



TRAFFORD
COUNCIL

Services for Children, Young People and Families

Children in care

Children's homes

Drugs and substance misuse

April 2020

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Date to be Reviewed: January 2022

1 Introduction

Trafford children's homes recognise that careful and consistent attention to health forms an essential part of a child's overall well-being and development.

Trafford's children's homes have a zero tolerance policy towards the storage or use of illegal drugs on their premises and will take measures to reduce and prevent children from using substances that cause harm.

These policies and procedures should be followed in conjunction with the individual child's health action plan. Advice and assistance should be sought as appropriate from the designated health professionals across Trafford.

The impact and effect of a child using or misusing any substance should be considered as part of the care planning process.

This document aims to ensure:

- A consistent approach to drug issues in the Children's homes by all staff working together with young people to protect and maintain their physical, psychological and emotional welfare.
- That both preventative and response strategies are implemented to reduce and prevent drug and substance misuse
- A positive and supportive climate that promotes responsible decisions by children and young people in relation to drug use and challenges all to pursue better health
- All staff responsible for young people in the care of the local authority will receive basic substance awareness training.
- That all staff has an adequate understanding of health risks and legal issues associated with drug use.
- That staff and young people are aware of available support services

Trafford Children and Young People's Service is fully committed to ensuring equality of opportunity to the delivery of this strategy to all young people, and will therefore ensure that: -Each child will be provided with guidance, advice and support, in accordance with the child's age, needs, culture and wishes.

Whenever a child is placed in a children's home whose first language is not English the staff will ensure an interpreter service is provided to relay health advice and policy regarding drugs & substance misuse.

1.1 Confidentiality

The promise of absolute confidentiality cannot be given, especially when there is a risk to the safety of the child, young person or other people. The young person should be told when information is shared. Information concerning risk to young people must be passed immediately to the Registered Manager of the children's home. An incident form must be completed.

1.2 Parents and Confidentiality

The Children Act (1989) notes the duty of staff to assist in the enhancement and maintenance of effective relationships between parent and child. Parents thus have a moral and legal right to be involved in the care of a young person when their involvement will 'enhance his or her well being'

Parental responsibility is clearly defined in The Children Act (1989) as 'all rights, duties, powers, responsibilities and authority which by law a parent of a child has in relation to the child and his/her property' S3 (1) 1989 Children Act. 'Where a care order is in force the Local Authority must exercise parental responsibility.'

Parents as a matter of good practice should still be consulted except when this would put the young person at risk.

2. General procedures and guidance

2.1 Definitions – for the purpose of this policy

- Drug: 'A drug is any substance which affects the way in which the body functions physically, emotionally or mentally and includes tobacco, Alcohol, solvents, over the counter and prescribed medicines, as well as illegal substances'.
- Drug Use: Drug taking by a young person that does not cause any perceived immediate harm – even though it may carry some risk
- Drug misuse: Drug use that harms health and social functioning – either dependant use (physical or psychological) or use as part of a wider spectrum of problematic or harmful behaviour

(Definitions used by Standing Conference on Drug Abuse (SCODA) in "Drug related early intervention developing services for young people and families' 1987)

It must be remembered that the overriding principle is to safeguard the health and welfare of the young person

When a young person initially becomes a resident in a Trafford Children's Home the Registered Manager or senior assistant will explain the 'Substance Misuse Policy' to them.

A copy of 'Information for young people about substance misuse in the Children's home' will also be given to the young person. (Appendix 1)

The negative influence that a drug user might have on other residents should be considered and strategies established to minimise the risk, such as education and counselling

2.2 Awareness and Education

Drug education forms part of the general health awareness of children, young people and staff.

Staff should use opportunities to talk informally to young people, by raising awareness and aiming to give children and young people the skills to cope with the pressures they may experience

Young people are entitled to: -

- **Knowledge** – Health, social and legal issues must be considered, especially the understanding of risks, effects and consequences of drug use enabling informed decision making by the young person.
- **Skill Development** – These skills include accessing information, assertiveness, communication, decision-making, negotiating, problem solving and peer pressure
- **Care and Support** – This ranges from the provision of accurate and consistent information to specialised therapy.
- All children and young people must be encouraged to develop or maintain a healthy lifestyle.

2.3 Signs of Misuse

Signs of drug misuse can be confused with other problems, which can be part of normal teenage development.

Any concerns should be discussed with the young person in a safe environment.

Explain the limits of confidentiality and establish if the young person needs any help.

Social workers, residential child care officers and foster carers must ensure that if a young person is involved with drugs that he/she understands that it is the behaviour, not the young person that is seen as unacceptable.

2.4 Representatives for substance misuse in the Children's homes

The homes will work closely with the designated Neighbourhood Police Officer, The substance misuse service, Early Break, and the Community Nurses for children in care. The staff will receive training on drug issues, and will receive updated information on a regular basis.

There is a separate policy on medication as it is necessary to sometimes have medicines in the home e.g. an individual child's prescribed medication

If any young person is on a drug rehabilitation programme and being supported with a substitute, these drugs may be treated as controlled drugs, refer to Storage and Administration of Medicine guidance and follow as appropriate.

2.5 Smoking

Smoking is not permitted in the children's homes.

It is recognised that smoking, both actively and passively, is harmful to health. This guidance below seeks to emphasise the positive role that adults have in setting a good example to children in their care.

This guidance includes all staff, young people and visitors to Trafford Children and young people's residential homes.

- No member of staff shall at any time smoke in the presence of any children in their "care".
- No member of staff shall supply smoking materials to any resident, purchase them on their behalf, lend money for cigarettes, tobacco or the materials for making or lighting cigarettes or tobacco.
- Where a child in care is already a habitual smoker, the health care plan shall address what efforts are to be made to encourage the child to give up the habit.
- Children who do not smoke should be actively discouraged from developing the habit through an appropriate health education programme.
- Smoking is not permitted in the residential children's homes or any of Trafford's vehicles see Health and Safety Guidance no 19.1 Driver and Escorts pg.9
- Smoking will be permitted in separate, designated areas, especially provided for staff.
- Social workers should not give permission for any child who is Looked After to smoke.

2.5.1 Designated Smoking Areas

Smoking is permitted at the Registered Manager's discretion in the designated smoking areas.

Old Hall Road: behind the main gates

Kindle, Kingsway Park: outside the back door

2.6 Alcohol

Alcohol is not permitted to be consumed or brought into the children's home.

Alcohol is potentially dangerous in two ways:

- Sustained drinking can lead to health risks and, in extreme cases, to alcohol dependence
- Intoxication can lead to uncontrolled, disorderly or dangerous behaviour

This guidance includes all staff, young people and visitors to Trafford Children and young people's residential homes.

- No Trafford residential children's home shall store alcohol on the premises.

- No member of staff shall supply alcohol to any resident or purchase it on their behalf.
- The consumption of alcohol is not permitted in the residential children's homes.
- The consumption of alcohol is not permitted by staff or young people during days out or holidays.
- Staff must not be under the influence of alcohol and are not permitted to consume alcohol whilst caring for children and young people within the home or on duty off site.
- Where a child in care has alcohol problems, the health care plan shall address how the child's needs are to be met.
- Staff should bear in mind the need for health education about the sensible use of alcohol and the consequences of its misuse.
- Staff are not permitted to take children into licensed premises other than those that serve food and are family friendly.

Staff and carers may have to deal with explicit questions raised by the young people at any time. It is important that these questions are answered honestly.

However, it is also appropriate to say that you do not know the answer and that you will check and respond later. It may be helpful to ask the young person what they think the answer is, or why they have asked the question.

2.7 Aerosols, Gas, Glue and Petrol

Staff must ensure that aerosol, gas, glue, petrol or similar substances are only used for the purpose they were designed for.

All reasonable measures must be taken to restrict any use by children.

The storage of any such products must be agreed with the Registered Manager.

All staff must be vigilant to the fact that children may bring into the home these substances which pose extreme risks to health.

A safe home environment must be maintained.

3.0 Incident management

3.1 Aggravating circumstances are defined by the police as:

- If the young person denies the offence.
- The young person is thought to have a concealed drug on their person Police have specific powers to search in these circumstances

- The young person has previously been involved in a drug incident in a Trafford children's home
- The amount is larger than for personal use (Staff training will be given in this area)
- The young person is suspected of supplying drugs
- The young person is in possession of a drug with intent to supply another (this could apply to a small amount)

The most appropriate member of staff on duty should ask the young person the questions below:

- What the substance is? (Identify)
- Who is it for? (Possession or supply)
- Have they got any more?

3.2 Possession with no aggravating circumstances

Police need not be involved

Staff need to ensure the child/young persons room (and any other part of the property if it is suspected that drugs are being concealed) is searched by at least two members of staff (if further drugs are found it is likely the police will have to be called)

If the search is negative and the child/young person has not been involved in a previous drug incident in a Trafford children's home, no police involvement is necessary: but:

- The incident should be documented in the child/young persons record,
- The Social Workers and Community Nurse for children in care should be notified and the Health care plan reviewed.
- The young person should be encouraged to seek help from Early Break
- The incident should be recorded – time, date, place, and substance found, by whom, description of substance. Do not handle the drug, use gloves and avoid contamination with the skin.
- Small amounts of substance should be disposed of as soon as possible on the premises by flushing down the toilet, not environmentally friendly but permanent.
- If large amounts are found, secure the substance, place in an envelope or bag, seal, and give brief description of substance, sign over seal with date and time, witnessed and signed by another member of staff. Consult with a manager regarding the amount of drugs found on site.
- Advice may be sought from Community Police or Early Break.

- Should the Police want to take further action appropriate arrangements will be made for testing the substance. Ask for collar/log number
- Make arrangements with Designated officer for him to collect the substance as soon as practicable

(Failure to do so may leave the home open to prosecution for offences under the misuse of drugs act 1971)

- Staff must not transport substance
- If the substance is to be stored at the Children's home it must be locked securely in a cupboard or safe, witnessed and documented
- If the substance is positive the police will take action if appropriate (See appendix 5 The Law)

3.3 Staff Guidelines if Substances are found with aggravating circumstances

If a young person is found in possession of a substance (as defined by The Misuse of Drugs Act 1971) and there are aggravating circumstances.

- Staff must contact the police direct on 0161 872 5050 or if it is an emergency on 999.

3.4 Emergency procedures

The procedures for an emergency apply when a child or young person or others are at immediate risk of harm. A person who is unconscious, having trouble breathing, seriously confused or disoriented or who has taken a harmful toxic substance, should be responded to as an emergency.

Your main responsibility is for any young person at immediate risk, but you also need to ensure the well-being and safety of others. Put into practice your first aid procedures.

If in any doubt, call for medical help.

Always:

- **assess the situation**
- **if a medical emergency, send for medical help and ambulance**

Before assistance arrives:

If the person is conscious

- ask the person what has happened and to identify any drug used
- collect any drug sample and any vomit for medical analysis
- *do not* induce vomiting
- keep the person under observation, warm and quiet

If the person is unconscious

- ensure that the person can breathe and place in recovery position
- do not give anything by mouth
- do not attempt to make the person sit or stand
- do not leave the person unattended or in the charge of another young person

When medical help arrives:

- pass on any information available including vomit and any drug samples
- member of staff to accompany young person in the ambulance
- complete substance misuse incident sheet

3.5 Emergency Procedure for an unconscious young person

- If the young person is unconscious they should be put into the recovery position and an ambulance called immediately as above
- A member of staff should remain with the unconscious child/young person until the ambulance arrives
- Another member of staff should collect any evidence of substance use (see substance misuse incident management sheet). If possible part of the substance should be sent in the ambulance with the staff member accompanying the young person as this may assist in the treatment of the young person
- Contact parent if appropriate
- Domestic cleaning gloves must be worn when disposing of discarded needles and syringes (Refer to blood-born Infection Control Policy). They must be disposed of into the sharp bin. Gloves must be disposed of after use.
- Complete Incident Report

3.6 For a conscious young person

- Keep young person calm. Do not chase or excite, as this could be dangerous if gasses, glue or aerosols have been used.
- Summon an ambulance if health is thought to be at risk. If unsure contact NHS Direct Dial 111 for advice
- If unable to calm the situation summon the Police

- A member of staff should collect any evidence of substance use (see substance misuse incident sheet) and if possible the substance should be sent in the ambulance to assist in treatment.
- Domestic cleaning gloves must be worn when disposing of needles and syringes (Refer blood-borne Infection Control Policy). They must be disposed in the sharp bin. Gloves must be disposed of after use.
- Contact parent if appropriate
- Complete Incident Report

3.7 Searching Procedure

- Residents have the right to privacy for themselves and their property. However, if staff believes that dangerous or illegal substances are being stored in a child/young persons room then the room must be searched. The young person and two members of staff must be present at all times
- If a young person is suspected of carrying drugs, staff can request that they turn their pockets out. Two members of staff must be present. Clothing is not to be removed.
- If the young person refuses to allow the search then staff must inform the Police and request that an official search takes place
- If a young person is carrying out illegal activities in the Children's home i.e. taking drugs, supplying drugs to others; then he/she must be asked to stop and the drugs confiscated (Refer to substance misuse Incident sheet)
- If she/he refuses to hand the substance over then staff should call the police.
- Any substances removed must be stored and dealt with as described in substance misuse Incident sheet.

3.8 Drug Paraphernalia

- Discarded needles and syringes must be disposed off in the sharp bin
- Staff must wear domestic cleaning gloves when handling discarded needles and syringes. Gloves must be disposed of after use (Refer to blood-borne Infection Control Policy)
- If staff are concerned about contamination or injury, they can seek advice from NHS Direct Dial; 111 or from the Occupational Health Department

3.9 Notifications and Recording

Incidents of drug or substance misuse must be notified to the Registered Manager and the child's social worker at the first opportunity.

Incidents should be recorded on the child's record.

All information given and work carried out with a young person should be recorded, dated and signed on the appropriate individual files and on the substance misuse incident sheet.

4.0 The Law

4.1 The Misuse of Drugs Act (MDA) divides drugs into three classes as follows:

Class A:

These include: cocaine and crack, ecstasy, heroin, LSD, methadone, methamphetamine (crystal meth), fresh and prepared magic mushrooms.

Class B:

These include: amphetamine (not methamphetamine), barbiturates, codeine, ketamine, synthetic cannabinoids such as Spice and cannabis. All cathinone derivatives, including mephedrone, methylone, methedrone and MDPV were brought under control as Class B substances in 2010.

Class C:

These include: anabolic steroids, minor tranquillisers or benzodiazepines, GBL and GHB, khat and BZP.

Class A drugs are treated by the law as the most dangerous. Offences under the Misuse of Drugs Act can include:

- Possession of a controlled drug.
- Possession with intent to supply another person.
- Production, cultivation or manufacture of controlled drugs.
- Supplying another person with a controlled drug.
- Offering to supply another person with a controlled drug.
- Import or export of controlled drugs.

Allowing premises you occupy or manage to be used for the consumption of certain controlled drugs (smoking of cannabis or opium but not use of other controlled drugs) or supply or production of any controlled drug.

Certain controlled drugs such as amphetamines, barbiturates, methadone, minor tranquillisers and occasionally heroin can be obtained through a legitimate doctor's prescription. In such cases their possession is not illegal.

4.2 Controlled drugs on premises

If you occupy, own or even manage premises and you allow or turn a blind eye to any of the following you could be committing an offence:

- Unlawful production, or attempted production of a controlled drug

- Unlawful supply or offering to supply a controlled drug
- Preparing opium for smoking, smoking opium, cannabis or cannabis resin
- Possession - Having the drug on your person or with you
- Having control of it, in your house or car, or in your locker at work etc.
- Having someone look after it for you

If prosecuted for the offence of possession the onus would be on the accused to prove either:

- They took the drug from someone else to stop them committing or continuing to commit an offence and as soon as was reasonably practicable after, they destroyed it or it was handed over to the police
- having found the drug unattended i.e. in the street, as soon as was reasonably practicable afterwards handed it to a police officer

There are a number of problems with destroying drugs:

- ♦ If a person is taken ill, the medical services will need to know what drug/drugs were taken. If they have been destroyed it could seriously hinder treatment

4.3 Possession with intent to supply

- Whether in lawful or unlawful possession of a drug, if you decide to unlawfully give or sell that drug to someone else, you are committing an offence
- Having a drug on prescription would be an example of lawful possession

4.4 Disposal of Substances

If large amounts of substance are found –

- The Registered Manager or the senior assistant of the residential children's home must contact the Designated Officer to ask for advice on disposal
- This must be recorded witnessed and signed. Do not transport any substance to the police station without specific instruction from the police
- all drugs and drug related materials should be stored securely before handing to the police"

5.0 Representative for substance misuse

Each home has a representative who can provide advice and information covering the following:

Knowledge of the substance misuse policy for the children's homes

- Be conversant with the policy

Knowledge base

- Obtain relevant information and resources for use in the children's homes by staff and children/young people.
- Update knowledge around policy issues, the law etc and share with staff
- Attend training.
- Attend local policy meeting when appropriate.
- Establish links with local groups.

Information

- Establish links with the Health Promotion Department and view available resources and obtain relevant leaflets.
- Establish links with Early Break for supplies of leaflets and information.

Induction for new staff

- Explain your role to new staff
- Ensure they are conversant with the substance misuse policy
- Arrange for relevant training

In-service training

- Identifying training needs with staff and informing the Registered Manager

Appendix 1.

Information for Children/Young people about substance misuse in the Children's Homes

“A drug is any substance which affects the way in which the body functions physically, emotionally or mentally and includes tobacco, solvents, over the counter and prescribed medication, as well as illegal substances”

(SCODA 1997)

Trafford Children's homes are committed to providing a healthy and safe home for all the children and young people who live there.

Therefore the use or storage of drugs in the Children's homes will not be allowed

Your safety will be considered to be at risk if you are using drugs and it will be necessary to share this information with other people to make sure you are kept safe and receive help.

Staff will provide you with information about drugs and any help that you may need.

You have the right to privacy for yourself and your property. However, if staff believe that you are carrying drugs, they will ask you to turn out your pockets. If they believe you have drugs in your room they will search your room.

Two members of staff will carry out the searches. If you refuse to help with their searches then staff will notify the Police who will then carry out the search

Where to get help and advice

Early Break

Early Break young People's Service works throughout Trafford offering a specialist service for young people between the age of 11 and 25 with drug/alcohol misuse problems. The service provides a variety of interventions, including Education, Information, Advice, Support, Structured Treatment and Acupuncture. The Service aims to help young people to overcome their drug/alcohol misuse problems so that they can sustain a stable and healthier lifestyle and achieve their full potential in society.

Who is eligible?

- Trafford Residents between the ages of 11 and 25
- Referrals are accepted from a wide range of services including self referrals
- Contact Early Break: 0161 723 3880

YP@TALKSHOP Sale Waterside, Sale M33 7ZF

Tel: 0161-912 2453

Fax: 0161-912 1328

Useful websites

- [Talk to Frank](#)
- [Childline](#)
- [The NSPCC website](#)

Contact numbers

NHS direct	111
Alcohol concern	0207 928 7377
Al-anon	0207 403 0888
Re-solv	0808 800 2345
Samaritans	08457 909 090
Childline	0800 1111
Adfa	0207 928 8898
Quit	0800 00 22 00
Drinkline	0800 917 8282

Substance misuse incident sheet

Name
Date of birth
Date of incident
Time
Sample found/description
Quantity found
Location
Found by
Time found
Brief description of symptoms/situation leading up to incident
Medical treatment sought? Y / N
Date
Time
Tick all that apply:
Ambulance <input type="checkbox"/>
First aider <input type="checkbox"/>
Hospital <input type="checkbox"/>
GP <input type="checkbox"/>
Symptoms
Outcome of treatment

Room search by:

Name
Name

Substance disposed

Manager
How?
Witnessed
Date & time
Signature
Signature

Substance stored

Where?
By whom?
Witnessed
Date & time

Substance handed over to

Police
Ambulance
Other (please specify)
Date

Police

Police informed? YES / NO
Collar number
Time
Log number
Date
If no, state reason

Parents

Parents informed? YES / NO
Time
Date
If no, state reason:

Senior/manager informed

Name
Time
Date

Social worker informed

Time
Date

Further action taken

Involve? YES / NO
Police action? YES / NO
Any other agencies? (e.g. Community nurse for LA, psychologist, etc.)
Sanction imposed

Further action taken

Name
Position
Date
Manager's signature