplinary action.

### 9 How to Raise Concerns

9.1 The need to apply this policy and procedure to an individual employee may be highlighted by:

- voluntary self-referral

- concerns raised by an employee/colleague
- concerns raised by or complaints from an external contact
- observation by the direct manager of work performance and/or behaviour not meeting required standards.

## 9.2 Voluntary self-referral

9.2.1 An employee concerned they may be misusing alcohol or any substance may approach their direct manager or Human Resources for confidential assistance and support. Employees of Plymouth CAST also have access to a free, confidential telephone counselling service provided by an external organisation – DAS. Contact details available from the Plymouth CAST website and are also posted on school staff room / central office notice boards.

## 9.3 Concerns raised by an employee

9.3.1 An employee who has observed some of the signs outlined in Appendix 1: Awareness Guidelines, or has a concern about the wellbeing of a colleague, should speak with their own direct manager in the first instance. As an alternative, employees may discuss their concerns with Human Resources or their local trade union representative, who will assist in drawing the attention of management to the potential misuse.

9.3.2 Employees should not hesitate to raise genuinely held concerns under this policy and confidentiality will be maintained (e.g. the colleague about whom the concerns are expressed will not be advised who raised the issue with management).

9.3.3 Action may be taken under the relevant policy e.g. disciplinary procedure, bullying and harassment policy, should management conclude a concern has been raised in bad faith, maliciously and/or as an act of victimisation.

## 9.4 Concerns/complaints from an external contact

9.4.1 Should suspected misuse be raised by an external contact, the direct manager of the individual whose behaviour or performance is causing concern should be informed of the concern/complaint.

9.4.2 Management will take responsibility for responding appropriately to an external contact, taking account of the need to maintain confidentiality for the employee concerned under the auspices of this policy.

- 9.5 Observations by direct manager of work performance and/or behaviour not meeting required standards
- 9.5.1 Managers may observe some of the signs outlined in Appendix 1: Awareness Guidelines and have concerns about the safety, wellbeing, behaviour or performance of an employee in their team. In addition, if a manager is informed by an employee that s/he is now unable to meet an essential work or contractual requirement e.g. holding a full driving licence, this information may alert the manager to the potential misuse of alcohol or any substance.
- 9.5.2 A manager who suspects an employee in their team of having an alcohol or substance misuse issue, either from their own observation or due to a concern being brought to their attention, should firstly discuss the matter with Human Resources prior to any approach to the individual employee.
- 9.5.3 A manager who has been informed of concerns or complaints relating to an employee in another team should, as a matter of urgency, discuss the matter with the direct manager of the employee or Human Resources.

## 10 The Procedure

- 10.1 When a concern has been raised by any of the means in Section 9 above, the direct manager will apply the formal procedure, as follows:
- Discuss the matter with an adviser from Human Resources.
  - Decide on the initial course of action following discussion above.
  - In confidence, discuss the matter with the employee and agree actions/timescales.
  - Make a confidential record of the discussion and outcomes.
  - If the employee maintains that misuse of alcohol or substances is not the cause of or relevant to their performance or behaviour, or denies/does not accept that their performance or behaviour is not meeting required standards, consider moving to performance management policies to address the issues.
  - Refer the employee to Occupational Health.
  - Organise screening/testing, if appropriate.
  - Implement any agreed amendments to working arrangements.
  - Carry out suitable communication, ideally the wording of which to be agreed with the employee, to other employees, management etc., where necessary.
  - Reflect upon the OH/test reports, once received.
  - Have a further meeting with the employee to discuss outcomes of OH report and screening/testing, and agree next steps and timescale.



- Advise the employee should a decision be taken that standards of performance and/or behaviour are not being met within the timescales, or trust in the employee's commitment to the process of recovery has not been established, and a move will be taken from this policy to relevant performance management policies e.g. disciplinary policy.

## **11 Screening and Testing**

### **11.1 With Cause Testing**

- 11.1.1 In order to protect the health, safety and wellbeing of all employees, pupils and the environment, testing may be carried out where management suspects or has grounds to believe the employee may be under the influence of alcohol or any substance e.g. following the raising of a concern or a specific incident/ accident (which may have occurred whilst at work or outside of work).
- 11.1.2 Where required, an employee is encouraged to submit to a test in accordance with this policy to enable Plymouth CAST to be able to provide them with the necessary support and expert advice.

### **11.2 Screening/Testing Provider**

- 11.2.1 Testing will be carried out by qualified and competent personnel from an external testing company, who will use accepted and reliable methods and ensure that tests are carried out with the least possible intrusion into the employee's privacy. All possible measures will be put in place to ensure confidentiality of test results and checks will take place to avoid any false results.
- 11.2.2 Plymouth CAST will select a screening/testing provider accredited by the United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS), having satisfied assessors that they provide a service that meets all testing criteria.

### **11.3 Results/Outcome**

- 11.3.1 Employees may request to be informed of the outcome of their test prior to this information being provided to management and Human Resources.

## **12 Confidentiality**

### **12.1 Management Responsibility**



12.1.1 Management and Human Resources will retain appropriate written and/or electronic records throughout the process of applying this policy and procedure. These will be retained in a secure filing system and the requirements of the Data Protection Act will be met.

12.2 Employee Responsibility

12.2.1 Employees who raise concerns under this policy, or become aware that a colleague employee’s potential misuse is being addressed under this Policy, must not discuss with or reveal this knowledge/information to any other person. If any employee needs to gain advice or discuss relevant issues, they should approach their direct manager, Human Resources or their trade union representative.

12.3 Involvement of the Police

12.3.1 Plymouth CAST will advise the police and call upon their expertise and assistance in all cases of use, possession, transportation, promotion, buying or selling of illegal drugs or legal highs on Plymouth CAST premises or whilst engaged on work duties.

**13 Support Guidance and Advice**

13.1 Further information for employees is provided in Appendix 1: Awareness Guidelines.

13.2 Sources of further external information, advice and guidance for all employees are highlighted in Appendix 2.

13.3 Plymouth CAST provides professional support and advice on the effective implementation of any procedure through HR who should be informed of all cases requiring a formal procedure.

**14 Review**

14.1 The content of this policy and procedure may be subject to revision from time to time following consultation with the recognised trade unions.

14.2 History of Policy Changes

Date	Page	Details of the change	Agreed by
14.09.2017	All	Board Approval for adoption	CAST Board




14.3 Policy to be reviewed the Plymouth CAST Board in consultation with the JCC in September 2018 or when legislation changes or operational reasons arise.

## **Appendix 1. AWARENESS GUIDELINES**

### **POTENTIAL SIGNS OF MISUSE**

Alcohol and substances/drugs can alter the way a person thinks, perceives and feels, leading to impaired judgement or concentration. In addition, there may be a neglect of wellbeing, health and physical appearance.

The following, especially arising in combination or on a regular basis, may indicate alcohol or substance misuse and should lead to action being taken under this policy.

- Frequent, regular patterns of short term absence, particularly on first day of return to work, assigned to colds, stomach upset, food poisoning or strange/suspicious reasons
- Lateness, especially on return from lunch
- Higher than average or previous pattern of unauthorised leave
- High accident levels e.g. trips, falls, car crash, or near misses
- Difficulty in concentration and in remembering instructions
- Making regular, repeated mistakes, especially of detail
- Taking more time and/or effort to complete tasks
- Changes in behaviour e.g. irritability, depression, withdrawal
- Reduced levels of personal physical care and body odour.

The above list is not exhaustive and should be regarded as an indication to be considered with great care, as many may be caused by other factors.

### **BASIC INFORMATION ON ALCOHOL**

The following is taken from NHS choices website:

<http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/alcohol/Pages/alcohol-units.aspx>

Units are a simple way of expressing the quantity of pure alcohol in a drink. One unit equals 10ml or 8g of pure alcohol, which is around the amount of alcohol the average adult can process in an hour. This means that within an hour there should be, in theory, little or no alcohol left in the blood of an adult, although this will vary from person to person.

The number of units in a drink is based on the size of the drink as well as its alcohol strength. For example, a pint of strong lager contains 3 units of alcohol, whereas the same volume of standard lager has just over 2 units.

Knowing your units will help you stay in control of your drinking. To reduce your risk of harming your health if you drink most weeks:

- men and women are advised not to regularly drink more than 14 units a week
- spread your drinking over three days or more if you drink as much as 14 units a week

Fourteen units is equivalent to six pints of average strength beer or 10 small glasses of low strength wine.

Alcohol Concern's [unit calculator](#) can be used to calculate units of consumption.

## LEGAL HIGHS

### The risks

Legal highs can carry serious health risks. The chemicals they contain have in most cases never been used before in drugs for human consumption.

This means they haven't been tested to show they are safe. Users can never be certain what they are taking and what the effects might be.

Other risks:

- You increase the risk to yourself if you combine alcohol with any legal or illegal drug.
- Legal highs can reduce your inhibitions, so you do things you wouldn't normally do. They can cause paranoia, coma, seizures and, in rare cases, death.
- Because the chemical ingredients in a branded product can be changed without you knowing, the risks are unpredictable.
- Even drugs that look similar or have similar names may be of varying strengths and have different effects.

Further advice on legal highs can be found on:

<http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/drugs/Pages/legalhighs.aspx>

or

<http://www.talktofrank.com/news/what-are-legal-highs>

## **Appendix 2: SOURCES OF HELP/SUPPORT**

The following sources are available to provide help, support and information:

### **INTERNAL RESOURCES**

Your direct manager or any member of the management team

Human Resources for advice on employee issues and for relevant training

### **EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS**

National Drugs Helpline (Frank)

Tel: 0300 123 6600

Website: [www.talktofrank.com](http://www.talktofrank.com)

Free, confidential, 24 hours a day

Narcotics Anonymous

Tel: 0300 999 1212

Website: [www.ukna.org](http://www.ukna.org)

Cocaine Anonymous

Tel: 0800 612 0225

Website: [www.cauk.org.uk](http://www.cauk.org.uk)

Council for Information on Tranquillisers, Antidepressants and Painkillers

Tel: 0151 932 0102

Website: [www.citawithdrawal.org.uk](http://www.citawithdrawal.org.uk)

Alcoholics Anonymous

Tel: 0800 9177 650

Website: [www.alcoholics-anonymous.co.uk](http://www.alcoholics-anonymous.co.uk)

Alcohol Concern

Tel: 020 7566 9800

Website: [www.alcoholconcern.org.uk](http://www.alcoholconcern.org.uk)

See website for Local services directory and contacts

Alcohol consumption calculator:

[www.alcoholconcern.org.uk/help-and-advice/help-and-advice-with-your-drinking/unit-calculator/](http://www.alcoholconcern.org.uk/help-and-advice/help-and-advice-with-your-drinking/unit-calculator/)



National Health Service – NHS Choices

Tel: 111

Website: [www.nhs.uk/pages/home.aspx](http://www.nhs.uk/pages/home.aspx)

The Samaritans

Website: [www.samaritans.org/](http://www.samaritans.org/)

Tel: 116 123

Volunteers are on hand to offer emotional support any time of the day or night.