

Alcohol Abuse Policy - Schools Edition

1. Introduction

The Consortium Trust (The Trust) is concerned to provide a safe and healthy working environment. It recognises that this can be put at risk by employees who are problem drinkers. This policy which applies to all employees therefore aims to:

- (a) promote the health and wellbeing of employees and to minimise problems at work arising from alcohol abuse;
- (b) make known to employees the harmful effects of the excessive consumption of alcohol;
- (c) encourage safe and sensible drinking habits;
- (d) identify employees with possible problems arising from alcohol consumption at an early stage, offer guidance and actively encourage them to seek appropriate help;
- (e) offer employees known to have alcohol related problems affecting their work referral to an appropriate agency for assistance;
- (f) provide necessary training and information for staff having roles to perform under the policy.

The Trustees support this policy and commends the adoption of its principles and practice by schools.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

- 2.1 The Chief Executive Officer and/or Academy Head have overall responsibility for the implementation of the Trust's policy and for the provision of personnel services in relation thereto (including training).
- 2.2 Day to day responsibility will rest with the Academy Head for the employees of an Academy School and with the CEO in respect to central Trust employees.
- 2.3 The Chief Executive Officer and/or Academy Head or their senior staff will have the main responsibility for identifying employees who may be in need of help because of the effect of alcohol on their work performance.
- 2.4 Individual employees have a responsibility under the Health and Safety at Work Act to seek to ensure the success of the policy and are encouraged to do so.

3. Definition of a Problem Drinker

- 3.1 A person whose drinking repeatedly interferes with his/her health or personal relations and whose work is thereby reduced in efficiency and dependability. The Trust accepts that employees in this situation should be regarded as having a health problem and requires treatment and help.

4. Identifying the Problem

4.1 The workplace provides an obvious opportunity to see the actual symptoms in the person who is at risk from excessive drinking; not just the physical signs (bleary eyes, shaking hands, etc), but the other latent signs of drink-related problems e.g. lateness, absenteeism, inefficiency, poor working relationships and reduced performance level.

5. Problems Related to Alcohol Abuse

The following have been identified as inherent problem when dealing with alcohol abuse:

- > difficulty of early detection;
- > stigma associated with alcohol abuse;
- > powerful nature of the dependence;
- > deep seated feelings of guilt, shame and hopelessness of the individual;
- > lack of procedures for referral to treatment and help.

5.1 The above factors often combine to encourage the individual to deny the existence of a problem to resist treatment.

5.2 However, places of employment provide a good setting for overcoming the obstacles listed above, because it has been shown that, as with other dependency problems, (e.g. drugs, tobacco, etc), problem drinkers develop a deteriorating pattern of work performance which eventually becomes apparent to an alert colleague.

6. Health Education

6.1 In order that the Trust and/or Locality Committees can adopt a positive stance in relation to the problems of alcohol abuse and on the basis that 'prevention is better than cure', an educational programme will be devised with the overall objective of alerting employees to the risk associated with excessive drinking and promoting a progressive change of attitude towards excessive alcohol consumption. Employees should be made aware of the contents of the policy by appropriate publicity at workplaces.

7. Problem Drinker Recovery Procedure

7.1 The primary objective of the Problem Drinker Recovery Procedure is to provide effective help and treatment to those employees suffering from a drinking problem in order to seek to help them overcome their dependence. The procedure is supportive in nature and is intended to remedy difficulties at work at the earliest possible time.

7.2 Employees who suspect or know that they have a drinking problem are encouraged to seek help and treatment voluntarily. Without prior commitment, the Trust and/or Locality Committee may consider meeting part or all of the costs of counselling and other services employed. Any time off work for help and treatment under the policy will be regarded as sick leave in accordance with the appropriate Conditions of Service.

- 7.3 The Academy Trust has established links with the Suffolk Community Alcohol Services for the purposes of this policy and details of this service can be obtained from the HoS People.
- 7.4 Employees who come to notice as suffering from a drinking problem and who decline to seek treatment or to accept referral for diagnosis and/or treatment or who discontinue a course of treatment before its satisfactory completion - and who are observed under monitoring to continue to produce an unsatisfactory work performance, may become subject to proceedings under the school's normal disciplinary procedures.
- 7.5 Following a return to work, after or during treatment, performance would need to be monitored and should work performance again deteriorate as a result of drinking problems each case will be considered on its merits and will either be dealt with by the offer of further treatment or, where there is no reasonable alternative, by the introduction of disciplinary action.
- 7.6 The procedure set out above does not apply to employees who, following excessive drinking, behave in an unacceptable manner contrary to the standards of safety and conduct required by the Trust and/or Locality Committee. Such cases will fall to be dealt with in accordance with the normal disciplinary code.
- 7.7 The confidential nature of any employees' records will be respected by those involved in implementing the Policy.
- 7.8 The Problem Drinker Recovery procedure is set out diagrammatically on the separate Policy Appendix.

8. Training

- 8.1 The Chief Executive Officer and/or Academy Head will receive appropriate training and information in order to enable them to perform their role under the Policy.



Document Control

Changes History

Version	Date	Amended By	Details of Change
V2	25/09/2020	EFS	Scheduled review amended references to LGB and updated relevant departments terminology.

Approval

Name	Job Title	Signed	Date
Andrew Aalders-Dunthorne	Principal/CEO	Electronic signature	06/01/2017
Dawn Carman-Jones	On behalf of the Trust Board	Electronic signature	09/01/2017
Dawn Carman-Jones	On behalf of the Trust Board	Electronic signature	26.11.2020

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