



Drugs Policy

Date of next policy review	2026
Name of person responsible for this policy	Mr Christopher Fulton
Other related policies	Positive Behaviour, SEN, T&L, Pastoral Care, Child Protection and Safeguarding, Critical Incident, Administering Medication
Issued to	Staff, governors, parents
Date of issue	September 2023

PURPOSE

In Victoria Primary School we believe learning in our school should be the beginning of an enjoyable experience based on the development of the child's natural sense of curiosity and wonder. We encourage our pupils to set and achieve personal, social and academic goals through a planned development approach.

We value and respect all members of our school community and recognize that each is unique and gifted differently. We encourage everyone to share responsibility within the school and to participate in its life and work, developing and using all their talents.

We recognize that young children are exposed to messages about drug use from an early age. They are likely to have seen older family members smoking, drinking or taking pills and medicines. They are now more drug literate, being exposed to the terminology of drugs and drug use through contact with internet, TV, films and through the increasing availability of and reference to drugs in general. Often the messages they receive are confusing and seem to glamorise the use of drugs.

Our aim is to attempt to promote within our pupils a knowledge of drugs and their long-term adverse effects and to equip them with the skills to resist pressure and make informed and responsible decisions.

Research has shown that, with an effective education programme, schools can help prevent some children from taking drugs and delay the onset with others.

Evidence from the literature review suggests that school drug education in general can be effective. It also indicates that some types and features of drug education are more effective than others. In particular, drug education using highly interactive methods and social influences approaches, specifically including resistance skills and normative education elements, is consistently shown to be more effective.

www.gov.scot/Resource/Doc/96384/0023320.pdf

DRUGS DEFINITION

A drug is "any substance which, when taken, has the effect of altering the way a person behaves, feels, sees or thinks." (2004 CCEA Drugs Guidelines)

This policy addresses the use of legal, illicit and illegal drugs.

- Illicit drugs (these are socially unacceptable legal drugs) include poppers, glues, solvents and nitrates and the underage consumption of alcohol and tobacco.
- Illegal drugs are those listed as controlled drugs such as cannabis, ecstasy, LSD and cocaine.
- Prescription drugs are those drugs that are issued on prescription by a doctor.

AIMS OF THE DRUGS POLICY

In our policy we make a clear statement for all interested parties about our school's approach to Drugs Education, ensuring a consistent approach by all members of staff, and also providing clear procedures as to how any drugs-related incident should be addressed.

- To ensure a consistent approach by all staff to drug education and in the handling of drug related incidents.
- To develop and implement a drugs education programme within the school curriculum.
- To develop procedures for addressing any drug related issue.

DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Board of Governors (Chair- Mrs J Rodgers) will:

- Support the development and on-going review of the drugs policy and programme.
- Ensure a summary of the policy is published in the school prospectus
- Ensure the B.O.G are fully aware and adequately trained to deal with any drug related incident including alcohol and tobacco.
- Have one member of the Board specifically trained in drugs-related issues.

Principal (Mr C Fulton) will:

- Determine (not investigate) any drug-related incident. (The PSNI will investigate)
- Contact the parents/guardians of any pupil involved in any drugs-related incident.
- Contact the PSNI, then confine responsibilities to the welfare of the pupil(s) involved
- Inform the Board of Governors about the incident
- Agree with them any appropriate pastoral or disciplinary measures to be taken
- Store or dispose of any drug or drug related paraphernalia
- Report the incident to the relevant EANI support office.

Designated Teacher for Drugs (Mrs J. Orr)

- To oversee and co-ordinate the drugs education programme
- To co-ordinate the school's procedures for handling suspected drugs-related incidents
- To ensure teachers are trained in these procedures
- To act as contact point for outside agencies coming into the school
- To take possession of any substance or drugs paraphernalia found in the event of any drugs-related incident.

- To complete a report following any drug-related incident.

Individual Staff Members (teaching and non-teachers)

- Deal with any emergency procedures surrounding the incident they have just encountered.
- Forward any information, substance or paraphernalia to designated teacher.
- Complete a factual report for the designated teacher.

STAFF TRAINING

Staff (both teaching and non-teaching) will be trained in drugs awareness every two years. This can also be offered to parents. Training can be provided by the EANI, the designated teacher or the PSNI. Teaching staff can also avail of training in drugs education through active learning by EANI staff.

Overview of our Drugs Education Programme

Drugs education is at the moment an integral part of our Personal Development and Mutual Understanding programme and takes into account the personal, social and environmental issues relating to our pupils.

Within other subjects such as English and Physical Education, there are opportunities for considering drug-related issues from a variety of perspectives.

Our drugs education programme, which is a preventative one, will be related to the maturity, present knowledge and expertise of the children and will be pupil centred, where pupils will be helped to acquire and develop the skills and attitudes necessary for them to be able to handle this knowledge and information sensibly.

Active learning methodologies such as discussion, debates, circle time, role-play, drama etc. will be used. These strategies will contribute to the development of the children's decision-making and thinking skills and will help them resist pressure

Examples of the aims are:

- To help young people distinguish between useful and harmful drugs
- To inform children of the effects of drug abuse and provide accurate and up to date information on drugs and their effects on health
- To help pupils acquire skills in managing the pressures of the youth culture they live in.
- To establish skills and behaviour which enable children to communicate effectively, assert themselves and take responsible decisions
- To help pupils come to an understanding of the 'rightness' and 'wrongness' of certain behaviours
- To help pupils acquire skills in managing peer pressure
- To create a climate where a young person feels comfortable to discuss drugs.
- To build up the self-esteem and confidence of our children
- To ensure progression and continuity in knowledge and understanding, matching these to the age, maturity and circumstances of the pupils concerned

Staff Use of Smoking and Alcohol

It is now a legal requirement that our premises are completely smoke free. No-Smoking signs have been displayed, clearly visible to all members of staff and visitors to the school. Anyone smoking will be advised that they are committing an offence and will be politely asked to stop smoking and advised that it is also an offence for the school to allow anyone to smoke.

For issues relating to staff use of alcohol, we refer them to the Alcohol and Drug Misuse Policy (TNC 2005/5) available from the D.E.

COMMUNICATING THE POLICY TO PARENTS AND OTHER AGENCIES

Parents will have access to the school's Drugs Policy on request and through the school's website- www.victoriaprimary.org.uk. The school will endeavour, through its School Development Plan and School Prospectus to keep parents fully informed of any changes which may occur to the existing school policy or school procedures. Their views and ideas will be welcomed whenever the policy is being reviewed. All outside agencies will be made aware of the policy to ensure that what they offer is part of the ongoing drugs programme and is always appropriate.

MANAGEMENT ISSUES

PROCEDURES FOR MANAGING DRUG-RELATED INCIDENTS

The procedures for dealing with drugs related incidents are clearly laid out as Appendices 1, 2, 3 and 4. All our staff are familiar with these approaches and know whom to contact and what to do when,:-

1. Suspected substance is found in the school grounds
2. Pupil is suspected of possessing/distributing an illegal substance
3. Pupil is suspected of having taken drugs in school
4. Emergency aid is necessary

It should be noted that it is a statutory requirement that the PSNI is informed in all cases where it has been alleged or suspected that a pupil has a controlled drug in their possession or if such a drug has been found in the school grounds.

DISCIPLINARY MEASURES

It is not appropriate to prescribe specific sanctions for any drug-related incident. The principal will decide how to respond to any such incident after taking into account a range of factors such as: -

- Age of pupil
- What was the motivation?
- Was there peer pressure?
- Does the pupil have a parent/carer/guardian who misuses drugs?
- Does the pupil know and understand the school policy and rules?
- Is it a first or subsequent offence?

- Quantity of drug
- Is the drug legal/illegal?
- Is it possession or supply

At all times we will consider the needs of individual pupils and support mechanisms will be put into place, such as appropriate counselling from NEELB or other appropriate agency. The matter will be handled discretely and sensitively and parents are expected to support the aims of the school throughout the implementation of any aspect of the school's policy in deciding disciplinary matters. It is emphasised that all measures taken will be for the long-term benefit of the pupil as well as the protection of other pupils.

Searching: It is not permitted for school staff to search a child's clothing or possessions without parental consent. However, it is acceptable to ask the pupil to empty pockets or schoolbag or, in an **emergency** situation, the bag may be searched for the purpose of diagnosis in order to provide reliable information for any medical treatment. This will always be done in the presence of the pupil and another adult. However, if a pupil has or is suspected of having a controlled drug, the police will be called to the school to conduct the investigation.

Detaining: If consent is refused and there are reasonable grounds to suspect that the pupil has in their possession or has taken a controlled drug, pupils can be prevented, using reasonable force, from leaving school premises pending the arrival of the police. Parents will be informed as soon as possible and the incident documented in the Incident Report Form.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Teachers or any visitor to the school cannot and should not promise total confidentiality. These boundaries should be made clear to the pupils. In the case of information revealed about controlled drugs, this must be passed on to the designated teacher for drugs.

The PSNI should be notified in all incidences where it has been alleged or suspected that the pupil has in their possession or has taken an illegal drug.

Where a pupil seeks help, the matter will be handled discretely and sensitively with the intention that the pupil receives help either from the counselling service at EANI or from another appropriate agency

PROCEDURES FOR USING OUTSIDE AGENCIES

Any agency or visitor to the school will be expected to have a Child Protection policy, appropriate resources and a clear set of aims and objectives. Their programme will always contribute to the school's drugs programme in the school and they will evaluate the impact it has had on our children. They will be given a copy of our drugs policy and will follow the procedures as out-lined in it. They cannot guarantee confidentiality.

The teacher will:

- Always be present in the room
- Ensure the content is appropriate
- Evaluate the programme and the impact it made on the children.
- Provide introductory/follow-up activities before and after the visit

GUIDANCE FOR CONFISCATION AND STORAGE OF HARMFUL SUBSTANCES

The law allows staff to take temporary possession of any substance found for the purpose of protecting a pupil from harm and committing the offence of possession. The teacher should take any substance/paraphernalia found to the Designated Teacher who will arrange for its safe storage with the principal until it can be handed over to the police. Another adult should always be present when the substance is confiscated and a record will be kept of the details.

GUIDANCE ON STORAGE, HANDLING AND DISPOSAL OF HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES

Care will be taken in the purchasing and storing of solvent materials that are used throughout the school.

Teachers

- There will be close supervision throughout the school of materials such as glue, felt-tips, aerosols etc when used by pupils
- In classrooms, teachers and classroom assistants will be expected to monitor closely the distribution, use and collection of all potentially hazardous substances.
- Such materials will be kept in a locked cupboard, with access only for the teacher/classroom assistant.

Cleaning Staff

- All cleaning materials and substances used in the maintenance and cleaning of the school will be stored in the original containers, correctly labelled and kept locked in a store or cupboard when not in use. These are the responsibility of the caretaker.

GUIDELINES ON THE ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICINES IN SCHOOL

From time to time children will require to take medicine in school. Where this is the case Parents are requested to provide specific permission and details of the medication.

Teachers are under no obligation to administer medication and where this is the case alternative arrangements will need to be put in place. This may be that the parent visits school to administer medication.

There are also occasions where there is regular medication required. In these cases parents will be required to complete a permission form detailing the medication and dosages to be taken and the frequency of medication. If required a supply of medication may be stored securely in school. This will be signed by the school Principal.

MONITORING AND EVALUATING

REVIEW OF POLICY AND PROCEDURES

This policy along with the procedures will be monitored and amended, after consultation and when appropriate but certainly following any incident, actual or suspected.

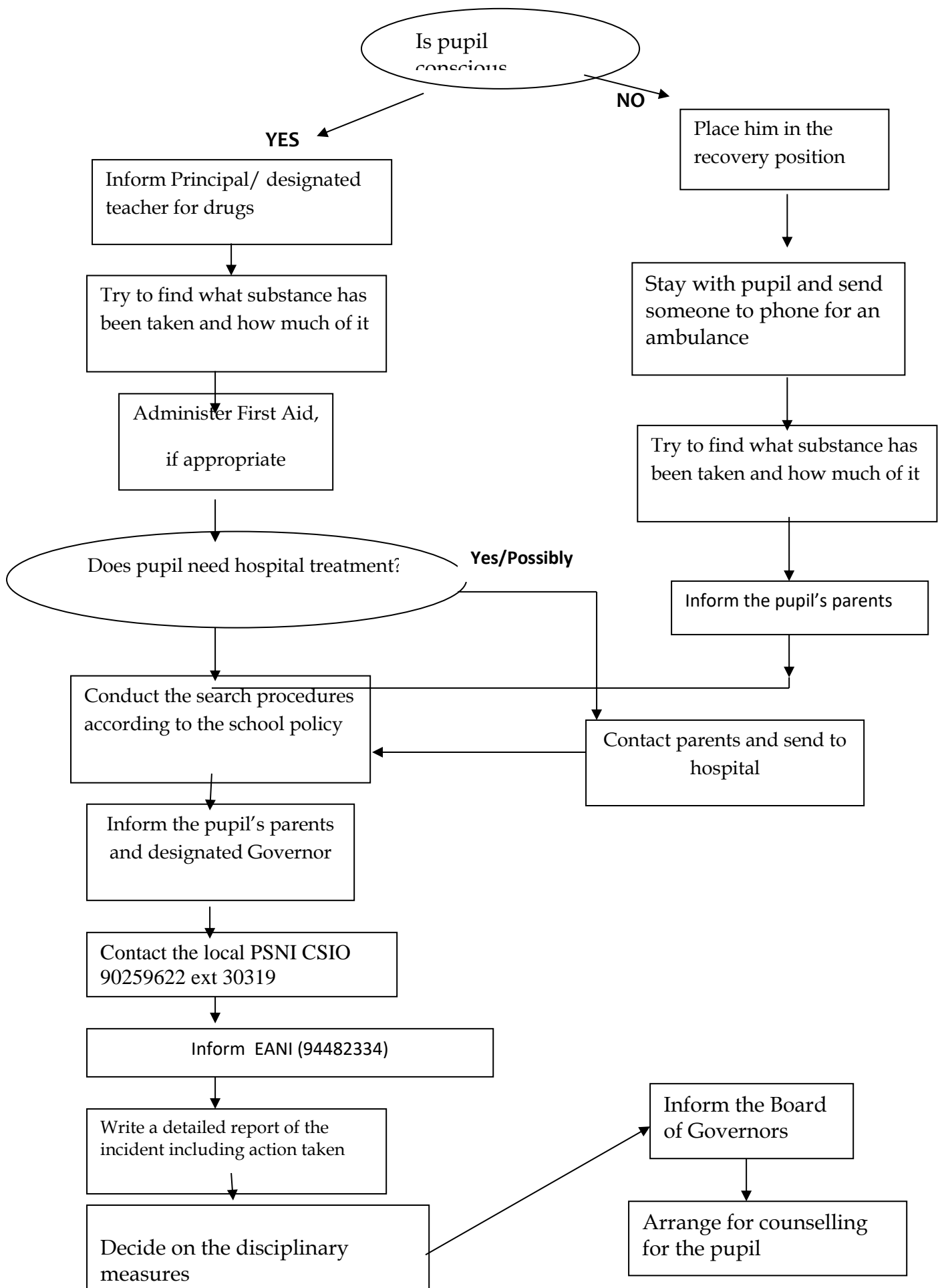
CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING SUCCESS OF THE DRUGS EDUCATION PROGRAMME

The evaluation process will be assisted by information from teachers which will have been gained through monitoring the teaching situation. Oral feedback from parental sources and the pupils themselves will also impinge upon the process. Necessary changes in practices and content arising from the review will be implemented.

APPENDICES

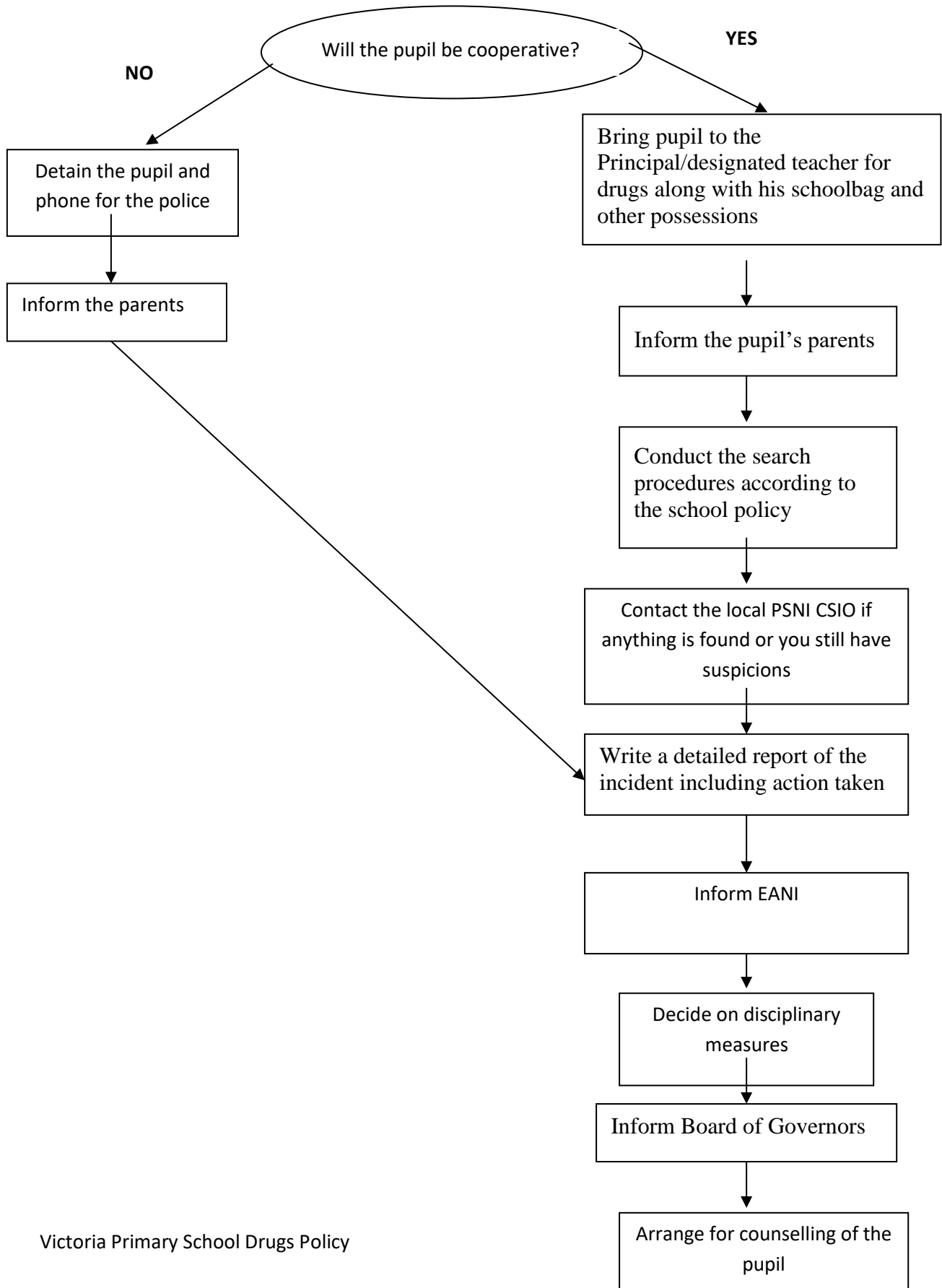
- Appendix 1 Pupil suspected of having taken drugs in school
- Appendix 2 Pupil suspected of possessing/distributing an illegal substance
- Appendix 3 Finding a substance on the school premises
- Appendix 4 Emergency Procedures
- Appendix 5 Drugs Incident Report Form
- Appendix 6 Overview of Drugs Programme
- Appendix 7 Drugs Programme Evaluation Forms..... Pupil/Teacher
- Appendix 8 Pupil Medication Consent Form

APPENDIX 1 **Pupil suspected of having taken drugs in school**



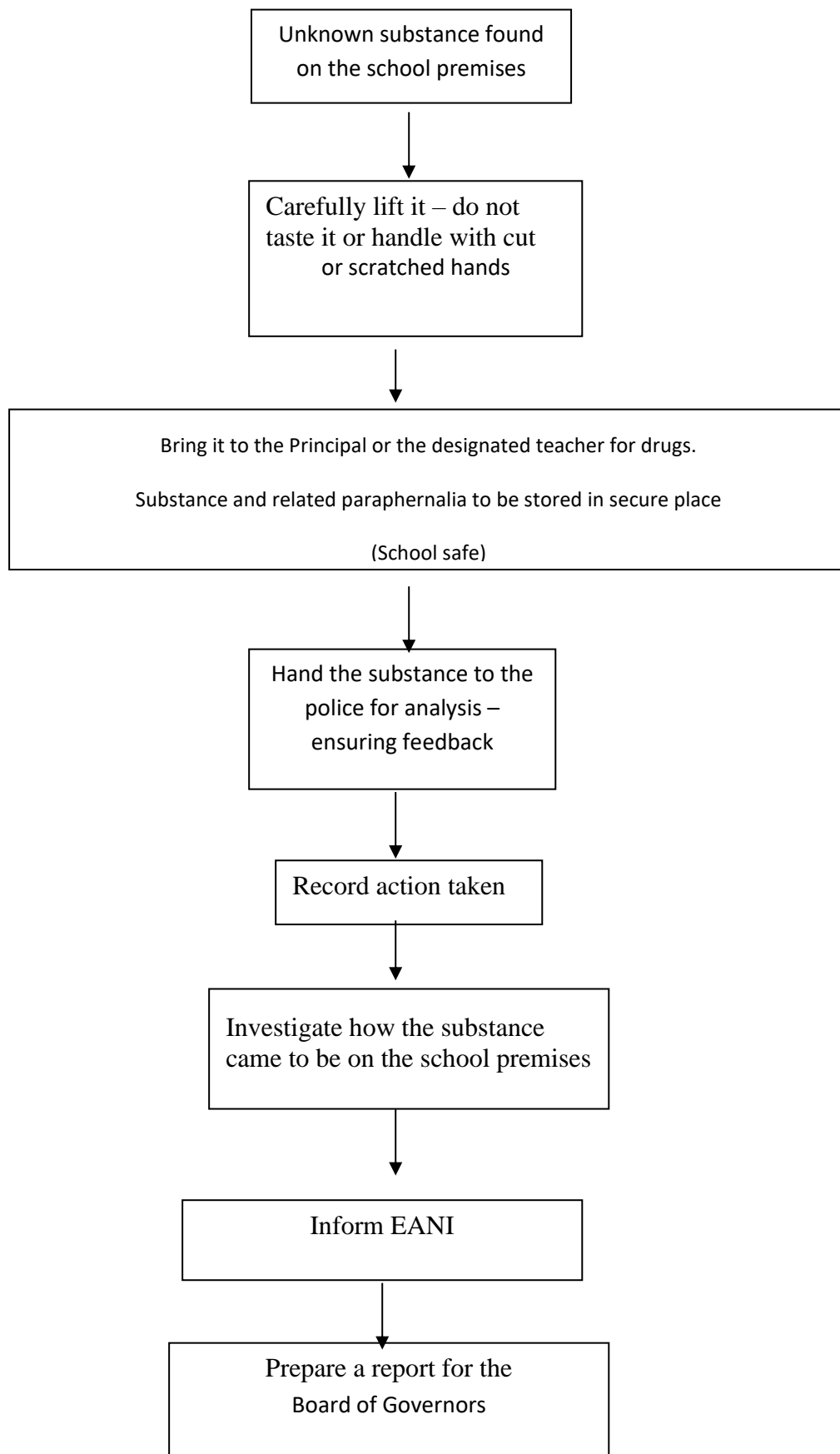
APPENDIX 2

Pupil suspected of possessing/distributing an illegal substance



APPENDIX 3

Finding a substance on the school premises



Appendix 4

Emergency Procedures

1. Send for the teacher/classroom assistants trained in first aid
2. Find out what has been taken. This will help the emergency crew.
3. If a depressant drug (alcohol, solvents, sleeping pills or painkillers) has been taken, they will feel drowsy. Keep them awake by getting them to walk or by applying a cool damp cloth to the back of their neck
4. Do **not** give anything to eat or drink.
5. If unconscious, put in recovery position, clear airways and call an ambulance immediately
6. If they stop breathing, begin mouth-to-mouth resuscitation. Stay until ambulance arrives and inform them of the facts.
7. If a stimulant (Amphetamines or ecstasy) has been taken, the person will be distressed. It is important they remain calm and relaxed. Get them to breathe in and out slowly. If hyperventilating occurs, get them to breath in and out of a **paper** bag.
8. If LSD or hallucinogen has been taken, keep them in a darkened, quiet room to avoid sensory stimulation. They should be supervised at all times and kept reassured that the effects will wear off and they are in no danger.



APPENDIX 5

Drugs Incident Report Form

Name of Pupil _____ **Class** _____

Name of person recording _____

Position in school _____

Address _____

Date/time of Incident _____

First Aid given by _____

Details _____

Police Informed _____

EANI informed _____

Disciplinary/pastoral/other response

Details _____

DESCRIPTION OF THE INCIDENT and ACTION TAKEN

Form completed by _____