

# ***DRUGS POLICY***

**Co-ordinator:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Approved Date:** 04/12/17 4/11/20

**Review Date:** 09/11/23

## Section 1: Introduction

### a) Ethos Statement

- In Saints & Scholars Integrated Primary School the welfare of every child is of paramount consideration and so we endeavour to create a caring, happy, secure, supportive and stimulating environment where children can develop socially, emotionally and physically at their own rate. The Principal, senior leadership team and staff endeavour to provide an atmosphere of care and respect within the curricular and extra-curricular life of the school community.

### b) Rationale

The Board of Governors of each school is required by the Department of Education to establish and maintain a Drugs Policy. The school drugs policy is based on guidelines from **DENI (Circular 2004/9)** and the Employing Authority's *Alcohol and Drugs Misuse Policy and Procedures for Teachers in Grant-aided Schools*, (TNC 2005/5) (Updated 2014) and has been developed as a response to the growing concerns about the use and misuse of drugs in Northern Ireland. The *New Strategic Direction for Alcohol and Drugs, Phase 2, 2011–2016*, (DHSSPS) describes what needs to put in place to reduce the harm that substance misuse causes in Northern Ireland.

The policy endeavours to make a clear statement of our views on drugs and drug education. It ensures a consistent approach among staff on drugs education and in the handling of drug related incidents. Good practice for the future is also safeguarded.

Although it is unlikely that illegal drugs will be in our primary school, we believe that drugs play a part in the lives of every one of us and recognize that drug use and misuse can have a serious effect on health, well-being and academic achievement. We therefore have a crucial role to play in drug prevention and education.

Primary aged children need to be protected from the harm that drugs can cause and it is our responsibility to give them the knowledge and skills to be able to stay healthy and keep safe.

Drug abuse is a whole community issue and we believe that the school has a role to play in conjunction with the other statutory and voluntary agencies within the community. The support of parents is vital, as the school needs the support of parents to extend the messages taught in the classroom into the home. Drugs education alone will not solve the problem of drugs abuse but the problems will not be solved in the absence of effective drugs education.

- Drugs education is a cross-curricular issue whereby we seek to ensure that key messages are reinforced in all aspects of school life, which reflect the caring ethos of the school. We believe that drugs education needs to be part of a holistic learning approach aimed at the overall development of our pupils. The policy forms an integral part of our existing Health Education Programme and the Drug Education Programme complements this.

### c) Drug Definitions

A drug is any substance which when taken has the effect of altering the way a person behaves, feels, sees or thinks. As well as everyday products such as tea and coffee, substances include

- Drugs include: The term 'drugs' is used throughout this policy to refer to *all* drugs:
- - all *illegal* drugs (those controlled by the Misuse of Drugs Act, 1971);
  - all *legal* drugs, including alcohol and tobacco, and also volatile substances /solvents (those giving off a gas or vapour which can be inhaled);
  - illicit drugs (including cannabis, LSD, magic mushrooms etc.);
  - prescribed drugs, such as antibiotics, painkillers, antidepressants, antipsychotics, inhalers and stimulants such as Ritalin;
  - all medicines, whether over-the-counter or on prescription deliberately used wrongly.
  - new psychoactive substances (NPS), formerly known as legal highs\*, which contain one or more chemical substances that produce similar effects to illegal drugs and are sold as incense, salts or plant food and marked 'not for human consumption' to avoid prosecution;
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#### **d) Aims of Drugs Education Policy**

- The aims of this policy are to:
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- a) clarify the school's approach to drugs, for staff, pupils, governors, parents or carers, and to clarify the legal requirements and responsibilities;
- b) ensure a consistent approach from staff to drug education and in the unlikely event of handling any drug-related incidents ensure procedure is followed in line with pastoral care, child protection and safeguarding policies;
- c) safeguard the health and safety of pupils and staff in our school;
- d) enable staff to manage drug-related incidents properly;
- e) foster skills that empower children to manage pressures of the culture they live in and take responsibility for their own health.
- f) To safeguard good practice in the future.
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#### **Section 2: Development and Implementation**

- Roles and Responsibilities

The Board of Governors and Principal will have overall responsibility for ensuring the effective implementation of the Drugs Policy in Saints & Scholars Integrated Primary School.

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- The Principal will:
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- ensure that staff understand their legal responsibilities and the limits of confidentiality;
- ensure that staff and parents are informed about this drugs policy;
- ensure that the policy is implemented effectively;
- co-ordinate the school's response to and management of any drug-related incidents;

- prioritise the welfare of the pupils involved, other pupils in the school and the handling, storage and safe disposal of any drugs/drug related paraphernalia;
  - ensure that staff are given sufficient training, so that they can teach effectively about drugs, and handle any difficult issues with sensitivity;
  - liaise with external agencies regarding the school drugs education programme;
  - monitor the policy on a day-to-day basis, and report to governors, when requested, on the effectiveness of the policy.
- The Board of Governors will:
    - designate a governor with specific responsibility for drugs education;
    - establish general guidelines on drugs education;
    - support the Principal in following these guidelines;
    - inform and consult with parents about the drugs education policy;
    - liaise with the EA and health organisations, so that the school's policy is in line with the best advice available; support the Principal in any case conferences, or in appeals against exclusions.

The Drugs Education (Health & Wellbeing) Co-Ordinator, in liaison with the Designated Teacher for Child Protection, will :

- coordinate the training and induction of procedures with new and existing staff;
- liaise with outside agencies and other bodies in relation to drugs training for staff and learning experiences for staff;
- liaise with the principal;
- ensure all staff are aware of procedures.
- ensure an appropriate programme of study is being delivered for all pupils within the school.
- Duties will include:
  - a) Liaising with the Principal on the implementation of the policy.
  - b) Contacting and liaising with outside agencies.
  - c) Offering support and training where necessary for the Board of Governors, staff and parents on drug education matters.
  - d) Helping to promote an awareness of drug education within the school.

Individual staff members will:

- provide an appropriate range of learning activities to enhance children's understanding of the dangers and consequences of all drugs;
- immediately report any suspected drug-related incident or conversation;
- not attempt to determine the circumstances of an incident but deal with any emergency procedures if necessary.

All other teaching staff will be responsible for putting into practice the policy and ensuring that appropriate lessons are taught to ensure that children are developing positive attitudes towards a healthy way of life. Non-teaching staff will support teachers where necessary and will report all drug related incidents to the Drugs Education Co-ordinator.

**a) Staff Training**

Periodically drug education programmes may be organised for staff to meet training needs, in order to implement the drugs education policy. This will take the form of 'in-house' training although specialist drug education staff may also attend in-service training to inform staff of new developments.

Parents will be informed about certain drug issues if appropriate by receiving information leaflets (or viewing on the school website) from the school produced by statutory agencies. Parents will also be encouraged to contact the school if they have concerns about drug issues.

**b) Overview of Drugs Education Programme**

Drugs education will be an integral part of our Personal Development and Mutual Understanding programme, incorporating the personal and social development of pupils in their environment. Aspects covered will be relevant to their age and will take account of their present knowledge and experience of drugs. Adequate and suitable resources are provided in the 'Living. Learning. Together' Resources. The approach adopted will be mainly preventative and teaching methods will include pupil centred activities e.g. role play, drama and group work. Where appropriate links will be made with other relevant areas of learning e.g. Religious Education, Physical Education and The World Around Us (eg: P7 'The Body' topic). On occasion outside agencies may be used for specialist help. E.g. PSNI, nurse, Bee Safe Workshops etc. if this is the case the class teacher will remain with the children at all times.

**Aims of Drugs Education:**

- a) To promote positive attitudes towards personal health.
- b) To inform pupils of the effects of drug use and abuse.
- c) To help build up the self-esteem of the pupils.
- d) To help pupils acquire skills in managing the pressures of the youth culture in which they live.
- e) To help pupils acquire decision-making skills.
- f) To create a climate where a young person feels comfortable to discuss problems around substance misuse.
- g) To encourage an approach in which each pupil is actively involved.
- h) To encourage a healthy and critical respect for all substances taken into the body.
- i) To equip pupils with skills that will empower them to take responsibility for their own health and safety.

**Drugs at school**

Pupils should not bring prescribed medication into school. Parents may follow guidance set out in our Medicines Policy.

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Where children have medical needs, parents must give us details of the child's condition and medication, in line with our Medicine's Policy. Parents will bring the medication to school in a secure, labelled container. Records will be kept of all medication received and given. Emergency medication may be stored securely in the classroom (for anaphylaxis or asthma); other drugs will be stored securely in the School office.

Solvents and other hazardous chemicals must be stored securely, to prevent inappropriate access, or use by pupils. Teachers are cautious with older, solvent-based Tippex, with aerosols, with glues and with board-cleaning fluids.

Legal drugs are legitimately in school only when authorised by the Principal. Members of staff who smoke must keep their tobacco and matches or lighters secure. Saints & Scholars Integrated Primary School is a smoke-free zone. This means there will be no smoking on the premises or outside of the school gates. Consumption of alcohol is also not permitted during the school day.

### **Communicating the Policy to Parents and Other Relevant Agencies**

The Drugs Education Policy will be made available to all new parents and in the event of the policy being updated new copies will be issued to all parents (or they'll be informed that the updated policy is available to read on the school website). A draft copy of the policy will be sent to parents at a consultation stage and responses will be taken into consideration before the policy is finalised.

### **Section 3: Management Issues**

#### **Procedures for Managing Drug-Related Incidents**

##### **Drugs incidents**

- An incident involving unauthorised drugs in school is most likely to involve alcohol, tobacco or volatile substances, rather than illegal drugs.
- The first priority is safety and first aid, i.e. calling the emergency services and placing unconscious people in the recovery position. An intoxicated pupil does not represent a medical emergency, unless unconscious.
- Pupils suspected of being intoxicated from inhaling a volatile substance will be kept calm; chasing can place intolerable strain on the heart, thus precipitating sudden death.
- Any drug suspected of being illegal will be confiscated and stored securely, awaiting disposal; these precautions must be witnessed and recorded. Staff should not taste unknown or confiscated substances.
- Legal but unauthorised drugs or medicines will also be confiscated, and will be returned to parents; the school may arrange for the safe disposal of volatile substances.
- If the school suspects pupils of concealing controlled drugs on their person or in their

- personal belongings, staff should make every effort to encourage them to produce these substances voluntarily. Staff should ask pupils to turn out their pockets or schoolbags.

If the pupils refuse, staff should contact their parents or carers and the PSNI to deal with the situation. **A member of staff should never carry out a physical search of a pupil, unless there is compelling evidence that the pupil has committed an offence.**

The Principal will decide if the police need to be called or whether the school will manage the incident internally. During instances where a pupil or pupils are suspected of, or found in possession of drugs, their names and identities will be passed on to the PSNI. Any suspicious substance found in school or in the possession of a pupil will also be given to the police for analysis. If a pupil is suspected of being under the influence of drugs parents will be notified immediately and appropriate medical action will be taken. Confidentiality in drug related incidents cannot be guaranteed.

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

The Principal will conduct an investigation into the nature and seriousness of any incident, in order to determine an appropriate response such as the need for counselling or support from social services.

For all those involved in dealing with incidents of drug misuse, the experience is likely to be traumatic. This will be true not only for the Principal, teachers, other members of staff and Governors of the school but also for the pupil involved in the incident, their parents and other pupils in the school. Dealing with suspected incidents of drug misuse will require extreme sensitivity on the part of those involved.

In cases where an incident has occurred and the school is approached by the press, a prepared written statement will be made, only by the Principal or her deputy. This statement will include the fact that the school is dealing with the incident. Pupils involved in the taking of drugs will be encouraged to attend counselling sessions.

All teachers and staff will refer to the Guidance, 'DENI' 2004/9, NEELB 'Outline Drugs Policy' 2010/2011, 'Drugs Incidents in Schools' 2011 and 'Drugs Guidance for Schools' 2011 on legal issues for procedures to follow in any drug related incident. Detailed procedures for dealing with the different types of drug related incidents are included in these appendices.

### **A Range of Disciplinary Measures**

The Board of Governors, Principal and staff have a duty to protect every pupil from the drug culture and will follow EA/DE procedures to protect all pupils from the danger of drugs. Pupils suspected of possessing, supplying or using drugs on the school premises will be dealt with in a serious manner. Incidents involving drugs may lead to suspension, after

investigation of the incident and in extreme cases expulsion may be recommended. The school in these cases will act in accordance with DE and EA Guidelines.

### **The role of parents**

The school is well aware that the primary role in children's drugs education lies with parents. We wish to build a positive and supporting relationship with the parents of our pupils, through mutual understanding, trust and cooperation. The school asks parents to support these measures and to cooperate with the school in encouraging the child to lead a healthier lifestyle.

Parents need to be aware of the school's discipline policy on drugs as:

- It reassures parents that the school treats drug related matters very seriously, thus providing protection for pupils.
- It informs parents on what to expect if their child becomes involved in a drug related incident.

To promote this objective, we will:

- inform parents about the school drugs policy;
- invite parents to view the materials used to teach drugs education in our school;
- answer any questions parents may have about the drugs education their child receives in school;
- take seriously any issue which parents raise with teachers or governors about this policy, or about arrangements for drugs education in the school;
- encourage parents to be involved in reviewing the school policy, and making modifications to it as necessary;
- inform parents about the best practice known with regard to drugs education, so that the parents can support the key messages being given to children at school.

When an incident concerning unauthorised drugs has occurred in school, and a pupil is involved, we will inform the parents, and explain how we intend to respond to the incident.

Staff will be cautious about discharging a pupil to the care of an intoxicated parent, particularly when the parent intends driving the pupil home. Staff will suggest an alternative arrangement. The focus will be the pupil's welfare and safety. Where the behaviour of an intoxicated parent repeatedly places a child at risk, or the parent or carer becomes abusive or violent, staff should consider whether the circumstances of the case are serious enough to invoke child protection procedures in line with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, and possibly the involvement of the PSNI.

At all times the needs of each individual child involved in such incidents will be considered and appropriate intervention and support mechanisms will be put in place.

### **Confidentiality**

Confidentiality can never be guaranteed to any pupil. Any criminal activity disclosed must be passed on to the designated teacher, PSNI and EA. Confidentiality Teachers cannot and should not promise total confidentiality. They should make the boundaries of confidentiality clear to pupils. Members of staff should carefully consider their response, if a pupil approaches them for individual advice on drug use or misuse. In the case of controlled substances, the staff member should explain to the pupil that they cannot offer a guarantee of confidentiality. If the pupil discloses information concerning controlled substances, the

staff member must pass this on to the designated teacher for drugs. The member of staff can direct the pupil to sources of confidential information and advice and to treatment and rehabilitation services.

Communication following a suspected or confirmed drug-related incident

Staff, pupils and parents or carers

The school will carefully consider, after consultation with the Chair of the Board of governors, how they communicate any information about a suspected or confirmed substance-related incident to staff, pupils and parents or carers. It will only disclose information to members of staff concerned with the pastoral needs of the individual pupil. The school will inform only the parents or carers of the pupil or pupils directly involved of the incident and subsequent outcomes.

Teachers should not discuss individual cases with other pupils. The school may, however, need to make a general statement informing the school community after an incident where rumours may create a negative atmosphere.

### **Dealing with the media**

If the school receives an enquiry from the media, only the principal or a designated nominee will, after consulting with the Chair of the Board of Governors, respond to the call. When responding to the media, it is essential that the school respect the privacy of pupils and their families. The principal should prepare a checklist of the appropriate key facts and decide whether to liaise with the PSNI before issuing a statement. Any statements made should be positive, short, factual and without elaboration. Concluding statements should be reassuring and restate that the school has managed the incident effectively.

### **Procedures for Using Outside Agencies**

If an outside agency is to be used the following checklist will be consulted:

- Does the individual/agency have a specified Child Protection Policy?
- How will the issue of confidentiality be dealt with?
- Are the teaching resources being used appropriately?
- Has the individual/agency worked with any other schools?
- Does the individual/agency have a clear set of aims and objectives as well as lesson plans?
- Has the individual/agency read the school's Drugs Policy and are they prepared to adhere to it?
- Do parents/guardians know that an individual/agency is being used by the school?
- Will the input by the individual/agency be monitored?
- Will the pupils be asked how the session/class with the individual/agency went?
- Can the school terminate the work of the individual/agency if the classes or sessions are deemed inappropriate?
- Are evaluations carried out by the individual/agency and if so will the school have access to them?

a) **Emergency First Aid**

Ref. Appendix 3

b) **Guidance for Confiscation and Storage of Harmful Substances**

If a harmful substance is found it will be stored in a secure place and the relevant authorities notified as outlined in Appendices 1-3.

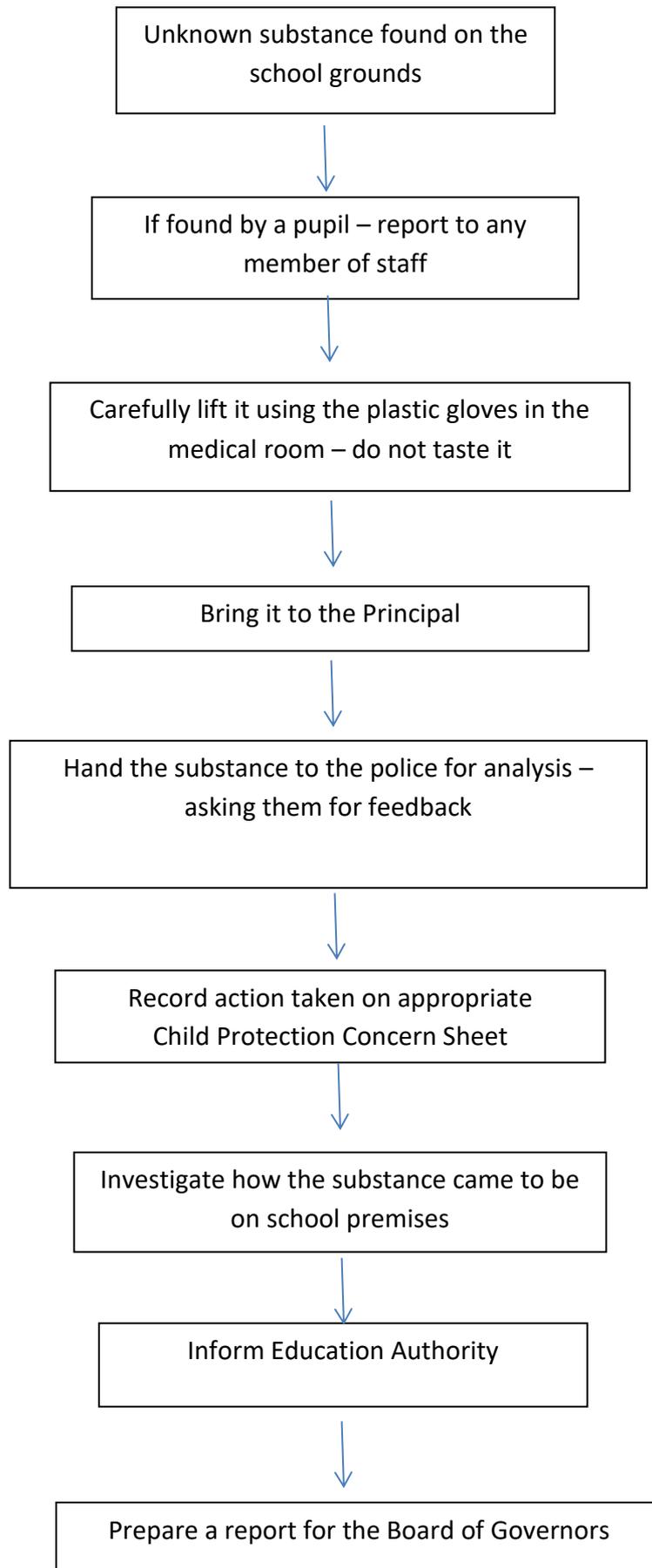
**Section 4: Monitoring, Evaluation and Review**

The drugs education policy and programme will be monitored and reviewed on a regular basis as part of the School Development Plan to take account of the needs of staff and pupils. It will also be reviewed in light of particular incidents or local circumstances. Account will be taken of the views of the Board of Governors, staff, parents and pupils and any necessary changes will be made.

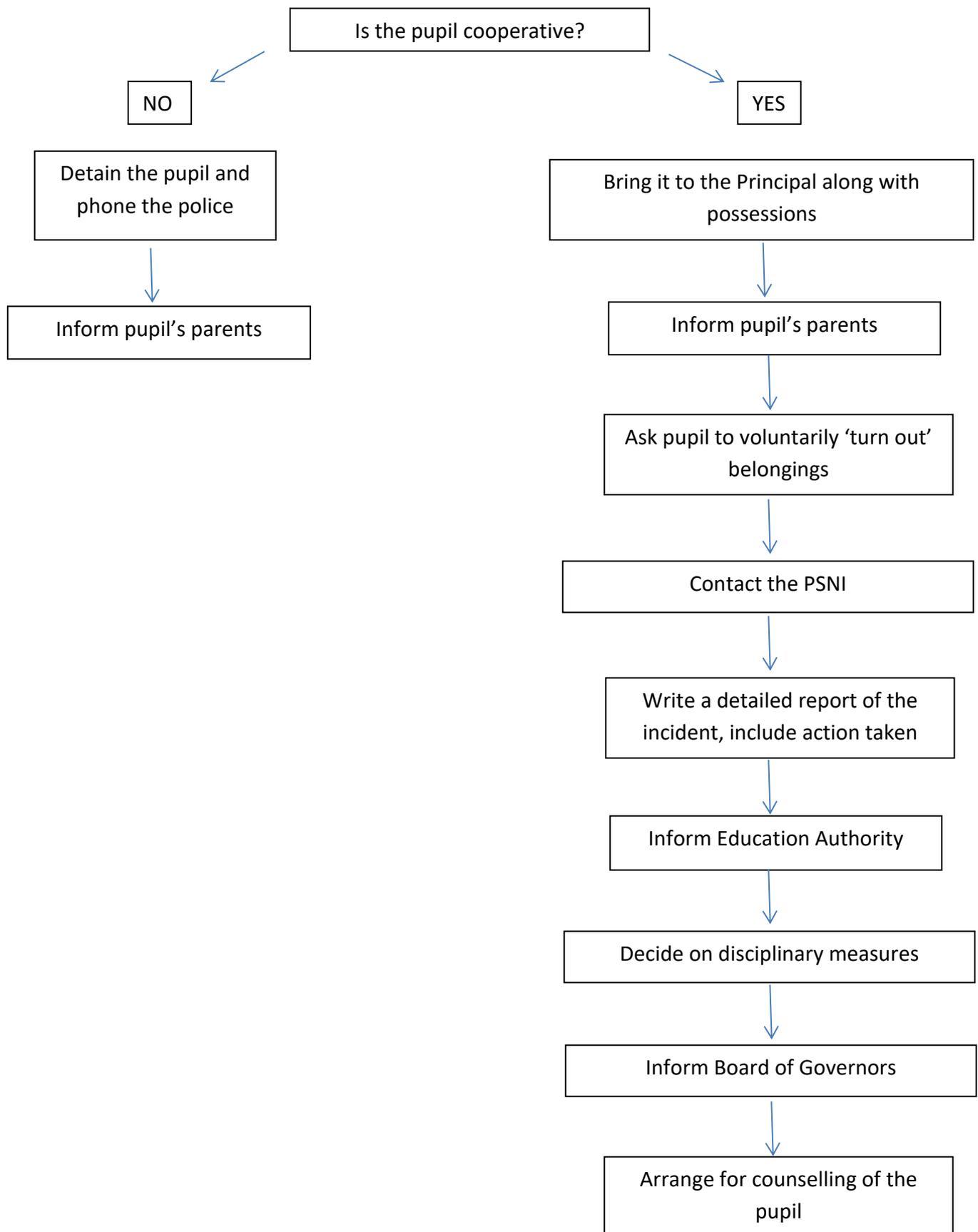
**Section 5: Appendices**

- Appendix 1: Finding an illegal substance on PPS premises.
- Appendix 2: Pupil suspected of distributing an illegal substance.
- Appendix 3: Pupil suspected of taking drugs in PPS.

## **Finding an illegal substance on Saints & Scholars Premises (Appendix 1)**



## Pupil suspected of possessing or distributing an illegal substance (Appendix 2)



**Pupil suspected of taking drugs in Saints & Scholars Integrated Primary School**  
**(Appendix 3)**

