LAGAN COLLEGE BELFAST
Drugs Policy

Document Reviewed:	Policy Reviewed – January 2026 by D Collins, VP Pastoral
Date Ratified by BOG:	January 2026
Review Date:	January 2027

Related Documents

1. LCB Positive Behaviour Policy
1. LCB Use of Restraint and Seclusion in Educational Settings Policy
2. CCEA Drugs Guidance for Schools in Northern Ireland
3. DENI Circular 2015/23 – Drugs Guidance
4. DENI Circular 2014/25 – Encouraging a smoke-free and e-cigarette free environment in schools and youth organisations

RATIONALE

Lagan College's Drug Education Policy complies with its statutory obligation to have a drugs policy. The policy follows the Department of Education Circular 2015/23 and the guidance given by the CCEA in the Northern Ireland Curriculum Drugs Guidance for Schools in Northern Ireland (Revised Edition 2015) (referred to in this Policy as "the CCEA Drugs Guidance").

Lagan College recognises that young people in today's society are exposed to the risks associated with the drug culture which exists. Young people are challenged by the changing and sometimes conflicting values of society, which places demands on them to make informed and responsible choices. The school wishes to promote the development of the 'whole person' which encompasses physical, spiritual, mental, emotional, social and environmental health; by equipping students with the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values to handle their lives effectively in the present and prepare them for adulthood.

Research cites personal inadequacy, a lack of self-esteem and peer pressure as the main reasons for drug misuse among young people. This places a responsibility on the school to 'better prepare young people for adult life.' (Education Reform (NI) Order 1989)

Our school believes that the misuse of drugs endangers not only our students but also affects the wider community in which we live. It is the school's responsibility to ensure the child's health and safety while in our care and we also strive to promote their personal and social well-being. Drug

misuse undermines this and hinders the development of the young person. Drugs education is therefore form an integral part of the school curriculum.

The policy provides a focus for the school to consider how drug education should be implemented and developed within the curriculum, and outlines the roles, responsibilities and legal duties of key staff. From a wider perspective, it gives parents and the local community an opportunity for involvement in drug issues.

The policy forms an integral part of our existing health education and personal and social education programmes, and the drug education programme complements this.

This policy links with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) by taking into consideration the below articles of the UNCRC.

Article 19: Governments should ensure that children are properly cared for, and protect them from violence, abuse and neglect by their parents, or anyone else who looks after them.

Article 33: The Government should provide ways of protecting children from dangerous drugs.

Article 36: Children should be protected from any activities that could harm their development.

THE SCHOOL ETHOS

The primary aim of the College is the integrated, Christian aim and this is the reason for its foundation. It means that we seek "to foster an atmosphere of mutual respect and understanding for the religious and ethnic identities of students, parents and staff". (College Staff Handbook.)

Lagan College is also a health promoting school. It teaches areas of health education and strives to protect and improve the health of those within it. The school provides a secure and stimulating environment which encourages students to be health and safety conscious. It makes provision for students to take initiatives and exercise responsibility.

There is also good liaison with parents, outside agencies and specialist services to advise, support and contribute to the promotion of health within the school.

In this context it is important that all staff, students and parents understand that the provision or use of illegal substances in Lagan College is not tolerated and will result in the most severe consequences for those involved.

The school formulates, implements and reviews regularly a range of health-related policies, including its drugs policy.

DEFINITIONS

Controlled substances

These are legally classified according to their benefit when used in medical treatment or harm if misused. The Misuse of Drugs Act sets out a range of substances that are included under that Act, which includes heroin, crack, cocaine, cannabis, ecstasy, tranquilisers, magic mushrooms, LSD, DMT, sleeping tablets, anabolic steroids and others.

Vape/e-cigarette

A device that vaporises a substance for inhalation through a mouthpiece; excludes licensed medicinal products.

Single-use (disposable) vape

A device not designed to be **refilled** or **recharged**; sale/supply now prohibited in NI.

Nicotine pouches

Tobacco-free sachets placed in the mouth to deliver nicotine; **currently unregulated for age of sale in NI**. Nicotine pouches are known a **Snus**.

Drug and substance:

The School's Policy on drug education covers any drug and substance under the DENI definition:

'drug and substance is defined as any product 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, substances/ drugs include:

- alcohol, tobacco and tobacco-related products, including nicotine replacement therapy (NRT), vapes/electronic cigarettes and nicotine pouches;
- over-the-counter medicines such as paracetamol and cough medicine
- prescribed drugs, such as antibiotics, painkillers, antidepressants, antipsychotics, inhalers and stimulants such as Ritalin;
- volatile substances such as correcting fluids or thinners, gas lighter fuel, aerosols, glues and petrol;
- controlled illegal drugs such as cannabis, LSD, ecstasy, amphetamine sulphate (speed), magic mushrooms, heroin and cocaine;
- New psychoactive substances ("NPS") (formally known as legal highs*) which contain one or more chemical substances that produce similar effects to legal drugs and may be sold as incense, salts or plant food, such as Herbal highs, Party pills
- other substances such as amyl or butyl nitrite (known as poppers) and unprocessed magic mushrooms

*It should be noted that the term 'Legal highs' is misleading. Public perception is that 'legal' means safe. This is not the case as there is no regulation of these substances and therefore no way of knowing what chemicals they contain.

Some signs and symptoms associated with drug use are set out in Appendix 2.

With the exception of permitted prescribed drugs, the use of any of the above drugs/ substances is totally forbidden in Lagan College. Lagan College must be informed in advance of any prescribed drugs which a student may be taking and these must be stored safely in the Nurse's room during school time.

Procedures for handling alcohol, tobacco and nicotine containing products (NCPs) misuse are found in Appendices 3 and 4 and this is also included in the Positive Behaviour Policy. Procedures for handling prescribed medicines and volatile substances are also found in Appendices 3 and 4 and are outlined in the school Health and Safety policy. This policy complements these policies and also the Child Protection and Pastoral Care Policies. It does not exist in isolation.

Drug Use

Refers to taking a drug.

Drug misuse

Refers to legal, illegal or illicit drug taking or alcohol consumption which leads a person to experience social, psychological, physical or legal problems related to intoxication or regular excessive consumption and/ or dependence. Drug misuse is therefore taking drugs, including prescribed drugs and NPS that cause harm to the individual or anyone else.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aims and objectives of this policy are:

- to ensure the College is a safe space for all students
- to ensure the wellbeing and safety for students and staff
- to establish a clear statement of the College's view on drug use or misuse and the role of drugs education;
- to outline of the need for a consistent approach to drugs education and managing incidents in line with our pastoral care and safeguarding policies;
- to outline the procedures and protocols in place within the school to deal with drug related incidents, and
- to monitor, evaluate and review the policy annually.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES WITHIN THE COLLEGE

Role of Board of Governors

The Designated Governor for Drugs is Mrs Teresa Geraghty.

The role of the College governors is to collaborate with appropriate staff, students and parents or carers to foster and support developing and reviewing its drugs policy.

They should also:

- facilitate the consultative process where the school community can respond and contribute to the policy's effectiveness and quality, which the governors should examine and approve before implementing in the school;
- ensure details of the policy are published in the school prospectus and that these are reviewed at least annually and after a drug-related incident; and
- be fully aware of and adequately trained to deal with suspected drug-related incidents, including alcohol and tobacco, tobacco-related products, vapes/electronic cigarettes, and their appropriate disciplinary response.

Role of Principal

It is the Principal's responsibility to determine the circumstances of all incidents, but it is the responsibility of the PSNI to investigate any criminal or suspected criminal offence. In any suspected drug-related incident, the Principal should contact the parents or carers of those students involved.

The principal must ensure that in any incident involving a controlled substance there is close liaison with the PSNI and that they are informed.

After contacting the PSNI, the Principal will confine his/her responsibilities to:

- the welfare of the student(s) involved in the incident and the other students in the school;
- health and safety during the handling, storage and safe disposal of any drug or drug related paraphernalia, using protective gloves at all times;
- informing the Board of Governors;
- agreeing any appropriate pastoral or disciplinary response;

- reporting the incident to the Education Authority; and
- completing a written report and forwarding a copy to the Board of Governors and the designated officer in the Education Authority.

Role of Designated Teacher for Drugs

The Vice Principal (Pastoral), is responsible for the co-ordination of the arrangements to deal with individual cases of suspected or actual drug misuse. Their role includes:

- Implementing procedures as outlined in this policy for dealing with an incident
- Receiving any substance found in school
- Liaison with the Principal on any drug related incident
- Regularly updating staff on the policy and the procedures for dealing with a drug related incident
- The induction of new staff as appropriate
- Liaison with the drug education co-ordinator and staff who have responsibility for pastoral care and delivery of the drug education programme
- Liaison with outside agencies in relation to drug related incidents
- Reviewing and updating the school drug policy, when required.

As part of their role the Vice Principal (Pastoral) is the member of staff responsible for co-ordinating all issues pertaining to drug education programme within the school. Their role includes:

- Ensuring that the programme of study is being taught effectively
- Liaising with all staff on drug education matters, for curriculum purposes
- Organising training for staff as appropriate
- Liaising with outside agencies for curriculum purposes

Role of Individual Staff member

All staff should be familiar with the content of the school's drug policy. If a suspected drug-related incident occurs, the member of staff should:

- notify the principal and the designated teacher for drugs;
- deal with any emergency procedures to ensure the safety of students and staff, if necessary;
- forward any information, substance or paraphernalia received to the designated teacher for drugs,
- complete a brief factual report on the suspected incident, using the Drugs Incident Report Form and forward this to the designated teacher for drugs

Role of Parent/Carer

Parents play a vital role in the prevention of drug misuse. It is important that they are fully involved in the education of their child, this is especially so with the drug education programmes. Parents are encouraged to play an active role in homework tasks, and discuss drug issues with their child whenever possible. The Student Learning Planner contains support information in regard to misuse of substances.

Parents/Carers are also aware of the school's procedures for dealing with drug related incidents. This information is included in Induction Packs for Years 8, 13 &14 student and a summarised

version of the Lagan College Drugs policy is issued annually. The College will ensure that parents are informed in writing in regard to any drugs incidents that occurs within the school.

Parents/Carers are expected to liaise with Lagan College if they have concerns in regard to their child. If a parent/carer suspects or is aware that their child is involved in/with inappropriate use of substances, then they must inform the College immediately. The College will offer support and with parental permission refer their child to the Daisy project.

The Daisy Project is service for young people who need confidential advice and help for alcohol or drug use. They provide a range of support and interventions for young people and their families. DAISY provides young people and their families with an individually tailored package of support that can include;

- Brief Intervention
- Mentoring
- Counselling
- Group-Work
- Family Support
- Systemic Family Work (Belfast and South Eastern trust areas only)

The Daisy Project aims to:

- Provide information and advice on the effects of alcohol and drugs
- Provide young people and their families with appropriate packages of support that will reduce the impact of substance misuse on their lives
- Reduce risk taking behaviours
- Support and sustain positive changes in young peoples' lives
- Promote healthier relationships

The Daisy Project – 028 9043 5813

DRUGS EDUCATION IN THE CURRICULUM

'The purpose of a Drugs Education Programme, is to provide opportunities for young people to acquire knowledge, understanding and skills which enable them to consider the effects of drugs and other substances on themselves and on others. It enables them to make informed and responsible decisions about the use of such substances within the context of a healthy lifestyle.'(DENI Misuse of Drugs – 1996)

The programme of education is integrated within the College's Pastoral Programme as part of Health Education. A fully integrated approach to drug prevention is essential and within the Pastoral programme students are taught about raising self-esteem, self-confidence and assertiveness to prepare them for making informed decisions about drug use, the main focus being on knowledge, social skills, attitudes and values.

Drugs education should not be seen as a one-off topic but as a continuous process which involves the development of skill and attitudes enabling students to make informed choices. Effective drug education should take account of not only the individual, but also the family, their peer groups, and the wider community. Where possible, the school promotes the partnership between the parent and child, when addressing drug issues.

In Northern Ireland, the statutory curriculum for young people includes the relatively recently introduced subjects of Personal Development (Years 8-10) and Learning for Life and Work (Years 11-14). These subjects provide opportunities for young people to develop their knowledge and understanding of the use, misuse, risks and effects of drugs and other potentially harmful substances, their effects of health and lifestyle, and the personal, social and economic implications. These issues are addressed in these subjects which students follow from Year 8 to Year 14. Drugs education is specifically included within the Programmes of Study for Science, and within other subjects, such as Religious Education, English, Home Economics, Technology, and Physical Education, there are opportunities for considering drug-related issues from a variety of perspectives.

THE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE DRUG EDUCATION PROGRAMME

The school's drug education programme is grounded in the following aims and objectives:

AIMS

- To promote positive attitudes towards personal health.
- To develop self-discipline and self-respect.
- To build students' self-esteem.
- To develop decision-making skills which may delay or prevent the onset of experimentation.
- To inform students of the effects of drug abuse, and the risks involved.
- To help students to understand how they can influence their peers.
- To develop knowledge and understanding of themselves and others as individuals.
- To help students acquire skills in managing the pressures of the youth culture in which they live.

OBJECTIVES

Drug Education should enable students to develop a knowledge and understanding about drugs and drug issues, as well as the skills needed to cope with challenges they will encounter.
Students should be able to:

- Understand their own personality, needs, abilities and interests.
- Understand the process of reasoning required to make informed choices.
- Explore their own attitudes towards drugs and drug issues.
- Develop coping strategies to deal with peer pressure.
- Develop a competence in challenging attitudes and patterns of behaviour associated with drug misuse.
- Develop self-discipline.
- Understand what is meant by 'a drug' and the definition of 'addiction'.
- Understand how some drugs affect the body.
- Be aware of the benefits of healthy lifestyles.
- Recognise potential drug exploitation and how to take avoiding action.
- Be aware of the current drug culture and the effect of advertising campaigns.

These objectives are closely linked with our school policy on pastoral care and they should not be seen in isolation. In addition to the drugs education provided within the curriculum, the College offers counselling and support for students to explore their own attitudes and values as well as an opportunity to discuss any drug related problems they may have. This is generally done through the Pastoral System within the school and the students are informed that confidentiality cannot always be guaranteed. More specifically, the College through DENI provides in-school counselling through a professional counsellor from 'Family Works Counselling Service'. Additionally, the College will refer students to the Daisy Project for support should the need arise.

THE DELIVERY AND ORGANISATION OF LAGAN COLLEGE'S DRUGS EDUCATION PROGRAMME

Drug Education is a whole staff issue. Lagan College ensures that staff are regularly updated with changes in the curriculum and changes to the policy, which have an effect on their delivery of the curriculum. Where possible staff received up-dates on drug issues and attend relevant training.

DEPARTMENTAL DRUGS EDUCATION

The programme is organised through each relevant subject area, with the Head of Department overseeing its implementation. The Head of Department is responsible to ensure that the aspects of Drugs Education outlined in the Northern Ireland Curriculum are covered for all age and ability levels, and this is taught by subject specific teachers.

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT - DRUGS EDUCATION

The Head of Personal Development and Learning for Life is responsible for overseeing the delivery of the Personal Development programmes. This programme is supported through assemblies and

workshops delivered by form tutors, Heads of Year, Heads of School and the Vice Principal (Pastoral) and other Pastoral Leaders.

LAGAN COLLEGE'S CURRENT DRUGS EDUCATION PROVISION.

Drugs Awareness delivered through the Personal Development Curriculum and discreetly via topic areas delivered throughout the curriculum.

YEAR 8- Don't Start, Don't Vape Programme • What is Vaping? • What are the Concerns with Vaping and Child & Young People? • The Law and Vaping • Vaping and the Environment
Year 9 – Alcohol Awareness – SHAHRP 1 • Alcohol Myths • Making Choices • Alcohol and the Body • Consequences of Drinking **Assembly: NI chest Heart and Stroke – Vaping**
Year 10 – Substance Abuse • What Do We Know About Cannabis? • Types of Drug Use and Media Influence • Making My Mind Up on Illegal Drugs • Risk/Protective Factors • Cannabis/Dealing with Stress **Assembly: LCB – Vaping**
Year 11 – Substance Abuse • Risking Taking Behaviours: Alcohol and Drugs **Assembly: LCB – Vaping** **Youth Justice Agency: Alcohol Awareness**
Year 12 – Drugs Awareness Talk: Jacki Burke. **Assembly: LCB – Vaping**
Year 13 - Alcohol Misuse & Personal Social Consequences • PSNI Workshops • E- Modules on Alcohol Misuse & Personal Social Consequences

Year 14 – E-Gaming and Gambling

- **Pros and Cons of particating in E-Gaming**
- **Risk taking behaviours - Gambling**
- **Addictive Behaviours**
-

AREAS OF STUDY FOR DRUGS EDUCATION PROGRAMME

KEY STAGE 3

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING	SKILLS	ATTITUDES
- School rules relating to medicines, alcohol, solvents, cigarettes and illegal drugs · Information about drugs, their effects and health risks · Scientific terminology, egg. abuse, addition, withdrawal, overdose · Categories of drugs · The law relating to drugs · The misuse of drugs in sport · The effects of different levels of intake of alcohol · Advice and support, helplines, and organisations	- Identifying health risks · Communicating with peers, parents and professionals · Decision making and consequences · Requesting advice and support · Giving and securing help, eg. first aid · Safety procedures when using medicines · Identifying and understanding pressures and influences · Personal strengths and weaknesses · Handling social relationships	- Attitudes and beliefs amongst different groups of society · Impact of the media and advertising · Attitudes towards drugs and laws relating to drugs · Responsibility for your own actions · Responsibility for your own and other's safety. · Recognition of yourself as a role model · Alternatives ways to spend your leisure time

KEY STAGE 4

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING	SKILLS	ATTITUDES
· School rules relating to medicines, alcohol, solvents, cigarettes and illegal drugs · Information about drugs including their legal status, effects and appearance · Personal, social, financial, biological and psychological effect of drug misuse · Patterns of drug misuse and the impact on the community and wider society · Dangers associated with particular drugs, mixing drugs, environment and mood · Drug policy in this country · Legal responsibilities and rights · The services provided by local and national advice and support agencies	· Personal self-appraisal · Handling personal and social relationships · Identifying and understanding pressures and influences · Identifying and assessing risks, including emotional and lifestyle consequences · Communicating with peers, parents and professionals · Making choices and knowing the consequences · Decision making and assertiveness · Managing conflict and aggressive behaviour · Requesting advice and support · Giving first aid	· Social and cultural influences on young people · Making choices and knowing the consequences · Attitudes towards drugs, drug users and misusers, drug pushers, and laws in relation to drugs, including licensing laws · The role of the media in influencing attitudes towards drug use · Individual's responsibilities for their own actions · Alternative social and leisure pursuits

USING EXTERNAL AGENCIES TO DELIVER DRUGS EDUCATION

The College may use outside agencies to help delivery the drug education programme if the following criteria are met:

- The content and delivery of the programme has been jointly agreed.
- The programme and methods of delivery are consistent with the aims and objectives outlined in this policy.
- The Principal has given her approval for the use of the outside agency.
- The staff from the agency have been vetted in relation to Child Protection and Safeguarding.
- The external agency/individual is trained in Drugs Education.

PROCEDURES FOR MANAGING SUSPECTED DRUG-RELATED INCIDENTS

A suspected drug related incident is described as:

- Suspect drugs found on the school premises
- A student suspected of being in possession of drugs
- A student found to be in possession of drugs
- A student is suspected of being under the influence of drugs
- A student suspected of using drugs on the school premises
- A student found to be using drugs on the school premises
- A student suspected of supplying or handling drugs to/for others
- A student found to be supplying or handling drugs to/for others

CHECKLIST OF ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES WHEN MANAGING AN INCIDENT

Individual staff members should:

• assess the situation and decide the action;

• make the situation safe for all students and other members of staff, secure first aid and send for additional staff support, if necessary;

• carefully gather up any drugs and/or associated paraphernalia or evidence and pass all information or evidence to the designated teacher for drugs; and

• write a brief factual report of the incident and forward it to the designated teacher for drugs.

The designated teacher for drugs should:

• respond to first aider's advice or recommendations;

• inform parents or carers immediately, in the case of an emergency;

• take possession of any substance(s) and associated paraphernalia found;

• inform the Principal;

• take initial responsibility for student(s) involved in the suspected incident; and

• complete a Drugs Incident Report Form and forward it to the principal.

The Principal should:

• determine the circumstances surrounding the incident;

• ensure that the following people are informed:

– parents or carers;

– designated officer in the local PSNI area;

– Chair of Board of Governors;

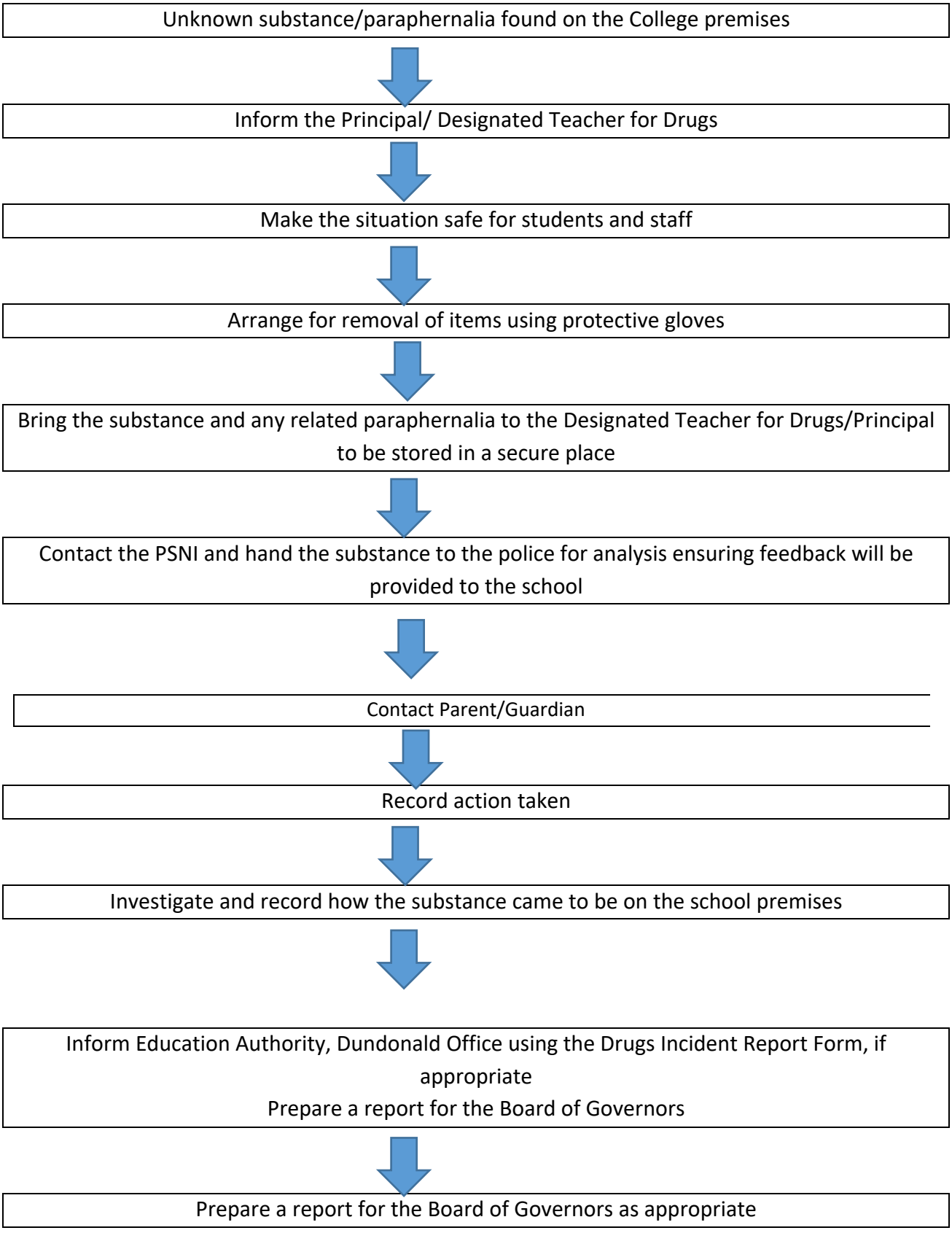
- Designated officer in Education Authority.

• consult and agree immediate pastoral and disciplinary responses, including counselling services or support;

• forward a copy of the Incident Report Form to the chairperson of the Board of Governors and the designated officer in the Education Authority; and

• review procedures and amend, if necessary.

Handling Drug- Related Incidents



LAGAN COLLEGE BELFAST

Record of Drug Related Incident

CONFIDENTIAL – LIMITED ACCESS ONLY

DESCRIPTION OF THE INCIDENT

ACTION TAKEN

1. Name of Student / Young person _____ DOB _____

   Address _____

   School _____

2. Date of Incident _____ Reported by _____

   Time of Incident _____ Location of Incident _____

3. First Aid given YES / NO Administered by _____

   Ambulance/Doctor Called YES / NO Time of Call _____

   Drug Involved (if known) _____ Substance Found YES / NO

4. Parent Informed YES / NO Date _____ Time _____

   By whom _____

5. Where substance is retained _____ or

   Date substance destroyed or passed to PSNI _____ Time _____

   Witnessed by _____

6. Police Informed YES / NO Date _____ Time _____

   By _____ Name of Station / Officer _____

7. EA Drug Education Officer Informed YES / NO Date _____

   Time _____ By whom _____

8. Form completed by _____ Date _____

Position _____

Countersigned by School Principal/Board Officer _____

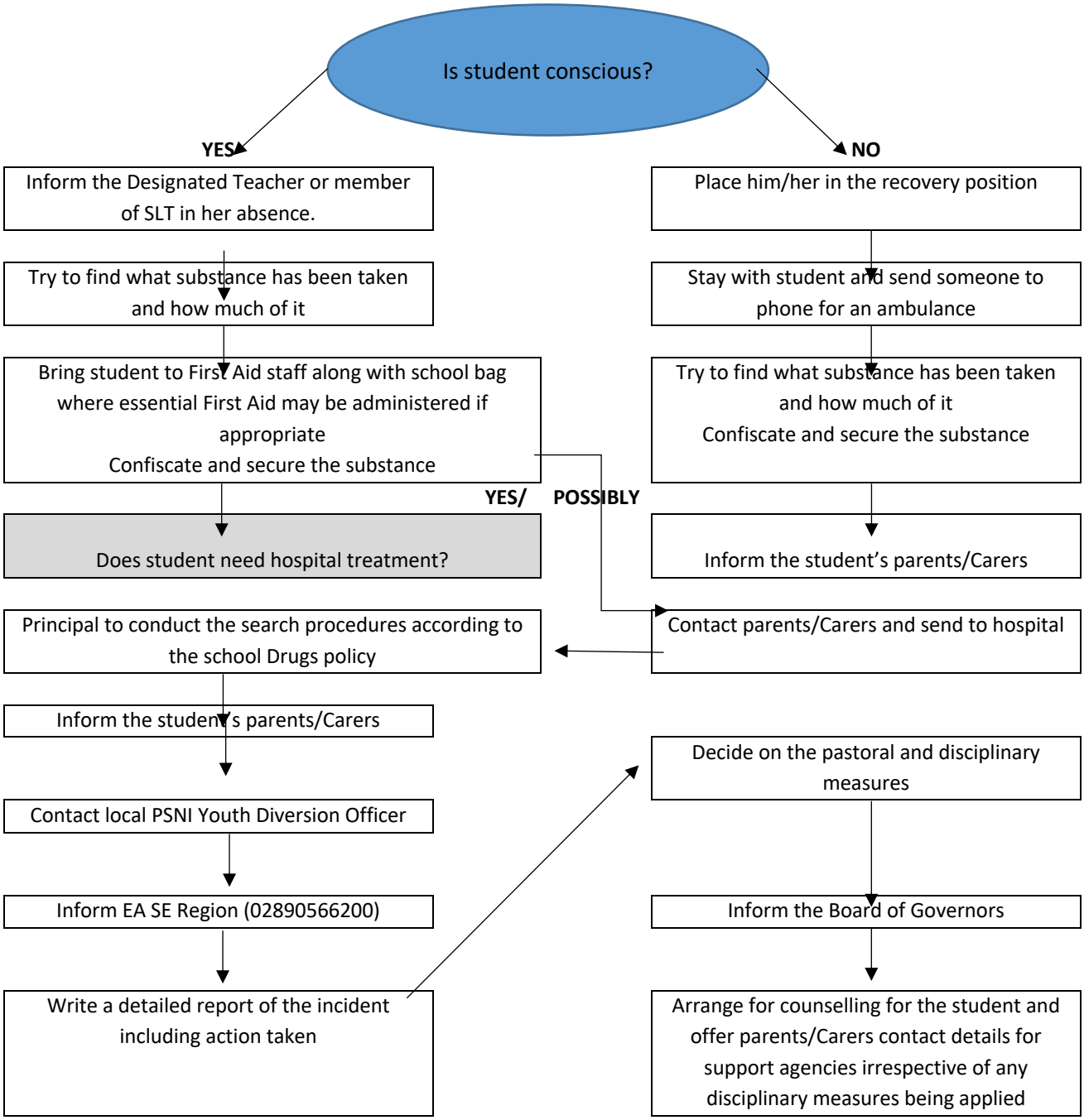
Dated _____

Please retain one copy for your confidential file and return the original to:

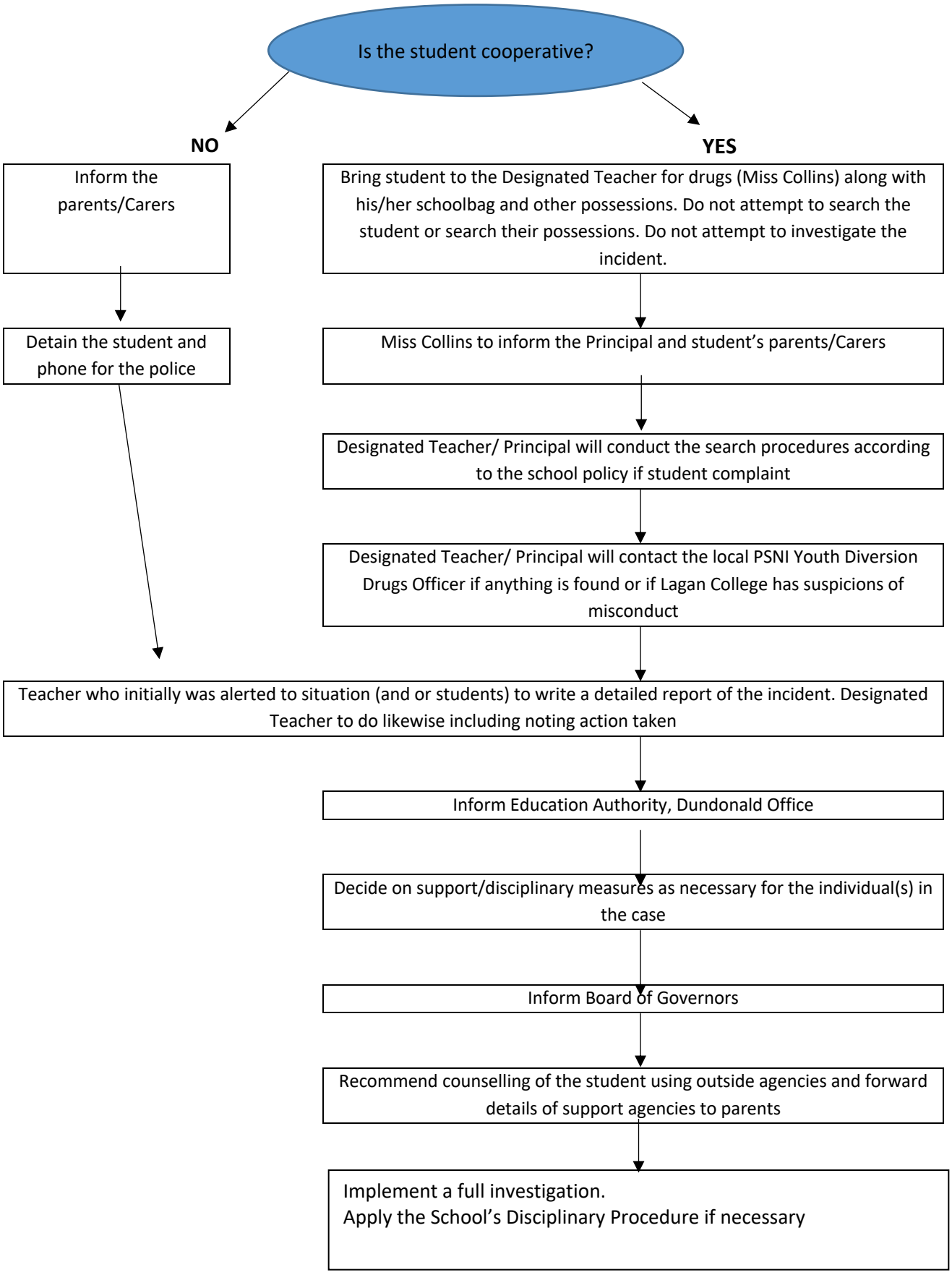
Designated Officer
Drugs Education
EA – Dundonald Office
Grahamsbridge Road, Belfast, BT16 2HS

Tel: 028 9056 6200 Fax: 028 90566266

STUDENT SUSPECTED OF HAVING TAKEN DRUGS IN COLLEGE OR UPON ARRIVAL TO COLLEGE



STUDENT SUSPECTED OF POSSESSING/DISTRIBUTING A DRUG



EMERGENCY FIRST AID

Emergency Action for all members of the school community:

In the event of finding someone collapsed and unconscious, summon help from the School Nurse or a Qualified First Aider and follow these procedures until help arrives.

Check that the mouth is free of obstruction and the airway clear.

If necessary, pull the tongue forward

Loosen clothing at the neck-line

Place the person in the recovery position with the head forward
(refer to illustrations of recovery position next page)

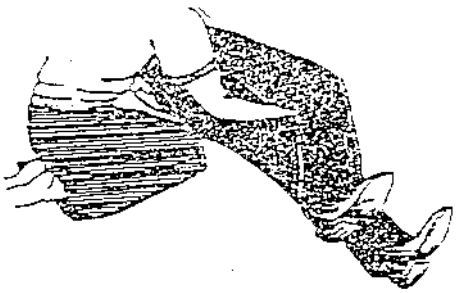
Check for chest movement and colour of face, lips and tongue; if these begin to turn blue, a person qualified in first aid should resuscitate

THE RECOVERY POSITION



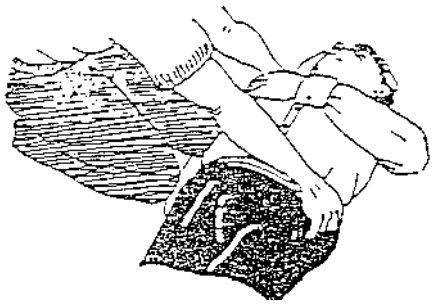
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- Turn the face towards you
- Tilt the head backwards and move the jaw forward to ensure that the air-way remains open



2

- Place the arm nearest to you by the casualty's side, then slide the hand, palm upwards, under the buttock.
- Bend the other arm and lay it across the chest
- Lift the far leg and bringing it towards you cross it over the leg nearest you



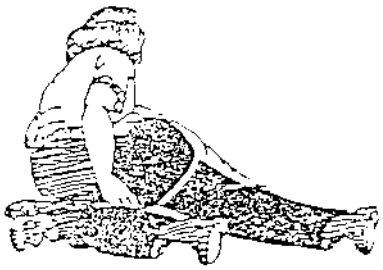
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- Support the head and grip the clothing at the hip
- Roll the casualty towards you until he/she rests against your knees



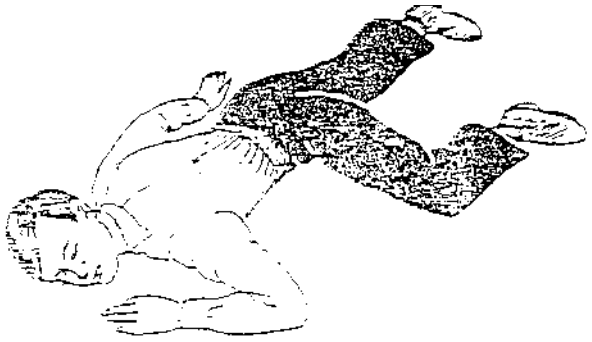
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- Check that the air-way remains open
- Keeping the uppermost arm bent, move it out from the body to act as a support



5

- Bend the uppermost leg and bring well forward to support the body



6

- Free the other arm to let it lie alongside the body

SEARCHING STUDENTS AND PROPERTY

- Staff may search **school property** such as lockers or desks.
- Staff can search personal property, including schoolbag, coat or other items (including those contained in school property) BUT ONLY WITH THE STUDENT'S CONSENT.
- Ensure you have the student and another adult present as witnesses
- It is acceptable to ask the student to empty pockets and school bags but you cannot make them.
- If a student refuses to consent to a search of himself/herself or of his/her belongings the school may get parents/ carers and the PSNI involved.
- If staff suspect that a student is in possession of a substance, the College will contact parents and PSNI.
- A member of staff should never carry out a physical search of a student, unless there is compelling evidence that the student has committed an offense.

DETAINING A STUDENT

When managing a suspected drug-related incident the school will require the students concerned to remain in school under the supervision of appropriate members of staff until their parents or carers and the PSNI arrive.

If the student refuses to remain, the school cannot detain a student against their will. However, if a member of staff has reasonable grounds to suspect that the student has in their possession or has taken a controlled substance, they can make a citizen's arrest under Article 26A of the Police and Criminal Evidence (Northern Ireland) Order (PACE) 1989 and/or contact the PSNI immediately.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

For the purpose of this policy, an emergency is considered to be either:

- A situation in which a student or staff is in danger, or -
- A sequence of events which requires urgent attention.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The spirit of confidentiality is of primary importance to those who work professionally with young people in a trusting and secure environment. However, the legal requirements of drug legislation will mean that in certain circumstances there will be a change in the convention of confidentiality; any criminal activity around drugs disclosed must be passed onto the Designated Teacher, PSNI and Education Authority, Dundonald Office.

The Children (Northern Ireland) Order (1995) makes it clear that the welfare of the young person is paramount and therefore confidentiality as much as possible will be maintained. The details of the drug related incident will be shared on a need to know basis in the interests of the child. Details of the incident may be shared to minimise risk for others and inform future practice however the details of the individual/s will be protected as much as possible.

A CHILD IN NEED

Where a student discloses to a staff member that he or she is taking illegal drugs, or a parent/guardian informs the school that their son/daughter is involved in risk taking involving drugs, the staff member cannot offer a guarantee of confidentiality given the seriousness of the drug misuse. However, the College will constructively respond with the necessary support to enable that student to facilitate change in their pattern of behaviour by establishing a PEP in partnership with parents/carers and outside agencies.

DISCIPLINARY MEASURES IN RELATION TO DRUG INCIDENTS

The College will deal with each case as it arises, following the school's Drugs Policy, EA guidance and legal requirements.

Procedures will be carried out in line with the Positive Behaviour Policy and the College Student Expectations. These are set out below:

In Lagan College our relationships are based on respect, service, equality and reconciliation.

- We show respect for all.
- We are helpful to all.
- We treat all others as we would like to be treated ourselves.
- We try to put things right when they go wrong.

Lagan College Expectations

- We use good manners and are respectful when we speak to each other, face to face, on-line or by phone.
- We always act in a way that considers the feelings and safety of others.
- We wear our uniform correctly and with pride.
- We are on time for school and for every lesson.
- We walk calmly around the school keeping to the left.
- We are good ambassadors for Lagan College whilst traveling to and from school.
- We come to school with the correct books and equipment.
- We complete and hand in homeworks on time.
- We listen carefully when others are speaking.
- We always work to the best of our ability and with enthusiasm.
- We take pride in our school and help to keep it clean and safe.

SERIOUS SANCTIONS

All disciplinary matters are fully investigated by Lagan College and an appropriate response will be considered in line with the CCEA and DENI Drugs Guidance.

The Principal and Board of Governors will retain responsibility for deciding how to respond to particular incidents following full investigation. The College will make a co-ordinated and appropriate response to any drug-related incident, taking into consideration the health and safety of students and staff as the main priority.

In order to safeguard the safety and well-being of our students and staff the College will respond to Drug related incidents as outlined below.

1. **Any student that brings illegal drugs to and/or from school <u>will be expelled</u>.**

2. **Any student who has brought in illegal drugs to school and supplied them to others <u>will be expelled.</u>**

3. **Any student participating in taking an illegal drug which has been given to them by another student <u>will be suspended and may be expelled</u> pending a full investigation.**

4. **If a student is involved in being given drugs and reports any details or facts to a member of staff, this may be taken into consideration, pending a full investigation.**

5. **Students <u>will be suspended and may be expelled</u> pending full investigation if they smoke cigarettes, vapes/e-cigarettes and/or nicotine pouches in school.**

6. **Any student that brings alcohol into school or is under the influence of alcohol <u>will be suspended and may be expelled</u> pending full investigation.**

In cases where the Board of Governors are considering a serious sanction to be applied to a student, in line with the CCEA and DENI Drugs Guidance, the College will implement a repertoire of responses other than expulsion, if exceptional circumstances are clearly made evident.

For the avoidance of doubt, it is the parent/guardian's responsibility to present, to the Board of Governors, any exceptional circumstances at the time of the behaviour, that may influence their decision.

STAFF USE OF ALCOHOL AND/OR SMOKIN/VAPING ON SCHOOL PREMISES

Lagan College is a smoke-free premises and no visitor or employee may smoke or make use of vapes/electronic cigarettes within the College grounds. For further guidance please refer to DE Circular 2014/25 – Encouraging a Smoke-Free and E-Cigarette Free Environment in Schools and Youth Organisations).

With the exception of a few specified social events held for adults outside school hours, the school premises are an alcohol free zone. During regular working days, the school does not allow any alcohol to be consumed on school premises. This applies to visitors, staff and students. Adults breaking this rule will be referred to the Principal directly.

PROVISION OF COUNSELLING SERVICES IN THE SCHOOL

All students and their families who have been involved in a drug related incident will be offered an opportunity to engage with outside agencies for support, irrespective of the College's response to the incident. A full list of support services available for students and their families is available in Appendix 5

LINKS THE COMMUNITY AND THE POLICE

The school endeavours to work closely with the local community to help reduce the number of drug related incidents.

Lagan College has developed good working relationships with the local police. This helps to ensure that if a drug related incident is reported, it will be dealt with in a professional and discrete manner, and in keeping the best interests of the child concerned in mind. The College will contact Youth Diversion Officer for advice and support when it is needed.

DEALING WITH THE MEDIA

If the school receives an enquiry from the media, the caller should be referred only to the Principal. When responding to the media, the privacy of the student should be respected, they are only to give short, factual statements, and the concluding statement should be positive, and reassuring. No further comments should be given.

MONITORING AND EVALUATING

The Drugs policy is reviewed every two years to reflect changing circumstances and trends in drugs use. The programmes of study for drug education are continually reviewed and any changes deemed necessary are implemented.

All staff are made aware of the Drugs policy and procedures as part of their in-service training in August. New members of staff are also instructed as part of their induction training. Staff training in the event of an emergency is provided. Key members of staff have also been instructed in basic first aid and re points of referral in the event of an emergency.

The full policy is available to parents if they request it and it is printed in summary form in the College Handbook and Prospectus. The policy can also be accessed from the school website.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 **SUMMARY OF RELEVANT LEGISLATION APPLICABLE TO NORTHERN IRELAND (PSNI, PHA)**

APPENDIX 2 **SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF DRUG USE**

APPENDIX 3 **PROCEDURES FOR MANAGING A PARENT OR CARER ARRIVES AT SCHOOL TO COLLECT A CHILD AND APPEARS TO BE UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF ALCOHOL OR ANOTHER SUBSTANCE**

APPENDIX 4 **PROCEDURES FOR HANDLING SUBSTANCES**

APPENDIX 5 **ALCOHOL AND DRUG SERVICES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE**

APPENDIX 1

SUMMARY OF RELEVANT LEGISLATION APPLICABLE TO NORTHERN IRELAND (PSNI, PHA)

MISUSE OF DRUGS ACT 1971

Controlled drugs (Misuse of Drugs Act 1971)

- **Possession, supply, production, or permitting these on premises** is an offence and may lead to arrest.
- If a staff member takes **temporary possession** of a suspected controlled drug to prevent an offence, they **must** promptly destroy it safely or deliver it to a person lawfully entitled to take custody (e.g., PSNI), documenting actions taken.
- Stakeholders **must not knowingly permit** cannabis smoking, production or supply of any controlled drug on premises.

CRIMINAL LAW ACT (NORTHERN IRELAND) 1967

Duty to inform (Criminal Law Act (NI) 1967, s.5)

- Where an arrestable offence has been committed and a person **knows/believes** they have material information, they have a **duty** to provide that to a constable **within a reasonable time** unless there is a reasonable excuse.

POWERS OF ARREST (PACE, NI) ORDER 1989, ART. 26

Any person may arrest without warrant:

- Someone **in the act of** committing an arrestable offence or whom they have **reasonable grounds** to suspect is committing such an offence; and
- Where an arrestable offence has been committed, anyone may arrest the person **guilty** or **reasonably suspected** of being guilty.

Note: Apply organisational incident protocols first; staff should contact PSNI unless immediate safety requires intervention.

THE MEDICINES ACT (1968)

This Act divides medicines into three distinct categories:

- restricted medicines or prescription-only medicines, which can only be supplied by a pharmacist on receipt of a doctor's prescription;
- pharmacy (or over-the-counter) medicines, which can be sold without a prescription but only by a pharmacist in a pharmacy;
- general sales medicines, which can be sold without a prescription by any shop; and

- Prescription-only medicines must not be supplied without a valid prescription; certain medicines (e.g., **Temazepam**) are controlled under the Misuse of Drugs Act if no prescription is held.

SMOKE-FREE PLACES & VEHICLES (NI)

- **Smoking** is prohibited in **most enclosed public places and workplaces**, including schools, public transport and shared work vehicles.
- It is an offence to smoke in a **private vehicle** that is enclosed, has more than one person present, **and** includes someone **under 18**.
- All **organisation grounds** (including car parks, outdoor teaching areas and sports sidelines) are designated **smoke-free and vape-free** areas.

VAPING (E-CIGARETTES)

Ban on single-use (disposable) vapes

- From **1 June 2025**, it is **illegal** in NI to **sell, supply or distribute** single-use vapes.
- **Possession or use** of **single-use/disposable vapes** on College grounds is **prohibited**; staff will **confiscate** for safe disposal and action incident in line with Positive Behaviour policy.

Age of sale & youth protections

- It is illegal for retailers to sell **nicotine inhaling products (vapes)** to **under-18s**.

NICOTINE POUCHES (TOBACCO-FREE ORAL NICOTINE)

Current legal position in NI

- There are **currently no NI statutory age-of-sale restrictions** for nicotine pouches.
- Lagan College **prohibits possession, use, or supply** of **nicotine pouches** by anyone **under 18** on our premises. Staff will **confiscate**, notify parents/carers action incident in line with Positive Behaviour policy.
- Where nicotine pouches are found, staff will treat them as **age-restricted products**, as with vapes/tobacco, and follow the disciplinary **incident & safeguarding** protocol.

TOBACCO LAWS

Tobacco (cigarettes, papers, cigars, smokeless tobacco)

- It is **illegal** to sell tobacco (including **cigarette papers**) to anyone **under 18** in NI.
- **No smoking** anywhere indoors; designated outdoor areas are **smoke-free**.

ALCOHOL LAWS (CHILDREN AND YOUNG PERSONS ACT (NI) 1968)

- It is an offence to **give alcohol** to a child/young person **under 14**, except **in a private residence** for **medical purposes**; vendors must **not sell** alcohol to **under-18s**. Police may **confiscate alcohol** from under-18s in a public place.

SOLVENTS & GASES (INTOXICATING SUBSTANCES (SUPPLY) ACT 1985)

- It is an offence to sell solvents/aerosols/gases to **under-18s knowing** they are to be used for **intoxicating purposes**.

APPENDIX 2

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF DRUG USE

Recognising current drug use is a major issue for many professionals who work with young people. There is also the issue of identifying those young people who may be at increased risk of using drugs.

Below are specific physical and behavioural signs that may be associated with drug use. Some of these, however, can indicate the onset of adolescence.

PHYSICAL SIGNS

These can differ depending on the type of drug taken, for example a stimulant or hallucinogen. Below are some of the physical signs related to drugs used illicitly in Northern Ireland.

Nicotine Pouches

Pouches are small, discreet, and flavoured, making detection difficult; watch for **oral discomfort, nausea, vomiting, headaches, tachycardia** in pupils and **mint/fruit-scented sachets** near the cheek/gum.

Solvents

Solvents include glues, butane gas refills, aerosols, typewriting correcting fluids and thinners. Signs to look out for include:

- usual signs of intoxication – unco-ordinated movement or slurred speech;
- possible odour on clothes and breath;
- redness around the mouth and nose, if using glue;
- a cough; and
- possible stains on clothing, depending on type of solvent used.

Cannabis

Cannabis can have the effect of a depressant or mild hallucinogen, depending on the amount taken and situational factors. The effects of taking cannabis include:

- a tendency to laugh easily;
- becoming talkative;
- relaxed behaviour;
- reddening of the eyes; and
- hunger.

If the drug is smoked, it produces a distinctive sweet smell.

Ecstasy

Ecstasy is sometimes referred to as a hallucinogenic stimulant. Its effects will therefore include those listed for stimulants. It can also cause:

- increased temperature;
- excessive sweating;

• a very dry mouth and throat;
• jerky, unco-ordinated movements;
• clenched jaws; • occasional nausea, when first used; and
• fatigue after use, but also possibly some anxiety, depression and muscle pain.

Stimulants (amphetamines (speed), butyl nitrite (poppers) or cocaine)

The effects can result in:
• increased pulse rate;
• increased blood pressure;
• agitation;
• talkativeness or lack of coherent speech;
• dilated students;
• loss of appetite;
• damage to nasal passages;
• increased tendency to go to the toilet;
• mouth ulcers; and
• fatigue after use.

Hallucinogens (LSD, magic mushrooms)

Effects can vary depending on nature of the experience. These include:
• relaxed behaviour;
• agitated behaviour;
• dilation of students; and
• unco-ordinated movements.

Heroin

Heroin acts as a depressant. The effects of taking heroin include:
• decrease in breathing and heart rate;
• suppression of cough reflex;
• increase in size of certain blood vessels;
• itchy skin;
• runny nose;
• decreasing body temperature; and
• sweating.

Legal Highs

'Legal Highs' are substances which have been designed to mimic or copy the effects of illegal drugs such as cocaine, ecstasy, cannabis, LSD and benzodiazepines (Benzos)

The effects of taking Legal Highs include:
• reduced inhibitions;

• excited or paranoid states;
• confusion leading to aggression;
• intense comedowns which impact on mental health;
• sudden increases in body temperature and heart rate;
• drowsiness;
• coma seizures and;
• death

BEHAVIOURAL SIGNS

Drug use can often cause behavioural changes. These changes can be difficult to recognise. Some prior knowledge of the person may be required to make an accurate evaluation of behaviour. The changes can be obvious or very subtle and may be due to some other reason, unconnected with drug use.

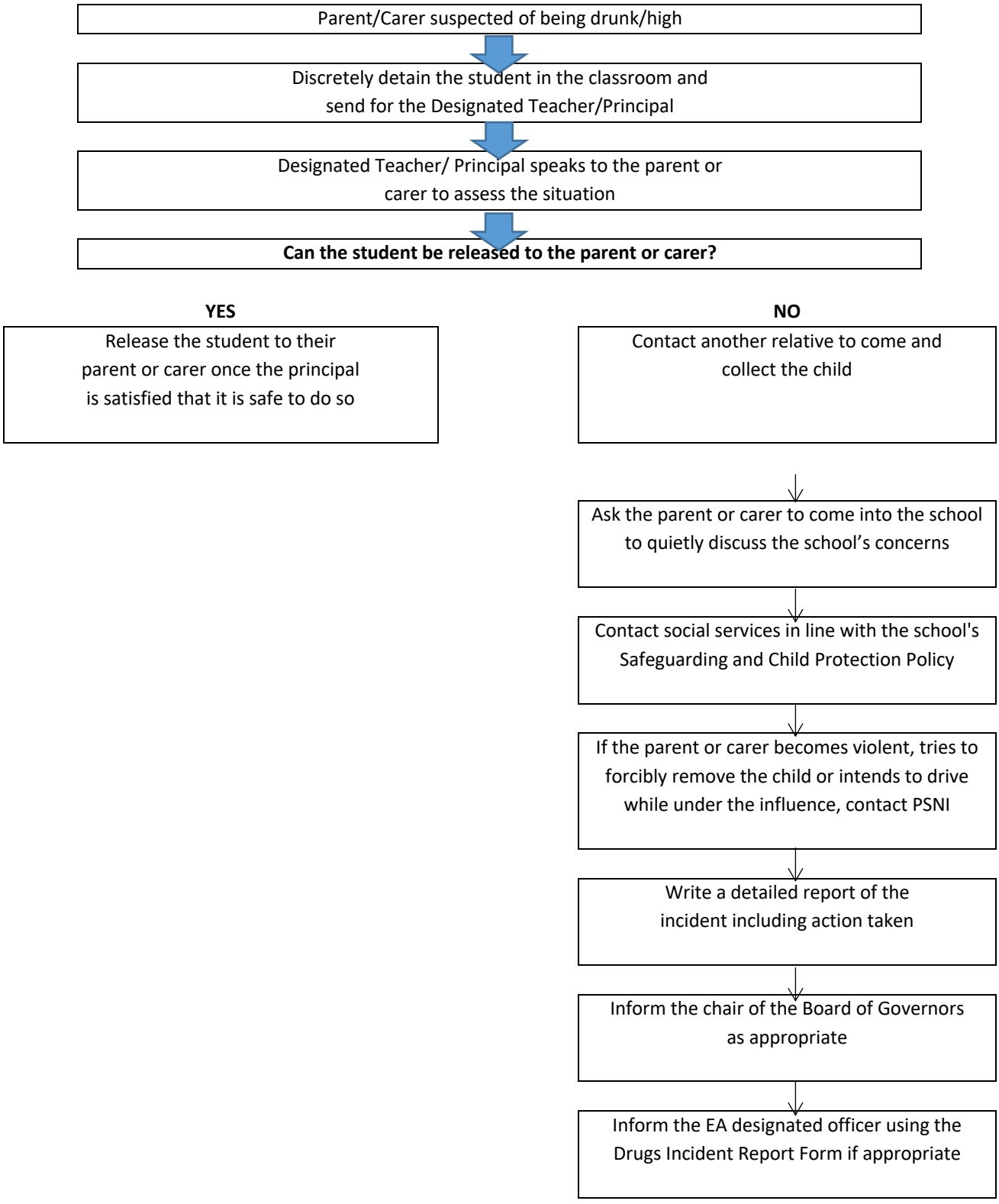
Signs can include:
• efforts to hide drug use through lying, evasiveness and secretive behaviour;
• unsatisfactory reasons for unexpected absences or broken promises;
• changes in friendships;
• changes in priorities, including less concern with school work, less care of personal appearance, non-attendance at extra-curricular activities;
• efforts to get money for drug use, ranging from saving dinner or allowance money, borrowing from friends or relatives or selling own possessions to stealing from friends or home or involvement in petty crime; and
• secretive telephone calls.

Other possible signs include:
• being very knowledgeable about drugs and the local drug scene;
• a defensive attitude towards drugs and drug taking;
• unusual outbreaks of temper;
• absence from or poor performance at school or work experience on days following nights out in nightclubs or bars; and
• a pattern of absences on a certain day.

These signs may often only become apparent in students who are using drugs on a regular basis. Such signs can be difficult to see in the experimental or casual drug user.

APPENDIX 3

PARENT OR CARER ARRIVES AT SCHOOL TO COLLECT A CHILD AND APPEARS TO BE UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF ALCOHOL OR ANOTHER SUBSTANCE



APPENDIX 4

PROCEDURES FOR HANDLING SUBSTANCES

PROCEDURES FOR HANDLING ALCOHOL MISUSE

With the exception of a few specified social events held for adults outside school hours, the school premises are an alcohol free zone. The school does not allow any alcohol to be brought onto or consumed in school premises. This applies to visitors, staff and students.
Adults breaking this rule will be referred to the Principal directly. Students will be dealt with under the school's Positive Behaviour policy.

PROCEDURES FOR HANDLING TOBACCO MISUSE

The school is a restricted environment with no one being permitted to smoke on the school premises. Adults breaking this rule will be advised by other members of staff and if necessary reported to the Principal. Students breaking this rule will be dealt with under the school's Positive Behaviour policy.

STORAGE AND ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICINES

There may be occasions where staff may be asked to administer medication, but they cannot be directed to do so. The administration of medication to students remains the responsibility of the parent or those with parental responsibility.

Medication should only be taken to school when absolutely essential and with the agreement of the Principal. Parents/guardians should be encouraged to request, where possible, that medication be prescribed in dose frequencies which enable it to be taken outside school hours e.g. medicines that need to be taken three times a day should be taken in the morning, after school hours and at bedtime.

The school nurse and all staff should be alerted to the particular risks for young persons in taking Aspirin and Ibuprofen and should not routinely administer these unless under clear medical guidance.

Prescribed medication will not be accepted in school without complete written and signed instructions from the parent/guardian.
The nurse **will not** give a non-prescribed medicine to a student unless there is specific prior written permission from the parents/guardians.
Only reasonable quantities of medication should be supplied to the school (for example, a maximum of four weeks supply at any one time)
Each item of medication must be delivered to the school nurse, in normal circumstances by either the student or parent/guardian, **in a secure and labelled container as originally dispensed.** Each item of medication must be clearly labelled with the following information:

- Student name.
- Name of medication.
- Dosage.
- Frequency of administration.
- Date of dispensing.
- Storage requirements (if important)
- Expiry date.

The school will not accept items of medication in unlabelled containers.

Medication will be kept secure at the Medical Room, out of reach of students. Unless otherwise indicated all medication to be administered in school will be kept in a locked medicine cabinet.

The school will keep records indicating the time the medication was administered, by whom and dosage. These records will be retained under data protection guidelines for the duration of the student's time at Lagan College. This information will be available for parents.

It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to notify the school in writing if the student's need for medication has ceased.

It is the parents'/guardians' responsibility to renew the medication when supplies are running low and to ensure that the medication supplied is within its expiry date.

The school will not make changes to dosages on parental instructions.

School medical staff will not dispose of medicines. Medicines, which are in use and in date, should be collected by the parent at the end of each term. Date expired medicines or those no longer required for treatment will be returned immediately to the parent for transfer to a community pharmacist for safe disposal.

For each student with long term or complex medication needs, the Principal, will ensure that a Medication Plan, Action Plan or Care Plan as deemed appropriate indicating clear protocols is drawn up, in conjunction with the appropriate health professionals as required

THE MANAGEMENT OF SOLVENTS

Students are not permitted to bring solvents or aerosols into school. This includes tippex fluid and pens, tippex thinners, glue, permanent marker pens and spray deodorants. Students are permitted to bring felt tip pens to school.

All members of staff are responsible for the safe storage and usage of solvents in their classroom. They should be locked away when not in use. This includes glues and paints. The cleaners and caretakers should also ensure that their stores are locked when not in use and that solvents are held in a secure place.

APPENDIX 5

ALCOHOL AND DRUG SERVICES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Organisation	Telephone	Website
Belfast Office	028 9056 4000	https://www.eani.org.uk/
Dundonald Office	028 9056 6200	https://www.eani.org.uk/
Department of Education The Department of Education has produced information and sources of help on a range of topics, including smoking and drugs, as part of the iMatter programme.		www.deni.gov.uk
Independent Counselling Service for Schools The Department of Education funds the Independent Counselling Service for Schools (ICSS). It is available to all post-primary aged students, including those in special schools, during school hours and on school premises. Contact is through the school.	Tel: 028 9127 9729 for further information from the ICSS Regional Co-ordinator	
Health and Safety The Health and Safety Executive Northern Ireland (HSENI)	Tel: 028 9024 3249	www.hseni.gov.uk
Local Drug and Alcohol Co-ordination Teams (DACTS) 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 Community Involvement Crimestoppers	Tel: 028 9065 0222 Tel: 028 9070 0964 Tel: 080 0555 111	
Organisation	**Telephone**	**Website**
Health and Social Care Organisations Family Support NI Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services, Belfast		www.publichealth.hscni.net www.familysupportni.gov.uk www.belfasttrust.hscni.net

Local Organisations A list of local organisations that provide information and advice and/or resources about drugs.		
Ascert Alcohol Support Service provide one-to-one help for adult family members affected by someone else's alcohol misuse or addiction.	028 92 604422	
www.thesite.org/ drinkanddrugs	www.nhs.uk/Livewell/Pages/ Topics.aspx	www.mindingyourhead.info www.talktofrank.com
Support for young people affected by parental alcohol misuse: Steps to Cope offers support for young people aged 11–18 years in Northern Ireland, who are living with parental alcohol misuse.	0800 254 5123	www.stepstocope.co.uk
The Alcohol and You Partnership has useful information for parents and family members as well as a self-help section to help people address their drinking.		www.alcoholandyouni.com

Parents can also consult their GP to find out where their nearest support agency is. If you need more urgent support and advice, contact:

- your GP or the out of hours GP service;
- the emergency department of your local hospital; or
- Lifeline: **0808 808 8000**