DDAT
Derby Diocesan Academy Trust

# Substance Misuse Policy

## September 2026

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## 1 Introduction

1.1 Derby Diocesan Academy Trust ("the Trust", "DDAT") is committed to providing a safe, healthy and productive working environment that is safe for its pupils. This includes ensuring that all individuals working for and on behalf of the school are fit to carry out their jobs safely and effectively in an environment which is free from alcohol and drug misuse.

1.2 The Trust is committed to supporting all individuals with alcohol or drug-related problems to regain good health, and to handle such cases sensitively, professionally, and fairly.

1.3 This policy is not intended to apply to "one-off" incidents or offences caused by alcohol or drug misuse at or outside work where there is no evidence of an ongoing problem, which may damage the Trust's reputation, and which are likely to be dealt with under DDAT's Disciplinary Procedure.

1.4 The Trust has zero-tolerance for the following:

1.4.1 Individuals arriving at work under the influence of alcohol or drugs, and/or whose ability to work is impaired in any way by reason of the consumption of alcohol or drugs

1.4.2 Individuals who consume alcohol or take drugs (other than prescription or over-the-counter medication, as medically directed) at any school premises.

1.5 This policy applies to all DDAT employees, contractors, volunteers, casual workers and supply/agency workers, working for the Trust.

1.6 This policy does not form part of an employee's contract of employment and DDAT may amend it at any time following consultation with recognised Trade Unions. It has been implemented following consultation with all recognised Trade Unions.

1.7 This policy should be read in conjunction with the DDAT Code of Conduct for Staff, Agency Workers and Visitors, and DDAT Disciplinary Procedure.

## 2 Identifying a problem

2.1 If an individual has concerns that a person’s behaviour may be related to being under the influence of a substance, it is important they raise them but not assume these behaviours are related to substance use. They should encourage them to seek assistance through their line manager, the school’s Mental Health First Aiders or the DDAT Central HR Team. If they will not seek help themselves, they should draw the matter to the attention of their own line manager. They should not attempt to cover up for an individual whose performance or behaviour is impacted as a result of an alcohol or drug-related problem. Please also refer to section 5 of this policy.

2.2 The individual should bear in mind the following when raising their concerns:

2.2.1 Be clear that the aim is to keep the conversation confidential, but some degree of information-sharing may be necessary depending on what is disclosed. Refer to clause 7 on confidentiality.
2.2.2 Use open, non-judgemental questions.
2.2.3 Stress that the intention is to try to support them.
2.2.4 Focus the discussion on specific examples of concerning behaviour.
2.2.5 If the behaviour has given rise to concerns about health and safety, give specific examples and be clear about why it is a problem and that it needs to stop.
2.2.6 Do not make assumptions or accuse. There may be a variety of reasons why an individual's behaviour has changed (unrelated to drugs/alcohol). If you want to help, they need to be able to trust you and not be made to feel defensive.
2.2.7 The individual must not feel under pressure or judged. Use the terms 'alcohol use issues' or 'alcohol use disorder' rather than 'alcoholic' or 'alcoholism'. Use phrases like 'frequent/excessive alcohol use' or 'frequent use of drugs' rather than 'addiction' or 'addict'.

2.3 If an individual believes that they have an alcohol or drug-related problem, they should seek specialist advice and support as soon as possible. They should also speak to their line manager, the schools Mental Health First Aiders or the DDAT Central HR Team who can offer them access to appropriate professional support through the schools Employee Assistance Programme, e.g. Schools Advisory Service or Westfield Health for Derby Cathedral School, or via Education Support. Support can also be accessed via the Mental Health First Aiders either in school or via the DDAT Central Team. Trade Union representatives can also provide support. The earlier an issue is reported, the earlier support can be accessed.

## 3 Alcohol and drugs at work

3.1 Drug use includes the use of controlled drugs, psychoactive (or mind-altering) substances formerly known as "legal highs", and the misuse of prescribed or over-the-counter medication.

Alcohol and drugs can lead to reduced levels of attendance, reduced efficiency and performance, impaired judgement and decision-making, and increased health and safety risks for the individual themselves, pupils at DDAT's schools, and other individuals. Irresponsible behaviour or the commission of offences resulting from the use of alcohol or drugs cause safeguarding concerns and could potentially damage the Trust's reputation.

3.2 All individuals are expected to arrive at work fit to carry out their job and be able to perform their duties safely without any limitations due to the use or after-effects of alcohol or drugs.

3.3 The Trust expects individuals to demonstrate responsible behaviour at work, work-related functions and work-related social events, and to act in a way that

will not have a detrimental effect on their ability to carry out their duties or on the Trust's reputation. Individuals should not drink alcohol or consume drugs during the normal working day, at lunchtime and other breaks, and at official work-based meetings and events where this could affect their ability to remain professional and/or fit for work at the relevant times. Drinking alcohol and consuming drugs whilst at work or working under the influence of such substances may be considered gross misconduct and may be dealt with under DDAT's Disciplinary Procedure.

3.4 Individuals must comply with drink-driving laws and drug-driving laws at all times. Conviction for drink-driving or drug-driving offences may harm the Trust's reputation and, if an individuals' job requires them to drive, they may be unable to continue to do their job. Committing a drink-driving or drug-driving offence may lead to disciplinary action under DDAT's Disciplinary Procedure and could result in dismissal.

3.5 If an individual is prescribed medication that may affect their ability to carry out their duties or their ability to drive, they must seek advice from their GP or pharmacist about the possible effect on their ability to carry out their job safely and whether their duties should be modified. The individual should inform their line manager immediately if this is the case and they will consider reasonable adjustments or if they can temporarily reassign them to a different role. The line manager must inform and consult with the DDAT Central HR Team without unreasonable delay.

## 4 Searches

4.1 The Trust reserves the right to conduct searches for alcohol or drugs on Trust premises, including (but not limited to) searches of lockers, filing cabinets and desks, bags, clothing and packages. A search may include a body search (pat down) by a senior member of staff of the same sex in the presence of a witness.

4.2 Any alcohol or illegal/recreational drugs found as a result of a search will be confiscated and action may be taken under DDAT's Disciplinary Procedure.

## 5 Managing suspected substance misuse

5.1 Where a line manager considers that a deterioration in work performance and/or changes in patterns of behaviour may be due to alcohol or drug misuse, they should seek advice and assistance from the DDAT Central HR Team.

5.2 If an individual arrives at work and their line manager reasonably believes that they are under the influence of alcohol or drugs, they will immediately contact the Executive Headteacher / Headteacher / CEO who will seek advice from the DDAT Central HR Team in order that they can be supported in a first-aid room/private setting away from pupils and others and carry out an initial informal fact-finding exercise to gather more information.

5.3 Following an informal fact-finding exercise, if a line manager has reason to believe that an individual is experiencing the effects of alcohol or drug misuse which requires formal disciplinary investigation, they will instigate the DDAT

Disciplinary Procedure and invite the individual to an investigation meeting to which they will have the right to be accompanied. Please refer to the DDAT Disciplinary Procedure for more information. The purpose of the investigation meeting is to:

5.3.1 discuss the reason for the investigation and seek the individuals' views on, for example, the deterioration of their work performance and/or behaviour; and

5.3.2 where appropriate, signpost the individual to avenues of support as outlined in clauses 2.3 and 6.1.2, and offer to refer them to Occupational Health for medical and/or specialist advice.

5.4 If, at any point, an individual agrees to be referred to Occupational Health, the line manager will arrange for an Occupational Health referral to be made in consultation with the individual. An Occupational Health Referral Request Form must be completed, and the individual must confirm their agreement with the content before this can be processed.

5.5 Occupational Health may ask for the individuals' consent to approach their GP for advice. An Occupational Health report will be sent to the referring manager (and/or the DDAT Central HR Team) who will then reassess the reasons for their investigation meeting with the individual and decide on the way forward.

5.6 If, as a result of the investigation meeting, the line manager continues to believe that the individual is experiencing the effects of alcohol or drugs misuse and they refuse an offer of referral to Occupational Health or appropriate treatment providers, the decision may be taken to proceed in handling the matter under DDAT's Disciplinary Procedure.

## 6 Providing support

6.1 Alcohol and drug-related problems may develop for a variety of reasons and over a considerable period of time. The Trust is committed, in so far as reasonably practicable and in accordance with its safeguarding obligations and duty of care to pupils and all staff, to treating these problems in a similar way to other health issues. The Trust will provide support wherever possible, with a view to maintain/facilitate a return to full duties. This may include:

6.1.1 Referral to appropriate treatment providers where necessary, in conjunction with the individuals' GP.

6.1.2 Signposting to resources offered by specialist charities or local community services. These include (but are not limited to):

- Alcoholics Anonymous
- Alcohol Change UK
- Drinkaware
- Narcotics Anonymous
- WDP
- We Are With You

- Rehab 4 Addiction
- Turning Point
- Talk to Frank
- Derbyshire Addictions Advice Service - DAAS
- NHS
- Mind

6.1.3 Time off work to attend treatment where this cannot be arranged around work commitments.

6.1.4 Making reasonable adjustments to the individuals' role, as recommended by Occupational Health, during treatment and for an agreed period thereafter, subject to operational requirements and feasibility.

6.1.5 Carrying out a risk assessment, where appropriate.

6.1.6 Referral to a Mental Health First Aider either in school or via the DDAT Central Team.

6.1.7 Signposting to Education Support.

6.1.8 Signposting to wellbeing support through the Employee Assistance Programme, e.g. Schools Advisory Service or Westfield Health for Derby Cathedral School.

6.2 If an individual's recovery and return to work does not go as planned, the DDAT Central HR Team will meet with the individual's referring manager to discuss and decide what further action, if any, should be taken.

## 7 Confidentiality

7.1 The Trust aims to ensure that the confidentiality of any individual experiencing alcohol or drug-related problems is maintained appropriately. However, it needs to be recognised that, in supporting individuals, acting in the best interests of its pupils and in accordance with its statutory safeguarding obligations, some degree of information sharing is likely to be necessary. As such, nothing in this policy will prevent the Trust from complying with its statutory obligations, nor will it prevent the Trust making any disclosures required in accordance with its Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and/or Keeping Children Safe in Education guidance.

7.2 If an individual seeks help with an alcohol or drug-related problem directly from the DDAT Central HR Team and wishes to keep matters confidential from their line manager and colleagues, this will be respected unless there is reason to believe that this could put them, their colleagues, the school's pupils or anyone else at risk, or carries some other material risk for the Trust. In those circumstances, the DDAT Central HR Team will encourage the individual to inform their line manager and/or the Headteacher / Executive Headteacher and will give them sufficient time to do so where possible, before discussing the matter with them directly.

## 8 Performance and disciplinary issues

8.1 If an individual agrees to undertake appropriate treatment and/or rehabilitation for an acknowledged alcohol or drug-related problem, the Trust may decide to suspend any ongoing disciplinary action against them for related misconduct or poor performance, pending the outcome of the treatment. Depending on the progress made on the course of treatment, any disciplinary action may be suspended for a specified period, discontinued or restarted at any time as the Trust sees fit.