

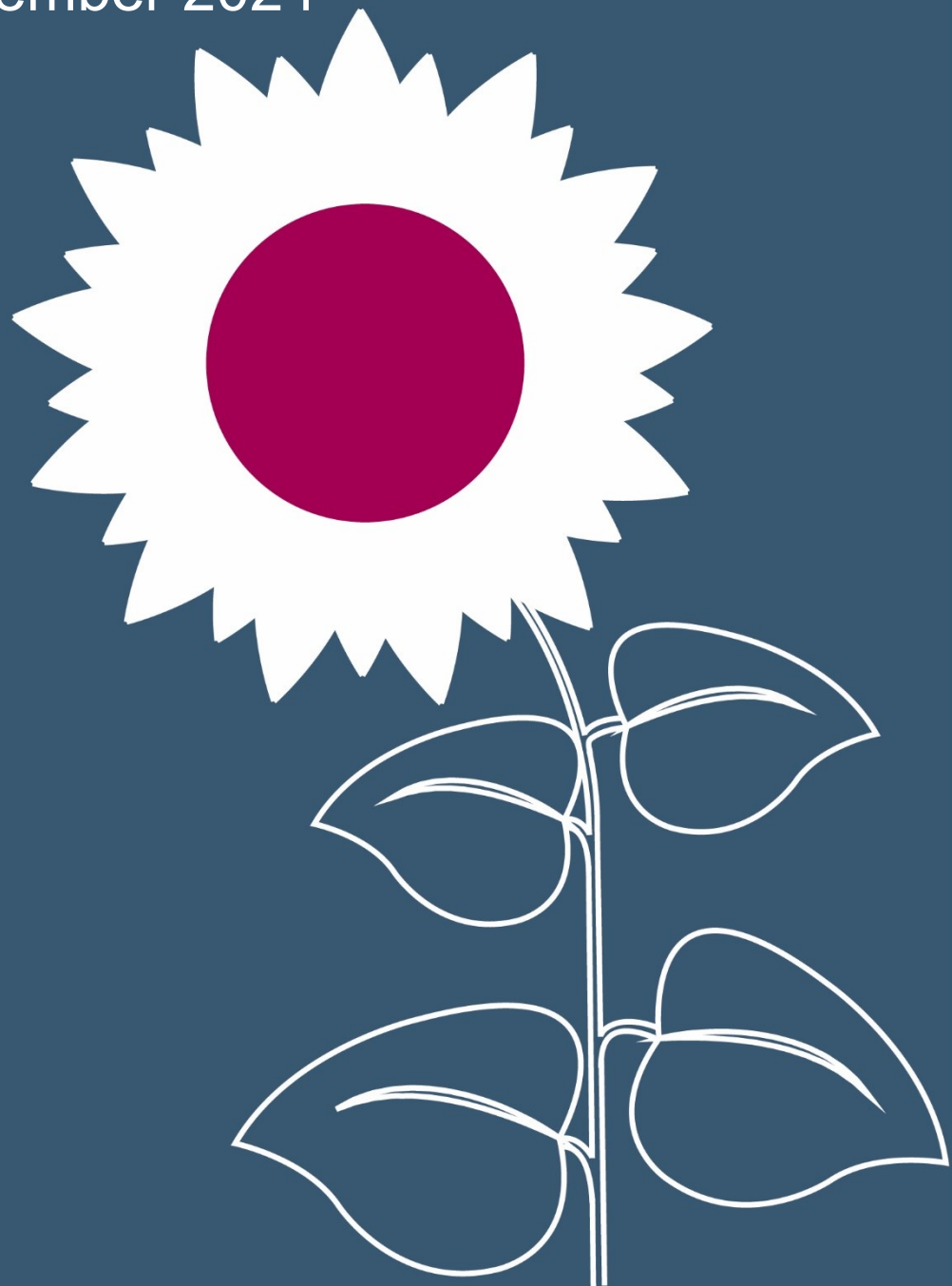


City of
Stoke-on-Trent

Alcohol Policy for Young People and Staff in Small Group Homes

Tri x 5_1_30 September 2023

Review September 2024



Information sheet

Service area	Children's Social Care
Date effective from	December 2013
Responsible officer(s)	Strategic Manager Children in Care
Date of review(s)	April 2021 July 2022 September 2023
Status: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mandatory (all named staff must adhere to guidance) • Optional (procedures and practice can vary between teams) 	Mandatory
Target audience	Residential Care Staff
Date of committee/SMT decision	
Related document(s)	
Superseded document(s)	July 2022
File reference	5_1_30

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 This policy should be read in conjunction with Stoke-on-Trent City Council Employee handbook guidelines.

2 Principles of the Policy

- 2.1 **Under no circumstances should alcohol be brought into or kept in Stoke-on-Trent residential care small group homes.**

3 Legislative Context

- 3.1 Children and young people under the age of 18 are unable to purchase alcohol.
- 3.2 Stoke-on-Trent, Children and Family Services will **not** give permission for children and young people in their care to drink alcohol:
- In the children's small group home;
 - When outside the home; or
 - When dining.

4 Policy Relating to Alcohol and Young People

- 4.1 Carers will ensure that children and young people are given information commensurate with their age understanding on the harmful effects of alcohol and how to keep themselves safe in environments where others may be consuming alcohol.
- 4.2 Children and young people will be educated on how best to support others in the event they come into contact with a person who is ill due to alcohol consumption.
- 4.3 Carers are to be vigilant if the young people have been out unsupervised (even if spending time with family) and assess if they are showing signs of alcohol consumption. If it is believed the young person may have been drinking alcohol, carers must be alert to the effects of alcohol on the young person and actions they need to take.
- 4.4 In the event that a young person is found to be severely under the influence of alcohol medical attention should be sought for guidance e.g. 111.
- 4.5 Additional information/support should be sought from medical professionals if any alcohol has been consumed and young person is on any medication (stating when the last time they had the medication or when the next dose is due).

- 4.6 If staff believe that a young person's alcohol consumption is becoming habit forming or likely to impact on their health professional support should be sought.
- 4.7 The young people's social worker and family (if appropriate) should be kept informed of any concerns relating to any incidents of alcohol consumption and incidents should be brought to their attention within 24 hours.
- 4.8 If it is believed an adult (even if a family member) has given the young person alcohol, this must be reported to the social worker immediately.

5 Residential Workers and staff in the home providing care and support to young people

- 5.1 Although drinking alcohol is seen as a socially acceptable, the consumption of any alcohol, by carers when on duty is **not** permitted. This includes:
- When residential care workers are accompanying the young people on activities
 - When residential care workers are accompanying the young people on holiday
 - Drinking wine, beer or spirits when dining with the children and young people
- 5.2 Residential Care Workers are responsible for their own actions outside of work and must act responsibly when drinking prior to a shift the next day, so they present themselves on duty and for the duration of their shift where alcohol will not impair their judgement or ability to carry out their duties (e.g. transporting young people).
- 5.3 If a residential care worker arrives on duty or during the shift colleagues believe that person to be under the influence of alcohol due to the smell of alcohol coming from the worker or their behaviour indicates they are under the influence, the colleague must notify a manager immediately (On call if out of hours).
- 5.4 If it is considered that the worker is unfit for work and unable to complete the expected duties and provide the full service of care to the young people e.g. inability to drive, the manager can send the employee home. If this happens the manager should follow this up with a discussion with HR and senior management and a decision will be made as to if any disciplinary investigations will be initiated.