

Substance Misuse Policy

Version	1.1
Approving Body	Trust Board
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Review date	30th September 2026
Owner	Director of Resources
Applies to	All Trust Schools, all Trust staff

Version	Date	Reason
1.0	October 2020	To establish a Trust wide policy
1.1	October 2023	Periodic review

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1. Introduction

1.1 Initio Learning Trust is committed to providing a safe and healthy work environment for all employees, so they are able to carry out their jobs safely and effectively.

1.2 All employees are expected to arrive at work fit to carry out their jobs and be able to perform their duties safely without any limitations due to the use or after effects of alcohol or drugs (whether prescribed, over the counter, legal highs or illegal substances). Misuse of alcohol and drugs can lead to increased absences, reduced performance, impaired judgement and decision making, damage to relationships and increased health and safety risks, not only for the individual but also for our pupils and colleagues. Irresponsible behaviour resulting from the misuse of alcohol or drugs may also damage pupil outcomes and the [school/academy/trust's] reputation.

1.3 This policy does not form part of an employee's contract of employment and may be amended following a period of consultation.

2. Scope and purpose of policy

2.1 This policy covers all employees of the trust.

2.2 The purpose of the policy is to set out the rules and arrangements for managing alcohol and drug related issues. The policy sets out what action trust will take and/or support offered to employees where alcohol and drug related problems are affecting their health, attendance, safety and work performance¹. Managers will make a judgment about whether an employee is deemed to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs affecting performance.

2.3 The aim of implementing this policy is to ensure all employees are:

- (a) aware of their responsibilities regarding alcohol and drug misuse
- (b) encouraged to seek help, in confidence, at an early stage
- (c) dealt with sympathetically, fairly and consistently
- (d) clear about what action will be taken to ensure the safe and efficient running of the trust.

3. Identifying that there is a problem

3.1 Managers have a role to play in identifying problems at work that are being caused or contributed to by alcohol or drug misuse. Where there is considered to be deterioration in work performance and/or changes in patterns of behaviour which may be due to alcohol or drug misuse, managers should take action and also seek advice from the Headteacher.

3.2 If an employee arrives at work and a manager reasonably believes that they are under the influence of alcohol or drugs, the employee shall immediately be taken out of circulation so that an investigation of the circumstances can be undertaken.

3.3 Employees should not attempt to cover up for a colleague whose work or behaviour is suffering as a result of an alcohol or drug-related problem. Instead they should encourage their colleague to seek assistance through their manager or if they will not, the employee should raise it themselves with their own manager.

¹
- It does not apply to "one-off" incidents or offences caused by alcohol or drug misuse at/or outside work where there is no evidence of an ongoing problem, which may damage our reputation, and which are likely to be dealt with under our Disciplinary Procedure.

3.4 An employee who believes they have an alcohol or drug-related problem, should seek specialist advice and support as soon as possible.

4. Rules on alcohol and drugs at work

4.1 Employees are required to demonstrate responsible behaviour at work, work-related functions and work-related social events and to act in a way that will not have a detrimental effect on our reputation. This includes the consumption of alcohol at work. The Trust will expect employees to remain professional and fit for work at all times.

4.2 The Trust expects all employees to comply with the drink-driving legislation at all times. Committing a drink-driving offence outside or during working hours or while working for the trust may lead to action under our Disciplinary Procedure and could result in dismissal.

4.3 The Trust may occasionally arrange school social functions. If an employee attending such a function behaves inappropriately or brings the school into disrepute due to their actions, following the consumption of alcohol/drugs, then the conduct may be regarded as taking place in the work place and as a result disciplinary action may be appropriate.

4.4 When attending school trips including residential visits either in this country or abroad, employees are considered to be working and so the consumption of alcohol is not permitted. However during longer-term residential visits [more than two nights], "off-duty" time may be agreed by the party leader and during this time, alcohol may be consumed as long as it does not impact on the employee's ability to make professional decisions should they be required to be "on-duty". Employees should not drink alcohol in front of the children even if deemed to be "off-duty". The party leader reserves the right to prevent any alcohol consumption by employees on a trip should it be deemed necessary to ensure the safety and welfare of all those on the trip. Inappropriate behaviour on trips may result in disciplinary action.

4.5 If an employee is prescribed medication, they must seek advice from their GP or pharmacist about the possible effect on their ability to carry out their job and whether their duties should be modified. If so they must tell their line manager without delay.

5. Searches

5.1 Where the school has reasonable suspicion that a member of staff has prohibited goods on school property, the Trust reserves the right to conduct searches for alcohol or drugs, including, but not limited to, searches of lockers, filing cabinets and desks, and packages sent to our address or held on the premises.

5.2 Any alcohol or drugs found as a result of a search will be confiscated and action may be taken under the Disciplinary Procedure.

6. Management and Support of substance abuse problems

6.1 When a problem affecting conduct or performance is first identified, the employee will be invited to a disciplinary investigation meeting with their manager. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss concerns, establish the facts and seek their employee's views on, for example, the deterioration of work performance and/or behaviour.

6.2 Alcohol and drug-related problems may develop for a variety of reasons and over a considerable period of time. Therefore the trust will seek, where appropriate, to treat these problems in a similar way to other health issues. Support may be provided at this point, in order to aid a full recovery, allowing a return to work/effective performance and the full range of duties. The manager may decide to offer a referral to the Occupational Health Service for medical and/or specialist advice before deciding what further action to take. Other support that could be offered includes:

(a) time off work to attend treatment as recommended by the Occupational Health

Service

(b) adjusting duties or other support as recommended by the Occupational Health Service during treatment and for an agreed period thereafter, subject to operational requirements and feasibility.

6.3 If, having acknowledged an alcohol or drug-related problem, the employee undertakes treatment and/or rehabilitation, the trust may decide to suspend the disciplinary process, pending the outcome of the treatment.

6.4 If, as the result of the investigation meeting, the manager continues to believe that the employee is suffering the effects of alcohol or drugs misuse but the employee refuses an offer of referral or support, the disciplinary process will continue.

6.5 If an employee does not finish a programme of treatment because they stop attending or the recovery and return to work does not happen as anticipated at the outset of a course of treatment, the manager may reinstate the disciplinary process.

6.6 Where performance and/or conduct does not improve or continues to deteriorate despite support, the trust will take disciplinary action.

7. Confidentiality and data protection

7.1 We aim to ensure that the confidentiality of any employees experiencing alcohol or drug-related problems is maintained appropriately by managers, where it is necessary to inform them, colleagues. However, it needs to be recognised that, in supporting employees, some degree of information sharing is likely to be necessary. As part of the application of this policy, the Trust may collect, process and store personal data and special categories of data in accordance with our data protection policy. We will comply with the requirements of the **Data Protection Legislation** (being (i) the General Data Protection Regulation ((EU) 2016/679) (unless and until the GDPR is no longer directly applicable in the UK) and any national implementing laws, regulations and secondary legislation, as amended or updated from time to time, in the UK and then (ii) any successor legislation to the GDPR or the Data Protection Act 1998, including the Data Protection Act 2018). Records will be kept in accordance with the requirements of the Data Protection Legislation.

8. Review

This policy is reviewed and amended every 3 years by the trust. We will monitor the application and outcomes of this policy to ensure it is working effectively.

Appendix 1

Equality Impact Assessment/ Analysis (EIA)

Step 1: Scoping and Identifying the Aims

School/Service	People Department
Title of Change:	Substance Misuse Policy
What are you completing this EIA for?	Policy
Is this a new or existing activity or change?	Existing
What are the main aims / objectives of the changes?	Ensure policy is still relevant and the most current legislation is being adhered to.
What is the context for this EIA? e.g., policy, practice, service, curriculum proposal or project?	
Why is the activity/change needed? E.g., The policy or practice affect different "protected groups" differently?, enhancing of services, education	
Name/s of people and Date undertaking analysis:	Shani Davies, Director People & Culture
Who will be affected by this activity/change? eg pupils/students, service users, employees, wider community	All Staff in scope of this policy
Does it relate to an area with known inequalities? E.g., access to service for disabled people, pupils/students, vulnerable pupils/students, SEND, racist bullying etc.	
EIA Schedule When will the EIA be reviewed?	

Step 2: Assessing the Impact

Detail any positive or negative impacts of this document /policy on pupils/students and staff in the box below. If there is no impact, please select "not applicable"

Protected Characteristic	Positive Impact(s)	Negative Impact(s)	NA	Action to address negative impact: (e.g. adjustment to the policy)
Sex consider issues for: men and women, non-binary.	Y			
Gender reassignment E.g. privacy of data and harassment	Y			
Disability e.g., attitudes, physical, social barriers, visible and non-immediately visible disabilities, neurodivergence, learning disability	Y			
Age e.g., consider all ages but there may be some issues that relate for example to older people/younger people	Y			
Sexual Orientation consider heterosexual as well as lesbian, gay and bisexual (and other sexual orientations)	Y			
Pregnancy and maternity	Y			

e.g., childcare, working arrangements, part time working				
Marriage and civil partnership	Y			
Religion or belief consider religions, beliefs, or no belief	Y			
Ethnicity / Race e.g., language barriers, different ethnic groups/nationalities	Y			
Socio-economic factors e.g., resident status – socio economic/low-income groups, migrants, carers, impacts on children and families (please state)	Y			
Mental health e.g. short term, long term, acute, fluctuating mental health conditions, impacts	Y			

*If you answer yes to any of the following, you **MUST** complete the evidence column explaining what information you have considered which has led you to reach this decision.*

Assessment Questions	Yes / No	Please document evidence / any mitigations
In consideration of your document development, did you consult with others, for example, external organisations, employees, pupils/students, carers or community groups?	Yes	Staff and Trade Unions
Have you taken into consideration any regulations, professional standards?	Yes	Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, KCSIE, ACAS, CIPD

Step 3: Review, Risk and Action Plans

Low – No major change	Medium - Adjust the policy	High – Stop and remove
The activity is robust and there is no potential for discrimination, and you have taken all appropriate opportunities to advance and foster relations between groups.	This involves taking steps to remove barriers or to better advance equality. It can mean introducing measures to mitigate the potential effect.	If there are adverse effects that are not justified and cannot be mitigated, you will want to consider stopping the policy/project altogether. If the activity shows unlawful discrimination, it must be removed or changed.

How would you rate the overall level of impact / risk to the school / service / Trust if no action was taken?	Low x ☐	Medium ☐	High ☐
What action needs to be taken to reduce or eliminate the negative impact?	N/A		
Who will be responsible for monitoring and regular review of the document / policy / change?	Director People & Culture		

Step 4: Authorisation and sign off

I am satisfied that all available evidence has been accurately assessed for any potential impact on pupils/students and employees with protected characteristics in the scope of this project / change / policy / procedure / practice / activity. Mitigation, where appropriate has been identified and dealt with accordingly.

Equality Assessor:

Shani Davies

Date:

19/2/26