



Drug, Alcohol and Substance Misuse Policy

Person Responsible: Deputy Head Teacher

Adoption Date: September 2022

Review Date: September 2023

Definition

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime defines a drug as:

“A substance people take to change the way they feel, think or behave”

This definition has been adopted by the Home Office and is the definition that applies within this policy and which therefore covers:

- All illegal drugs (those controlled by the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971)
- All legal drugs, including alcohol, tobacco, volatile substances, ketamine, khat and alkyl nitrates
- All legal medicinal drugs (including ‘over-the-counter’ and prescription medicines)

Aims of this policy

The purpose of this policy is to:

- clarify the legal requirements and responsibilities of the school
- reinforce and safeguard the health and safety of all staff, students, governors, parents/carers, external agencies and the wider community
- clarify the school’s approach to drugs for all staff, students, governors, parents/carers, external agencies and the wider community
- give guidance on developing, implementing and monitoring the drug education programme
- enable staff to manage drugs, alcohol and illegal substances on the school premises, and any incidents involving such that may occur, with confidence and consistency, and in the best interests of those involved
- ensure that the response to incidents involving drugs, alcohol and illegal substances compliments the overall approach to drug education and the values and ethos of the school
- provide a basis for evaluating the effectiveness of the school’s drug education programme and the management of incidents involving illegal and other unauthorised drugs

Application

This policy applies to all persons using the school site; students, staff and visitors. It applies whilst students are travelling to and from school, during the school day (including break and lunch time), and during any additional times the school is legally responsible for the student. It applies on residential and non-residential visits.

Role of the headteacher and governors

The Governing Body have overall responsibility for the policy and its implementation. This responsibility is devolved to the headteacher who is responsible for liaising with the governing body, parents/carers and appropriate outside agencies and for the appointment of those staff within the school, who have responsibility for handling the implementation of the policy.

Drug, Alcohol and Substance Misuse education

Drug, Alcohol and Substance Misuse education is taught partly via the science curriculum for students up to Year 11, and throughout the school by the Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) curriculum. Drug, Alcohol and Substance Misuse issues are addressed in PSHE throughout the school.

We believe that if young people are not given accurate information about drug, alcohol and substance misuse in school, then they may obtain possibly dangerous misinformation from elsewhere.

The drug, alcohol and substance misuse education syllabus is revised from time to time, but always accords with the following principles, which all staff are required to follow:

- the legal context will be made clear, including prohibitions and maximum punishments
- the zero-tolerance stance of the school towards drug, alcohol and substance misuse while under the school's jurisdiction will be emphasised
- realistic information on the effects and potential effects of drugs and other restricted or illegal substances, physical, psychological and social, will be given
- information about how drugs and other restricted or illegal substances are obtained or used will not be given.

During the course of drug, alcohol and substance misuse education, students may be encouraged to research and debate issues, examining both sides of controversial questions, but staff, whatever their private opinions, will clearly uphold these principles.

Sanctions

The school's jurisdiction covers students from the time they start from home to travel to school until they arrive home after school, and also covers all school-related events and visits. When the welfare of other students and staff is compromised, this jurisdiction may also cover actions taken by students when they are not at school or a school related event.

While under the school's jurisdiction, no student may at any time be in possession of a classified drug, alcohol, tobacco or other substance which may be similarly abused.

Drugs

If a student is suspected of being under the influence of an illegal drug/legal high or is caught in possession of an illegal drug/legal high (or any form of drug paraphernalia) parents/carers will be informed at the earliest opportunity by the headteacher (or designated member of staff). However, we reserve the right, in accordance with the current legal guidance, to permanently exclude any student in possession of illegal drugs/legal highs, even for a first or one-off offence. Students selling or supplying illegal drugs/legal highs will be permanently excluded. Sanctions will range from internal isolation through fixed term-exclusions to permanent exclusion. In all cases of illegal drug possession or the possession of drug paraphernalia, the police may be notified and criminal action may result. We recognise that a student who is abusing drugs needs support. We would therefore hope that, in most circumstances, the school and parents/carers can work together to support the young person involved. Drug counselling, through the school nurse service (if available) will be offered, as appropriate.

New psychoactive substances (NPS) (also called 'legal highs')

Students are forbidden to bring new psychoactive substances (NPS) on to the school premises. Since the Psychoactive Substances Act came into effect on May 26 2016 it has been illegal to supply any NPS in the UK for human consumption. The main effects of almost all psychoactive drugs, including NPS, fall into three categories: stimulants, 'downers' or sedatives, psychedelics or hallucinogens. The same sanctions apply as Drugs.

Cigarettes, tobacco and matches

Students are forbidden to bring cigarettes (including electronic cigarettes), lighters or matches on to the school premises. Students are also forbidden to smoke (including using electronic cigarettes) on the way to or from school, while wearing school uniform, or on school visits. If found smoking (including using electronic cigarettes) or found in the possession of cigarettes (including electronic cigarettes), tobacco or matches, students will be punished according to the sanctions outlined in the 'Behaviour Policy'. We recognise that any student who smokes, needs support. We would therefore hope that, in most circumstances, the school and parents/carers can work together to support the young person involved. The student will be referred to the school nurse to be counselled regarding giving up smoking.

Alcohol

Students are not allowed to bring alcohol on to the premises or to drink alcohol on the way to or from school. If a student is suspected of being under the influence of alcohol or is caught in possession of alcohol, the student's parents/carers will be contacted. Depending on the severity of the incident the student can expect to suffer a penalty ranging from loss of lunchtime for a week (as described above) to internal isolation or fixed-term exclusion. We recognise that any student who abuses alcohol, needs support. We would therefore hope that, in most circumstances, the school and parents/carers can work together to support the young person involved. The student will be referred to the school nurse to be counselled regarding alcohol abuse.

Searching and Confiscation

Please refer to the DfE guidance 'Screening, Searching and Confiscation. Advice for head teachers, staff and governing bodies'.

School staff can search a pupil for any item if the pupil agrees.

The Head Teacher and SLT can search students or their possessions, without consent, where they suspect the student has certain prohibited items. The items that can be searched for under this power are knives or weapons, alcohol, drugs stolen items and item that may provide evidence of a contravention of the School Behaviour Policy. No search is to be undertaken by an individual member of staff.

The power to search without consent enables a personal search, involving removal of outer clothing, searching of pockets and bags; but not an intimate search going further than that, which only a person with more extensive powers (e.g. a police officer) can do.

School staff can confiscate, retain or dispose of any banned or prohibited item found as a result of a search or which they consider harmful or detrimental to school discipline.

Weapons and drugs will be handed over to the police otherwise it is for the Head Teacher to decide when and if to return a confiscated item.

Any property confiscated must be treated with respect when deposited with the school office or in a locked secure area.