Drugs, Alcohol and Psychoactive Substances Policy

This is a policy of The Prince’s Trust and applies to all Trust staff, volunteers and seconded staff.

Please note: Delivery Partners will have their own policies in place. It is the responsibility of The Trust to check that these policies meet the standards of The Prince’s Trust.

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Changes from previous version

- Reference to new Adverse Event and Safeguarding process
- Update to format, structure and procedural flowchart
- Revision to terminology, language and definitions
- References to legislation updated
- Prince’s Trust procedures updated and clarified
- Links to TrustNet removed (pending new intranet)
- Change of policy name from Drugs and Alcohol Policy to Drugs, Alcohol and Psychoactive Substances Policy to reflect new legislation
- Guidance on prescribed medication updated to reflect 2014 government guidelines
- Clearer guidance on confiscating and disposing of drugs, alcohol and psychoactive substances

Purpose

This policy advises staff and volunteers on how to prevent an unsafe situation arising from the use of alcohol, drugs or psychoactive substances. It also informs staff of the law when working with young people who are using alcohol, drugs or psychoactive substances.

- Many young people that we seek to support may regularly use drugs, alcohol and/or psychoactive substances but their misuse can affect their ability to participate fully in Prince’s Trust programmes, and can be a threat to their safety and that of staff and volunteers.
- Staff have a duty of care and must respond appropriately to young people requiring prescribed medication, or who are under the influence of drugs, alcohol or psychoactive substances.
- The Prince’s Trust must uphold the law on drug misuse and dealing drugs on premises (including in vehicles) where Trust programmes are being held.

This policy provides clear procedure to Trust staff and volunteers on the management and prevention of incidents arising from the use of drugs, alcohol and psychoactive substances.
This policy

- It is the policy of The Prince’s Trust that all young people who participate in Trust activities and programmes should be able to do so safely and without risk to health, as far as possible.
- Staff, volunteers and young people should not be in possession of, under the influence of, nor consume drugs, alcohol or psychoactive substances on any Trust premises or programmes.
- Individual risk assessments should be used to inform support needs and participation in programme sessions for young people with drug or alcohol dependencies.
- Staff must report all relevant incidents to their line manager and follow the Adverse Event and Safeguarding process if needed.

Procedural Flowchart
The procedure to follow when a young person is under the influence or has been found with drugs, alcohol or psychoactive substances on a Prince’s Trust programme or Trust premises.
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Definitions

- **Drug**: the World Health Organisation (WHO) defines a drug in the simplest terms as a substance taken that alters the mind or body. The legal definition of a drug concerns illicit substances and medication with a high potential of misuse, and these are controlled and classified under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971. Drugs are categorised as Class A, B or C, depending on their perceived threat to society, with Class A the most dangerous.
  - Class A includes: heroin, cocaine, LSD, (crack) cocaine, ecstasy, magic mushrooms etc.
  - Class B includes: amphetamines, cannabis, methylphenidate (Ritalin) etc.
  - Class C includes: ketamine, GHB, some painkillers and tranquillisers etc.

- **Controlled substance**: illicit substances and medicines with a high potential of misuse are controlled and classified under The Misuse of Drugs Act 1971, as above.

- **Psychoactive substances**: the legal definition under the Psychoactive Substances Act 2016 is a substance that ‘produces a psychoactive effect in a person if, by stimulating or depressing the person’s central nervous system, it affects the person’s mental functioning or emotional state’ i.e. that cause hallucinations, drowsiness or changes in alertness, perception of time and space, mood or empathy with others. Psychoactive substances contain one or more chemical substances that produce similar effects to illegal drugs e.g. cocaine or ecstasy. Prior to the 2016 Act, these substances were commonly referred to as ‘legal highs’ but the terminology has changed as they are now illegal to produce, supply or import.

- **Prescribed medication**: a drug to manage an illness or medical condition that is available only with written instructions from a doctor or dentist to a pharmacist.

- **Legal highs**: see psychoactive substances.

Categorisation is constantly changing and there are annual amendments. Classification can also change depending on how the drug is used e.g. amphetamines move from Class B to Class A if prepared for injection. The latest classifications can be found at [www.homeoffice.gov.uk/drugs](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/drugs).

Please see Appendix 1 for a summary of UK legislation as it applies to this Policy.

Organisational procedures

- All staff are responsible for these procedures being carried out. They are required to report any drug, alcohol or psychoactive substances related incidents to their line manager, and should follow the Adverse Event and Safeguarding process if needed.

- Volunteers should raise any concerns with their Prince’s Trust contact, who should address any issues arising using the procedures detailed below.

- In the event of drug, alcohol or psychoactive substance use being discovered or suspected, action should be taken to curtail the offending behaviour. If this cannot be achieved, staff should refer to the Exclusion Policy.

Informing young people

All young people should be informed during recruitment and/or induction that they cannot be in possession of, under the influence of, nor consume drugs, alcohol or psychoactive substances (excluding authorised prescribed medication) on any Trust premises or programmes.

The potential consequences of breaching this policy e.g. temporary or permanent exclusion from Trust activity, should be made clear. Any “ground rules” or “conditions of attendance” session must include this and reminders should be given throughout the programme.
**Disclosed drug or alcohol dependency**
- If a young person has disclosed that they are recreationally using drugs, alcohol or psychoactive substances and this use is not presenting a problem (i.e. they can manage their use, they are not involved in risk taking or criminal behaviour and they understand that they cannot use these substances on programme) then no further action should be taken other than to inform the relevant line manager and keep them up to date.
- When goal setting, a young person may decide that they want to work on their substance use. Staff and volunteers should support this as much as possible, which may involve seeking guidance from, or signposting to, specialist external agencies. Listings of local referral services that can provide staff and/or young people with confidential help, information and advice about any drug misuse problem should be held for easy reference. See ‘Further Information’ section.
- If a young person has disclosed a serious addiction, an individual risk assessment should be carried out to identify whether the young person is stable enough to engage sufficiently in the programme and receive an appropriate level of support. Risk assessments must be referred to and updated as necessary.

**Confidentiality**
See Confidentiality Policy for guidance. Staff and volunteers may decide it is in the best interests of the young person to take action (but are not obliged to do so) if:
- They have been told that a young person has used drugs
- They observe a young person in possession or use of drugs away from Prince’s Trust premises and not under the supervision of Prince’s Trust staff or volunteers
- They are given information through a needs analysis or goal-setting exercise with the young person

In certain circumstances it may be appropriate for referral agencies or a parent / carer to be informed of an individual’s substance use. Any decision to inform referral agencies or a parent / carer about an individual's drug or alcohol use should be taken by the relevant line manager. Consideration should be given to:
- The staff member’s obligations to provide the referral agency with an accurate report
- The long term interests of the young person
- The young person’s age

**Prescribed medication**
Young people who take prescribed drugs for a medical condition (e.g. insulin, ventolin) or as a substitute for an illegal substance (e.g. methadone), should be supported to participate on Trust programmes.

Consideration should be given to their ongoing safety and that of others. Amendments may be required to programme sessions, activities and locations to ensure appropriate support is available. In some circumstances it may be advisable to place clients on specific courses to ensure this.

It is important to ensure:
- Prior knowledge and approval of staff delivering the programme, and Delivery Partners if relevant
- The young person agrees to hand over medication to a member of staff for safekeeping
- Medication is stored securely and medication release forms are in place
- Individual risk assessments are carried out if deemed necessary i.e. if a medical condition is serious or less common
Where the medical condition is sufficiently serious or requires particular action to be taken in an emergency, all relevant staff should be clear on what constitutes an emergency and how to respond. Other young people on the programme may need to know what to do in general terms, such as informing a member of staff immediately if they think help is needed.

**Storing and administering prescribed medication**

Medication must be stored securely e.g. an unmarked, lockable box managed by Trust staff that is portable for offsite activities. Needles should be carried in a separate smaller robust container and kept inside the larger secure storage vessel above. This should be clearly labelled with a warning sticker.

Young people should know where their medicines are at all times and be able to access them immediately; where relevant, they should know who holds the key to the storage facility. This is particularly important to consider when outside of Trust premises.

Trust staff should only accept prescribed medicines if these are:

- in-date
- labelled
- provided in the original container as dispensed by a pharmacist
- include instructions for administration, dosage and storage
- The exception to this is insulin, which must still be in date, but will generally be available inside an insulin pen or a pump, rather than in its original container.

Staff should also be aware of the effects of any medication, including side-effects or symptoms that may appear if the medication is not taken.

Young people should administer their own medication and measure the quantity needed, apart from in the case of a medical emergency, when staff may do so in accordance with the prescriber’s instructions. Staff must have access to medication release forms. A record should be kept if staff administer medication, stating how much was administered, when and by whom, along with any side effects.

Paracetamol can be provided and administered as per the manufacturer’s dosage instructions as part of First Aid provision. Young people must state on the Medical and Consent Form if they do not wish paracetamol to be provided.

Harmful prescribed medication e.g. Methadone, Temazapam, Valium, Ritalin, Dexedrine etc.

- Staff should witness the taking of these medications
- If possible, isolate individuals while they administer the drug
- Engage them in a short conversation afterwards to make sure they have swallowed any fluids
- Staff should, where possible, make a space available for participants to inject in privacy.
- Where a young person has disclosed a heroin dependency, they may be able to ask a doctor to prescribe Physeptone (Methadone) tablets for a residential, in place of Methadone Linctus (liquid), so that the control and management of this substance is easier on residential activity.

If a young person refuses to take their prescribed medication, staff should seek urgent medical advice if the implications of not taking this medication will have serious consequences for the young person. In the event of accidental or intentional use of prescribed medication by other persons, staff must seek urgent medical advice.
Consideration should be given to any volunteer supported activity where a staff member may not be present e.g. a mentor meeting. Volunteers should be informed of medical conditions on a need to know basis; see Confidentiality Policy.

Dealing of drugs on Trust premises and programmes
Staff must act immediately on any information that a young person might be dealing drugs during a Trust programme, or on Trust premises. If a young person is found to be, or suspected of, dealing drugs, they may need to be temporarily excluded from the programme. Staff should consult their line manager before taking any action involving the police and record it using the Adverse Event and Safeguarding portal.

Young people suspected or confirmed to be under the influence
If a young person is under the influence of drugs, alcohol or psychoactive substances (or suspected to be) staff can make a decision to temporarily exclude them from the programme; see Exclusion Policy.

Staff can act on suspicion and do not need proof. This is justifiable due to the potential risk to the young person and others, especially if they are taking part in an adventurous activity. Suspicion should be based on obvious signs, such as physical symptoms, known history or asking young people directly.

- If a young person is not capable of leaving Trust premises, they should be taken somewhere safe, accompanied by a staff member or volunteer, where they can sober up. They should be asked to leave Trust premises when it is safe for them to do so.
- If the young person is unconscious or experiencing serious side-effects, for example, breathing difficulties, hallucinations or fitting, call 999 immediately.
- Trained staff should administer First Aid if needed.
- If the young person’s behaviour becomes uncontrollable, violent or aggressive and they could potentially harm themselves or others, the police should be called.
- Staff and volunteers should be mindful of their own personal safety; see Working with Challenging Behaviour Policy and Personal Safety and Lone Working Policy.
- Following a temporary exclusion the young person can be allowed back on programme the following day at the discretion of a line manager; see Exclusion Policy.
- If a young person is under the influence during a one-to-one session with a volunteer, the session should be stopped. All volunteers should receive training in how to deal with a situation where a young person is under the influence. The young person should leave the session (including mentoring appointments) immediately if it is safe for them to do so. Volunteers should inform their Trust contact or call The Trust’s emergency contact number immediately to seek further guidance should they need to stay with the young person. In an emergency situation they should call 999. Volunteers should be mindful of their own personal safety and should only meet young people in public places where they have access to support should an incident occur.

Disposing of drugs, alcohol or psychoactive substances
Staff are advised not to confiscate drugs or psychoactive substances as they may be charged with possessing an illegal substance if they are found with them, even if they have been handed over by a young person, so care must be taken when considering what to do.

- **Drugs and psychoactive substances:** the substance should be disposed of by the young person as soon as practical in front of at least one witness (who should be a staff member) in a
way that ensures that no-one can retrieve it. If drugs or psychoactive substances are found on the premises, they should be disposed of by a member of staff with at least one witness. A written record should be made of any disposal, which is signed and dated by both witnesses.

➔ **Alcohol:** staff can take temporary possession, and must store alcohol securely until the young person is ready to leave Trust premises, when it can be returned. If already open, alcohol should be disposed of in the presence of a member of staff. Staff cannot return alcohol to under 18s.

If a young person refuses to dispose of drugs, alcohol or psychoactive substances when requested it may be appropriate to exclude them from the programme; see Exclusion Policy.

Volunteers must not take possession of these substances in any circumstances and should refer the incident to their Prince’s Trust contact.

**Reporting and recording drug and alcohol related incidents**

All incidents, near misses or concerns involving drugs, alcohol and ‘legal highs’ should be reported by Trust staff in line with this policy and recorded using the [Adverse Event and Safeguarding portal](#). Where appropriate and including in the event of a death, serious injury or multiple injuries as a result of the use of drugs or alcohol, the Incident Management Plan must be activated.

**Temporary and permanent exclusion**

Should an incident occur, the Head of Programmes should be consulted to make a decision on whether a young person should be excluded from a session or programme. Following a temporary exclusion, a young person can be allowed back on programme the following day at the discretion of the Programme Manager. See Exclusion Policy.

**Involving the police**

Staff are under no obligation to directly involve the police in an incident. However, staff should be aware that Delivery Partners may have conflicting policies or guidance, and so discussion should be had before the programme starts to jointly agree a process should incidents occur.

See Confidentiality Policy for guidance on responding to police requests for information.

Involving the police may be appropriate in situations where behaviour cannot be managed and/or:

➔ is perceived as a serious threat to the safety and welfare of staff, volunteers and/or young people
➔ has resulted in serious injury, illness or death
➔ is with the intention of substantial financial gain or serious financial loss to other people

If it is decided that drugs suspected to be controlled substances should be handed to the police, the following guidelines are recommended:

➔ Staff should seal the substance in a plastic bag and include date, time and name of witness
➔ Substances should be stored in a secure location until they can be handed over to the police
➔ Staff are not obliged to give police the name or any other identifying characteristics of the young person from whom the substance was taken (if known)

Staff and volunteers must not obstruct the police in the process of their investigations, e.g. by concealing illegal drugs or helping a person escape the police, as this is a serious offence.
Volunteers
Volunteers should refer any concerns or incidents related to actual or suspected drug, alcohol or psychoactive substance use to their Trust contact. Volunteer training should cover how to deal with a situation where a young person is under the influence, what to do if they find drugs, and what to do if a young person discloses drug or alcohol use or dependency and asks for help. Volunteers must never take temporary possession of drugs or alcohol.

As volunteers, Young Ambassadors are subject to the same policy as other volunteers, staff and young people regarding drugs and alcohol whilst on Trust business. Staff should provide additional support to Young Ambassadors when they know they have ongoing vulnerabilities and be properly briefed and given guidance on drinking in moderation during events. The Young Ambassador code of conduct and disciplinary procedures should be referred to for any breaches of this policy.

Permissible alcohol consumption
Young people may be permitted to have an alcoholic drink or drinks (in moderation) on an occasion where it is felt to be appropriate e.g. a promotional event outside of the programme such as a fundraising dinner. This exception should be granted by the relevant line manager and responsible Prince's Trust staff should make every effort to ensure that such activity takes place in a controlled environment.

Staff and volunteers have a responsibility to set an example to young people, and should also be considerate of the fact that a young person may have an alcohol dependency. The law should be followed around the purchase and consumption of alcohol by under 18s in a public place.

Under 18s and alcohol
The law states that young people under the age of 18 cannot buy or drink alcohol in pubs, bars or public places. Young people aged 16 and over are allowed to drink beer, wine or cider (not other alcohol) with a meal in a restaurant, hotel or part of a pub set apart for eating meals; someone over 18 must be present and buy the alcohol. Any young person is allowed to drink alcohol at home or on other private premises.
Further information

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Legislation and legal guidance

| Drug misuse and dependency | www.homeoffice.gov.uk/drugs |
| Prescribed medication | Page 20, Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions |
| Possession and dealing | https://www.gov.uk/penalties-drug-possession-dealing |

Additional information (see intranet)
- Incident Management Plan
- Information Sheets on Alcoholism, Methadone, Needlestick Injuries and Self-harm
- Adverse Event and Safeguarding process
- Health and Safety Toolkit

Legislation
- Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 allows police to close premises from which Class A drugs are used, produced or supplied and are associated with disorder or serious nuisance to the local community. See in particular, sections 76-83 on closure of premises.
- The Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 controls and classifies illicit substances and medicines with a high potential of misuse.
- Psychoactive Substance Act 2016 makes it an offence to produce, supply or offer any psychoactive substance if it is likely to be used for its psychoactive effects, regardless of its potential to harm. The main intention of the Act is to try and close down shops and websites that trade in ‘legal highs’.

Related Policies
- Exclusion Policy
- Confidentiality Policy
- Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy
- Medical and Next of Kin Policy