



<b>Policy No:</b> SJD/YP/10	<b>Authorised by:</b> Davina Powell	<b>Review Date:</b> 20th October 2023
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<b>DRUGS, ALCHOHOL and SUBSTANCE MISUSE</b>		

## Introduction

The physical, emotional and health needs of each child are identified, and appropriate action is taken to procure the medical, dental, and other health services needed to meet them. Children are provided with guidance, advice and support on health and personal care issues appropriate to the needs and wishes of each child.

## Policy

It is policy that there should be no illegal drugs, alcohol, or other illegal substances in any of SJD Homes' premises, whether consumed by children, young people, or staff.

## Good Practice Aims

Each resident must be provided with guidance, advice and support appropriate to their age, needs, culture and wishes, in relation to health and social issues including alcohol and illegal substance abuse, smoking, use of solvents, safer sex and relationship education, HIV infection, hepatitis and sexually transmitted diseases, and protecting oneself from prejudice, bullying and abuse, both within and outside the home.

There is a policy and written guidance implemented in practice, on promoting their health in the home including:

- sexual health
- the effects of alcohol, smoking and other substances
- HIV and AIDS and other blood borne diseases.

Residents are actively discouraged from smoking, alcohol and illegal substance or solvent abuse and under-age sexual activity. They must be given opportunities to discuss these issues openly and honestly with staff and their peers.

All care staff need to be alert to the signs that young people are using and/or abusing drugs, alcohol, and other substances. Adult disapproval, clarity about the consequences for future health and support to help them give up the practice are mechanisms to be used in work with young people.

Staff will aim to encourage positive attitudes amongst young people to help them resist experimentation with drugs, alcohol, or toxic substances.

Where young people are admitted who already use and abuse drugs, alcohol, or other substances, then counselling may be proposed as part of their care plan. Referrals for professional help may also be arranged.

## Procedures

If it is suspected that the young person is involved with more dangerous drugs, such as heroin, crack or cocaine or any other Class A drugs, then:

1. The local police will be contacted automatically and immediately.
2. Ofsted will be notified by correspondence within forty-eight hours where appropriate.
3. An emergency planning meeting will be called with the placing authority to be held within two or three days of the incident.
4. If there is not an immediate commitment from the young person to change their behaviour then the placement may be terminated immediately.
5. The placement would be reviewed if there were any infringement of SJD Homes' expectation regarding Class A drugs.

If the substances involve the use of cannabis, then the following procedures will apply:

1. The young person would be asked to hand over any cannabis thought to be in their possession.
2. If they do so then the drugs will be confiscated, witnessed by at least two members of staff in the presence of the young person.
3. Advice will be taken as to the proper disposal of the drugs. The local police will be contacted on each occasion.
4. If the young person refuses to comply with reasonable requests to hand over illegal substances, or if it is suspected or found that there are substantial amounts, then the local police will be informed and asked to intervene as deemed appropriate.

Similarly, if any patterns begin to be defined a planning meeting will be called between SJD Homes and the placing local authority. If the young person does not make a clear commitment to cease their use of cannabis, then their placement may be terminated.

If any young person is involved in the misuse of solvents or alcohol the following procedures will apply:

1. Where the substances involved are not deemed to be illegal (i.e., where such products are on sale locally) but are being used in an unacceptable manner, e.g., aerosols, then staff will first ask the young person to hand all items over to staff.
2. The Police may be asked to assist and help staff to monitor the situation, particularly if there is the likelihood that young people will refuse to comply with reasonable requests and where staff decide that there is a potential risk to the safety of the young person or to other residents.

The young person's social worker or personal advisor will be informed as soon as possible. If a pattern of substance abuse or persistent abuse of alcohol is identified and where the health of the young person is deemed to be at risk, the following action will be taken:

1. Ofsted, where appropriate and the placing local authority will be informed by letter from the manager.
2. The letter will include details of the action that has been taken or is proposed in order to deal with the situation within the home.
3. Support and guidance will be offered to the young people involved.
4. A planning meeting will be held at which the placement may be terminated.
5. If it is not then the young person will be sent a letter pointing out the seriousness of their behaviour and that any recurrence could still lead to the closure of their placement.
6. If the pattern of substance abuse continues, the placement will be reviewed the outcome of which may be that the placement is to be terminated.
7. The next stage will be to call a de-briefing meeting between staff, Ofsted if appropriate, social worker(s)/personal advisors and police to explore causes and to identify further action, e.g., contacting the Trading Standards Unit of the council, police contact with local traders.

In the event of serious drug, alcohol, or substance misuse where the young person is incoherent and obviously unwell, then the following procedure will apply:

1. Try to ascertain the substance and the amount taken.
2. Contact hospital or GP. Unconsciousness, vomiting or violent behaviour from a young person should necessitate hospital attention.

3. In the event of hospital admission, the on-call manager should be informed (See also Section on Notifications).
4. All actions must be fully recorded.
5. If a young person is detained in hospital, the appropriate social worker or out of hours team and parents, if appropriate, must be informed.
6. Key workers are responsible for arranging hospital visits. Immediate follow up is the responsibility of all staff.

