



Castle Tower School Drugs Policy

Date Ratified by Board of Governors	February 2025
Review Date	February 2027

Castle Tower welcomes pupils aged 3-19 who face a wide range of barriers to learning. Educational opportunities are provided within our Nursery, Primary, Secondary and Post 16 departments.

Our Vision

Vision:

To be a leading light in special education through educating, nurturing and inspiring all our school community.

Mission:

Castle Tower School is committed to creating a community which:

- Ensures everyone is safe and included
- Always learns
- Promotes independence and resilience
- Celebrates achievements
- Looks forward with hope to the future

Everything we do is driven by our core values:

- Child-centred
- Nurturing
- Fun
- Team work
- Inclusive
- Independence

Our Ethos

Castle Tower strives to create a caring community in which every member feels valued, supported and happy. All staff work to maintain an ethos in which fairness, tolerance, compassion and forgiveness permeate all relationships within the school community. High standards of respect, self-discipline, commitment and sensitivity are sought and everyone is encouraged to set and achieve the highest personal, academic and social goals. The safety, welfare and development of everyone in our school community is of paramount importance to all staff and Governors.

At Castle Tower, there is continued development of the quality of the teaching and learning environment. Resources are used efficiently. Opportunities are created for learning in co-operative and interactive settings. Pupils are presented with challenging as well as stimulating teaching and learning opportunities. Staff at Castle Tower seek close working relationships with other providers and services throughout each stage of our pupil's education and through the transition stage to further education and life after school.

RATIONALE

We recognise that we live in a world where drugs have become commonplace and are used in a medical context as prescribed or non-prescribed, or used legally or illegally in a social context. Some young children come to school with a store of knowledge, attitudes and experiences related to the world of drugs. They will have their own perceptions of drugs which will frequently be inaccurate, gained from parents/carers, older brothers or sisters, friends, the media and through popular music. Some pupils have received or are receiving regular medication relating to their additional medical conditions.

We therefore take a serious and professional approach to our responsibilities in relation to drugs education.

DEFINITION

The definition of 'drugs' will include any substance which when taken, has the effect of altering the way the body works or the way a person behaves, feels, sees or thinks. As well as everyday substances such as tea and coffee, drugs include:

- Prescribed drugs, such as antibiotics, tranquillisers, inhalers and Ritalin
- Alcohol and tobacco
- 'Over-the-counter' medicines, such as Paracetamol
- Substances, such as correcting fluids/thinners, gas lighter fuel, aerosols, glue and petrol and Poppers (amyl/butyl nitrate)
- Illegal /controlled drugs, such as Cannabis, LSD, Ecstasy, Amphetamine Sulphate (speed), Magic Mushrooms, Heroin and Cocaine.

AIMS OF DRUGS EDUCATION POLICY

- To ensure a consistent approach to drug-related issues by all members of the school staff including teachers, classroom assistants and all ancillary staff.
- To define the roles and responsibilities and legal duties within the school concerning drugs
- To implement and deliver drugs education in the school curriculum.
- To consider the wider issues of drug abuse within the school community (in particular, smoking and alcohol)

DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Board of Governor's responsibility will be to:

- Support the development and on-going review of the drugs policy and programme.
- Ensure they are fully aware and adequately trained to deal with any drug related incident including alcohol and tobacco.
- Have one member of the Board is specifically trained in drugs-related issues.

The principal's responsibility will be to: *

- Determine (*not investigate*) all incidents involving drugs. (*The PSNI will investigate*)
- Contact the parents / carers of any pupils involved in any drugs-related incident.
- Ask pupils voluntarily to turn out their belongings in the presence of a witness. (Teachers will not search a person or personal property.)
- Liaise closely with the PSNI
- Inform the Board of Governors about the incident and agree with them any appropriate pastoral or disciplinary measures to be taken
- Store or dispose of any drug or drug related paraphernalia
- Report the incident to the Education Authority at Antrim Board Centre.

* or the Acting Principal/Vice Principal

STAFF TRAINING

All staff (including teachers and ancillary staff) will be trained in the recognition of drugs and their symptoms every two years. Training will be taken by the appropriate agency. Governors and parents may be invited to attend the training session and all will be familiar with the procedures in the school for dealing with any drug-related incidents.

OVERVIEW OF OUR DRUGS EDUCATION PROGRAMME

Drugs Education is an important part of the school's PD/PDMU, Science, and RE programmes. The needs of the pupils will vary across the key stages in Castle Tower, we will focus on the children, their level of ability, feelings, attitudes and decision-making abilities rather than solely on the drugs themselves.

Some of the aims of our programme are:

- To inform children of the effects of drug abuse and provide accurate and up to date information on drugs and their effects on health
- To establish skills and behaviour which enable children to communicate effectively, assert themselves and take responsible decisions
- To help pupils acquire skills in managing peer pressure
- To create a climate where pupils feel happy to discuss drugs.
- To build up the self-esteem and confidence of our children
- To help our children to identify and understand the pressures and influences which could have a serious consequence for their health and well-being
- To ensure progression and continuity in knowledge and understanding, matching these to the age, maturity and circumstances of the pupils concerned

Relevant staff will be responsible for the delivery of the suitable level of the drugs education programme, and, where appropriate, may draw upon the expertise of outside speakers. At all times the approach will be a preventative one and the method of delivery will be pupil centred through active learning.

The programme will be supported by the whole school and parents will be expected to provide support as appropriate.

SMOKING AND ALCOHOL

It is a legal requirement that our premises are smoke free. No-Smoking signs have been displayed, clearly visible to all pupils, members of staff or visitors to the school. Anyone smoking will be advised that they are committing an offence and will be politely asked to stop smoking and advised that it is also an offence for the school to allow anyone to smoke. This includes electronic cigarettes and battery powered vapour inhaler devices.

Information on smoking cessation programmes and using licenced NRT's can be found at www.publichealth.hscni.net

For issues relating to staff use of alcohol, we refer them to the Alcohol and Drug Misuse Policy (TNC 2005/5) available from the D.E.

COMMUNICATING THE POLICY

Like all school policies, this one will be available on request by parents/carers. It is also available on our school website. It will also be published on the schools' website:

www.castletowerschool.com

The Board of Governors is fully aware of the policy and the discipline measures to be followed.

MANAGEMENT ISSUES

PROCEDURES FOR MANAGING DRUG-RELATED ISSUES

The procedures for dealing with drugs related incidents are clearly laid out as Appendices 1, 2, 3 and 4. Any incident involving drugs should be logged on the pupils CPOMS account. If this is not available staff should log the incident using the drugs incident report form in appendix 4.

1. Suspected substance is found in the school grounds
2. Pupil is suspected of possessing/distributing an illegal substance
3. Pupil is suspected of having taken drugs in school
4. Drugs Incident Report Form

DISCIPLINARY MEASURES

It is not appropriate to prescribe specific sanctions for drug-related incidents. The principal will decide how to respond to any such incident after taking into account a range of factors such as:

-

- Age of pupil
- What was the motivation?
- Was there peer pressure?
- Is it a first or subsequent offence?
- Quantity of drug
- Is the drug legal/illegal?
- Was the pupil aware of the school's drugs policy and rules
- Does s/he admit or deny the offence

At all times we will consider the needs of individual pupils and support mechanisms will be put into place, such as appropriate counselling from EA or other appropriate agencies.

The school will expect the support and co-operation of parents in dealing with any drug-related incident.

It is a statutory requirement that the PSNI is informed in all cases where it has been alleged or suspected that a pupil has a controlled drug in their possession or if such a drug has been found in the school grounds.

The school will take temporary possession of any such substance until the police are called.

Searching: Staff will be aware that only school property can be searched and in the presence of a witness. Pupils may be requested to turn out their possessions voluntarily, but personal property must not be searched unless by the police who will be called if a pupil has or is suspected of having a controlled drug.

Detaining: If consent is refused and there are reasonable grounds to suspect that the pupil has in their possession or has taken a controlled drug, pupils can be prevented, using reasonable force, from leaving school premises pending the arrival of the police. Parents will be informed as soon as possible, and the incident documented in the Incident Report Form.

Confidentiality: In the child's interest, the school can never guarantee confidentiality in the event of a drug-related incident, or if the child revealed that they had taken illegal drugs. This information must be given to the principal. This applies to all staff and any member of outside agencies visiting the school.

Using an outside agency for Drugs Education

Visitor/Agency will:

- Have Child Protection policy/short guide
- Be given copy of policy to ensure school's views on confidentiality
- Have appropriate resources
- Have a clear set of aims and objectives and the impact it had on the children.
- Ensure their programme is part of the school's drugs programme

The teacher will:

- Always be present in the room
- Ensure the content is appropriate
- Evaluate the programme and the impact it made on the children.
- Provide introductory/follow-up activities before and after the visit

EMERGENCY FIRST AID PROCEDURES

- Send for a member of staff trained in first aid
- Find out what has been taken. This will help the emergency crew.
- If a depressant drug (alcohol, solvents, sleeping pills or painkillers) has been taken, they will feel drowsy. Keep them awake by getting them to walk or by applying a cool damp cloth to the back of their neck
- Do **not** give anything to eat or drink.
- If unconscious, put in recovery position, clear airways and call an ambulance immediately
- If they stop breathing, begin mouth-to-mouth resuscitation. Stay until ambulance arrives and inform them of the facts.
- If a stimulant (Amphetamines or ecstasy) has been taken, the person will be distressed. It is important they remain calm and relaxed. Get them to breathe in and out slowly. If hyperventilating occurs, get them to breathe in and out of a **paper** bag.
- If LSD or hallucinogen has been taken, keep them in a darkened, quiet room to avoid sensory stimulation. They should always be supervised and kept reassured that the effects will wear off and they are in no danger.

GUIDANCE FOR CONFISCATION AND STORAGE OF HARMFUL SUBSTANCES

The law allows staff to take temporary possession of any substance found for the purpose of protecting a pupil from harm and committing the offence of possession. The teacher should take any substance/paraphernalia found to the Principal who will arrange for its safe storage with the principal until it can be handed over to the police. Another adult should always be present when the substance is confiscated. A record will be kept of the details.

GUIDANCE ON HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES USED IN SCHOOL

Teachers

- There will be close supervision throughout the school of materials such as glue, felt-tips,

- aerosols etc when used by pupils
- In classrooms, teachers will be expected to monitor closely the distribution, use and collection of all potentially hazardous substances.
 - Such materials will be kept in a locked cupboard, with access only for the teacher
 - All cleaning materials and substances used in the maintenance and cleaning of the school will be stored in the original containers and kept locked away when not in use. These are the responsibility of the building supervisors.

GUIDELINES ON THE ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION IN SCHOOL

If a child is unwell, they should not be attending school. Some pupils require medication for ongoing conditions.

Pupils requiring regular medication should follow normal practice at the appropriate time. For those pupils with a Care Plan, named staff are trained to administer medication.

For pupils who require the administration of short-term medication, eg completing a course of antibiotics, parental permission and details of dosage must be received.

Paracetamol will only be given when parents have given written permission for pain relief to be given

Other Illnesses: It is the responsibility of parents to make arrangements for pupils who become unwell at school. It is their responsibility to collect them and take them home or make alternate arrangements.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

REVIEW OF POLICY AND PROCEDURES

This policy and the procedures contained within it will be monitored and amended, after consultation, when appropriate and certainly following any incident, actual or suspected.

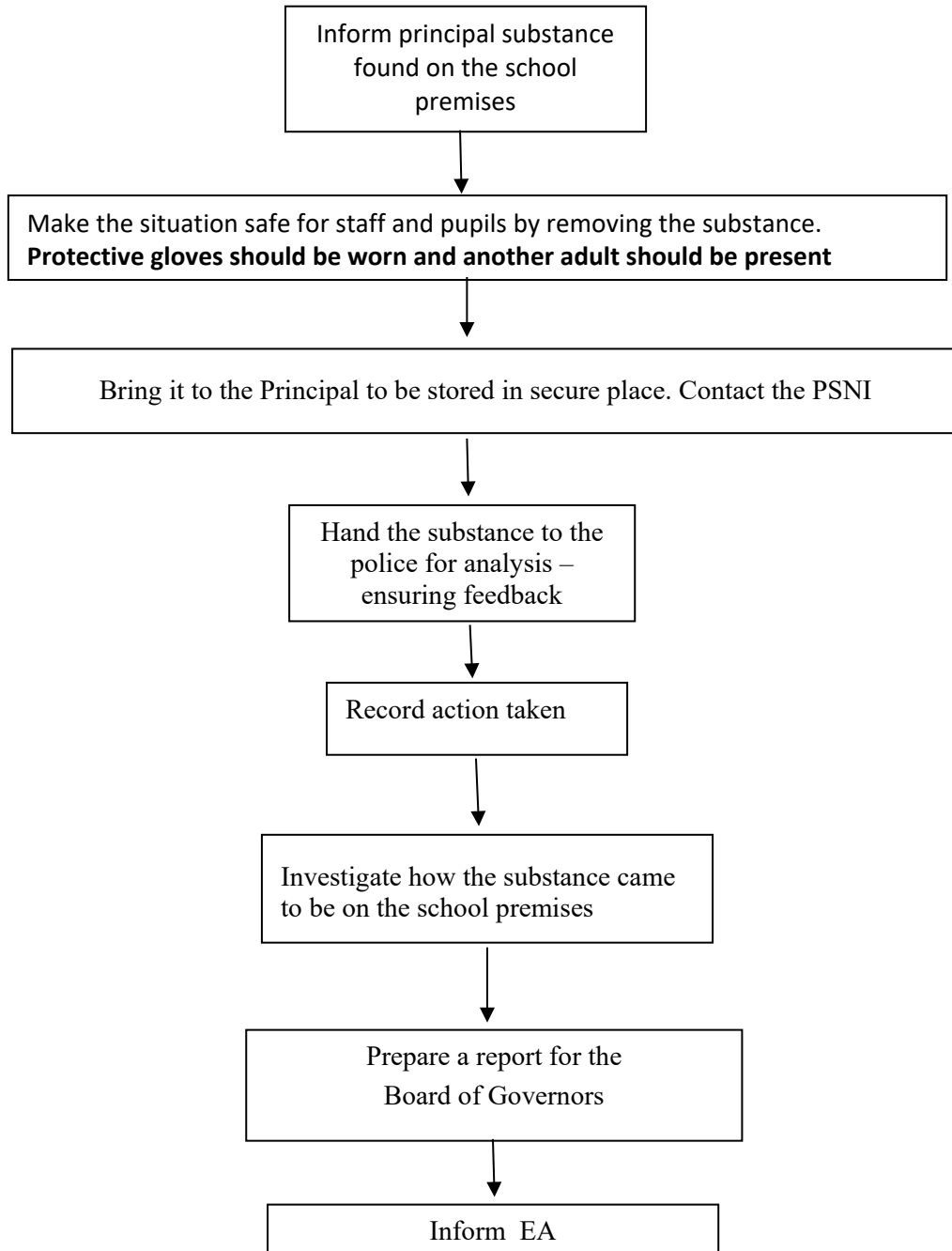
APPENDICES

- Appendix 1 Finding a substance on the school premises
- Appendix 2 Pupil suspected of possessing/distributing an illegal substance
- Appendix 3 Pupil suspected of having taken drugs in school
- Appendix 4 Drugs Incident Report Form
- Appendix 5 Useful Contacts



APPENDIX 1

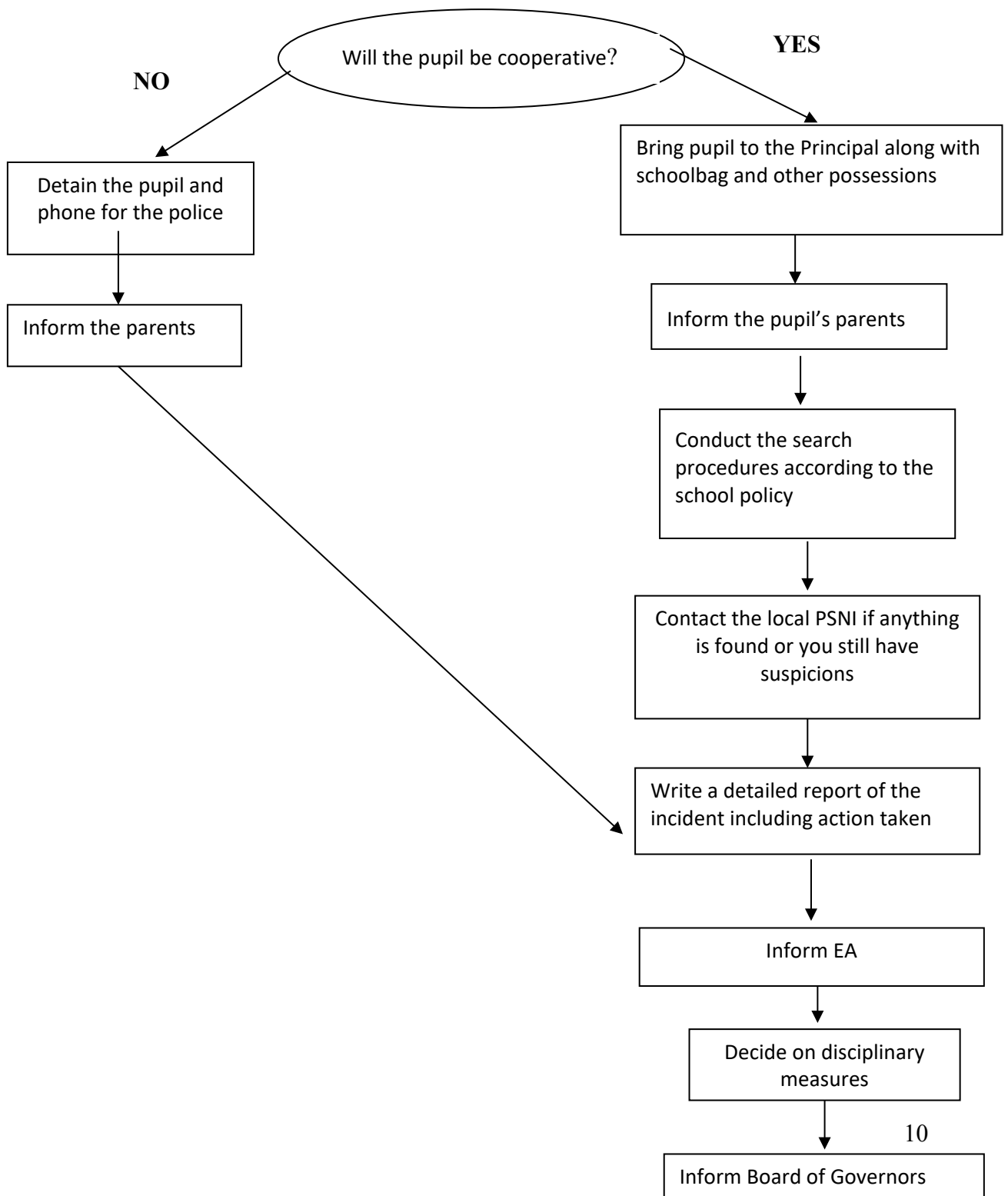
Finding a substance on the school premises





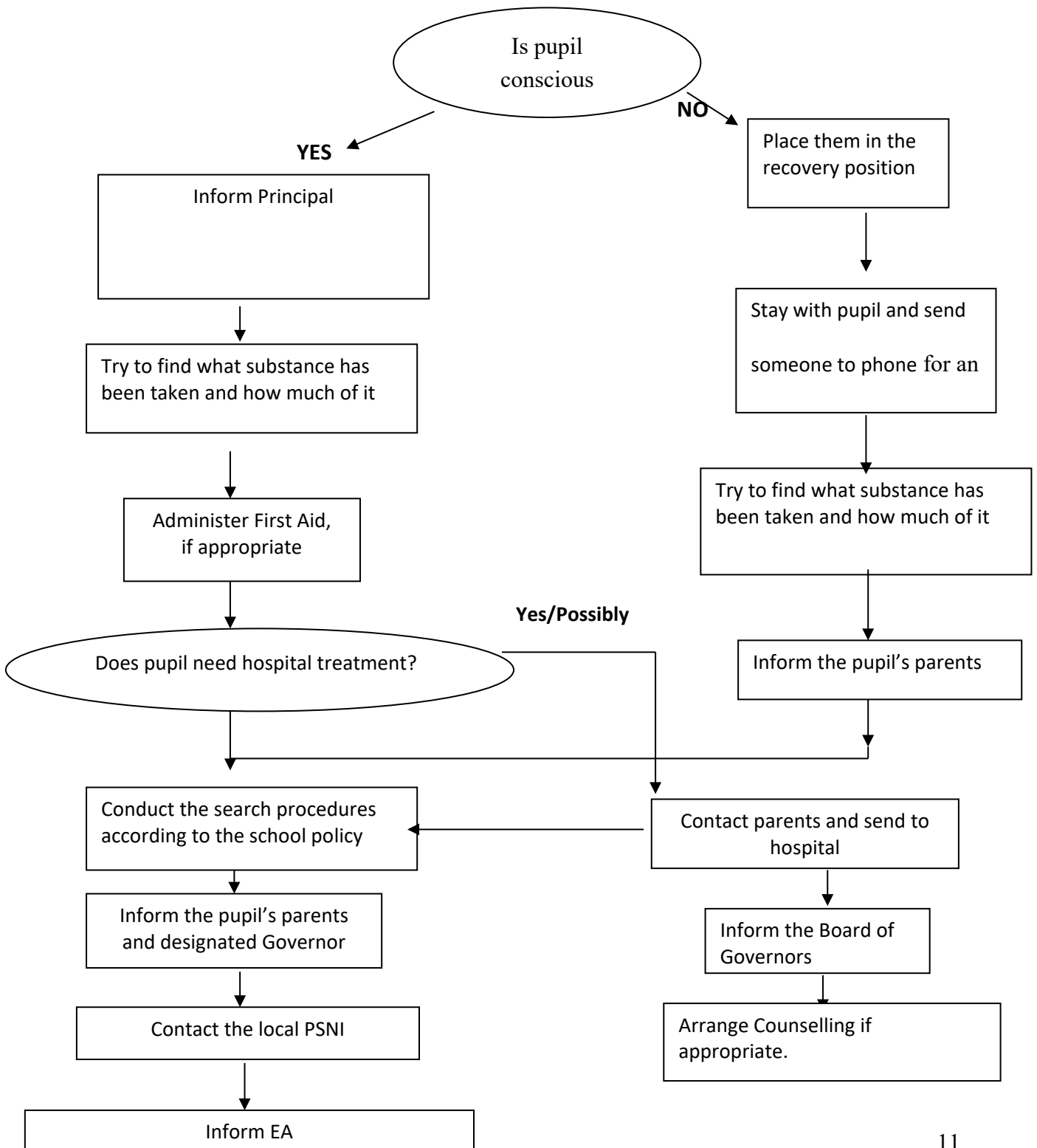
APPENDIX 2

Pupil suspected of possessing/distributing an illegal substance





APPENDIX 3 Pupil suspected of having taken drugs in school



APPENDIX 4

Drugs Incident Report Form

Name of Pupil _____ **DOB** _____

Address _____

Date/time of Incident _____

Reported by _____

First Aid given by _____

Ambulance called yes no (please circle) **If yes what time** _____

Details _____

PSNI informed yes no (please circle)

EA informed yes no (please circle)

Where is substance retained _____

Date substance destroyed or passed to the PSNI _____

Disciplinary/pastoral/other response

Details _____

DESCRIPTION OF THE INCIDENT and ACTION TAKEN

Form completed by _____ **Date** _____

Useful Contacts

Local Drug and Alcohol Co-ordination Teams

Contact details for local services in the Local

Service Directories prepared by the DACTs

www.publichealth.hscni.net

Police Service for Northern Ireland (PSNI)

Drugs Squad Tel: 028 9065 0222

Community Involvement Tel: 028 9070 0964

Crimestoppers Tel: 080 0555 111

Treatment, Counselling and Support Agencies

Health and Social Care Organisations www.publichealth.hscni.net

Family Support NI www.familysupportni.gov.uk

Children and Adolescent Mental Health

Services, Belfast

www.belfasttrust.hscni.net

Local Organisations

A list of local organisations that provide

information and advice and/or

resources about drugs.

www.mindingyourhead.info

www.fasaonline.org

www.talktofrank.com

www.thesite.org/

drinkanddrugs

www.nhs.uk/Livewell/Pages/

Topics.aspx