

<u>Policy Title</u>	Learner Alcohol, Drugs and Weapons Policy
<u>Policy Category</u>	Compliant
<u>Owner</u>	Executive Director Quality
<u>Group Executive Lead</u>	Executive Director Quality
<u>Date Written</u>	Jan 2022
<u>Considered By</u>	Safeguarding Council
<u>Approved By</u>	Executive Committee
<u>Date Approved</u>	March 2022
<u>Equality Impact Assessment</u>	To include the outcome of the Equality Impact Assessment
<u>Freedom of Information</u>	This document will be publicly available through the Groups Publication Scheme.
<u>Review Date</u>	March 2025
<u>Policy Summary</u>	This is a new policy to make clear the arrangements for dealing with issues associated with alcohol, drugs and weapons in the case of learners, students and apprentices. It is complementary and underpins aspects of the NCG Safeguarding Policy and NCG Positive Student Behaviour Policy.

<u>Applicability of Policy</u>	<u>Consultation Undertaken</u>	<u>Applicable To</u>
Newcastle	Yes	Yes
Newcastle Sixth Form	Yes	Yes
Carlisle	Yes	Yes
Kidderminster	Yes	Yes
Lewisham	Yes	Yes
Southwark	Yes	Yes
West Lancashire	Yes	Yes
Professional Services	Yes	Yes

<u>Changes to Earlier Versions</u>	
<u>Previous Approval Date</u>	<u>Summarise Changes Made Here</u>
N/A	First version to support the NCG Positive Behaviour Policy for students

<u>Linked Documents</u>	
<u>Document Title</u>	<u>Relevance</u>
Safeguarding Policy	<i>Overarching approaches to safeguarding – applicable should an incident involving ADW also be sign of abuse, neglect or risk to the learner as both perpetrator and potential victim.</i>
NCG Positive Student Behaviour Policy	<i>Sets out the expectations for learners at NCG, both positive behaviours and sanctions where standards fall below expectations, including disciplinary measures that may be appropriate following the steps outlines within this policy.</i>
H&S policy	<i>Overarching approaches to H&S in accordance with national legislation.</i>
NCG Alcohol and Substance Misuse Policy	<i>Sets out the arrangements should a staff member be involved.</i>
NCG Staff Code of Conduct	<i>Sets out code of conduct of staff.</i>

Equality Impact Assessment

	Judgement	Explanatory Note if required
EIA 1 - Does the proposed policy/procedure align with the intention of the NCG Mission and EDIB Intent Statement in Section 2?	Yes	
EIA 2 - Does the proposed policy/procedure in any way impact unfairly on any protected characteristics below?		
Age	No	
Disability / Difficulty	No	
Gender Reassignment	No	
Marriage and Civil Partnership	No	
Race	No	
Religion or Belief	No	
Sex	No	
Sexual Orientation	No	
EIA3 - Does the proposed policy/processes contain any language/terms/references/phrasing that could cause offence to any specific groups of people or individuals?	No	
EIA4 - Does the policy/process discriminate or victimise any groups or individuals?	No	
EIA 5 - Does this policy/process positively discriminate against any group of people, or individuals?	No	
EIA 5 - Does this policy/process include any positive action to support underrepresented groups of people, or individuals?	No	Not in terms of protected characteristics, but policy does promote risk to those vulnerable to alcohol, drugs and weapons misuse.
EIA 6 - How do you know that the above is correct?	The policy has passed through the Safeguarding Council - a representative group of experienced managers in this aspect of our work.	

1. Statement of Intention

NCG is committed to providing a safe, supportive, healthy and secure environment for learners and staff. The Group believes that the misuse of alcohol and drugs is detrimental to the health and wellbeing of individuals and can affect the efficient working of the Colleges, its learners and staff. The concealment of weapons, whether as perceived protection from others, or with the intention to do harm will not be tolerated under any circumstances.

The possession, consumption or misuse of alcohol, drugs, drug paraphernalia or the illegal supply of these substances, and/or weapons/concealment of weapons in College is not condoned and there is a zero tolerance approach. The only exceptions to this rule are:

- The limited and controlled supply of alcohol through organised functions in College such as graduations/award ceremonies, to age-appropriate staff and learners, with prior approval from a member of the Senior Management Team.
- Consumption of alcohol in College restaurants and bistros by paying customers, in line with licensing rules, and the law.*

*Age appropriate learners should not be served alcohol if they are dining at the College restaurant/ bistro during their day of study (for example during a lunchtime break). Whilst this may be lawful, the policy practice is intended to ensure that students do not consume alcohol and then potentially operate equipment or machinery putting themselves, and others at risk.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Promote a safe and healthy environment in which teaching and learning can take place.
- Ensure a consistent approach to the management of drug related incidents.
- Clarify the legal requirements and responsibilities of the Colleges concerning the misuse of drugs.
- Enable students to make informed decisions about drug use.
- Prevent the adverse effects of drugs and assist with supporting and sign-posting learners with drug-related problems.

3. Legislative/Quality Framework

- Health and Safety at Work Act (1974).
- Misuse of Drugs Act (1971).
- Psychoactive Substances Act (2016).
- DfE Advice: [Searching, screening and confiscation for schools.](#)

4. Scope

This policy and procedures apply to all students of NCG, including:

- Those on subcontracted programmes.
- Within the learning environment of an external/community venue.
- When they are travelling to and from the College on College transport.
- On a College organised trip, placement or event/function.

5. Definitions

For the purposes of this policy, the following definitions will be used:

The term **learner** is used in its widest sense and includes all learners, whether young people aged 14-18, learners with specific high needs, apprentices, adult learners or higher education students.

The term **teacher** is used to describe all teaching and training staff, including teachers, lecturers, instructors, skills trainers, learning support practitioners, coaches/mentors, work experience coaches and teachers in managing positions.

Drugs: Illegal Class A, B and C drugs, alcohol, psychoactive substances, solvents (including aerosols, glue, cleaning and lighter fluid) and prescription medication that is not being used for the nature it was prescribed.

Drug paraphernalia: Button bags, grinders, bongs, stash jars/ containers, needles or similar items that could be linked to the use of drugs (possession/ supply).

External/Community Venues: Any venue not owned by the Group, where learning is delivered by staff.

Weapons: artefacts that are likely to be used to cause harm and are likely to be concealed (as opposed to in clear, supervised use for curriculum reasons) – including knives, pistols, screwdrivers, blades, martial arts equipment etc, fireworks.

ADW – occasionally refers to alcohol, drugs, weapons used for convenience in this policy.

DSL – designated safeguarding lead – trained staff in each college to deal with safeguarding concerns.

Vaping - the process of inhaling and exhaling vapour containing nicotine, and flavoured chemicals. Illegal vapes may contain banned substances such as THC/Spice bringing additional health concerns, in addition to those already present.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

6.1 It is the responsibility of the **College Leadership Team** to:

- Implement this policy and ensure appropriate personnel are in place to support its successful implementation.
- Take responsibility for handling drugs, alcohol and weapons related incidents reported in their area, in liaison with the Learner Services and Wellbeing Team.
- Follow clear procedures for taking disciplinary action with students fairly and consistently.
- Liaise with police if illegal drugs, including psychoactive substances (formally known as 'legal highs') are found.
- Provide adequate training to the team in charge of ensuring the elements of this policy are upheld.
- Provide adequate training to the wider staff body on general drug and alcohol awareness, including the links to mental health/ addiction/ financial aspects/ links to crime/ County Lines and the specialist support available locally, and nationally.

6.2 It is the responsibility of **Estates Manager** to:

- Support College staff if there are concerns regarding student possession or dealing of drugs including gathering evidence and talking to witnessing staff and/ or students.
- Ensure the security personnel/ duty managers are trained, deployed and visible and patrol all areas of College.
- Accurately record all instances of drug related incidents and concerns.
- Provide reports for the Leadership Team on drug related incidents.

6.3 It is the responsibility of **Director/Head of Department** to:

- Liaise with course and pastoral tutors to ensure that issues related to drug use are covered through the tutorial programme (full-time learners) or embedded within taught delivery, and that teaching staff are adequately resourced.
- Provide support for learners who disclose they (or a friend/ family member) are misusing drugs and refer to internal/ external agencies where appropriate.
- Follow appropriate safeguarding procedures if there is an immediate and significant risk of harm to a learner (or a friend/ family member) relating to drug misuse.

6.4 It is the responsibility of **All College Staff (including subcontractors)** to:

- Read and understand this Policy and related procedures.
- Take action, and report concerns if they observe, or are informed about drug misuse/ possession/ dealing/ concealed weapons.
- Refer learners who disclose they (or a friend/ family member) are misusing drugs, to the Wellbeing Team or equivalent.

7. The proactive use of deterrents including screening

The Group recognises that proactive education of learners alongside proactive deterrents makes for a safer learning environment. As such, in addition to well publicised policies, the Group will occasionally screen and search learners, visitors and staff. This will be done in accordance with DfE guidance [Searching, screening and confiscation at school - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/searching-screening-and-confiscation-at-school)

On random days throughout the academic year, the Colleges may screen students, staff and visitors. This will apply to all activity on main site and off site. This process must be well planned and the responsibility of the Principal, or designated lead.

Activity may include:

- Students, staff and visitors being asked to empty pockets and being screened via a security arch or handheld wand.
- Voluntary, or mandatory bag search with cause.
- Partnership work with local police.
- Drug dogs on site.

Associated staff (e.g. security personnel) will be fully trained and briefed, and any learners, or staff, refusing to be searched or any drugs, weapons or items found as part of the activity will be dealt with as per the Positive Student Behaviour Policy/ Safeguarding Policy/ NCG Alcohol Drugs and Weapons Policy. Staff refusing to do so will be referred to protocols within the NCG Staff Code of Conduct, and Alcohol and Substance Misuse policies.

8. 14-16 School Aged Pupils

- Any incidences or concerns involving school link pupils should be reported by the teaching staff member responsible for them in College, to the link staff member in the relevant partner school. Any immediate action should be taken in consultation with the school.
- Disciplinary/safeguarding action will be taken in liaison with school protocol wherever possible.

9. Appeals Procedure

Appeals against any disciplinary action for ADW incidents or activity fall in line with the appeals procedure in the Positive Student Behaviour Policy.

10. Dissemination

- **Dissemination to staff:** This policy will be referred to during safeguarding mandatory staff training every 2 years and a record of staff who have read the document is maintained by HR; the policy can be found on the NCG policy intranet and website, and the training can be accessed via the NCG People Portal.
- **Dissemination to learners:** This policy will be highlighted to learners via induction, with timely reminders delivered through tutorial/ course briefings. The expectations are also clear in the NCG Positive Student Behaviour Policy.

Appendix A - Procedures

1. Incidents may fall into one of the following categories (although the list is not exhaustive):

- Suspicion of being under the influence of drugs/ alcohol.
- Suspicion of the possession of drugs/alcohol.
- Suspicion of dealing drugs.
- Student disclosure that they or a family member/friend are misusing drug/alcohol.
- Discovery and confiscation of drugs/drug paraphernalia.

1.1. Suspicion of being under the influence of drugs, or alcohol

- This may involve witnessing or observing drug/alcohol use by learners, or evidence/ information from other students or staff. Useful information should be noted.
- There may be the smell of cannabis or alcohol on breath or clothing.
- Determine if there are physical signs and behaviours e.g. dilated pupils, inflamed or reddened eyes, slurred speech, confusion, giggling, vomiting, unable to stand upright or hyperactivity (if the learner is not well known to the staff member, it is useful to notify and take advice from a member of staff who teaches or supports them as the signs/ behaviours could be an indicator of existing conditions). Signs also include the learner not being aware of their surroundings, able to answer simple questions or take care of themselves.

Staff will need to make a judgement call here as the symptoms may not necessarily involve drugs or alcohol – however staff are asked to be vigilant/over protective/cautious, rather than dismissive.

Actions

- Establish their identification (Learner ID card) if not already known.
- Refer to the head of department/ security/ safeguarding team immediately who will instigate a temporary suspension; they will additionally consider any reputational risks and notify senior leads for marketing if required.
- If the learner capacity/ state is serious enough to warrant concern (e.g. very inebriated, 'high' or unconscious), a First Aider should be called for advice. Actions may include a call to the emergency services.
- The learner's parents/ carers/ family should be contacted and informed, and transport arranged with them to leave for the day (temporary suspension).

- No learner should be sent away from College if there is a risk to their safety.
- Record the incident on MyConcern, or eTrackr. Initially it may be prudent to log the incident on eTrackr (in line with Positive Behaviour Policy), however subsequent investigation may reveal underpinning safeguarding matters, which would be reported confidentially in MyConcern. If in doubt, consult with the DSL.
- Follow up with the student as appropriate on their return to College, in partnership with safeguarding leads – the latter is to ensure that we do not miss signs of abuse or criminal in root cause.
- Ensure that the learner is very clear of this policy and follow the appropriate step in the NCG Positive Behaviour Policy.
- Once the steps above are complete the learner can be removed from campus, if it is safe to do so – a parent/carer friend should be contacted if the learner is a young person; it may be appropriate to call a taxi for an adult as their/ College expense (discretion afforded to leadership teams).
- Consider other factors such as other learners who have observed the inappropriate incident (who may need support), or reputational impact – staff should discuss with College wellbeing or safeguarding teams if required, who can advise.

1.2. Suspicion of the possession of drugs

- This may involve witnessing or observing drugs/alcohol use by learners, or evidence/information from other learners or staff.
- Useful information should be noted e.g. description of people involved (learners and non-learners), dates, times, car registrations, observations, by all witnessing staff and/or learners.
- CCTV should be checked where possible to verify the information provided.

Actions

- Notify the Security Team or Head of Department and inform them of the suspicions.
- They will ask the individual to hand over the drugs in line with the College.
- If the learner does not hand over anything, where the evidence is considered to be sufficient, a member of staff authorised to Stop and Search may do so following DfE guidance (linked earlier in this policy).
- If alcohol, drugs or drug paraphernalia are found or handed over, the confiscation procedure (Appendix 1) must be followed.

- The police will be informed if illegal drugs/ psychoactive substances are found are found. The police will decide on any legal action
- Record the incident on MyConcern, or eTrackr. Initially it may be prudent to log the incident on eTrackr (in line with Positive Behaviour Policy), however subsequent investigation may reveal underpinning safeguarding matters, which would be reported confidentially in MyConcern. If in doubt, consult with the DSL.
- Follow up with the student as appropriate on their return to College ensuring that they are very clear of College policy and that they have also been offered support and that the Positive Student Behaviour Policy is followed
- Consider other factors such as other learners who have observed the inappropriate incident (who may need support), or reputational impact – staff should discuss with College wellbeing or safeguarding teams if required, who can advise.

1.3. Suspicion of dealing drugs/supply of alcohol

- This will involve witnessing behaviour which is clearly suspicious and conclusive.
- This may involve more inconclusive evidence/information from other learners or staff including the observation of exchanging small parcels.
- Useful information should be noted e.g. description of people involved (learners and non-learners), dates, times, car registrations, observations, by all witnessing staff and/ or learners.
- CCTV should be checked where possible to verify the information provided.

Actions

- Staff should report concerns to the Security Team immediately.
- Attempts should be made to identify all individuals involved, including non-learners (if applicable).
- Where evidence is considered to be sufficient, the NCG Positive Student Behaviour Policy will be followed.
- The police will be informed if illegal drugs/psychoactive substances are found are found. The police will decide on any legal action.
- Record the incident on MyConcern, or eTrackr. Initially it may be prudent to log the incident on eTrackr (in line with Positive Behaviour Policy), however subsequent investigation may reveal underpinning safeguarding matters, which would be reported confidentially in MyConcern. If in doubt, consult with the DSL.

Follow up with the student as appropriate on their return to College ensuring that they are very clear of College policy and that they have also been offered support and that the Positive Student Behaviour Policy is followed. Consider other factors such as other learners who have observed the inappropriate incident (who may need support), or reputational impact – staff should discuss with College wellbeing or safeguarding teams if required, who can advise.

1.4. Learner disclosure that they or a family member/friend are misusing drugs

- If a learner discloses to a member of staff that they or a family member/friend are misusing drugs and require help and support, the staff member should report this to the Designated Safeguarding Team/Wellbeing Team. Help and advice can be put in place, including referral to external services, personal support and counselling.
- Such disclosures may remain confidential, unless it becomes apparent that there may be an immediate and significant risk of harm to the learner or family member/friends, particularly if they are under 18 years old. Appropriate safeguarding procedures will be followed by the Designated Safeguarding Team/ Wellbeing Team.

1.5. Discovery and Confiscation of Drugs/Drug Paraphernalia

- Staff should report the incident promptly to Security who will remove the drugs/ alcohol.
- If drugs have not been discovered through student possession Security will investigate, using CCTV where necessary, speaking to any staff/learners in the vicinity.
- 'Legal highs', solvents, drugs paraphernalia and alcohol (along with containers) will be disposed of.
- Sharp or potentially contaminated items should not be handled without the appropriate equipment or personal protective clothing.
- Illegal drugs will be stored safely and securely by a designated senior manager and handed over to the police as soon as possible. The designated senior leader will usually be the Vice Principal Quality, Head of Learner Services, Head of Estates, or the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Appendix B - Procedures for External Sites, Placement and trips

Teachers and staff who teach at external or community venues should consider the safety of themselves and other learners when addressing issues of concern regarding drugs.

The teacher/staff member responsible for the supervision of learners should raise any issues of concern regarding drugs with the learner, as they arise. If there is cause to believe a learner has drugs in their possession and/or is showing signs of being under the influence of drugs, the member of staff can ask the learner to leave the learning environment. A follow up discussion will be carried out by the teacher/ staff member responsible so that the learner is aware of the consequences of their actions.

If the learner refuses to leave, the teacher/staff member responsible may take the decision to contact the police. If the safety of the teacher/staff, other learners or anyone in the immediate vicinity is at risk, the teacher/staff member should contact their emergency contact, Head of Curriculum/Department, a Senior Manager or the Duty Manager for advice. It may be that the safest course of action is to end the session until appropriate action has been actioned.

As per the standard procedures for main site please also:

- Record the incident on MyConcern, or eTrackr. Initially it may be prudent to log the incident on eTrackr (in line with Positive Behaviour Policy), however subsequent investigation may reveal underpinning safeguarding matters, which would be reported confidentially in MyConcern. If in doubt, consult with the DSL.
- Follow up with the student as appropriate on their return to College, in partnership with safeguarding leads – the latter is to ensure that we do not miss signs of abuse or criminal in root cause.
- Ensure that the learner is aware and clear as to the existence of this policy and follow the appropriate step in the NCG Positive Behaviour Policy.

College organised trips/external events

- Learners must not consume or have in their possession any ADWs on a College organised trip or during an external event.
- **Possession:** If there are reasonable grounds to suspect that a learner may have ADWs in their possession, the Trip or Event Leader can ask a student to turn out his/ her pockets or ask if the staff member can look in the student's bag or possessions
- A minimum of two staff members must be present including one of the same sex as the learner.
- If the learner does not consent to a search, the Trip or Event Leader may take the decision to contact the police, considering the suspected item and legality of possession.
- If items are found, these should be confiscated and the confiscation procedure followed as soon as is practicable.

- **Under the Influence:** If there are reasonable grounds to suspect that a learner is under the influence of drugs or alcohol, the learner must be supervised by a member of staff for the remainder of the trip. If the learner is still under the influence on return to College, they should be collected by a parent/carers, next of kin or responsible adult
- If the trip is a residential, the learner must be supervised by a member of staff until they have the capacity to care for themselves (e.g. not vomiting, able to stand upright without support, not at risk of injury, fully conscious, able to answer simple questions and aware of surroundings)
- Every effort should be made, and as soon as is reasonably practicable, to contact the parents/carers of learners aged 16-17 years to inform them of the situation and that they are being cared for by College staff

As per the standard procedures for main site please also:

- Record the incident on MyConcern, or eTrackr. Initially it may be prudent to log the incident on eTrackr (in line with Positive Behaviour Policy), however subsequent investigation may reveal underpinning safeguarding matters, which would be reported confidentially in MyConcern. If in doubt, consult with the DSL.
- Follow up with the student as appropriate on their return to College, in partnership with safeguarding leads – the latter is to ensure that we do not miss signs of abuse or criminal in root cause.
- Ensure that the learner is aware and clear as to the existence of this policy and follow the appropriate step in the NCG Positive Behaviour Policy.

Apprentices/work placement learners

- Learners must not have ADW in their possession, or consume whilst on any work placement, regardless of whether it is a paid or unpaid placement and regardless of the age of the learner.
- Depending on the organisation/employer, alcohol may be served e.g. service enterprises such as restaurants, hotels, hair/beauty salons. The responsibilities of the employer and expectations of the student will be covered during induction. Learners under the age of 18 will not be permitted to serve alcohol on work placement. Learners/apprentices must not consume alcohol whilst working or training – should an exception be required for example use of small amounts of alcohol in cooking/ tasting – a risk assessment will need to be in place.
- If the employer has reasonable grounds to suspect that a learner has drugs in their possession, they may ask the learner to leave the premises or contact the police, taking into account the suspected drugs and legality of possession. They should contact the College link immediately.
- If the employer has a drug and alcohol policy (including testing protocols), stop and search policy or similar, this must be covered in the placement induction and/or included in the contract of employment.

- Any concerns during placement by the employer should be referred back to the relevant programme or course leaders, and follow the NCG Positive Behaviour Policy. The programme/course leader should seek advice from senior leaders, or the Designated Safeguarding Team/Wellbeing Team should they be unsure as to next steps.
- Apprentices will have regular progress reviews in the workplace and most will attend College for day, or block release – should they have any concerns they must discuss it with the relevant and/ or tutor.

Appendix C - Screening, Searching and Confiscation of Weapons

There is clear guidance issued to schools by the DfE and in the absence of national College for the post-16 sector, NCG has adopted this for our colleges.

The detail is available [here](#) and is not repeated in NCG format, as all guidance should be followed.

General principles:

- Learners can be searched if the principal authorises a designated member of staff to do so, provided they have reasonable grounds.
- Authorised staff must be trained and deemed competent.
- Staff engaging in the search and confiscation must be aware of the potential for harm to the learner, other learners, themselves and others in the vicinity of the search.
- If in doubt, and the threat is significant, the police should be called.

Authorised Staff Roles at NCG's Colleges

College	Authorised Staff Roles
Carlisle College	Security Team / Estates
Kidderminster College	Security Team / Estates
Lewisham College	Security Team / Estates
Newcastle College	Security Team / Estates
Newcastle Sixth Form College	Security Team / Estates
Southwark College	Security Team / Estates
West Lancashire College	Security Team / Estates



Appendix D - Example curriculum planning tool

Good education shouldn't be reserved just for tutorial sessions and induction. Tutors should use the example planner below to help promote the dangers of alcohol, drug use and concealment/use of weapons throughout the year for the maximum benefit to students.

Specific Curriculum Area	Carlisle College	Kidderminster College	Lewisham College	Newcastle College	Newcastle Sixth College	Southwark College	West Lancashire College
Alcohol – general awareness							
Drugs – general awareness							
Smoking and vaping							
Digital addiction/social media							
Gambling (addiction, risks)							
Drink/drug driving							
Festivals and Nightlife							
Drink spiking							
Drug possession/suppling and the law							
Specific focus on dangers associated with a relevant drug the College is concerned about e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cannabis Cocaine 							

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<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Xanax (or other prescription meds)• Nitrous oxide• Psychoactive substances							
Addictive behaviour and local support							