



Boroughbridge High School and King James's School Federation

Workplace Substance Misuse Policy

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Policy ratified by Governors	September 2025
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Staff Lead	HR Advisor

Significant Revisions since last review:

No revisions since last review.

Policy review as part of full review of HR policies under the Federation

Workplace Substance Misuse Policy

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This Policy has been produced for Schools by North Yorkshire HR and should be read in conjunction with the 'Workplace Substance Misuse Policy Guidance'. Managers are encouraged to refer to the Guidance document to ensure employees are appropriately supported and best practice is followed.

This policy and procedure has been produced both for managers and employees.

Advice is available for school managers from North Yorkshire HR regarding the application of the Workplace Substance Misuse Policy and Guidance via NYHR@northyorks.gov.uk, or by telephone 01609 798343.

Access: If you require this information in an alternative format, please contact North Yorkshire HR.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Governing Body of Boroughbridge High School and King James's School Federation has adopted this policy in relation to employees who misuse substances and where this has an impact on their performance at work. There are two strands to the policy; supporting the employee's well-being and addressing performance issues which arise as a result of substance misuse.
- 1.2 Boroughbridge High School and King James's School strive to provide a safe, healthy and productive environment for all staff, pupils, parents/carers and visitors. In accordance with the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 the school has a responsibility to protect and maintain the health, safety and well-being of employees and others in the workplace by reducing the risk of drug and alcohol related harm.
- 1.3 Boroughbridge High School and King James's School will, wherever possible, support employees who misuse substances by assisting them to identify their substance misuse issue and seek help. This may include, where appropriate, referral to the school's Occupational Health provider or signposting to appropriate services.
- 1.4 If the Head Teacher or any other senior leader or line manager feel that an employee's work is adversely affected by substance misuse, then they should take action in line with this policy and other relevant HR policies and procedures adopted by the school, taking advice as appropriate from their HR and Occupational Health providers. Leaders and managers also play an important role in supporting employees within their teams and signposting them to relevant services. All staff have a responsibility for raising their concerns if they believe that another employee is under the influence of a substance whilst at work.
- 1.5 Being incapable of work, or of working safely due to the influence of alcohol or drugs, is classed as gross misconduct under Boroughbridge High School and King James's School Federation's Disciplinary Policy and, if proven, may result in summary dismissal.

2. Definitions

- 2.1 For the purposes of this policy, **substance misuse** is defined as:

"The abuse of alcohol or other drugs where it has a detrimental effect on work performance either intermittent or continuous, which interferes with an individual's health, work capabilities or conduct, or which affects their work performance and/or safety of others."

- 2.2 **Drugs** are defined as:

"Any substances which an individual takes which are not needed for therapeutic purposes, solely to alter one's mood, affect or state of consciousness or to affect a body function unnecessarily."

- 2.3 This policy covers the consumption of all drugs no matter how they are taken including, but not limited to, ingestion, inhalation and injection.

3. Scope

- 3.1 If Boroughbridge High School or King James's School knowingly allows an employee under the influence of any substance to continue working and his or her behaviour places the employee or others at risk, the school could be prosecuted. Employees also have a responsibility to take reasonable care of themselves and others who could be affected by what they do at work.
- 3.2 This policy applies to all employees of Boroughbridge High School and King James's School and the Federation.

4. Aims and Objectives

- 4.1 The aims and objectives of the Workplace Substance Misuse Policy and associated guidance include:
- To support the wellbeing of employees
 - To maintain the health, safety and well-being of employees, pupils and others who work with or for the school including visitors
 - To reinforce individual responsibility in relation to substance misuse
 - To facilitate access to substance misuse support
 - To ensure service needs are met
 - To raise awareness of the risks and potential harms associated with substance misuse
 - To maintain the delivery of high quality education services
 - To protect the image and reputation of the school
 - To ensure that Boroughbridge High School and King James's School Federation complies with relevant legislation
 - To minimise the risks associated with substance misuse
 - To set clear rules regarding substance misuse in the workplace so that employees are aware of the likely consequences for their employment
 - To create a climate that encourages employees to come forward and seek help voluntarily at an early stage
 - To provide a framework for Head Teachers, senior leaders and line managers to address substance misuse amongst employees that ensures appropriate, fair and consistent conduct

5. Implementation of Policy

- 5.1 Senior leaders or line manager are required to take action under this policy if a substance misuse issue has an impact on an employee's work performance. This may be as a result of an ongoing substance misuse problem or through abuse of a substance on a one-off occasion
- 5.2 The following are examples of how substance misuse can impact on the workplace:
- Lateness and absenteeism
 - Loss of productivity and poor performance

- Health and safety concerns
 - Bad behaviour or poor discipline
 - Poor personal presentation at work including smelling of drugs or alcohol
 - Adverse effects on team morale
 - Adverse effects on pupils
 - Adverse effects on Boroughbridge High School or King James's School's image
- 5.3 Employees are required to ensure that they are fit to attend work and are not under the influence of any substances or allow these to impact on their work performance. This includes any periods outside the normal working day where the employee is on an educational visit with pupils or on standby/on-call. Employees who may have a substance misuse issue are encouraged to speak to their Head Teacher or line manager and access available services to receive support, advice and treatment. Employees should also report any concerns they may have regarding any colleagues who they believe is under the influence of any substances whilst in the workplace.
- 5.4 The following are considered to be unacceptable behaviour and are prohibited under this policy:
- Consuming alcohol or intoxicating drugs whilst at work, including lunch and break times or whilst on educational visits including residential trips
 - Arriving at work under the influence of alcohol or intoxicating drugs
 - Driving at work whilst under the influence of alcohol or intoxicating drugs
 - Possession of drugs at work or dealing in drugs either in or outside the workplace
- 5.5 Where such behaviour arises it may be treated as a conduct issue which will be dealt with under the Disciplinary Policy. This list is not exhaustive but is indicative of the behaviour which would be considered unacceptable. Where the school becomes aware of behaviour which potentially constitutes a criminal offence it will be reported immediately to the Police e.g. driving under the influence, dealing in drugs, etc.

6. Relevant Legislation

- 6.1 This policy complies with the following legislation:
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
 - The Road Traffic Act 1988
 - Misuse of Drugs Act 1971
 - The Equality Act 2010 (Disability) Regulations 2010
- 6.2 In application of this policy it is expected that senior leaders and line managers will follow the principles of the relevant legislation and further information is provided in the Workplace Substance Misuse Guidance.

7. Links with other policies

- 7.1 The following school policies are relevant to the application of this policy:
- Health and Safety Policy

- Attendance Management Policy
- Disciplinary Policy

8. Evaluation and review

- 8.1 This policy will be reviewed every 3 years or in line with changes in relevant legislation.