

DRUGS EDUCATION POLICY

April 2025

1. School Ethos and Rationale

Schools share responsibility with parents and the community in the education of pupils about the risks and consequences of drug use and misuse, and to encourage them to make healthy, informed choices by increasing knowledge, and challenging attitudes. At Milltown Primary School we believe that the safety, welfare and personal development of everyone in the school is of paramount importance thus we strive to respond to the personal, social and educational needs of our pupils through our interaction with them in the classroom and beyond.

In drawing up this policy the school has been guided by:

- DE Circular 2015/23
- CCEA guidance: Drugs: Guidance for Schools in N Ireland Revised Edition 2015.

The policy relates to, and complements, the Safeguarding/Child Protection, Behaviour, Anti-Bullying, Critical Incidents and Health and Safety Policies.

Schools have a statutory requirement to have a drugs policy and to provide drugs education as part of the school's curricular provision. This ensures that all members of the school community adopt a consistent approach to drug-related issues. There is also a statutory requirement for schools to inform PSNI if they believe or suspect a pupil to be in possession of a controlled substance.

2. Definitions of 'drugs', 'substance' and 'drug misuse'

In the context of this policy, the terms **drug** and **substance** include any product that, when taken, has the effect of altering the way the body works and how a person behaves, feels, sees or thinks.

As well as everyday products such as tea and coffee, substances include:

- Alcohol, tobacco and tobacco-related products, including nicotine replacement therapy (NCT) and electronic cigarettes
- Over-the-counter medicines such as paracetamol and cough medicines
- Prescribed drugs, such as antibiotics, antidepressants, stimulants, inhalers and painkillers
- Volatile substances such as correcting fluids and aerosols
- Controlled drugs such as cannabis, LSD, ecstasy, 'speed', magic mushrooms, heroin and cocaine
- New psychoactive substances (NPS)
- Other substances

Drug misuse refers to taking drugs, including prescribed drugs, that cause harm to the individual, their significant others or the wider community.

3. Aim and objectives

We do not condone the misuse of drugs, nor do we wish to sensationalise or dramatise the drugs situation. We believe in providing a Drugs Education Programme which is appropriate to the experience of children in our school.

Our aim is to protect pupils from harm associated with the use and misuse of substances.

Objectives:

- Have a consistent approach, throughout the school, to drugs education and managing incidents in line with our pastoral care policies
- Provide a programme which gives the children opportunities to acquire the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to make informed and responsible decisions about the use of drugs and other substances within the context of a healthy lifestyle.
- Dissuade from inappropriate use of drugs/use of harmful substances
- Enhance pupils' self-awareness and self-esteem
- Equip pupils with social competencies necessary for coping with the interpersonal pressure to begin using drugs
- Provide staff with adequate support to enable them to deliver effective drugs education and to respond to situations with consistency and sensitivity.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

At Milltown PS, the Principal, Mrs Wright, is the designated teacher with responsibility for drugs and, in her absence, Mrs Wilson, Mrs Hanvey and Mrs Johnston are deputy-designated teachers. Mrs Henning is the designated governor.

The Board of Governors

School governors are involved in the development and review of the school's Drugs Education Policy:

- Facilitate the policy consultation process;
- Examine and approve the policy;
- Ensure a summary of the policy is published in the school prospectus;
- Ensure the policy is reviewed at least annually and after a drug-related incident; and
- Be fully aware of the school's procedures for dealing with drug-related incidents (including alcohol and tobacco, tobacco-related products, electronic cigarettes) and their appropriate disciplinary response.

The Principal

The Principal has overall responsibility for co-ordinating the Drugs Education Policy and ensuring that appropriate responses are made in regard to any drugs related issues.

The Principal will:

- Liaise with class teachers to ensure an appropriate teaching programme is provided;
- Maintain links with appropriate agencies;
- Be the designated person for determining the circumstances of all incidents;
- Report to governors.

The designated teacher for drugs

The designated teacher has overall responsibility for drugs issues within the school including:

- Co-ordinating the curricular provision in compliance with the statutory requirements;
- Co-ordinating the school's procedures for handling suspected drug-related incidents;
- Ensuring that all governors, staff and parents are aware of the policy and procedures;
- Being the contact for outside agencies that may have to work with the school or pupil/s concerned;
- Reviewing / updating the policy at least annually and after a drug-related incident, where learning from the experience could improve practice.

All staff


All staff, both teaching and non-teaching should:

- Be familiar with the school's policy and procedures
- Know who to contact and what to do when a young person is suspected either of being in possession of drugs or being under the influence of drugs, including alcohol.
- Be aware of physical or behavioural changes in pupils which could be caused by drug/substance misuse.
- Respect the privacy of any pupil (and his/her family) involved in a drug related incident.
- Make it clear to a pupil who discloses that he/she is taking drugs that this information *must* be passed on to the Principal/designated teacher.

Teachers (in addition to the above)

- Deliver the school's drugs education programme
- Create an atmosphere in the classroom in which pupils can contribute to discussion, safe in the knowledge that the comments, ideas and feelings of the group are valued.
- Support pupils in their class if necessary.
- Liaise with the designated teacher regarding any aspect of the Drugs Policy, as necessary.

Role of the Building Supervisor

- Watch out for drug-taking materials/ harmful substances in the school building or grounds;
- Report to the Principal/designated teacher as soon as possible;
- Cleaning materials to be kept in locked store. 

Pupils and Parents/Carers.

- Pupils should not bring, or use, drugs/harmful substances on school property.
- Parents /carers should be alert to the possibility of drugs use/misuse in the school community and report to the designated teacher as soon as possible.
- Discuss any concerns with the school

5. Organisation and Management of the Drugs Education Programme.

Our Drugs Education programme is based on guidelines provided by CEA. It is a structured programme delivered at a level appropriate to the age and experiences of the pupils and is timetabled in PDMU and the science aspect of WAU. The emphasis is on the dangers involved in the misuse of *tobacco (including e-cigarettes), alcohol, medicines (both over-the-counter and prescribed) and solvents.* As our programme responds to need, we will include other substances when appropriate.

Teachers use a variety of approaches including individual and group work. Active learning is encouraged with the children being given the opportunity to think about the information they acquire and to apply it in various hypothetical situations e.g. through role-play.

Underpinning our teaching is the belief in building children's self-esteem, in helping them value themselves and others and in giving them a sense of their responsibility to themselves and others. We recognise this is a partnership between the school and parents where we work together towards educating the children to make healthy, informed choices and discourage the misuse of drugs.

Staff will ensure that children are aware of the risks involved in contact with dangerous substances and equipment. They will be clearly told that if they find anything suspicious they **MUST NOT TOUCH**, but immediately inform a member of staff.

PDMU Programme

Themes: a) **Health, Growth & Change;** b) **Safety**

Foundation stage

- Be aware of how to care for their body in order to keep it healthy and well.
- Understand that many substances can be dangerous.
- Know the safety rules that apply when taking medicines.

Key Stage 1

- Understand that medicines are given to make you feel better, but that some drugs are dangerous.
- Understand that if not used properly, all products can be harmful.
- Know and understand simple safety rules about medicines, tablets and household substances
- Know about different types of medicine and that some people need them to live a normal life

Key Stage 2

- Know that all medicines are drugs but not all drugs are medicines
- Know that there are over-the-counter, prescribed legal and illegal substances and have some understanding of their effects
- Know the important and beneficial part which drugs have played in society
- Know about the harmful effects tobacco, alcohol, solvents and other illicit and illegal substances can have on themselves and others.
- Develop strategies to resist unwanted peer/sibling pressure and behaviour.

Other subject areas contribute to this when and where appropriate e.g.

WAU

- Keeping healthy through exercise, rest, diet, personal hygiene
- Dangers in the home (some household substances)
- Safe use of medicines
- Harmful effects of tobacco, alcohol and other substances
- CPR (Heartstart Programme)

Literacy:

- Explore issues through stories
- Develop communication skills
- Use of role-play and drama

RE:

- Develop understanding of moral issues
- Consider social and moral consequences of actions

Art:

- Produce pictures / posters on health and safety themes

PE:

- Develop positive attitudes towards physical activity and healthy lifestyle
- Develop safety awareness
- Understand the relationship between physical activity and good health

UICT:

- Produce pictures / posters using ICT packages

Outside Expertise

Input offered by external support agencies to assist with aspects of the Drugs Education Programme, will be assessed by the Principal, to ensure it is suitable, supports the school's policy and is part of a planned programme, before consent is given to their contributing to the Drugs Education Programme. In such cases, teachers must be present at all times when a representative from an agency or other individual is taking a session with a class.

Involving/Supporting parents or carers

If an agency/individual comes into school to support our drugs education programme, parents/carers are informed beforehand. The planned programme is outlined and parents have the opportunity to raise any concerns they might have, before the visit. This consultation has the added benefit of letting parents or carers know what is going on and strengthening ties between home and school.

6. Responding to suspected drug-related incidents

In responding to suspected substance-related incidents, staff will seek to handle each incident sensitively and to be fair and consistent in their dealings with pupils.

a. What constitutes a drug-related incident?

A drug-related incident may include:

- A pupil displaying signs of illness, unusual or uncharacteristic behaviour; (Appendix 7: Recognising Signs of Substance use)
- An allegation of having drugs
- Suspicion of possession, possession with the intent to supply and /or supply of any substance as defined in Section 2 above
- Finding substance-related paraphernalia

b. Procedures managing drug related incidents on school premises: Summary

Cigarettes and alcohol

In the event of a pupil being found with cigarettes (including e-cigarettes) or alcohol on his/her person at school, the items will be confiscated and the pupil's parents/guardians will be informed.

Solvents

The school will ensure that potentially harmful substances are stored safely and pupils are supervised carefully in the event of them having to be used in the course of their work. The use of correction fluid is discouraged and the use of aerosol sprays e.g. in art work, will be in well ventilated areas. Cleaning materials will be locked in a secure store.

Action to be taken in the event of a suspected incident of drug misuse where the designated teacher for drug issues is the principal.

A. Responding to illness/inappropriate behaviour as a result of suspected drug misuse.

In suspected cases of drug misuse, where a child is ill or collapses:

1. Seek medical assistance immediately
2. Inform parents and PSNI

Follow up action

1. Principal/ designated teacher investigates and completes a Drugs Incident Report form on the incident. The report should be brief and factual.
2. In light of the report take further action in line with the school Behaviour Policy.
3. As part of this process, the principal/designated teacher may make referral to outside agencies that can support the young person or his/her family.

B. Responding to allegation/suspicion of possession, possession with the intent to supply and /or supply of any substance/drugs in the school premises.

1. Stay calm
2. Where possible conduct a search.
 - A member of staff may search a pupil's desk or locker if there is reasonable cause to believe it contains unlawful items, including controlled drugs. Such a search should be made in the presence of the pupil and another adult or witness.
 - Where pupils are suspected of concealing controlled drugs on their persons or in their personal belongings, every effort should be made first to secure the voluntary production of any unlawful substances e.g. by asking them to turn out their pockets or schoolbags.
 - If the pupil refuses, staff should contact their parents 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.
 - A search of the pupil's personal belongings, including schoolbag, coat, or other items hanging in the cloakroom, should be made only with the pupil's consent and in his/her presence and that of another adult or witness.
3. Pupils should remain in school, supervised by appropriate members of staff until their parents and PSNI arrive. The school staff may detain a pupil, using reasonable means, until the police arrive, where there are reasonable grounds to suspect that the pupil has in their possession or has taken a controlled substance. Duress, however, should never be used.
 - The teacher should try to avoid being alone in the room with the pupil.
4. Take possession of any Suspected Controlled drug.

The law permits school staff to take temporary possession of a substance suspected of being a controlled drug to protect a pupil from harm and prevent the pupil committing the offence of possession.

 - The teacher should (using appropriate safety precautions) take the suspected substance and/or any paraphernalia to the designated teacher for drugs as soon as possible.
 - They should arrange for its safe storage until the school can hand it over to the local PSNI officer to identify whether it is a controlled substance.
 - School staff should not attempt to analyse or taste an unidentified substance.
 - An adult witness should be present when staff confiscate the substance
 - A record of the details should be kept using the Drugs Incident Report Form (Appendix 5)
 - Note where it is believed a pupil may have swallowed a substance suspected to be a controlled drug e.g. to avoid detection, **medical assistance should be immediately sought and the police informed.**
5. Inform the parents and PSNI
6. Record the necessary details. (Time, place, date, circumstances of removal or confiscation of the suspected controlled drug.)
7. Notify the Chairman of the Board of Governors.
8. Notify the Employing Authority. (The Designated Drugs Officer in the EA)

C. Responding to finding substance-related paraphernalia in the school grounds

If staff recover a substance or an objects they suspect have a connection with drugs, they should:

1. Exercise extreme care, as these items may be hazardous
2. Report to the designated teacher for drugs who, if the incident is considered serious, will:
 - Inform the EA designated officer
 - Make a full record using the Drugs Incident Report Form

c. Roles and responsibilities when managing a suspected drug-related incident

Individual staff members should:

- Assess the situation and decide on the appropriate actions to take;
- Send for additional staff support, if necessary
- Deal with any emergency procedures / first aid to ensure the safety of pupils and staff (see Appendix 9);
- Notify the principal / the deputy-designated teacher for drugs at the earliest opportunity;
- Carefully gather up any drugs and/or associated paraphernalia or evidence and pass all information or evidence to the designated teacher for drugs; (see Appendix 4.1);
- Write a brief, factual report of the incident (Drugs Incident Report Form) and forward to the designated teacher for drugs (see Appendix 5);
- Consider the needs and safety of a pupil when discharging him or her into the care of a parent or carer who appears to be under the influence of alcohol or another substance (staff, who are in loco parentis, should maintain a calm atmosphere when dealing with the parent and, if concerned, should discuss with the parent alternative arrangements for caring for the pupil);
- Invoke safeguarding procedures, if a parent / carer's behaviour may place a pupil at risk. (Appendix 4.5)

The designated (deputy-designated) teacher for drugs should:

- Respond to first aider's advice or recommendations;
- Inform parents or carers immediately, in the case of an emergency;
- Take possession of any substance(s) and associated paraphernalia found;
- Inform the principal;
- Take initial responsibility for pupil(s) involved in the suspected incident; and
- Complete a Drugs Incident Report Form (see Appendix 5) and forward it to the principal. ^{SEP}

The Principal should:

- Determine the circumstances surrounding the incident;
- Ensure the welfare of the pupil's involved in the incident and other pupils in the school;
- Ensure health and safety during the handing, storage and safe disposal of any drug or drug-related paraphernalia;
- Ensure that the following people are informed:
 - parents/carers;
 - designated officer in the local PSNI area (in an incident involving a controlled substance);
 - chair of the Board of Governors; and
 - designated officer in Education Authority if an incident:
 - is serious enough to require PSNI involvement;
 - requires that a child protection procedure is invoked; or
 - leads to the suspension or exclusion of a pupil;
- Invoke appropriate pastoral and disciplinary responses, including counseling services or support;
- Forward a copy of the Drugs Incident Report Form (see Appendix 5) to the chair of the Board of Governors and the designated officer of the EA, if appropriate; and
- Organise a review of procedures and amend, if necessary. ^{SEP}

7. Confidentiality

The relationship between school and the child is one in which the safety of the child is paramount thus staff will be guided by the Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy. Confidentiality of the child and parents/carers will be respected provided the safety of the child is not compromised.

Staff should:

- Explain to pupils that they can never guarantee confidentiality; and
- Pass on any information about suspected criminal activity associated with drugs to the designated teacher, PSNI and the Education Authority.

8. Legal responsibilities and involving the PSNI

Schools **must** notify the designated officer in the local PSNI area in cases where:

- there is an allegation or suspicion that a crime has been committed. **Failure to notify the PSNI is a criminal offence.**
- a pupil has, or is suspected of having, controlled drugs in their possession, either on their person or in their belongings, or if controlled drugs are found on the school premises. This may include new psychoactive substances or prescription medication.

9. Disciplinary / Pastoral Care responses

- In normal circumstances parents will be contacted.
- Sanctions will be selected in line with the school's Behaviour Policy, in the best interests of the pupil in the longer term while ensuring the safety and well-being of other pupils.
- If the situation is assessed as a safeguarding/child protection issue, social services will be contacted in the first instance.
- Evidence of drug use by a pupil or possession of a controlled / harmful substance may result in suspension pending a full investigation.
- The school will seek /signpost support services when necessary.

10. Guidelines for administering prescribed medication

The school is guided by the DE publication *Supporting Pupils with Medication Needs*, in relation to pupils who are on prescribed medication. In line with the school's Long Term Medical Needs Policy, no such medication may be administered in school without prior written permission of the Principal.

11. Staff/Volunteers

a. Use of alcohol and smoking on school premises, school trips and social events

No Smoking Policy

Milltown PS operates a No Smoking Policy, at all times, throughout the school premises and during school related activities undertaken outside the school premises. This also includes the use of electronic cigarettes.

Use of Alcohol Policy

No alcohol should be consumed on the school premises or during school related activities undertaken outside the school premises, where staff are in charge of children e.g. school trips/school events. At school events where staff are not in charge of children and outside of work, staff/volunteers should be mindful that they are representatives of the school and should not engage in conduct which could damage the reputation and standing of the school, themselves or other members of the school community.

b. Possession/use of illegal drugs

Criminal offences involving possession or use of illegal drugs are regarded as unacceptable.

Staff will be guided by the Code of Conduct for Staff and Volunteers.

12. Procedures for communicating to staff, parents or carers or other relevant agencies

The policy is shared in the following ways:

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| Staff: | Consulted at a staff meeting and policy provided New teachers made aware of the policy at induction |
| Governors: | Copy of policy provided for discussion/adoption at a Board of Governors meeting |
| Parents/Carers: | A summary is contained in the school prospectus and the full policy available in the school office. |
| Outside providers: | The content of any programme is checked against the school policy |

In relation to specific incidents, information about the school's response will be shared to staff, pupils, parents /carers and the media by the principal/designated teacher or deputy-designated teacher in her absence. No member of staff should be tempted to communicate with the media on any drugs related school business.

13. Procedures for monitoring and evaluating the policy

The policy and procedures will be reviewed on a regular basis and particularly post-incident.

14. Procedures for evaluating the drugs education programme

Evaluation of the Drugs Education Programme will be within the evaluation of the PDMU curriculum. It will be informed by teachers, the needs of pupils and DE/CCEA guidance with regard to the appropriateness of the taught programme.

15. Training and Information

The staff is provided with training and support in implementing the school Drugs Education Policy, to help them deliver an effective drugs education programme and to respond to suspected drug-related incidents with consistency and sensitivity. All staff should be aware of the procedures to be put in place should a drug-related incident occur including procedures in the event of a medical emergency (Appendix 9).

Staff will avail of training, advice and support from INSET providers as and when necessary.

Appendices included from CCEA guidance:

- 3 - Checklist of Roles & responsibilities when managing an incident
- 4 - Handling drug related incidents
 - 4.1 - Finding paraphernalia
 - 4.2 - Pupil suspected of having taken drug/alcohol
 - 4.3 - Pupil suspected of possessing/distributing
 - 4.4 - Pupil in possession of alcohol/unauthorised prescribed medication
 - 4.5 - Parent/carer arriving at school to collect child under influence alcohol/drugs
- 5 - Drugs Incident Report Form (Signpost electronic version)
- 7 - Recognising signs of substance abuse
- 9 - Emergency procedures

APPENDICES

Appendix 3

Checklist of Roles and Responsibilities when Managing an Incident

Individual staff members should:

- assess the situation and decide the action;
- make the situation safe for all pupils and other members of staff, secure first aid and send for additional staff support, if necessary;
- carefully gather up any drugs and/or associated paraphernalia or evidence and pass all information or evidence to the designated teacher for drugs; and
- write a brief factual report of the incident and forward it to the designated teacher for drugs.

The designated teacher for drugs should:

- respond to first aider's advice or recommendations;
- inform parents or carers immediately, in the case of an emergency;
- take possession of any substance(s) and associated paraphernalia found;
- inform the principal;
- take initial responsibility for pupil(s) involved in the suspected incident; and
- complete a Drugs Incident Report Form (see Appendix 5) and forward it to the principal.

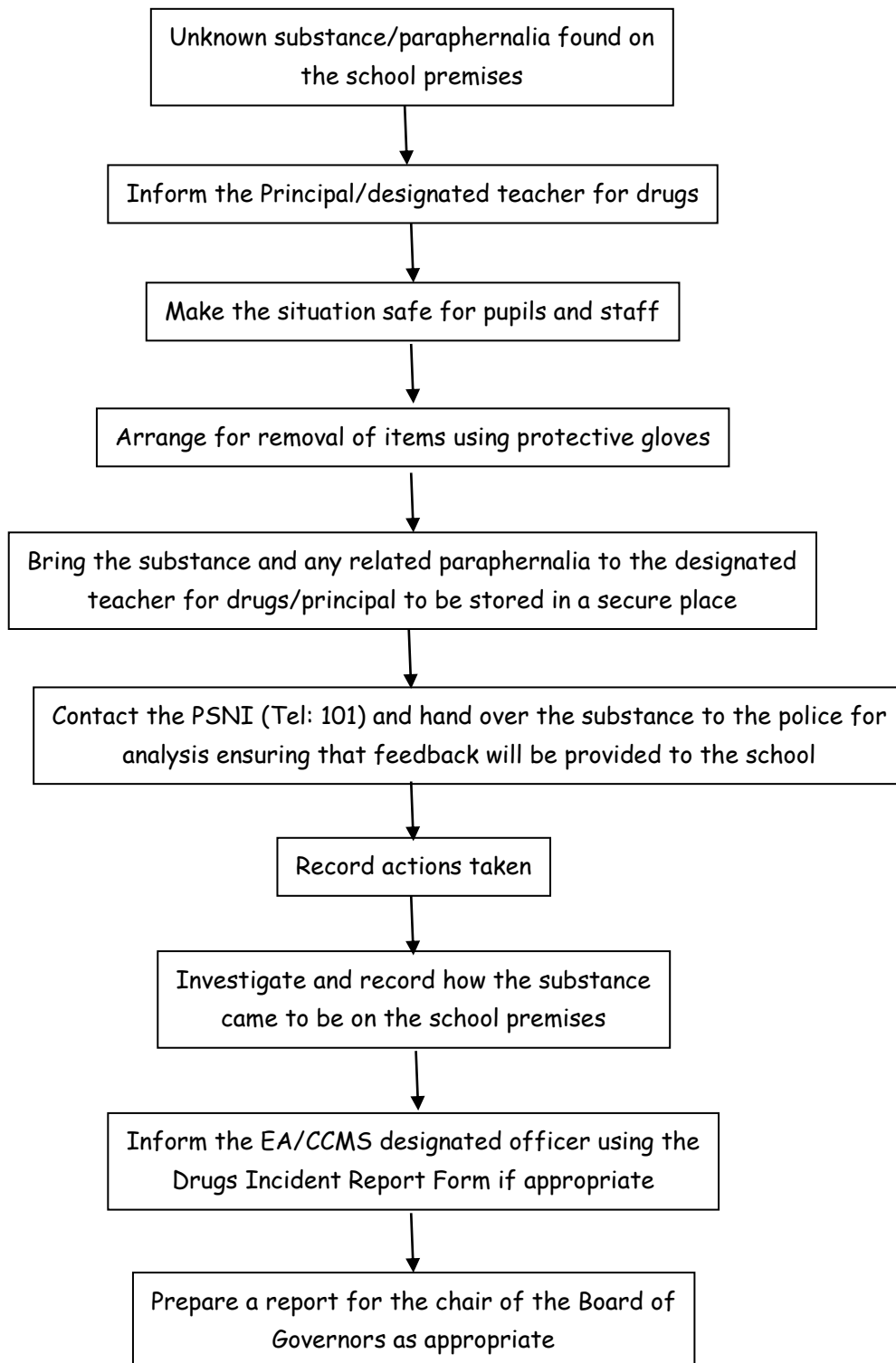
The principal should:

- determine the circumstances surrounding the incident;
- ensure that the following people are informed:
 - parents or carers;
 - designated officer in the local PSNI area;
 - Board of Governors; and
 - designated officer in Education Authority.
- consult and agree pastoral and disciplinary responses, including counselling services or support;
- forward a copy of the Incident Report Form to the chairperson of the Board of Governors and the designated officer in the Education Authority, if appropriate; and
- review procedures and amend, if necessary.

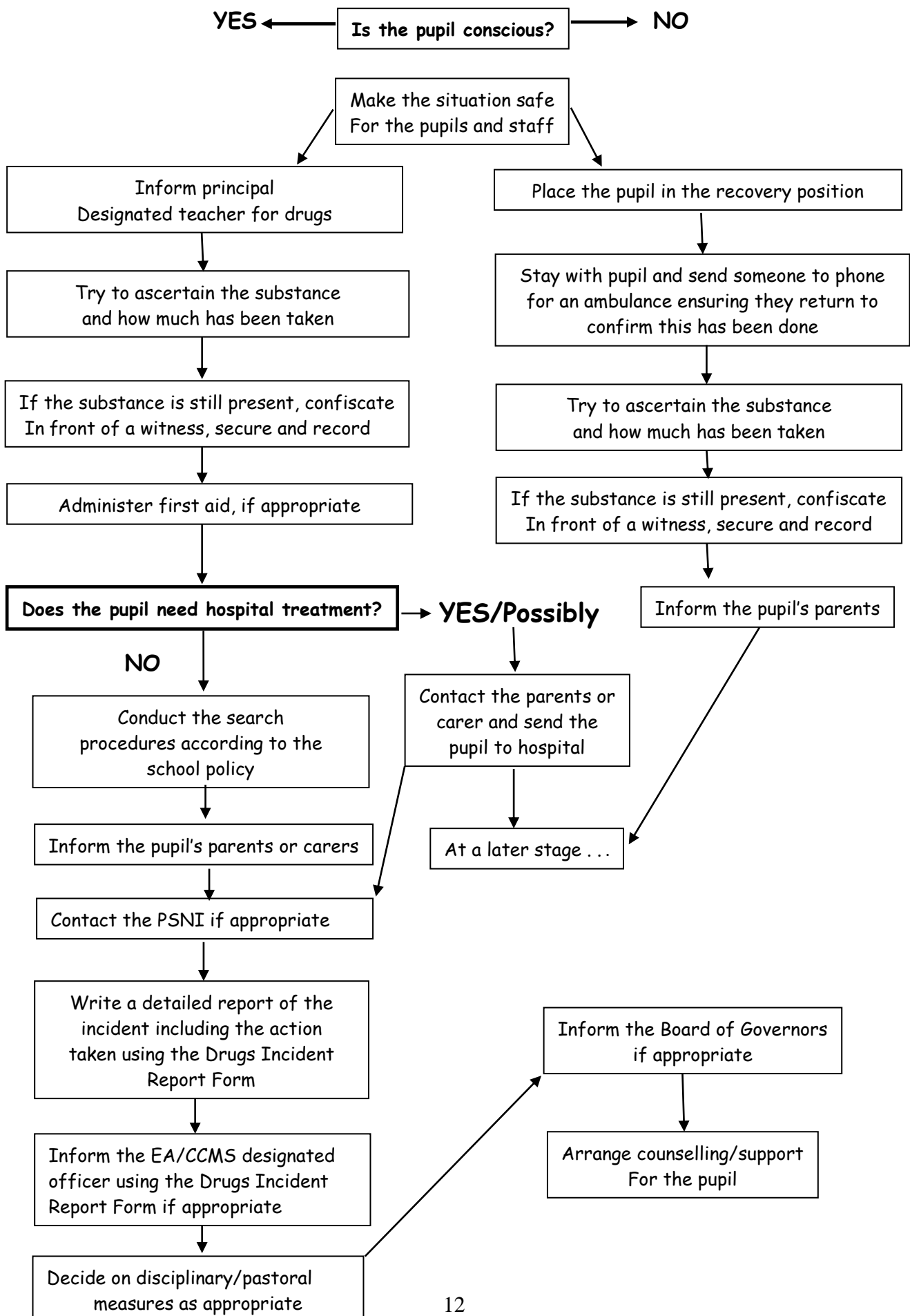
Appendix 4

Handling Drug-Related Incidents

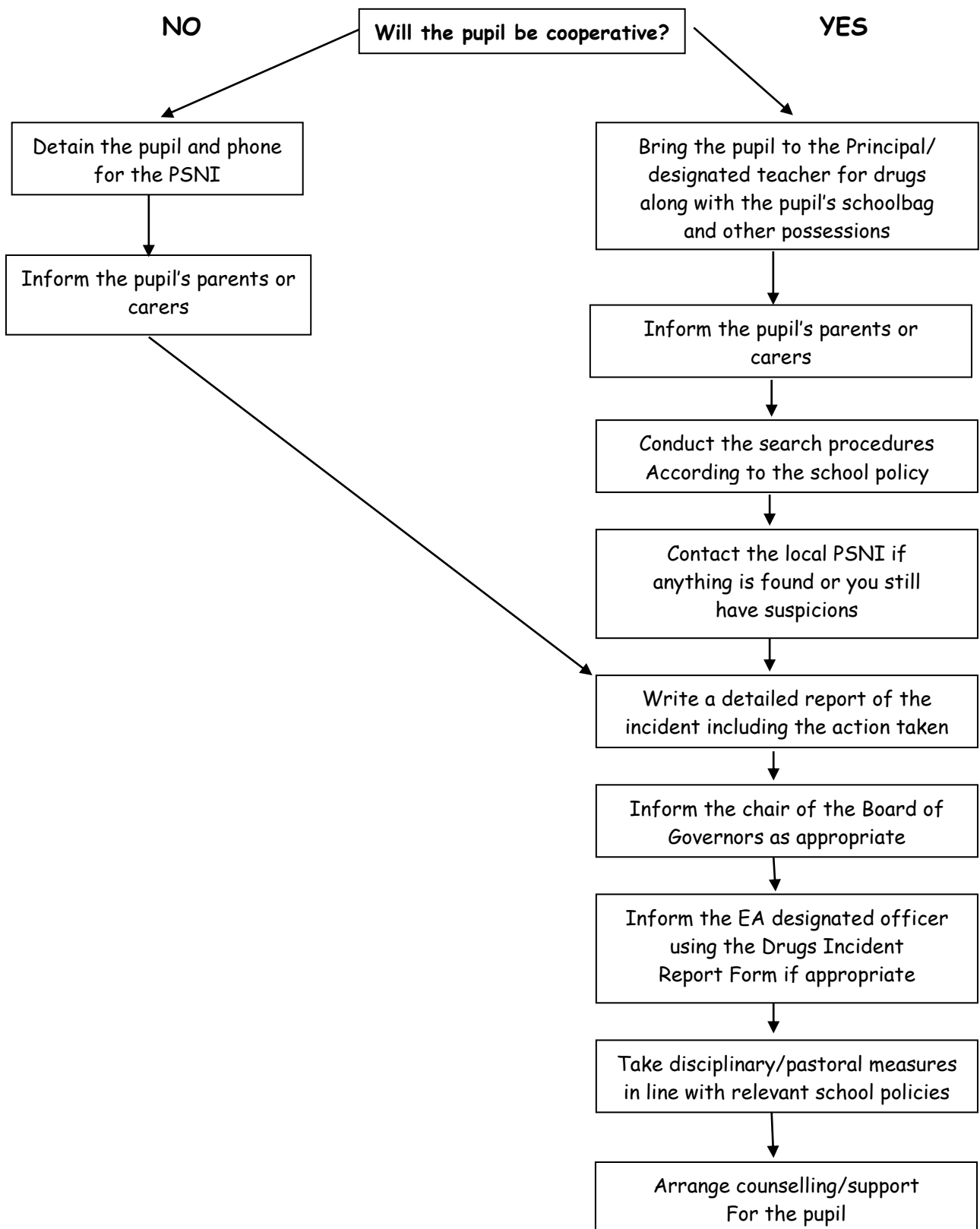
4.1 Finding a suspected substance or drug-related paraphernalia on or close to the school premises



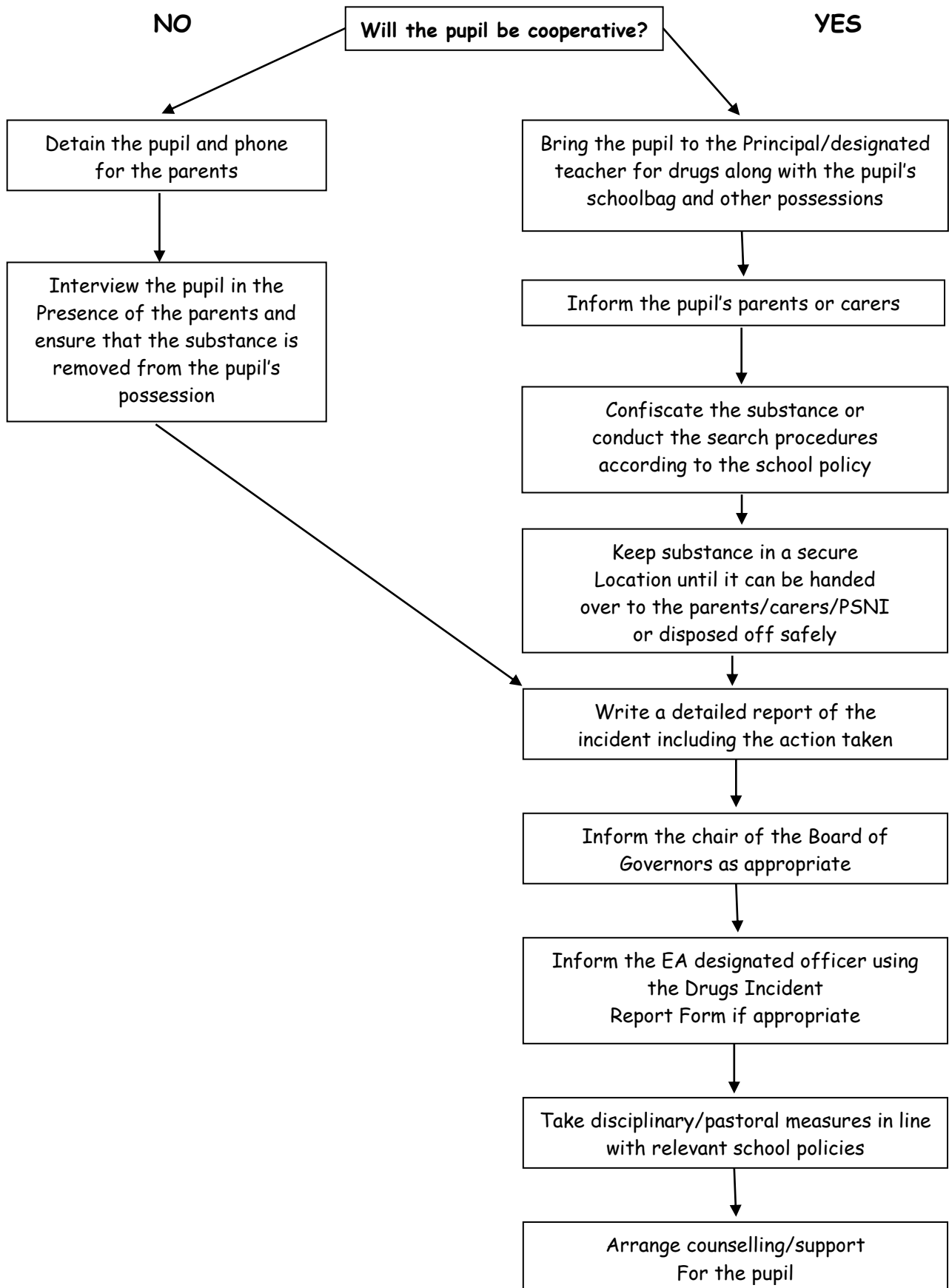
4.2 Pupil suspected of having taken drugs/alcohol on school premises



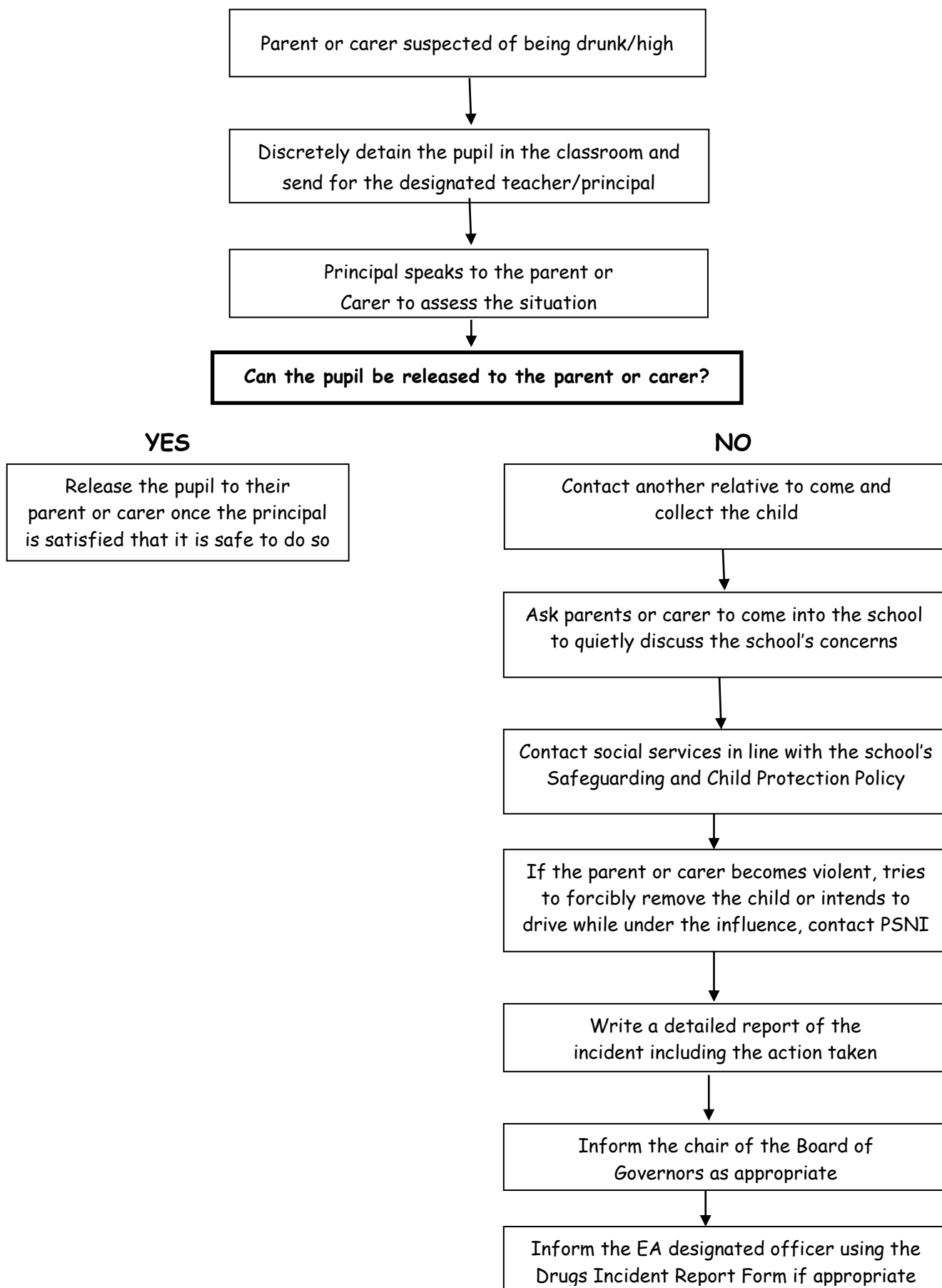
4.3 Pupil suspected of possessing/distributing an illegal substance



4.4 Pupil in possession of alcohol or unauthorised prescribed medication on the school premises



4.5 A parent or carer arrives at school to collect a child and appears to be under the influence of alcohol or another substance



Drugs Incident Report Form

| | |
|----|---|
| 1. | Name of Pupil _____ DOB _____ Address _____ _____ |
|----|---|

| | |
|----|--|
| 2. | Date of Incident _____ Reported by _____ Time of Incident _____ Location of Incident _____ _____ |
|----|--|

| | |
|----|---|
| 3. | First Aid given YES/NO Administered by _____ Ambulance/Doctor Called YES / NO Time of Call _____ |
|----|---|

| | |
|----|---|
| 4. | Parent or carer informed YES / NO ^[SEP] Date _____ Time _____ |
|----|---|

| | |
|----|---|
| 5. | Where substance is retained _____ or Date substance destroyed or passed to PSNI _____ Time _____ |
|----|---|

| | |
|----|--|
| 6. | PSNI informed YES / NO ^[SEP] Date _____ Time _____ |
|----|--|

| | |
|----|---|
| 7. | Education Authority or CCMS Designated Officer informed, as appropriate YES/NO Date _____ Time _____ |
|----|---|

| | |
|----|--|
| 8. | Form completed by _____ Date _____ Position _____ |
|----|--|

Description of the Incident

Actions taken

Incident form completed by

Date

Recognising Signs of Substance Use

What to look out for

If someone is having a bad time on drugs, they may be:

- anxious;
- tense;
- panicky;
- overheated and dehydrated;
- drowsy; or
- having difficulty with breathing. ^[L]_[SEP]

What to do ^[L]_[SEP]

The first things you should do are:

- stay calm;
- calm them and be reassuring, don't scare them or chase after them;
- try to find out what they've taken; and
- stay with them.

If they are anxious, tense or panicky, you should:

- sit them in a quiet and calm room;
- keep them away from crowds, bright lights and loud noises;
- tell them to take slow deep breaths; and
- stay with them.

If they are **really drowsy**, you should:

- sit them in a quiet place and keep them awake;
- if they become unconscious or don't respond, call an ambulance immediately and place them in the recovery position;
- don't scare them, shout at them or shock them;
- don't give them coffee to wake them up; and
- don't put them in a cold shower to 'wake them up'.

If they are **unconscious** or having difficulty breathing, you should:

- immediately phone for an ambulance;
- place them into the recovery position;
- stay with them until the ambulance arrives; and
- if you know what drug they've taken, tell the ambulance crew; this can help make sure that they get the right treatment straight away.

Emergency Procedures

This is the current best advice on what to do if someone is in difficulty because of misusing drugs.

- It is important to find out what they have taken as this could affect emergency aid, for example it will help the ambulance crew. Loosen clothing and call for an ambulance immediately.
- If the person has taken a depressant substance, for example solvents, alcohol, sleeping pills or painkillers, it is likely that they will be drowsy or unconscious. If the person is drowsy, it is important to try to keep them awake by talking to them or applying a cool damp cloth or towel to the back of their neck. You should not give them anything to eat or drink as this could lead to vomiting or choking.
- If they are or become unconscious, put them into the recovery position, clear their airway if blocked and keep checking on any changes to pulse and breathing rates.
- If they stop breathing, begin mouth-to-mouth resuscitation, starting with chest compressions. (If you have not been trained in CPR or are worried about giving mouth- to-mouth resuscitation to a stranger, you can do chest compression-only (or hands-only) CPR). Stay with the person until the ambulance crew arrive and then tell them all the facts, including what the person has taken. This is very important as it could save his or her life.
- If the person has taken a stimulant, such as amphetamines (speed) or ecstasy, they may show various signs of distress. If the person is panicking, try to reassure them. It is important that they calm down and relax. Get them to breathe in and out, deeply and slowly. Help them by counting aloud slowly. If they start to hyperventilate - that is they can't control their breathing - ask them to breathe in and out of a paper (not a plastic) bag, if there is one available.
- If the person has taken a hallucinogen, such as LSD, magic mushrooms or cannabis in combination with ecstasy, they may become very anxious, distressed and fearful. They may act in an unusual way. It is very important to reassure the person - tell them that you will look after them, that they are in no danger, that it is the effects of the substance and that these will soon wear off. You may want to take them to a quiet place, keep other people away and continue to reassure them. Just stay with them and talk calmly to them until the ambulance arrives.