

Substance and Alcohol Policy

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Record of changes

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Introduction to Substance and Alcohol Policy

Aims

The Outdoor Group (TOG) aims to provide a healthy and safe environment for learners, staff, and visitors (this includes protection from second-hand smoke). In addition to this, TOG has a responsibility to ensure that staff are modelling the positive behaviours that others, staff, and learners included, can aspire to by adhering to the policy.

This policy aims to ensure that staff, visitors, and service users who legally can and wish to smoke (or use e-cigarettes) are clear about TOG's policy and approach towards this.

Scope

This policy applies to all employees of TOG, service users, visitors, volunteers, contractors, agency staff and other persons who enter the grounds and premises, including during events and activities off-site. It encompasses the use, possession, distribution, and influence of the following:

- Cigarettes and vapes (and other tobacco products)
- Alcohol
- Medication (over the counter and prescribed)
- Illegal drugs

Employees and other individuals representing TOG must also be aware of their responsibilities when working away from TOG grounds. Smoking is not permitted when working on official TOG business.

TOG respects the rights of staff who wish to smoke or use e-cigarettes and has therefore provided guidance about how staff are able to do this.

Related Policies

- [Staff Code of Conduct](#)
- [Employee Handbook](#)
- [Visitor Policy](#)

Implementing the Policy - Employer's Responsibilities

The TOG leadership including Middle Management Team (MMT) have overall responsibility for implementing and evaluating the policy. The SLT & MMT have responsibility for ensuring that the policy is adhered to within TOG and must strive for effective and consistent application. All employees have a responsibility to ensure this guidance is implemented.

Employees should be made fully aware of the policy in their induction.

Tenders and contracts will stipulate adherence to this Policy as a contractual condition.

Implementing the Policy - Employee's Responsibility

It is the responsibility of each individual employee to familiarise themselves with and uphold and comply with the policy and the law. Persistently acting in contravention of the policy is a matter which will be dealt with through the disciplinary procedure.

Individual members of staff are responsible for informing their visitors of the policy.

If you are concerned that anyone is misusing drugs, medication and/or are excessively consuming alcohol, refer to the table below for the correct person to contact.

Reporter	Who to contact
Staff	TOG SLT
Learner	Any TOG staff member
Parent or carer	Designated Safeguarding Lead
Outside agency/contractor	Any TOG staff member

Cigarettes, e-Cigarettes & Other Tobacco Products

Restrictions on TOG sites

When the term smoking is used in the policy this refers to cigarettes, vaping (e-cigarettes) and any tobacco products. In line with The Health Act 2006 and the Smoke-free (Premises and Enforcement) Regulations 2006, smoking is not permitted in any part of TOG workplace, TOG grounds, TOG vehicles or any other establishments in the control of TOG except for the designated smoking areas and/or times.

Where TOG premises are used for purposes other than TOG related activities, the TOG smoking policy will remain in operation.

TOG does not provide any amenities which will aid or help employees to smoke. To ensure equity amongst smokers and non-smokers, any smoking breaks must be agreed with the line manager / site lead and taken in one's own time and recorded as such. Staff who wish to smoke may do so if it is in their own time during their official breaks, such as lunch breaks.

Smoking is not permitted within 10 metres of TOG buildings, and grounds. The only exception to this is if there is a signposted designated area and must not be in sight of service users under the legal age.

All staff who smoke are reminded they are responsible for the safe disposal of smoke – related litter and to be respectful of other non-TOG premises and members of the public when choosing to smoke.

Anyone observed smoking in an inappropriate area should be politely asked to extinguish all smoking materials. They should be advised of the acceptable places to smoke. If the request is ignored, refer to the appropriate line manager.

Offsite responsibilities

Employees and other individuals representing TOG must also be aware of their responsibilities when working away from TOG grounds. Smoking is not permitted when working on official TOG business unless within a designated area and time and must not be in sight of service users under the legal age.

If visiting the home of a family/parent/learner who smokes, staff should refrain from smoking during the visit/meeting.

Support to Stop Smoking

TOG recognises that smoking is an addiction and is committed to supporting staff in smoking cessation and from abstaining from smoking during working hours.

Support can be found here:

- Millions of people have used NHS Smokefree online support to help them stop smoking. Choose from an app, email, SMS, and face-to-face guidance. (<https://www.nhs.uk/better-health/quit-smoking/>)
- Your own GP practice - please note that not all GP's offer this service.
- Your local pharmacy - please note that not all pharmacies offer this service.

Substances

The Company is committed to maintaining a healthy, safe, and productive environment for its employees and service users. The Company recognises the impact that drugs and alcohol may have on an individual's ability to work and learn safely and correctly and aims to ensure an environment free from the inappropriate use of substances.

Procedure around Drugs Related Incidents

Reporting

All incidents involving drugs and alcohol should be treated as safeguarding concerns and should be reported as soon as possible:

Recording

All incidents involving drugs should be recorded as a disclosure following our safeguarding procedure.

Confiscating

Anyone suspected of possessing any drugs or drug related paraphernalia will be questioned and TOG will follow the correct legal protocol, which may involve removing the person(s) from site and/or confiscating the materials.

Informing

All drugs related incidents that occur suggest a need for underlying education. A need for counselling and education will be identified by leadership and sought in conjunction with parents, carers, and other professionals.

Alcohol

Being under the influence of alcohol at work is not permitted. Alcohol may not be consumed during working hours, lunchtime or break times where service users are present.

Alcohol may be consumed at company sponsored events with prior approval from management. If staff choose to drink alcohol, they are expected to consume alcohol responsibly and in moderation.

Illegal Drugs

At the Outdoors Group Ltd, we feel that creating safe environments which discourage the use of drugs enable us to help learners understand how to make healthy choices and promote positive behaviours.

Possession or use of drugs and illicit substances should always be viewed as a Safeguarding and Welfare issue primarily and TOG will seek to place their safeguarding duties at the heart of any response to such incidents.

Medication at Work (Staff Only)

Many prescribed medications and over the counter medicines can have an adverse effect on the ability to work. Therefore, employees must always check that they can still work safely before taking any medication.

- Prohibited use of any of the substances below (at any time during working time, during any breaks and/or before work) whenever their work performance might be affected by such use, are including (but not limited to):
 - substances covered by the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 (referred to as 'controlled drugs')
 - solvents and/or any other similar substances as a means of achieving an altered state of mind or consciousness
 - new psychotropic substances, psychoactive drugs, and new psychoactive substances (even where these may not be banned under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971)

If you are prescribed medication by your doctor, you must immediately discuss this with a Line Manager and provide confirmation from your doctor as to any side effects if:

- such medication may affect your ability to carry out your duties and/or drive; and/or
- such medication is covered by the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971.

This will apply whether there is any actual threat to health and safety.

The misuse of medication by employees is inappropriate. Illegal dispensing, distributing, possessing, using, selling, or offering to buy any drugs at work by any employee is prohibited. This includes controlled drugs, 'legal highs' or substances such as solvents where it is known, or could be known, to be for use as a means of achieving an altered state of mind or consciousness.

Any such activity (including reasonable suspicion of it) on Company premises will be reported immediately to the police. If you are found to be in breach of the rules in this section, you will be liable to dismissal on the grounds of gross misconduct under the Company's disciplinary procedures.

For the avoidance of doubt, using a controlled drug prescribed by a doctor shall not be treated as gross misconduct. However, you must comply with the notification requirements above and the requirements of any relevant risk assessment and failure to do so could result in disciplinary proceedings being brought against you.

Examination and Testing (Staff Only)

If the Company suspects that there has been a breach of the above provisions, or suspects that an employee's work performance or conduct has been affected through drug or alcohol use, the Company may at its discretion require the employee to undergo a medical examination to determine the cause of the problem.

To assist in the effective implementation of this policy, the Company also **reserves the right** to have drug or alcohol testing conducted at its discretion on any employee or employees. The reasons the Company may choose to conduct such testing include, but are not limited to the list below:

- Where there is a suspicion on the part of a manager that drugs and/or alcohol may have been used by an employee and their work performance is affected by such use.
- Following a criminal conviction which relates to drugs or alcohol including activities which have taken place outside of the workplace.
- Following an accident in a Company vehicle or a vehicle in working time.
- Following any accident or near miss in working time.
- Following an incident resulting in damage to Company property.

Following a report from a member of the public of dangerous driving in a Company vehicle. The Company also reserves the right to conduct random drug or alcohol testing of any employees at its discretion.

Such tests can be administered by a third party instructed by the employer or by an employee within the Company and could include (but not limited to) using a standard breathalyser, oral fluid device or a urine test.

If you are required to undergo testing, you will be expected to sign a written consent to be tested. Failure to give consent, or refusal to supply a required sample, including what is deemed to be an unreasonable failure to provide a sample as required, will be deemed to be a failure to comply with a reasonable management instruction and will normally be treated as gross misconduct, entitling the Company to take disciplinary action.