



Early Learning and Childcare Centre

SUBSTANCE MISUSE POLICY

The subject of substance misuse and how it can impair performance, safety or interpersonal work relations is a matter for employers. All employers have a duty to ensure the health and safety of their staff, and may fail in this duty if they permit staff to knowingly work under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

The purpose of this Policy is to help protect workers from the dangers of substance misuse and to encourage those with a problem to seek help. Substance misuse includes, but is not limited to; nicotine, alcohol, aerosol or glue inhalation or the misuse of drugs both illegal and legal. In addition, the Policy sets out a procedure to ensure that all substance misuse problems are dealt with sympathetically, fairly and consistently.

- Staff may not smoke (cigarettes, cigars, pipes or e-cigarettes), consume alcohol or unprescribed drugs (except drugs which may be bought over the counter for minor ailments) during their working day, including meal or rest breaks.
- Staff must not consume alcohol or take unprescribed drugs (except drugs which may be bought over the counter for minor ailments) at any time before reporting for duty when their use may impair work performance when on duty.
- Staff must respect that any time they are wearing the Ferryfield uniform they are representing Ferryfield and should behave appropriately.
- The possession, use or distribution of drugs for non-medical purposes on Ferryfield premises is forbidden.
- Staff should inform their manager of any prescribed drug that could have side effects and impact on their ability to work safely.
- Possession of or dealing in unprescribed drugs at work will immediately be reported to the police.
- Ferryfield recognises that an alcohol or drug addiction may be an illness and should be treated in the same way as any other illness. However the welfare of the children in Ferryfield is paramount and action will be taken accordingly.
- Where appropriate, action will be taken under Ferryfield's Discipline and Dismissal Policy.
- Any matters arising under this Policy will be dealt with in the strictest confidence

Dealing with Drugs and Alcohol Misuse at Work

- Problems with alcohol at work usually fall into two main categories: the individual who drinks inappropriately on occasions and the individual who consistently engages in inappropriate drinking.
- Problems arising from the first category are likely to be straightforward cases of misconduct whereas drinkers in the second category are likely to have associated health, absence and long-term performance problems.
- However, even occasional drinking may be a response to an underlying problem such as stress.
- It is not always easy for managers to distinguish between the two types of drinkers or if an individual is taking unprescribed drugs.
- In addition, some of the symptoms of excessive alcohol intake and drug misuse can be similar to the effects of a range of medical conditions including diabetes and epilepsy.

- Consequently when dealing with problems caused by suspected alcohol or drug misuse, managers should make a full investigation of all the circumstances before deciding upon the appropriate action.
- Managers should intervene at an early stage to avoid the need for later disciplinary action.
- If a manager identifies or has good reason to suspect alcohol or drug misuse as the cause of a performance or conduct problem, then the individual may require help to overcome the problem.
- The manager should speak to the individual in private about his/her concerns, and should ask the individual's reasons for the poor performance and/or conduct and ask whether it could be due to a health or any other problem.
- If the individual is drunk or may be under the influence of drugs then the manager will need to wait until the individual is no longer under the influence before taking any action, however in the meantime it may be appropriate to remove them from their duties temporarily.
- Where an individual admits to a dependency problem then this will be regarded as an illness and every assistance should be given to overcome this.
- Staff should try to plan attendance for treatment in their own time, where ever possible.
- The manager will set the individual objectives and plan a date for a review performance in line with these.
- The individual should be informed that continued employment will depend on reaching the agreed objectives and doing their best to overcome the problem as quickly as possible.
- A single lapse in treatment will be treated the same as any other illness, as long as there is a genuine effort on behalf of the employee to help themselves and there is no further misuse of alcohol or drugs whilst on duty.
- Misuse would include the employee attending for work still showing signs of alcohol or drug abuse.
- It is for the manager, liaising with the Management Committee, to determine in all the circumstances when lapses become a matter of conduct.
- If an employee refuses to undertake or continue treatment, or the treatment fails, then the matter becomes one of performance and/or conduct and should be dealt with as a disciplinary issue in accordance with Ferryfield's Discipline and Dismissal Policy.
- Any member of staff who, it is believed on reasonable grounds, may be under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs whilst on duty may be suspended from work whilst the matter is investigated.

Criminal Convictions

- Staff must inform their manager if they are convicted of any criminal charge regarding the use or supply of drugs.
- It will be for the manager, in liaison with the Management Committee, to determine if any further action is required.
- Care Inspectorate and SSSc will be informed.
- Any information will be treated in the strictest confidence.

Adopted by the Committee

Date

August 2016