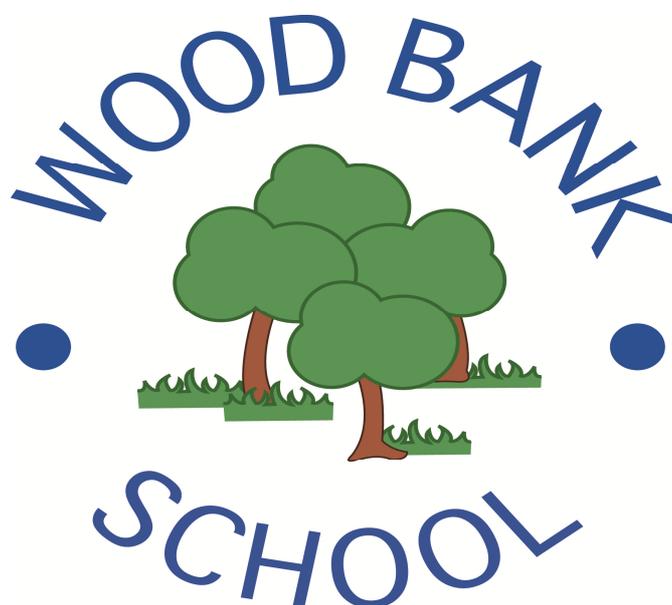


WOOD BANK SCHOOL



ALCOHOL MISUSE POLICY

Policy created/updated	February 2019
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Signed (Headteacher)	
Signed (Chair of Governors)	

Alcohol Misuse Guidance

(Section 10 of the Schools Personnel Guidelines)

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Alcohol Misuse Guidance

1. Status

- 1.1 In Community, Voluntary Controlled and Community Special schools, the Local Authority is the employer of staff. The Local Authority has responsibility for determining conditions of service for these staff. Some aspects of these conditions relate to national conditions of service, but in many instances, the position for support staff is based on local decisions.
- 1.2 In Foundation and Voluntary Aided schools, the governing body is the employer of staff and therefore has the authority to create and adopt its own guidance on the matters referred to.
- 1.3 In the interests of equal opportunities, governing bodies in Foundation and Voluntary Aided schools are recommended to adopt the Local Authority guidance.
- 1.4 Wherever possible this guidance should apply to all staff within the school. Where there are differences these are identified within the text.

2. Statement of Guidance

- 2.1 All school employees are expected to attend work without being under the influence of alcohol and without their performance being adversely impacted by the consumption of alcohol. If alcohol usage out of school hours impacts on an employee's working life, the school has the right to discuss the matter with the employee and take appropriate action, having considered all factors including the school's reputation, and public confidence.
- 2.2 The school, whilst having due regard to its responsibility to the children, young people and families of its local community in providing an effective service, is also committed to protect the health, safety and welfare of its employees. This includes employees who may be inappropriately, habitually or excessively using alcohol, often to the extent that such use is or may be an addiction, which is a clinical condition.
- 2.3 Alcohol misuse is use that results in a physical condition or behaviour that is inappropriate having regard for all the circumstances. Misuse may arise both in the workplace and outside, in circumstances where the work, reputation, integrity or good standing of the school is, or could be, adversely affected.

- 2.4 This guidance and these procedures apply to all employees of the school. All employees of the school have a duty under the provisions of the Health and Safety At Work Act 1974 to take reasonable care of both themselves and others who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work. This includes acts or omissions resulting from alcohol misuse. Additionally, it is the responsibility of each employee to use alcohol responsibly and comply with the provisions of this Guidance and Procedure.
- 2.5 Any acts or omissions committed by an employee whilst in an intoxicated condition that does not result from a clinical problem will be dealt with under the school's Disciplinary Procedure.
- 2.6 The Local Authority remains the body with overall responsibility for health and safety under local management of schools. Where it is also the employer the Local Authority has statutory duties under the provisions of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 for both employees and non-employees. The prime objective of this Guidance and Procedure is to introduce an awareness of problems relating to alcohol misuse. Any such problems may have health and safety implications, consequently this guidance and procedure is mandatory for all schools where teaching and non-teaching staff remain the employees of the Council.
- 2.7 This Alcohol Misuse Guidance has been designed to promote a non-hostile, non judgemental environment within the workplace to encourage employees to seek and accept help. Confidentiality will be maintained at all times.

3. Procedure to be followed

3.1 Confidentiality

- 3.2 All information relating to individual cases will be treated in the strictest confidence.

3.3 Identification of Possible Alcohol Misuse

- 3.4 Early recognition of alcohol misuse problems is an important factor in any rehabilitation programme. Therefore, headteachers, managers and fellow employees who turn a blind eye to colleagues' inappropriate behaviour or poor work performance could be adding to rather than helping to solve a problem that could have its origin in alcohol misuse. Alcohol misuse may need to be considered as a contributory factor in the application by the school of

capability and/or disciplinary procedures. Advice should always be sought from the school HR provider.

- 3.5 Employees who believe they have an alcohol related problem that affects their work may seek the assistance of their employers on their own initiative. In circumstances such as these, the manager consulted should encourage the employee to participate in this procedure which is intended to promote a recovery from the clinical condition.
- 3.6 Management at all levels of a school are in the most likely position to identify a possible alcohol related work problem. Work related alcohol problems may possibly be identified by an employee's poor work performance, poor attendance, breach of health and safety rules and/or habitually intoxicated condition. It is also the case that some medical conditions may present as similar to intoxication, including odours on the breath and other signs and symptoms. That being the case, such issues and concerns should be addressed confidentially and in line with this guidance.
- 3.7 Management have a clear responsibility to the employees they supervise and a duty to the school to seek to act on, in accordance with this guidance's provisions, a belief on reasonable grounds that any particular employee has an alcohol related work problem.
- 3.8 If, during any capability/disciplinary proceedings it becomes apparent that the subject matter of the capability/disciplinary proceedings is an alcohol related work problem, consideration should be given to suspending all capability/disciplinary action and following the following procedure. However, where there is gross misconduct e.g. theft or fighting, warranting summary dismissal, formal disciplinary proceedings may be commenced, and any medical condition may need to be considered, perhaps as mitigation.

4. Initial Action

- 4.1 Irrespective of the means by which a possibly alcohol related work problem has been identified, initial action remains the same. The employee's manager or another person nominated by the Headteacher (or by the Chair of Governors, if action needs to be considered regarding the Headteacher) should arrange for a representative of the school's HR provider to attend a meeting with the employee and themselves. It should be made clear to the employee that the meeting, when it is arranged, is separate from and does not form any part of the school's Disciplinary Procedure. Reasonable notice of the

meeting should be given and steps taken to allow the employee to have a representative with them.

- 4.2 The employee may be accompanied by a Trade Union representative, work colleague or other person of their choice at the meeting if they so wish. The purpose of this meeting is to establish the employee's own views regarding the school's concerns that tend to indicate that an alcohol related work problem exists.

5. Further Action

- 5.1 If as a result of the above meeting the senior manager and HR representative consider that a work related problem exists that may be a result of alcohol misuse, the following procedures should be implemented.

- a. The school should make arrangements for the employee to attend an appointment with the Local Authority Workforce Health Manager for a medical examination.
- b. If the Workforce Health Manager confirms the opinion that the employee has an alcohol related problem, the possibility of a rehabilitation programme will be explored in consultation with the employee, the school, the Workforce Health Manager and any other medical/clinical bodies/institutions considered appropriate. Assistance and support will be provided by the HR provider and the school during any rehabilitation programme.
- c. On successful completion of such a rehabilitation programme the employee will continue to receive informal support from their employers until such support is considered by all parties to be no longer necessary.

- 5.2 The action specified above should be implemented by the headteacher as appropriate, but taking into account points (a) to (e) below in the following circumstances:-

- a. if the Workforce Health Manager is of the opinion, after a medical examination, that the employee does not have an alcohol misuse problem affecting their work, the headteacher, having regard to all the circumstances, should consider whether immediate disciplinary action is inappropriate;

- b. if the employee fails to complete any rehabilitation programme implemented as a result of the Workforce Health Manager's medical examination, and agreed by the headteacher, disciplinary action should be considered;
 - c. if the employee refuses to be referred to the Workforce Health Manager for a medical examination, disciplinary action should be considered;
 - d. if the employee claims that any work related problem does not result from alcohol misuse then the problem will be dealt with without reference to this Guidance;
 - e. if the headteacher and representative of the HR provider, during any disciplinary investigation e.g. relating to an allegation of attending work under the influence of alcohol consider on the evidence that the work related problem is not a result of a condition of alcohol misuse then, having regard to all the circumstances, immediate disciplinary action may be appropriate. If capability action is under consideration, and again a condition of alcohol misuse is ruled out, school managers may continue with informal management support/ formal capability action, as appropriate, following the capability guidance in the relevant School Personnel Guidelines.
- 5.3 If the approach above is being followed, regarding management issues, and the employee denies there is an underlying alcohol related medical condition, then the employee should be given very specific clear guidance of the requirements of their post.
- 5.4 The employee's performance in the full range of duties and responsibilities of their post should be monitored by the headteacher or another senior manager normally for a period of at least three months but not exceeding six months. Part of this monitoring should be that there are regular meetings between the employee and his/her manager in the school. The employee may be accompanied by a Trade Union representative, etc at these meetings if the employee so wishes.
- 5.5 If at the end of the above monitoring period the concerns of the school no longer exist, no further action need be taken. If, however, no progress has been made in reducing the school's concerns at the end of the monitoring period disciplinary action should be considered, or the employee can be referred or re-referred to the Workforce Health Manager, dependent upon the circumstances of the case.

6. Suspension

- 6.1 Nothing in this Alcohol Misuse Guidance and Procedure affects the right of headteacher and/or the governing body to suspend an employee from work as a result of an alcohol related problem where they consider that the employee constitutes a significant risk to the health, safety or welfare of themselves, other employees, pupils or members of the public, or where there is a significant risk of destruction of or damage to school, Local Authority, or the public's property, or the risk of damage to the reputation and standing of the school in the community. Suspension should also be considered where there is a serious misconduct issue. Please refer to the school's Disciplinary Procedures.
- 6.2 Any suspension arising from such considerations will be on full pay. Immediate compulsory referral to the Workforce Health Manager must take place on suspension. If the Workforce Health Manager issues a report that states the employee is medically unfit to undertake the duties of his/her post the absence from work shall be considered as sickness absence, following discussions between the headteacher and the school's HR Adviser.

Appendix 1: Guidance on Recognising Alcohol Misuse

It is important to recognise that the following characteristics, in isolation may appear insignificant, but when appearing in combinations may indicate the presence of an alcohol abuse related problem. Advice and help should be taken from the school's HR provider, and the Council's Workforce Health Manager, in interpreting these characteristics.

a. Absenteeism

- excessive sick leave
- Instances of unauthorised leave
- absence on certain days, particularly near weekends
- excessive lateness, particularly after weekends
- unusual/improbable reasons for absence
- leaving work early
- frequent occurrences of certain illnesses e.g. diarrhoea, colds, flu, gastritis etc.

b. High Accident Rate

- frequent accidents both in and out of work

c. Difficulty in Concentration

- work requires greater effort
- tasks take more time
- difficulty in recalling instructions, details etc.
- increasing difficulty in handling complex assignments

d. Spasmodic Work Patterns

- alternate periods of high and low productivity
- increasing general unreliability and unpredictability
- poor timekeeping (if unusual)
- frequent trips to the toilet

e. Generally Deteriorating Job Efficiency (unusual for the individual)

- missed deadlines
- mistakes due to inattention or poor judgement
- wasting materials, supplies etc.

- making bad decisions
- improbable excuses for poor work performance

f. Poor Employee Relations at Work (unusual for the individual)

- over-reaction to real or imagined criticism
- unreasonable resentments
- irritability, aggression, mood changes or lethargy
- complaints from co-workers
- avoidance of line manager or colleagues
- dishonesty, borrowing money

g. Changes in Behaviour

- hand tremors, flushed face, slurred speech, unsteady gait or bleary eyes
- deterioration in personal hygiene or appearance
- unusual marks or stains on body or clothes
- unexplained infections sores or abscesses

h. Confusion

- sudden changes in usual behaviour patterns
- difficulty in dealing with complex assignments
- difficulty in identifying or recalling own mistakes (if unusual)
- possible hallucinations
- unbalanced emotions or mood swings