

## ESF Substance Misuse Policy

**Status: Revised Policy**

**Date for Next Review: June 2027**



ESF now provides the opportunity to provide input on ESF policies. Your suggestions can help us improve our workplace; therefore, your feedback is appreciated. To provide input, please scan the QR code or click the link below:

[https://bit.ly/esf\\_policy](https://bit.ly/esf_policy)

Thank you in advance for your help!

Originator:  Director - Strategic Performance and Quality Assurance  Date: 26th January 2021	Policy Owner:  Director - Education	Reviewed by:  Mental Health & Wellbeing Adviser  Date: June 2025	Approved by :  SMT  Date: 24 June 2025
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<b>Title</b>	ESF Substance Misuse Policy
<b>Policy Owner</b>	Director of Education
<b>Coordinator</b>	Mental Health and Wellbeing Adviser
<b>Status</b>	Approved
<b>Date</b>	July 2025
<b>Next Action</b>	Next Review in June 2027

<b>1. Policy document review</b>	<b>4</b>
1.1 Review Status	4
<b>2. ESF vision</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>3. Purpose</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>4. Scope</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>5. Definitions</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>6. Policy principles</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>7. Prohibited substances and paraphernalia</b>	<b>5</b>
7.1 Substance misuse	6
7.2 Managing medication	6
<b>8. Prevention and education</b>	<b>6</b>
8.1 Substance misuse education	6
8.2 School-based support services	7
8.3 Building community support	7
<b>9. Responding to substance misuse concerns</b>	<b>7</b>
9.1 Dealing with suspicions or allegations	8
9.2 Students who appear to be under the influence of a substance	8
9.3 Finding unattended substances or paraphernalia	8
<b>10. Investigation</b>	<b>8</b>
10.1 Review of evidence available	8
10.2 Student Interview	9
10.3 Consultation with professionals and leadership	9
10.3.1 Overseas requirements	9
10.4 Search of a student's belongings	9
10.5 Drug testing	10
10.6 Police involvement	10
<b>11. Outcomes of an investigation</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>12. Intervention</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>13. Suspension or exclusion</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>14. Illegal substance misuse by students offsite</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>15. Record keeping - data collection and analysis</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>16. Compliance</b>	<b>12</b>
16.1 Staff compliance	12
16.2 Compliance of students and their families	12
<b>17. Organisational support</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>18. Implementation</b>	<b>12</b>
18.1 ESF Centre	12
18.1.1 Director of Education	12

18.1.2 ESF Mental Health and Wellbeing Adviser	13
18.2 Principals	13
<b>Appendix A: Glossary of key terms</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Appendix B: Drug education and services</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Appendix C: Possible indicators of substance misuse</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Appendix D: Finding illegal drugs unattended on school premises</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Appendix E: Review of evidence available</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Appendix F: Conducting a student interview for suspected substance misuse</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Appendix G: Overseas trip: Student found in possession of suspected illegal substances/harmful substances and/or drug paraphernalia</b>	<b>subst 24</b>
<b>Appendix H: Procedure for searching a student’s belongings</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Appendix I: Consent to participate in a drug test with Central Health (Duddell Street)</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>Appendix J: A Guide to your experience when visiting Central Health, Duddell Street, Central.</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>Appendix K: Targeted interventions schools can take when addressing substance misuse</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>Appendix L: Intensive interventions schools can take when addressing substance misuse</b>	<b>36</b>

## 1. Policy Document Review

This policy document is subject to a regular review by The English Schools Foundation (ESF) to ensure its continuing suitability, adequacy and effectiveness. Areas subject to review include, but are not limited to, follow-up action from previous reviews, policy conformity, review of complaints, status of corrective and preventive measures, and improvements. ESF reserves the right to amend this policy following such review.

### 1.1 Review Status

Review No.	Summary of revision following review	Reviewed		Approved	
		By	Date	By	
1.	Individual names updated to job titles. Appendices and individual supporting documents consolidated to create Substance Misuse Policy Supporting Documents.			September 2021	
2.	No substantive changes made. Reordering of sections.	Director Of Education	June 2023	ESF SMT Sept 2023	
3.	Inclusion of 'harmful substances' Clarified medication management Updated key contacts and clinic	Director of Education	June 2025	ESF SMT June 2025	

## 2. ESF vision

ESF's vision is for every student to be the best that they can be.

## 3. Purpose

This policy is to prevent and respond to substance misuse in ESF schools. This is essential for creating environments where students are safe, happy and learning. Implementing prevention strategies reduces the risk of substance misuse among all students. Targeted interventions help identify and provide support to students who may be at risk or already engaging in substance misuse. Intensive interventions can provide additional support to students who are experiencing significant challenges related to substance misuse. Prevention and intervention can help prevent long-term negative consequences of substance misuse.

#### 4. Scope

This policy establishes expectations and responsibilities for all ESF staff, students, parents, volunteers, and outside service providers in addressing substance misuse. The policy applies to situations that occur on school premises, during school activities, or in any situation where a student's actions may impact the management of ESF schools.

#### 5. Definitions

Certain terms have specific meanings under this policy, and, as such, **Appendix A** should be read to ensure full understanding.

#### 6. Policy principles

Under this Substance Misuse policy, ESF commits to:

- Promoting a safe and healthy environment for all that is free from substance misuse
- Providing education, information, and support to guide students in making well-informed, positive choices
- Prohibiting the inappropriate use of substances
- Providing appropriate support and interventions to students who may be affected by substance misuse
- Ensuring that ESF staff and volunteers are aware of this policy and comply with its requirements
- Upholding the safeguarding of and the duty of care to students

#### 7. Prohibited substances and paraphernalia

Students are prohibited from having the following on site:

- Alcohol
- Tobacco and related products, including e-cigarettes/vapourisers
- Illegal substances, as defined in this policy
- Medicines without permission from the SLT/School Nurse
- Drug paraphernalia
- Substances used for harm

ESF staff, volunteers, and other visitors who legally possess and use items such as e-cigarettes, vaporisers, and other tobacco-related products are responsible for ensuring that such items are kept out of reach and out of sight of students at all times. Such products must not occur on or around school premises or at school-related activities.

### 7.1 Substance misuse

ESF recognises the growing risk posed by the misuse of substances not traditionally considered drugs (harmful substances), but which are deliberately inhaled or ingested to produce a psychoactive effect. Substances used in this way include, but are not limited to:

- Household or commercial products (e.g. hairspray, deodorant, air freshener, nail polish remover, paint thinners)
- Keyboard cleaners and compressed air dusters
- Glues and solvents (eg contact adhesive, correction fluid)
- Nitrous oxide ( eg canisters)
- Butane or lighter gas

Misuse of such items is strictly prohibited on all ESF premises and during ESF-related activities. This applies to possessions with intent to misuse, not only to confirmed active use cases.

### 7.2 Managing medication

Schools may permit the parents of students to present medication to the School Health Nurse for safekeeping, provided it comes with an appropriate prescription. Permission for students to carry their medication may only be given by an SLT member in consultation with the School Nurse and where deemed age and developmentally appropriate. Where possible, such permission will be limited to allowing the student to carry only one day's worth of their medication at a time.

Schools will record this permission and the prescription via the School Nurse on the Learning Management System. Students will be advised that their medication may not be given to any other person and must only be taken in line with the prescribed dosage.

## 8. Prevention and education

ESF schools prioritise the development of a positive school culture that supports healthy behaviours and decision-making skills among students. This involves promoting positive relationships between students and staff, emphasising community and belonging, and offering a range of support to students and their families.

### 8.1 Substance misuse education

Schools will provide drug education to encourage healthy lifestyles and informed decision-making. Schools will deliver programmes designed to increase students' comprehension of the personal, social and legal impacts of drug and substance misuse.

Education should explicitly address the practices of chroming, huffing, and dusting, helping students recognise that these behaviours—though involving legal and readily available products—carry serious health risks, including neurological damage, loss of consciousness, and sudden death. It is essential to challenge any perception that inhalant misuse is low-risk

or harmless.

The participation and backing of parents and caregivers are essential to ensuring the success of drug education beyond the school environment **(Appendix B)**.

## 8.2 School-based support services

ESF and schools will ensure that school-based support services monitor the development and provision of drug education and oversee and promote student welfare. This could include:

- Substance misuse prevention groups: These programmes aim to educate students about the risks associated with both traditional and emerging forms of substance misuse and help them develop positive coping strategies to deal with stress and other challenges.
- Counselling services: Counselling services can help students address underlying emotional and mental health issues that may contribute to substance misuse or the experimentation with inhalants or household substances. This might include individual or group therapy and referrals to outside resources as needed.
- Parent information sessions/workshops: Providing relevant and meaningful drug prevention education sessions on traditional and emerging forms of substance abuse helps parents to support their children better, to make healthy and positive choices.

## 8.3 Building community support

Prevention of substance misuse requires a community approach. ESF and its schools will build and maintain relationships with crucial stakeholders, including:

- Parents
- Healthcare professionals and public health organisations with expertise in adolescent substance misuse
- The Hong Kong Education Bureau
- The Hong Kong Police Force
- Other governmental and non-governmental organisations, as appropriate

## 9. Responding to substance misuse concerns

Concerns or suspicions of substance misuse can surface through various avenues. Direct allegations from peers or staff, observable signs of a student appearing under the influence of a substance, or the discovery of prohibited or dangerous substances or related paraphernalia in a student's possession or on school grounds require immediate SLT involvement.

### 9.1 Dealing with suspicions or allegations

Suspicions or allegations of a student breach of the substance misuse policy, whether from an identified or anonymous source, will be treated with the utmost confidentiality. Information relating to the suspicion or allegation may be disclosed only to those who need to know and to conduct any investigation.

### 9.2 Students who appear to be under the influence of a substance

If a student appears to be under the influence of a substance while on site and/or in the course of a school activity, the school must take all reasonable steps to ensure the student receives any medical treatment that is required to protect their health and safety, under the supervision of their parents where possible or otherwise through contact with the emergency services where needed (**Appendix C**).

### 9.3 Finding unattended substances or paraphernalia

Staff will take reasonable steps to secure the safety of all students anytime an unattended substance or paraphernalia is discovered. This includes on-site and during-school activities. Staff will record the time, date and location of the discovery.

In all circumstances where there is a suspicion of the substance being illegal, staff will, as soon as possible, contact SLT to determine the next steps. SLT must take all reasonably practicable steps to ensure that any suspected illegal substances are seized by the police as soon as possible or dealt with in accordance with police instructions (**Appendix D**).

## 10. Investigation

Following suspicions or allegations of substance misuse, an investigation may be necessary to determine whether intervention is required and what action might be appropriate. The investigation process should be conducted fairly and objectively, focusing on protecting the safety and wellbeing of all students and staff involved. Confidentiality and privacy should be maintained throughout the process to the greatest extent possible while ensuring that all relevant parties are informed and involved as necessary. The response must be timely to address any risks or concerns promptly and effectively. This may include a review of the evidence available, a student interview, further consultation, a search of the student's belongings and an off-site drug test.

### 10.1 Review of evidence available

Carefully consider the initial evidence or indications of substance misuse, whether it is unusual behaviour, physical signs, reports from other students or staff, or discovery of substance-related items in the student's possession (**Appendix E**).

## 10.2 Student Interview

Depending on the level to which the student is under the influence of substance misuse, an interview can be conducted to gather information and understand the situation better. The conversation must be conducted in a supportive and non-judgmental manner in the presence of a witness and in a way that upholds the student's rights and privacy (**Appendix F**).

## 10.3 Consultation with professionals and leadership

Consultation with school professionals, such as health nurses, child protection officers, and counsellors, is advisable in assessing initial evidence of substance misuse. Health nurses can offer medical insight into symptoms and address immediate health risks. Child protection officers guide the process to maintain legality, ethicality, and student rights, involving parents when needed. Counsellors can provide a psychological perspective, identify emotional distress signs, and aid in sensitive student conversations. This multidisciplinary approach contributes to a comprehensive, respectful, and effective investigation.

### 10.3.1 Overseas requirements

For any incident overseas ESF staff should take action to ensure that the safety of students is established. Thereafter, staff are required to immediately consult with the Principal (**Appendix G**).

## 10.4 Search of a student's belongings

The safety and wellbeing of all members of our school community is of the highest priority. When there is reasonable suspicion that a student may possess an item or items that threaten the safety of students or staff or breach the school's expectations for student behaviour, school staff may search the student's belongings. Such situations may include suspected theft, possession or supply of prohibited or harmful substances, or possession of offensive weapons or other harmful items.

Throughout any search, the school will maintain the dignity of the student. The extent and manner of the search will be proportional to the circumstances, taking into account the student's age and the seriousness of the matter. Searches will be conducted fairly and reasonably to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all school community members. Any search will be conducted in the presence of a witness, and any items discovered during the search will be handled appropriately following the guidelines (**Appendix H**).

The school will search only when there is reasonable suspicion and will take steps to respect the student's privacy and confidentiality as far as possible. In addition, the school will address any risks or concerns arising from the search with the student's wellbeing and best interests in mind.

### 10.5 Drug testing

Off-site drug testing may be requested by the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) if there is suspicion or confirmation that a student has been misusing illegal substances or as part of a behavioural agreement following a previous substance misuse incident. Consent to participate in a drug test is required from the parents and or caregivers (**Appendix I**). The school will also support any student or parent requesting advice and support in arranging a drug test. A guide will be provided to the student and their family on what to expect when at the clinic (**Appendix J**).

Drug testing is viewed as a tool to support the partnership between schools and parents in achieving positive student outcomes. The outcome of a drug test helps determine the ongoing support needed for the student, determine whether further testing will be required, and be one factor that contributes to the decision on a student's continued place in the school.

### 10.6 Police involvement

In cases where a student is found to be in possession of suspected illegal substances as defined in this policy, the school will contact the police.

## 11. Outcomes of an investigation

The outcomes of an investigation will determine the necessary level of intervention required to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the student and the school community.

## 12. Intervention

Effective interventions provide support to students who may be at risk or already engaging in substance misuse and prevent long-term negative consequences of substance misuse. Immediate action is required when substance misuse is confirmed.

Principals and SLTs are responsible for determining the appropriate interventions necessary after considering factors such as the severity of the behaviour, individual needs, age and developmental stage, and the wellbeing of the whole school community (**Appendix J & K**). Intervention will often involve collaboration with the school's counsellor or other mental health professionals to provide coordinated support, including ongoing counselling where appropriate, for the student and family.

The school should determine necessary interventions and next steps. The school may use the findings of a police inquiry, if it chooses to do so, to help inform its decisions.

Nonetheless, the school is responsible for making its own determinations and taking appropriate actions to address any violations of policy related to substance misuse.

### 13. Disciplinary Consequences

Consequences that may occur from breach of this policy are at the discretion of the principal. The Suspension and Exclusion Policy maybe referenced.

### 14. Illegal substance misuse by students offsite

If a staff member observes a student whom they know or reasonably suspect to be possessing, using, or under the influence of illegal substance, alcohol, or harmful substance offsite, the staff member must:

1. Assess the student's immediate safety.
2. Do not intervene directly unless in an emergency.
3. Report to emergency services as necessary.
4. Report promptly and confidentially to the school senior management team.

### 15. Record keeping - data collection and analysis

Schools must record substance misuse incidents through RecordMy, supported by ESF Centre as needed. The recorded data will be used for various purposes, including risk analysis and improving harm mitigation measures related to substance misuse. Data may also be used as possible evidence with respect to a student. All data handling and protection will be performed per the ESF Personal Data Handling & Privacy Policy.

### 16. Compliance

#### 16.1 Staff compliance

All ESF staff will comply with this policy and related documents to manage substance misuse issues. Any non-compliance should be reported to the Director of Education.

#### 16.2 Compliance of students and their families

Attending an ESF school requires students to comply with this policy and its related documents. This includes a requirement to:

- Fully cooperate with any investigation
- Submit to a search of belongings when required.
- Submit to a drug test when required, including bearing the costs of such tests
- Agree and adhere to any behavioural agreements established

## 17. Organisational support

ESF will ensure appropriate organisational support by providing guidance and other communications materials to increase awareness and understanding of this policy, effective professional learning regarding substance misuse matters, and the necessary tools required for schools and staff to record and report on such cases.

ESF Centre will ensure that data on substance misuse and analysis are available for schools and SLT in accordance with the ESF Personal Data Handling & Privacy Policy. The identities of students in the data will be treated as confidential. It will also provide on-call support to offer advice on policy and procedural matters or to provide direct support where necessary.

## 18. Implementation

The implementation of this policy will be supported by key groups and individuals, as well as via the provision of supplementary procedural guidance and education documents.

### 18.1 ESF Centre

ESF Centre is responsible for ensuring adequate organisational support for this policy.

#### 18.1.1 Director of Education

The Director of Education is responsible for this policy document. They will communicate the existence of this policy to relevant parties, schedule an appropriate policy review date, and monitor the ongoing use of this policy. Where any issues with this policy arise, the Director of Education is responsible for addressing those issues either immediately, in the normal review cycle, or by making an interim policy position until a permanent solution is available.

#### 18.1.2 ESF Mental Health and Wellbeing Adviser

The ESF Mental Health and Wellbeing Adviser is the vital link between ESF Centre and policy, and schools and their staff. The ESF Mental Health and Wellbeing Adviser will facilitate and manage the organisational support of ESF Centre to be used by school staff and their communities to ensure understanding and compliance with this policy.

### 18.2 Principals

Principals and senior leaders are responsible for the effective implementation of the policy and the procedures outlined and for ensuring that all staff members are aware of their responsibilities in following its guidelines.

## Appendix A: Glossary of key terms

Alcohol	Any liquid containing any amount of alcohol, but will not include any alcohol used by a school under staff member supervision for educational purposes.
Chroming/huffing/dusting	The deliberate inhalation of chemical vapours from legal household or commercial products to achieve a physical or psychological effect. All forms are extremely dangerous,
Confirmation	Where a situation is proven to be true through evidence and/or a student’s admissions
ESF	To include English Schools Foundation and ESF Educational Services Limited
ESF Mental Health and Wellbeing Adviser	A designated employee of ESF Centre who is responsible for supporting safeguarding across the foundation. If no employee of ESF Centre holds this job title, the CEO will designate another employee to fulfil the responsibilities of this role.
Harmful Substance	A harmful substance is any substance, regardless of its legal status or origin, that can cause adverse physical or psychological effects when misused.
Illegal Substance	Any substance specified in the <a href="#">Dangerous Drugs Ordinance (Cap.134)</a>
Inhalants	Substances that produce chemical vapours, which, when inhaled, can alter the body’s function physically and/or psychologically. These may include aerosol sprays, compressed air, solvents and glues, and nitrous oxide.
Medicine	Any substances or combination of substances considered a “pharmaceutical product” under the <a href="#">Pharmacy and Poisons Ordinance (Cap. 138)</a> , and any Chinese herbal medicines or proprietary Chinese medicines as defined in section 2 of the <a href="#">Chinese Medicine Ordinance (Cap. 549)</a> .
Paraphernalia	Any item used to inhale, ingest, inject drugs or harmful substances, or to conceal substances. Includes, but is not limited to, pipes, vapes, straws, balloons, rags, bags, or household products (e.g. empty aerosol cans, gas canisters) when linked to substance misuse.
Possession	When a student has drugs/substances or paraphernalia on their person, contained in an item belonging to them (e.g. school bag),

	or is in an area/place under their control
Principal	Principal of the relevant ESF School, ESL School, or Kindergarten
Schools	All ESF schools and ESL schools, including kindergartens
School activity	Means <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Any activity organised by ESF/ESL staff or through an ESF/ESL school, including sports competitions, camps and trips abroad;</li> <li>(b) Travel on transport organised by ESF</li> <li>(c) Any occasion when a student is wearing an ESF uniform</li> </ul>
School-based Support	Pastoral guidance staff, school nurse, counsellors, social workers
SLT	School Leadership Team
SMT	Members of the Senior Management Team of ESF, who are also directors of ESL
Staff member	Any employee of ESF and/or ESL
Suspicion	<p>Where a staff member believes a situation to be possible, likely or true, based on the information available.</p> <p>Reasonable suspicion, warranting a search and/or further investigation, may be raised by (but is not limited to) the following situations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Being caught in an act involving drug use</li> <li>● Being seen at, or near, the scene of an incident at the material time, where there is no legitimate explanation for the student's presence at that location</li> <li>● Being absent from class during the time of an incident</li> <li>● Credible and corroborated information received from other students or a teacher</li> </ul>
Tobacco and related products	Any form of smoking, irrespective of the presence of nicotine. This includes e-cigarettes, vaporisers, and other equipment that turns liquid into ingestible smoke or vapour.

## Appendix B: Drug education and services

Provider	Service	Location	Contact
<a href="#">CDAC</a> (The Community Drug Advisory Council)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bilingual</li> <li><a href="#">Professional Training</a> is divided into two levels, 'elementary' and 'advanced'               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Aims to enrich participants' anti-drug knowledge and equip them with the techniques to assess the needs of schools and students in mental health and anti-drug health education</li> <li>➤ Provides training to schools, a minimum of ten teachers</li> </ul> </li> <li><a href="#">Treatment and Rehabilitation in Hong Kong</a></li> <li>Further services for teachers and parents</li> </ul>	Unit 7, G/F, The Center, 99 Queen's Road, Central	Phone: 2521 2880 Email: <a href="mailto:enquiry@cdac.org.hk">enquiry@cdac.org.hk</a>
<a href="#">Education Bureau</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Healthy School Policy (See contact info in <i>Enquiries</i>)</li> <li>Anti-Drug Resources Kit</li> <li><a href="#">Anti-Drug Resource Kit for Schools</a></li> <li>Further support for teachers and parents (in liaison with CDAC)</li> </ul>		<a href="#">Phone numbers</a>
<a href="#">HK Jockey Club Drug Info Centre</a>	Permanent anti-drug educational exhibition Drug education teaching kits	Queensway Government Offices (school visits)	Phone: 2867 2831 Email: <a href="mailto:hkjcdic@sb.gov.hk">hkjcdic@sb.gov.hk</a>
<a href="#">KELY Support Group</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bespoke workshops for students, staff and parents</li> <li>Drug and Alcohol awareness workshops</li> <li>Resources (e.g. KELY Youth Toolkits)</li> </ul>	Borrett Road (Delivered in school)	Phone: 2521 6890 Email: <a href="mailto:contact@kely.org">contact@kely.org</a>
<a href="#">LEAP</a> (Life Education Activity Programme)	<p><u>Primary</u> Focus on understanding the body's operation, the effects of drugs on the body, strengthening social and emotional learning, and developing problem-solving and rejection skills through role-playing to help students build positive and healthy lifestyles.</p> <p><u>Secondary</u> <a href="#">Drug information</a> <a href="#">Drug and Legal Information/</a> Emphasis on both 'knowledge' and 'skills'. In addition to introducing the effects of various drugs, it also focuses on training social</p>	LEAP vans - mobile classrooms  The Static Centre at Lai Yiu Estate, Kwai Chung	Phone: 2530 0018 Email: <a href="mailto:leap@leap.org.hk">leap@leap.org.hk</a>

	communication skills, equipping students to deal with peer pressure, and guiding them to reflect on their attitudes towards life to make safe and responsible decisions.		
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## Appendix C: Possible indicators of substance misuse

*See Appendix A of the ESF Child Protection and Safeguarding policy: Checklist for identifying possible child abuse.*

### **Behaviour Patterns**

- No appetite, sudden physical changes, losing/ gaining weight within a short period of time
- Personal hygiene pattern changed
- Antisocial behaviour

### **Emotional and Psychological State**

- Emotionally unstable, aggressive, agitated, or depressed
- Always putting blame on others
- Marked changes in psychological state (easily nervous, restless)

### **Family systems**

- Abrupt changes in family functioning

### **School**

- Abrupt changes in school functioning, e.g. falling school grade or conduct, missing classes or school days
- Low concentration in class and in study
- Bringing a lot of money to school/workplace
- Asking for money from classmates

### **Leisure and Recreation**

- Abrupt changes in hobbies or interests
- No interests, or inert
- Secretive communication with friends
- Unexplained cash, new items or clothing
- Always asking for money, or even stealing money/items from home/friends
- Going to some high-risk spots, e.g. discos, rave parties, or games centres

### **Presence of signs of drug use**

- Strange equipment: pills, medicine bottle, needle, tin foil, spoons, straw
- Empty aerosol cans, compressed air canisters, plastic bags, rags with a chemical smell
- Wearing sunglasses inappropriately to hide dilated or constricted pupils
- Strong chemical odour on breath, skin or clothing
- Paint of residue around the nose or mouth
- Frequent headaches, nosebleeds, or nausea with no apparent cause

- Wearing long sleeves inappropriately to hide needle marks
- Strange smell from the body, constantly scratching
- Seriously decayed teeth

## Appendix D: Finding illegal drugs unattended on school premises

This process applies to any discovery of illegal drugs or drug paraphernalia on school premises. These must not be moved unless it is absolutely necessary for reasons of safety, or done with police instructions. Schools should ensure that a kit for safely removing drugs/drug paraphernalia is available.

### 1. Priority Action:

1. Call on another staff member for support (but do not leave the area).
2. Secure the area appropriately so that it cannot be accessed.
3. Ensure that a staff member remains at the location to supervise.
4. Inform an SLT member as soon as possible.
5. Document appropriately.
6. SLT to inform the police and request immediate safe collection.
7. SLT to inform the Mental Health and Wellbeing Adviser at ESFC as soon as possible.

### 2. Police Contact

A member of the SLT must make contact with the School's Police Liaison Officer as soon as possible (within minutes, not hours) to request the immediate safe collection of the drugs/drug paraphernalia.

### 3. If the drugs/drug paraphernalia must be moved for safety reasons before the Police can seize them:

The Principal or delegated SLT member will

1. Inform the police (preferably beforehand)
2. Keep a record of the name and rank of the police officer spoken to and the details of the conversation.
3. Ensure the necessary documentation is made.

Three staff members are required in this circumstance

1. Call two staff members for assistance, preferably SLT (but do not leave the area).
2. One staff member should bring a container/kit for safe removal.
3. One staff member should then keep others away from the area temporarily
4. One staff member, witnessed by another staff member, should take the drugs/drug paraphernalia to the Principal's office for safekeeping in a locked safe, drawer or cupboard.
5. First respondent to document action.
6. SLT to make further contact with the Police and confirm what action has been taken and the time for safe collection.
7. Ensure that the Mental Health and Wellbeing Adviser at ESFC is informed as soon as possible.

### 4. If the drugs/drug paraphernalia have been found by a student or group of students:

1. Follow the priority steps as appropriate.

2. Reassure the reporting student and check that they do not need any immediate care/medical attention.
3. Check to see if they have informed any other person about this. Advise against doing so.
4. Ask an appropriate Senior Leader to supervise/support while the student(s) write up an account (one each). They must include time, location, names of all students involved or in the vicinity, their actions, and those of others in the vicinity.
5. Senior Leader to phone parents to explain and reassure them about support for their child, and in the incident, follow up

#### **5. If the drugs/drug paraphernalia are brought to a member of staff by student(s)**

1. Seek further information, including details of other students involved and/or at risk.
2. One staff member, witnessed by another staff member, should take the drugs/drug paraphernalia to the Principal's office for safekeeping in a locked safe, drawer or cupboard.
3. First respondent to document action.
4. SLT to make further contact with the Police and confirm what action has been taken and the time for safe collection.
5. Ensure that the Mental Health and Wellbeing Adviser at ESFC is informed as soon as possible.

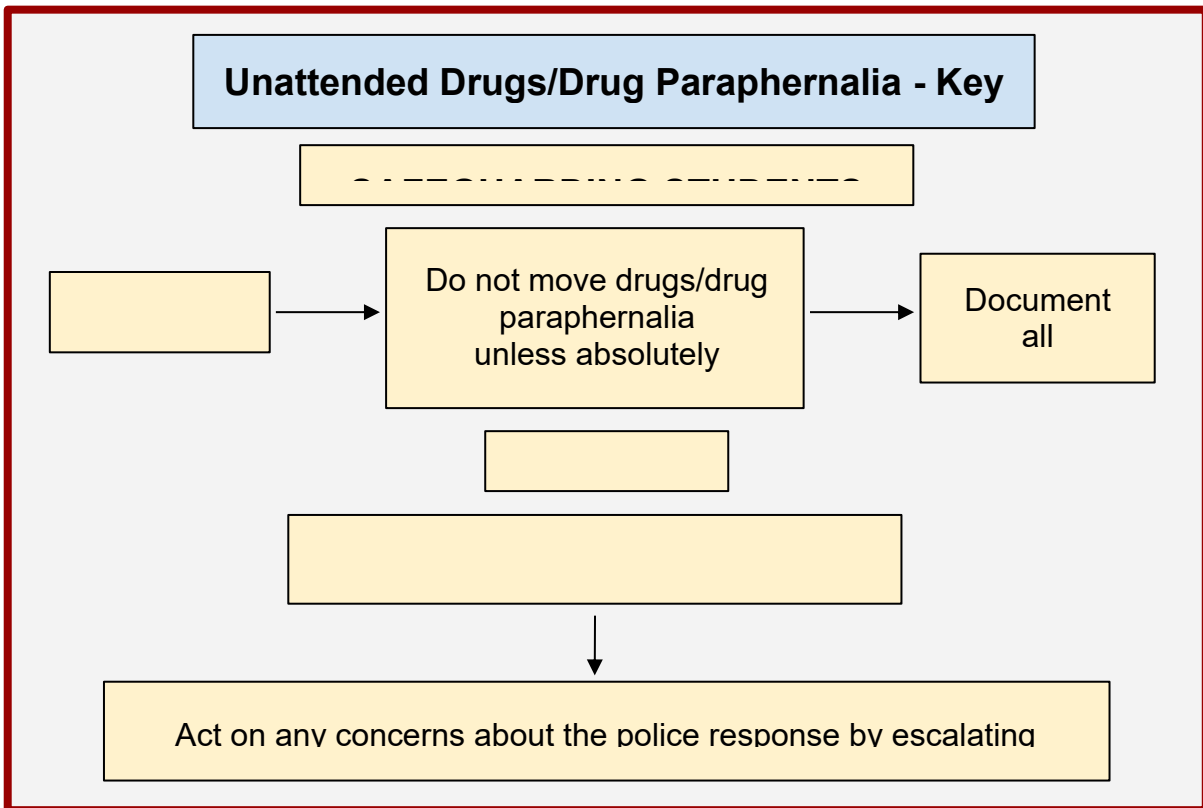
#### **6. Follow-Up**

1. Use the witnesses' notes to follow up with students seen in the vicinity
2. Check on students' absences from class in the period of time leading up to the illegal drugs/drug paraphernalia being found
3. Check CCTV and follow up as appropriate
4. Monitor individual year group behaviours
5. Put in place further communication and education as appropriate

#### **7. Documentation**

All procedures must be clearly documented, witnessed and signed, including

- Names of persons involved
- Actions taken
- Timings
- Photographs (if possible)



## Appendix E: Review of evidence available

Assessing the initial evidence or signs of substance misuse with the student is a critical initial step in an investigation. This applies to both illegal substances and legal substances used to cause harm.

This evidence might emerge in various forms:

1. **Unusual Behaviour:** Pay attention to changes in the student's behaviour. This might include sudden shifts in mood, including disorientation, confusion and euphoria, decreased interest in school activities, absenteeism, decline in academic performance, or increased secrecy or ritualistic behaviour.
2. **Physical Signs:** Be vigilant about physical indications, including bloodshot eyes, frequent nosebleeds, changes in appetite or sleep patterns, unexplained weight loss or gain, deterioration in physical appearance, chemical smells on breath, hands or clothes or unusual smells, paint of residue around nose or mouth, red or watery eyes, unexplained dizziness or unsteady movement, headaches or nosebleeds without medical explanation
3. **Reports from Others:** Consider reports from other students, staff, or parents who may have noticed concerning behaviours or signs. This could include direct observations of substance misuse, finding substance-related items, students bringing unexpected household items to school with no legitimate reason, or indirect indicators such as changes in friendship groups or behaviour.
4. **Discovery of Substance-related Items:** If substances or related paraphernalia are found in a student's possession, their locker or backpack, this could be a strong indication of substance misuse.
5. **Digital Evidence:** Social media or other digital platforms may also provide evidence of substance misuse. Consider posts, messages, and references to current substance misuse trends, including 'challenges' that may have come from friends.

Each of these elements should be considered carefully and respectfully, with a focus on student welfare. It's important to ensure that any action taken is proportionate to the suspicion and respects the student's rights and privacy.

## Appendix F: Conducting a student interview for suspected substance misuse

### Purpose:

To gather accurate information and assess support needs when substance misuse is suspected or confirmed in a manner consistent with ESF regulations on student privacy and rights.

### Personnel:

- Led by a member of SLT or designated staff
- Witness present (preferably same-gender staff if appropriate)
- Counsellor or social worker is consulted where emotional or family support is likely needed.

Ask open, neutral questions to determine the following:

1. **Acknowledgement:** Whether the student acknowledges the behaviour that has led to suspicion.
2. **Specifics:** Determine what the students know about the substance and how they used it (method).
3. **Understanding:** The student's understanding of the implications of substance misuse, both legally and in terms of health risks.
4. **Source:** Where and how the student might obtain the substance if they acknowledge misuse.
5. **Frequency:** If they acknowledge misuse, how often the student has been engaged in substance misuse.
6. **Peer Influence:** Whether peer pressure or influence from others has contributed to substance misuse.
7. **Support Systems:** The student's support system, including friends, family, and others who can help them address the issue.
8. **Impact on School Performance:** How substance misuse might be affecting their academic performance, attendance, and behaviour in school.
9. **Willingness to Change:** The student's willingness to accept help or support to change the behaviour if they acknowledge misuse.

### After the Interview:

- Document the conversation clearly and share with relevant pastoral and safeguarding leads
- Determine next steps: further investigation, parent contact, wellbeing intervention

Refer to counsellor or social worker where appropriate for ongoing support

## Appendix G: Overseas trip: Student found in possession of suspected illegal substances/harmful substances and/or drug paraphernalia

### **Actions required before the trip:**

1. Conduct a risk assessment which considers the availability of illegal substances and the legal consequences in the jurisdiction to be visited.
2. Discuss with the service provider at the locale to gain an understanding of their company protocols for incidents relating to substance misuse.
3. Communicate with both students and their parents.
  - a. The explicit behavioural expectations and prohibitions in relation to illegal substances and harmful substances during the trip.
  - b. The possible consequences should a student be found in possession of a suspected illegal substance,
    - i. Relating to an understanding of the local jurisdiction
    - ii. Relating to actions in such a case
4. If a student has a history of involvement in substance misuse, in order to avoid risk, the Principal may prohibit him/her from joining an overseas trip.

### **Immediate action is required if a student is found in possession of a suspected illegal /harmful substance.**

1. Ensure the safety of those present.
2. If a staff member is alone with the student(s), another staff member of the school staff must be contacted by phone to immediately come to the scene. This is both to bear witness and to supervise and support students as needed.
3. The substances must not be moved unless it would cause harm not to do so.
4. Using the emergency contact procedures, the School Principal must be contacted by the trip leader as soon as possible (within 20 minutes).
5. The trip leader must follow the advice given by the principal and keep in regular contact for follow-up direction and guidance.

### **Documentation**

One school staff member must clearly document the procedures, with;

- Explanation of the situation
- Names of students present
- Location
- Time(s)
- Action taken.

This documentation must be signed by those present.

**Immediate action to be taken by the Principal**

The principal will coordinate the response, including (as soon as possible):

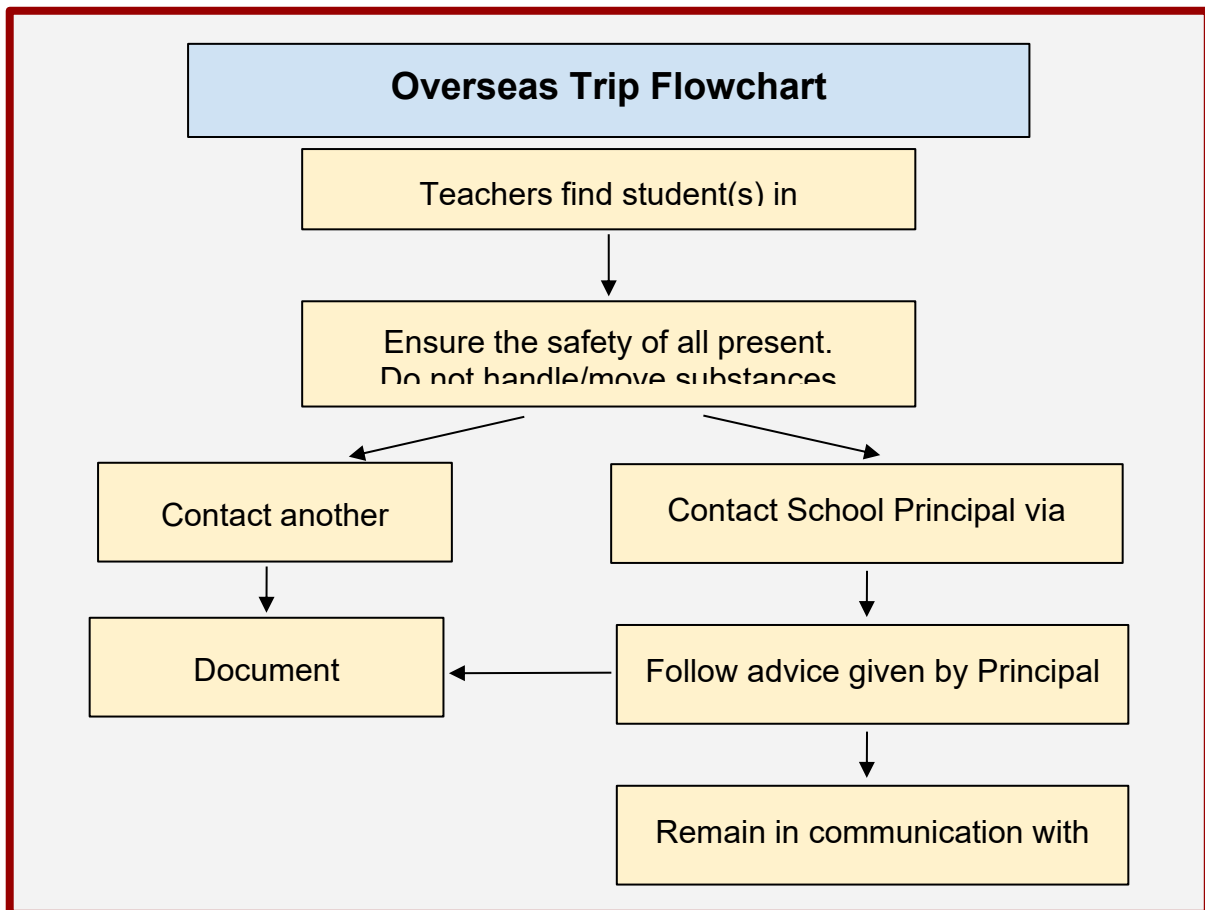
- Contact the Mental Health and Wellbeing Adviser at ESF Centre for direction and support
- Contact the parents and provide ongoing information and support
- Personal or delegated contact with the school trip leaders, for information updates, and to provide support

**Further action to be taken by the school trip leaders**

All reasonable steps must be taken to:

- Support the other students, who may be feeling unsettled
- Dissuade students from communicating about the situation on social media

Daily communication should be maintained with the designated contact person in Hong and action should be taken as advised.



## Appendix H: Procedure for searching a student's belongings

The decision to search a student's belongings will be taken only by a school's senior leadership team member, with the principal's approval, wherever possible. Another member of the teaching staff can be designated to conduct the search by a member of the SLT.

At least two staff members (at least one of whom is the same gender as the student) are required to search, and each in a specific role.

1. Supervising teacher - this person conducts the search
2. Support teacher - acts as a witness to the search

### Process:

1. Use a discreet location for the search, in a private room, wherever possible.
2. Before the start of the search, the Supervising teacher must verbally inform the student of the reasons for the search unless it is impossible or impractical to do so.
  - a. This may include suspicion of possession of illegal drugs, unauthorised medication, or substances/items misused to cause harm.
3. Instruct the student to take out his/her belongings from any receptacles in which they are contained, and place them in view of the supervising teacher and the witness.
  - a. Receptacles from which the student may be asked to take out their belongings include (but are not limited to):
    - i. A locker
    - ii. Their pockets or other clothing compartments
    - iii. Their wallet or purse
    - iv. Their bag(s), lunchbox, folder(s) or other receptacle used for carrying personal items
4. A student may be required to remove a jacket or a coat (outer layer of clothing). At no stage in the search will the student be required to remove other clothing or expose private parts of their body.
5. Wherever possible, the supervising teacher and support teacher will not touch students' belongings. If an item requires further inspection, the supervising teacher may request the student to show the item in more detail, e.g. by opening it, turning it over etc.
6. Ensure the belongings being shown remain in the direct line-of-sight of the student, the supervising teacher and the support teacher (the 'line-of-sight' arrangement).
7. Once a search has been conducted, the supervising staff member will inform the student's parents as soon as possible of the outcome.

If a search in Hong Kong reveals illegal substances, the supervising teacher will call the police. For searches that occur overseas that reveal illegal substances, the supervising teacher should call the principal for advice on next steps.

Maintain the line-of-sight arrangement until the police have arrived and taken possession of the item(s) in question or otherwise directed the school as to the appropriate handling of the item(s). Do not return any items suspected of being used to cause harm.

If the search does not reveal illegal items but reveals substances that may cause harm, these should be recorded and removed from the student. Further actions should be discussed with the principal and mental health professionals to ensure the safety of the student is catered to.

If the search does not reveal any items of concern, return them to the student's possession / back into the receptacles from which they were taken.

In any case where a student's belongings have been searched, the supervising staff member will inform the student's parents as soon as possible.

#### Maintaining the line of sight throughout the search

- If, for any reason, the student needs to change location during this search period, all items that are to be kept within the line-of-sight arrangement may be placed in a sealed container, e.g., an envelope, in which case line-of-sight of the envelope will be maintained during the relocation.
- If, for any reason, the supervising teacher or the third party needs to leave the line-of-sight arrangement, they will be replaced by another staff member as nominated by the supervising teacher until their return.
- If, for any reason, the student needs to leave the line-of-sight arrangement (e.g. to go to the toilet), the student will be accompanied by another staff member as nominated by the supervising teacher. In the meantime, the student's belongings will remain in the line-of-sight of the supervising teacher and the third party and may not be handled or have anything added to / taken away from them.

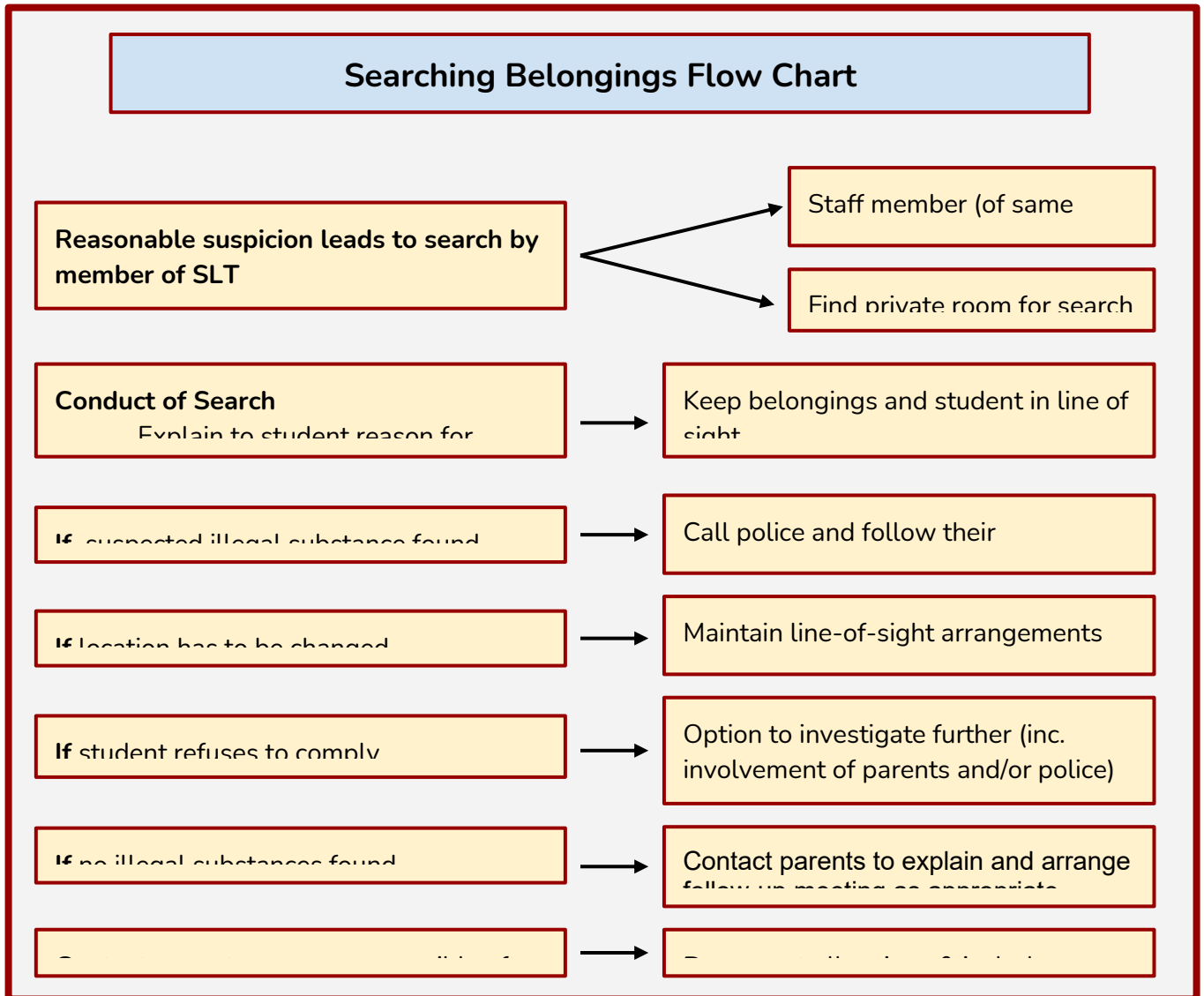
#### If a student refuses to comply with a search:

- The supervising staff may proceed with further investigation or action, including seeking the support of parents and/or involving the police.
- The Principal may, in serious cases, invoke the terms of the ESF Suspension and Exclusions Policy.

#### **Link to EDB School Administration Guide: Searching Students and Their Belongings at School**

<https://www.edb.gov.hk/en/teacher/student-guidance-discipline-services/principles-guidelines/searching-students-their-belongings-at-school/index.html>

Searching Belonging Flow Chart



Appendix I: Consent to participate in a drug test with Central Health (Duddell Street)

**Consent to Participation in Drug Test**

To: (Principal Name)  
Principal of (School Name)

We, the undersigned student (the student) and parent/guardian, acknowledge that a copy of the ESF Substance Misuse Policy, including the drug testing expectations and procedures, have been communicated to us by the school. We have read these policy documents and understand their content as well as that of this consent form.

**Drug Testing**

We hereby consent and undertake for our child (Please insert the full name of the student) to provide a urine specimen to be collected and tested for the presence of drugs at *Central Health, Duddell Street, HONG KONG*.

We understand that the drug test service will be provided by [clinic yet to be determined] and will be the collection point for the urine sample. [ESF agreed clinic pending confirmation] will be appointed as the laboratory service provider.

We also understand that the undersigned parent/guardian will accompany the student to the clinic for the drug testing unless an agreement has been made by the school for a member of staff to accompany him/her. If the student is not accompanied by the undersigned parent/guardian or member of staff, the clinic staff will seek advice from the school principal immediately. Supervision will be given by a trained health professional in the urine collection process.

**Sample - Drug Test Items**

Drug Test Item(s)	Plan A	Plan B
Alcohol	Y	
Amphetamines/ Methamphetamines (speed)	Y	Y
Barbiturates (barbs, reds)	Y	
Benzodiazepines (Benzos)	Y	
Cannabinoids (Marijuana)	Y	Y
Cocaine (Coke, Crack)	Y	Y
Methadone	Y	
Opiates (Codeine, Morphine, Heroin)	Y	Y
Phencyclidine (PCP) (angel dust, crystal)	Y	

Drug Test Item(s)	Plan A	Plan B
Alcohol	Y	
Amphetamines/ Methamphetamines (speed)	Y	Y
Barbiturates (barbs, reds)	Y	
Benzodiazepines (Benzos)	Y	
Cannabinoids (Marijuana)	Y	Y
Cocaine (Coke, Crack)	Y	Y
Methadone	Y	
Ketamine (K)	Y	Y
Urine Supervision by a Trained Health Professional	Y	Y
Doctor Report Consultation (Face-to-face <u>or</u> Tele-consultation)	Y	Y
<b>Package Price</b>		
<b>Please select Plan A or B (School to Complete)</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**The appointment will be made for the day requested by the school**

**Clinic Location (For urine sample collection)**

**Address:** Central Health, Baskerville House, 3rd to 5th floor, 13 Duddell St, Central

**Identification Process**

- Student and parent/guardian are required to present their HKID card / passport and provide instant signature proof at clinic
- Instant signature proof should be identical to that on this consent form

**Fee**

We understand that the drug testing fee will be borne by the parent/guardian of the student.

**Payment Method Option**

1. By cash, Alipay, credit card (Visa, American Express) at clinic
2. By bank transfer. Screenshot of deposit slip is required

**Bank Account Details**

[Pending]

**Test Result**

- Central Health, Duddell Street will issue the test report.
- The test report will be ready within 2-3 working days.
- Once the test report is ready, the clinic will contact the parent/guardian of the student for report consultation and e-mail the test report to the school principal.



School Contact Details

Contact Person: (Please insert the English full name of the contact person)

Position: (Please insert the position of the contact person)

Contact number: (Please insert the contact number of the contact person.)

E-mail address of school principal: (Please insert the e-mail address of the school principal)

**Collection, Use and Release of Personal Data**

We understand that our personal data **(including drug testing results of the student)** will be collected by and /or released to the following concerned parties on a confidential and need-to know basis and only for the purposes of the drug testing –

1. relevant staff of [insert ESF approved clinic] who will render follow-up service to the student upon any positive test result or upon self-referral;
2. the school principal or any school staff designated to act on his/her behalf, as understood and by the student and parent/guardian;
3. the student’s parent/guardian irrespective of the student's age

We understand we may request access to and correction of our personal data under the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance (Cap. 486 Laws of Hong Kong), and that any such request to you may be made at the address and telephone number provided in the note below.

We also understand that –

- a) we may withdraw the above consent and undertaking at any time, and in this case, we will inform the school and the clinic immediately; and
- b) the parent/guardian and the school will be informed if the student gives notice of withdrawal, refuses to provide a specimen of urine for a drug test under the Scheme, or refuses to continue with the drug testing process in any other way.

- We hereby agree to give the above consent and undertaking for our child (student named below) to participate in the drug testing
- In the event that we cannot accompany our child, consent is given for him/her to be accompanied by a staff member.

**Confirmed by:**

Parent / Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

HKID Card Number	Relationship	Contact No.

\_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address

Print Name (In Block)	Signature	Date



Student:

\_\_\_\_\_

HKID Card Number

\_\_\_\_\_

Class and Class number

\_\_\_\_\_

Print Name (In Block)

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

I am **under** the age of 18

I am **above** the age of 18

**Please select and tick ONE of the two boxes above.**

**Witnessed by:**

Principal:

\_\_\_\_\_

Print Name (In Block)

\_\_\_\_\_

School Chop & Signature

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

Staff Member:

*(only required if  
accompanying the student)*

\_\_\_\_\_

Print Name (In Block)

\_\_\_\_\_

School Chop & Signature

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

**Certified by:**

Clinic Representative: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name (In Block)

\_\_\_\_\_

Clinic Chop & Signature

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

For the purposes of the drug testing, I consent to my drug testing results being disclosed to my parents/guardians, and this consent has been read over to me by you on (Please insert the date).

\_\_\_\_\_

Student's Name (In Block)

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

## Appendix J: A Guide to your experience when visiting Central Health, Duddell Street, Central

You are required to go to *Central Health, Duddell Street, Central*, to provide a urine sample. While we know this may not be something you particularly wish to do, we have worked with staff at the clinic to ensure that the experience is as comfortable and private as possible. You will be treated with respect, and we ask that you treat the staff at the clinic in the same way.

### The Clinic

The clinic is on the Baskerville House, 3rd to 5th floor, 13 Duddell St, Central.

### When You Arrive

- The staff will be expecting you, as contact will have been made by the school.
- You will be asked to fill in the clinic registration form, and then taken with your parents/guardian (or staff member if your parents aren't there) to a consulting room.
- The nurse will explain the process that will happen, and you can ask questions.
- You'll be asked to drink some water (so that it's easier for you to provide a urine sample a bit later).
- The nurse will also check the consent form that was completed at school, and you'll be asked about your medical history.

### What Next

- A nurse (of your gender) will supervise you while you remove all of your clothes apart from underwear and put on a disposable gown and a cotton gown. These will cover you up completely.
- You'll be asked to wash your hands.

### Giving the Urine Sample

- The nurse will take you to the washrooms, just down the corridor.
- When you get there, you will be given a container to collect urine.
- You will then go into the cubicle designated by the nurse and provide the sample.
- The nurse will be waiting just outside the cubicle, and you'll give him/her the container when you come out.

### Finally,

- You will return to the clinic, where you can witness the sealing and labelling of the container.
- The consent form will be returned to your parents/guardian (or teacher if accompanying you).
- You'll be free to go.

- The test result will be available within 2/3 days, after which your parents may arrange a follow-up appointment for you.

## Appendix K: Targeted interventions schools can take when addressing substance misuse

Providing a range of targeted interventions, schools can support students at risk for substance misuse or who have engaged in substance misuse. Targeted interventions should be proportionate, developmentally appropriate and responsive to both traditional drug use and emerging harmful substance trends. Examples include:

- **Early identification and assessment:** Early identification and assessment programs are designed to identify students who may be at risk for substance misuse so that they can receive early interventions and support. These programs may involve behavioural observations, screenings, or assessments that help identify students who are struggling with substance misuse. Once identified, schools can provide early interventions, such as counselling or referral to support programs, to help these students address their challenges before they become more serious.
- **Counselling and support services:** Counselling and support services are a key component of targeted interventions for substance misuse. These services can include individual or group counselling, peer support groups, or mentoring programs. Counselling can help students develop coping skills and strategies for managing stress and other triggers that may contribute to substance misuse. Peer support groups can provide a sense of community and belonging and help students feel less isolated and more supported. Mentoring programs can give students positive role models to guide them towards making positive choices.
- **Referral to treatment programs:** Referral to treatment programs is an important targeted intervention for students struggling with substance misuse. These programs may include substance abuse treatment centres, mental health clinics, or other specialised programs that can help students overcome substance misuse challenges. Schools can work with outside providers to ensure students receive the support and care they need.
- **Education and prevention programs:** Education and prevention programs are designed to provide students with information on the risks associated with substance misuse, healthy behaviours, and decision-making skills. These programs can help students make informed choices about substance use and reduce their risk of substance misuse. Education and prevention programs may include classroom presentations, workshops, or other activities that provide students with information and resources on substance misuse prevention.
- **Parent involvement:** Parent involvement is an important targeted intervention for students struggling with substance misuse. Schools can involve parents by providing them with information and resources on substance misuse prevention and encouraging them to participate in their child's treatment plan; this may include attending counselling sessions,

participating in support groups, or working with the school to develop and implement interventions that support their child's recovery.

## Appendix L: Intensive interventions schools can take when addressing substance misuse

By providing a range of intensive interventions, schools can support students experiencing significant substance misuse challenges, whether the substance involved is illegal, prescription-based without authorisation, or a legal product misused to cause harm. These interventions should prioritise student safety, reduce future risk, and ensure family and school alignment:

1. **Intensive Counselling or Therapy:** Provide access to individual or group counselling from school staff or external professionals. Focus areas may include:
  - Harm awareness and long-term health effects
  - Emotional regulation and impulsivity
  - Trauma-informed support where relevant
  - **Sensory or curiosity-driven misuse** (common in inhalant-related behaviours)

For legal substances misused for effect (e.g. deodorant spray, gas dusters), education around **perception of safety** and **social influence** is key.

2. **Referral to specialised treatment programs:** Referral to specialised treatment programs may be necessary for students requiring more intensive support and care, such as residential or outpatient programs. Schools can work with outside providers to ensure students receive the support and care needed to overcome their substance misuse challenges.
3. **Family Involvement** Actively engage parents or caregivers through:
  - Joint planning and review meetings
  - Support in reducing home access to misused substances (both legal and illegal)
  - Guidance on safety-proofing the home environment
  - Referrals to family counselling if appropriate
  - Referrals to parenting support programmes, if needed
4. **Individualised behaviour plans (IBPs):** Schools can develop individualised behaviour plans (IBPs) for students struggling with substance misuse. IBPs outline specific goals and accommodations for the student, and may include strategies to support the student's recovery, such as modified academic schedules or alternative assignments. IBPs can help ensure that students receive the support and accommodations they need to succeed academically while also addressing their substance misuse challenges.
5. **Individualised Behaviour Plans (IBPs):** Develop and monitor tailored support plans that may include:
  - Supervised breaks or transitions

- Check-in/check-out routines
- Goals and accommodations
- Strategies for support
- Restricted access to identified trigger items or spaces
- Ongoing counselling and support strategies

IBPs ensure students receive what they need to succeed academically while addressing their substance misuse challenges. IBPS should reflect the level of risk and provide clear boundaries and restorative opportunities.

6. **Peer support programs:** Peer support programs can be an effective, intensive intervention for substance misuse. These programs involve matching students with peer mentors who have experienced similar challenges with substance misuse and have successfully overcome them. Peer mentors can provide emotional support, guidance, and motivation to students who are struggling with substance misuse and can help them develop positive coping skills and strategies.
7. **Involvement of police services:** Police services can also work with schools to provide education and outreach programs. By working together with schools to develop effective prevention and intervention strategies, law enforcement and schools can help support students' overall wellbeing and academic success.
8. **Digital Safety and Social Influence Management**
  - Assess whether the student has been influenced by online trends, challenges, or peer encouragement (e.g. TikTok videos, private group chats)
  - Educate students on digital risk and manipulation
  - Engage parents in monitoring and discussing their child's online activity