

Alcohol, Smoking & Substance Abuse Policy

Date of policy review:	September 2026
Date for review:	September 2027
Lead for review:	Deputy Head Pastoral & Boarding

Contents

Contents.....	2
Preface	3
Purpose	3
Definitions.....	4
Drug Education in the curriculum	4
Approach to Drug and Alcohol Management.....	5
Immediate Actions in Boarding	6
The role of the Police	6
Parents/ Carers under the influence of drugs on School premises	7
Staff Training and Conduct	7
Student Support and Confidentiality	7
Monitoring and Review.....	7
Related documents:.....	8
Appendices	9
Appendix 1: External Agencies (National).....	9
Appendix 2: GUIDE TO AND ACTIONS IN LIGHT OF BREATH ALCOHOL CONTENT (BRAC).....	10
Appendix 3: FLOWCHARTS: Response to Boarding Incidents guidance.....	11

Preface

At Guildhouse School, safeguarding the wellbeing of our students is fundamental to who we are and underpins our core values: *Aim High, Work Hard, Be Kind*. We believe that a healthy, safe, and supportive environment is essential for all students to reach their full potential. This policy reflects our zero-tolerance stance on the misuse of alcohol and substances, while also offering education, guidance, and care to help students make responsible and informed choices.

Guildhouse School London actively seeks to provide an environment where every member of the community is safe from harm. We are committed to protecting, supporting, and educating our students around drug-related issues, including alcohol, nicotine, and other substances. Students are encouraged to respect their bodies, build resilience, and make positive, health-promoting decisions.

The school plays an essential role in developing attitudes and behaviours that empower students to lead healthy lifestyles. We foster an open, trusting atmosphere where students feel confident to discuss concerns, while learning about the realities and risks associated with drug use and misuse.

Guildhouse School reserves the right to enforce a zero-tolerance approach to the possession, use, or supply of illegal or unauthorised substances. These have no place within our community. Where needed, incidents will be treated as medical emergencies, and appropriate care and support will be provided. The school will follow the Safeguarding Policy as appropriate.

This policy has been developed in line with current Department for Education guidance and statutory safeguarding requirements, including:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026
- Searching, Screening and Confiscation Advice for Schools
- Relationships, Sex and Health Education guidance
- Relevant guidance concerning drugs, alcohol, vaping and substance misuse

This policy should be read alongside the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Student Behaviour Policy, Searching, Screening and Confiscation Policy, School & Boarding Handbook and Health & Safety arrangements.

Purpose

This policy applies to staff, students, parents/carers, and partner agencies working with the school and within its perimeters, including:

- Journeys during school time
- Work experience
- Residential trips
- During and outside the school day, including residential accommodation

The overall responsibility for managing drug-related issues lies with the Headteacher, who oversees drug education and the management of drug-related incidents in accordance with this policy.

All staff must be aware of the procedures for managing incidents, including whom to inform and the authority regarding searches, reporting, and involving the police.

Definitions

A drug is defined as any substance that alters the way a person feels, thinks, or behaves. For the purposes of this policy, "drugs" include:

- Illegal drugs (as defined by the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971)
- Legal drugs, including alcohol, tobacco (including e-cigarettes), and volatile substances (e.g., substances giving off a gas or vapour that can be inhaled)
- Over the counter and prescription medicine
- CBD Oil: Students using legal CBD oil within the UK threshold (0.2% THC) will not trigger a positive drugs test at Guildhouse School London, provided recommended doses are adhered to.
- The term also includes vaping devices, disposable vapes, nicotine pouches, nitrous oxide, psychoactive substances, anabolic steroids, misuse of prescription medicines and any other substance intended to alter mood, perception, behaviour or physical state.

Drug Education in the curriculum

Drug education is a core element of drug prevention, designed to minimise drug use, delay onset of first use, reduce harm, and enable those with concerns to seek help.

Aims of Drug Education:

- Increase knowledge and understanding about:
 - The effects and risks of drug use
 - Drug laws and rules
 - The impact of drug use on individuals, families, and communities
 - Moral, social, and political issues surrounding drugs
- Develop skills to:
 - Make informed decisions and stay safe
 - Resist pressure
 - Seek help and advice
 - Manage risks and develop self-awareness
- Explore attitudes towards drugs and drug users to challenge stereotypes and social influences.

Drug education is taught as part of the PSHE curriculum in a safe and supportive environment. Methods may include active learning approaches, such as group work, debates, simulations, and interactive ICT. External contributors will be vetted in line with the Visiting Speakers Policy.

Drug education is an entitlement for every student and is supported by Section 351, of the Education Act 1966 which requires every school to provide a balanced curriculum which:

- Promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of students at the school and of society.
- Prepares students at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult

life.

Approach to Drug and Alcohol Management

Proactive Prevention

- Regular workshops, assemblies, and guest speakers will educate students on the risks of substance misuse.
- Drug education will be integrated into science, PSHE, and social studies curricula to provide a comprehensive understanding.
- Mental health and wellbeing support will be available for students experiencing difficulties, including access to the Welfare Team, school counsellors, and external services.

Managing Drug and Alcohol Incidents

Drug incidents may include:

- A student, staff member, or parent appearing under the influence of drugs or alcohol
- A student in possession of drugs or paraphernalia
- Suspected supply of drugs or alcohol on school premises
- Disclosures of drug misuse by a student or their family
- Discovery and/or use of drugs or paraphernalia on school premises

Procedures:

Initial Safeguarding: All incidents will initially be treated as safeguarding concerns and reported to the DSL or DDSL, or a member of SLT without delay.

1. **Addressing Immediate Risks:** Administer first aid and summon emergency services if required.
2. **Searches:** Conducted in accordance with the Screening, Searching, and Confiscation Policy.
3. **Testing:** Students may be subject to drug or alcohol testing. The school reserves the right to administer a drugs test without warning if a student is suspected of having consumed any drugs. Any testing will be conducted lawfully, proportionately and in accordance with school procedures, safeguarding requirements and any relevant consent arrangements. The welfare of the student will remain the primary consideration throughout.

Follow-Up Actions:

A thorough investigation will determine the severity of the incident and the appropriate response. Factors to consider include:

- The nature of the drug (legal or illegal), how it was being used and quantity involved
- The student's account of what happened
- Witnesses' accounts
- The student's motivation, home circumstance and knowledge of the risks
- Evidence of habitual or organised supply
- The impact on the wider school community
- If supply of illegal drugs is suspected, how much was supplied, and was the student coerced

into the supply role?

Responses will balance individual needs with the wellbeing of the school community and may include:

- Counselling or referral to specialist services
- Pastoral support programmes
- Behaviour support plans or inter-agency programmes
- Exclusion (fixed-term or permanent) in serious cases
- A managed move

Drug, alcohol and substance misuse concerns may indicate wider safeguarding risks, including exploitation, coercion, criminal exploitation, county lines activity, mental health concerns, neglect, peer-on-peer abuse or vulnerability. Such concerns will be considered as part of safeguarding risk assessment and referrals where appropriate.

All students are made aware each year that Guildhouse School London reserves the right to impose a zero-tolerance policy, particularly for possession or use of illegal drugs. In any case, the school disciplinary process is adhered to, with permanent exclusion as a possible consequence.

Immediate Actions in Boarding

If a student is suspected of consuming drugs or alcohol during boarding hours:

- The DSL or Assistant Head of Boarding must assess the risk and, if necessary, remove the student from the area.
- If removal is not possible, call the Headteacher immediately.
- In cases of suspected alcohol consumption, the student should be breathalysed to assess the level of consumption. Actions should then align with Appendix 2.
- Refusal to be breathalysed may lead to actions in line with the highest levels of consumption.
- During daytime hours, concerns should be reported to the DSL.

The school recognises that many students are living away from home and may come from countries with differing legal, cultural and social attitudes towards alcohol, tobacco, vaping and drugs. Educational and pastoral support will therefore include awareness of UK law, safeguarding expectations, personal responsibility and preparation for adult life.

The role of the Police

Legal Drugs:

The police will not expect to be routinely involved in incidents involving legal drugs, but the school will inform the police about the inappropriate sale or supply of tobacco, alcohol or volatile substances to students in the local area.

Illegal Drugs:

Guildhouse School London has no legal obligation to report an incident involving drugs to the police. If other agencies/ the Police should, however, be involved, the Senior Leadership Team will report.

Police Interviews:

In the event of a student being arrested, a responsible adult needs to be present with the student.

Searches

All searches will be conducted lawfully, proportionately and in accordance with current Department for Education guidance, including Searching, Screening and Confiscation advice, and the school's Searching, Screening and Confiscation Policy.

Parents/ Carers under the influence of drugs on School premises

If a parent/carer appears under the influence on school premises, staff will prioritise the child's welfare, as outlined in the Safeguarding Policy.

When a member of staff suspects that they are dealing with parents/carers under the influence of drugs on school premises, a member of the senior leadership team must be called immediately.

The focus for staff will always be the maintenance of the child's welfare, as opposed to the moderation of parent's/carer's behaviour. Any incident involving concern for the safety of a child must be treated as a safeguarding concern and staff must follow the school Safeguarding Policy.

Staff Training and Conduct

- All staff will undergo regular training on identifying drug misuse and understanding intervention strategies.
- Staff must not consume alcohol or misuse substances while in charge of students.
- Misconduct will be addressed according to the Staff Substance Misuse Policy.
- Staff should offer or direct students to information and advice concerning the services available to students who are experiencing misuse problems.
- Staff should encourage a positive approach to health and wellbeing.
- Staff are to ensure there is no misuse of drugs/alcohol at any time and particular attention is to be paid at social functions, events or presentations.

Student Support and Confidentiality

- Students should be able to seek help if they have a problem within the school and accommodation from the Welfare Team (including the School Nurse and Student Wellbeing Counsellor, teaching staff or houseparents).
- Students should be encouraged to support peers to seek help if they have a problem or alert or cooperate with appropriate members of staff they see developing within the school
- Students will be provided with information about local and national help services.
- Confidentiality will be respected but may be overridden in cases of safeguarding or legal obligations.
- Students should be made aware that staff cannot offer unconditional confidentiality and that safeguarding concerns relating to substance misuse will be shared with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, where necessary, to protect the welfare of the student or others.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or as needed to remain in line with legal requirements, DfE

guidance, and the needs of the school community. The school will assess its effectiveness through incident analysis, student feedback, and consultation with parents and staff.

Related documents:

- Student Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Searching, Screening and Confiscation Policy
- Visiting Speakers Policy

Appendices

Appendix 1: External Agencies (National)

Drugs	Smoking/Vaping	Alcohol
National drugs helpline 0800 776 600 (24 hour)	NHS Smoking Support https://www.nhs.uk/better-health/quit-smoking/	Alcohol Change 020 3907 8480 www.alcoholchange.org.uk
Talk to Frank https://www.talktofrank.com/	NHS helpline 111	Drinkaware 020 7504 8217 (24-hour free helpline) https://www.drinkaware.co.uk/
Re-solv 01785 810 762 Information service on all aspects of solvent abuse Solvent abuse advice and support - Re-Solv: UK's solvent abuse charity	Change Grow Live (CGL) https://www.changegrowlive.org/	Al –Anon 0800 0086 811 Gives free confidential advice and support to people who must live with someone else's drinking. https://al-anonuk.org.uk/
Adfam 020 3817 9410 Gives free confidential advice and support to friends and family of drug users https://adfam.org.uk/families/	NHS Live Well: Vaping https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/quit-smoking/using-e-cigarettes-to-stop-smoking/	WithYou Provide free, confidential support to people facing challenges with drugs, alcohol or mental health. Drug and Alcohol Support www.wearewithyou.org.uk)

Appendix 2: GUIDE TO AND ACTIONS IN LIGHT OF BREATH ALCOHOL CONTENT (BRAC)

mg/l = .10 = Drinkers begin to feel moderate effects.

mg/l = .20 = Most people begin to feel relaxed, mildly euphoric, sociable, and talkative.

mg/l = .25 = Judgment, attention, and control are somewhat impaired. Ability to drive safely begins to be limited. Sensory-motor and finer performance are impaired. People are less able to make rational decisions about their capabilities (for example, about driving.)

mg/l = .35 = This is legal level for intoxication in the UK. There is a definite impairment of muscle coordination and driving skills.

Students should be informed of college rules/ procedure and sent to room for the rest of the evening. Monitored and checked again in 1 hour time.

mg/l = .45 = This is legally drunk. There is a clear deterioration of reaction time and control.

mg/l = .50 - .70 = Vomiting usually occurs, unless this level is reached slowly or a person has developed a tolerance to alcohol. Drinkers are drowsy.

Drinkers display emotional instability, loss of critical judgment, impairment of perception, memory, and comprehension. Lack of sensor-motor coordination and impaired balance are typical. Decreased sensory responses and increased reaction times develop. The vision is significantly impaired, including limited ability to see detail, peripheral vision, and slower glare recovery.

Student should be escorted to their room and asked to remain there for the rest of the evening. Monitored and checked again in 1 hour time.

mg/l = .70 = This level means the equivalent of 1/2 pint of whiskey is circulating in the blood stream.

mg/l = .80 – 1.20 = Drinkers are disoriented, confused, dizzy, and have exaggerated emotional states. Vision is disturbed, as is perception of colour, form, motion, and dimensions.

Drinkers have increased pain threshold and lack of muscular coordination. Drinkers stagger or lose the ability to walk and have slurred speech. Apathy and lethargy are typical.

Student should be escorted to their room and asked to remain for the rest of the evening. Monitored and checked hourly throughout the night. If condition worsens – Emergency services need to be called.

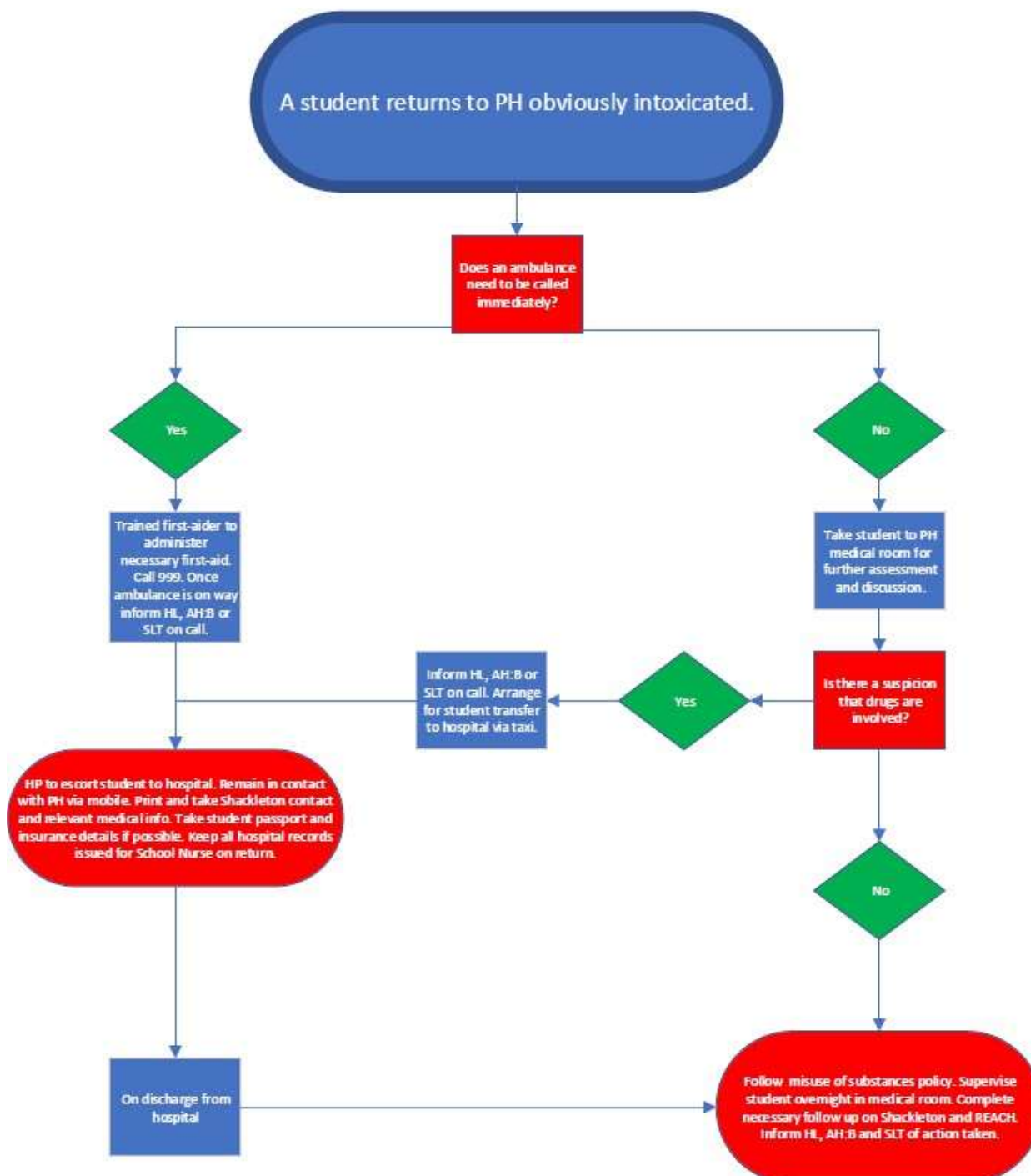
mg/l = 1.20 – 1.40 = Drinkers display general inertia, near total loss of motor functions, little response to stimuli, inability to stand or walk, vomiting, and incontinence. Drinkers may lose consciousness or fall into a stupor.

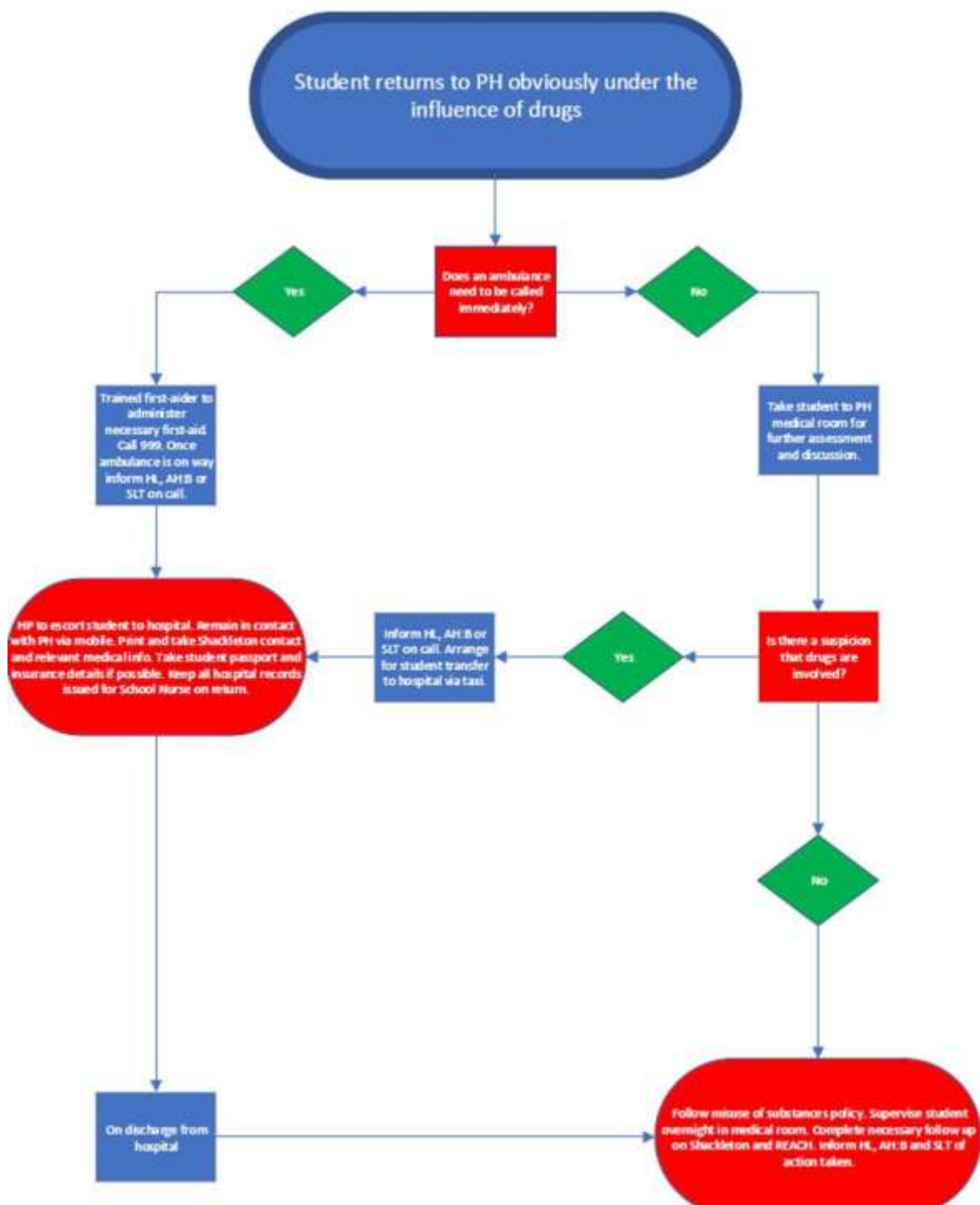
mg/l = 1.40 and over = Symptoms are complete unconsciousness, depressed or absent reflexes, subnormal body temperature, incontinence, and impairment of circulation and respiration.

Death may occur at 1.60 or higher.

Emergency services need to be called and advice from them documented and followed.

Appendix 3: FLOWCHARTS: Response to Boarding Incidents guidance







GUILDHOUSE SCHOOL
LONDON



Creating tomorrow's change makers.