

DRUG EDUCATION
AND THE MANAGEMENT OF DRUG-RELATED AND PROHIBITED SUBSTANCES STATEMENT

Please note: this statement should be read alongside both the Behaviour and Exclusion Policies.

This policy has been written in line with the non-statutory guidance from the DfE and ACPO drug advice for schools (Sept 2012).

Any reference made to drugs includes the following: alcohol, tobacco, illegal drugs, medicines, new psychoactive substances ('legal highs') and volatile substances.

Rationale

- The School condones neither the misuse of drugs by members of the school, nor the supply of these substances.
- The School acknowledges the importance of its pastoral role in the welfare of young people, and through the general ethos of the School will seek to persuade pupils in need of support to come forward.
- The School is committed to the health and safety of its members and will take action to safeguard their well-being.
- The School actively co-operates with other agencies such as the Police, Social Services, LEA and Health and Drug Agencies to deliver its commitment to Drugs Education and to deal with incidents of substances use and misuse.

Drug Education in the curriculum

Aims of drug education

Through the drug education in our School we seek:

- To provide accurate information;
- To minimise the risks that users and potential users face;
- To enable informed choice;
- To create an environment where pupils feel able to explore and discuss drug-related issues;
- To increase understanding about the implications and possible consequences of use and misuse;
- To enable pupils to identify sources of appropriate personal support;
- To encourage understanding about related health and wider social issues.

Intended outcomes

Drug education in our school will:

- Encourage pupils to gain an understanding of drugs and medicines and their role in modern society;

- Dispel myths by providing clear and accurate information;
- Ensure that pupils explore and challenge their own and others' values and attitudes to drug use;
- Have had opportunities to practise and develop their skills which enable them to make healthy and informed choices, both now and in later life.

Organisation of drug education in the school

Drug education is taught mainly through the PSHE programme at both Lower and Senior Schools. However, further opportunities to reinforce learning will occur in other areas of the curriculum. The Head of PSHE will maintain a curriculum audit and thus ensure teachers are aware of this policy. The PSHE curriculum at the Lower School is monitored by the Vice Principal.

Management of drug-related incidents

Rationale

The School recognises that a drug related incident may be identified through the discovery of a substance and/or someone found in possession or having to respond to incidents of suspicion and/or rumour. An incident may also arise from the discovery of drug related paraphernalia (syringes, smoking equipment etc.)

The school acknowledges that each drug-related incident should be treated individually and recognises that a variety of responses may be necessary to deal with the incidents. The school will carefully consider the implications of any action it may take and seek to balance the interests of the individual(s) involved, the other school members and the wider community.

The School is committed to the health and well-being of all its pupils and will endeavour to help any individual work through her difficulties.

Parents

The School recognises the importance of working in partnership and sharing the responsibility of education of pupils with parents. This is achieved by keeping them informed and involved at all times. Effective communication and co-operation with parents are essential to the successful implementation of this policy.

Co-ordination

The Vice Principal and Principal will be informed of any incident at the time and will have lead responsibility for action taken.

Searching pupils

Searching pupils (Searching, Screening and Confiscation July 2022)

Prohibited items: Knives or weapons, alcohol, illegal drugs, stolen items, vaping equipment, tobacco and cigarette papers, fireworks, pornographic images, any article that a member of staff reasonably suspects maybe used to commit an offence or cause personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the pupil)

The Principal/Vice Principal, and staff **authorised** by them, may only search a pupil's possessions, without their consent, where they have reasonable grounds for suspecting that a pupil has a prohibited item in her possession.

There will always be two authorised members of staff conducting a search.

Searches generally: If staff believe a pupil is in possession of a prohibited item, it may be appropriate for a member of staff to carry out:

- A search of outer clothing; and/or
- A search of school property, e.g., pupils' lockers or desks; and/or
- A search of personal property (e.g., bag or pencil case within a locker)

The designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) should also be informed of any searching incidents where the member of staff had reasonable grounds to suspect a pupil was in possession of a prohibited item. The staff member should also involve the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) without delay if they believe that a search has revealed a safeguarding risk.

If the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) finds evidence that any child is at risk of harm, they will make a referral to children's social care services immediately (and the police if required). The safeguarding team will then consider the circumstances of the pupil who has been searched to assess the incident against potential wider safeguarding concerns.

Searches will be conducted in such a manner as to minimise embarrassment or distress. Any search of a pupil or possessions will be carried out in the presence of the pupil and another member of staff.

If a pupil is searched, the searcher and the second member of staff present will be of the same sex as the pupil.

If the Vice Principal/Principal, or member of staff authorised by them, finds anything which they have reasonable grounds for suspecting is a prohibited item, they may seize, retain and dispose of that item as appropriate.

Drug Testing

Random drug testing may be put in place in exceptional circumstances as deemed by the school.

Confidentiality

The possession and use of illegal drugs will be of immediate concern to school staff. It is important that any action taken is in the best interest of the pupils concerned, the whole school and wider community. Where these interests are in conflict, it may be necessary to give priority to the whole school.

The School may maintain confidentiality and is not obliged in law to take any action in the following circumstances:

- Being told that a young person has used an illegal drug.
- Observing possession or use of illegal drugs outside the school day or off the School premises.

There will, of course, be occasions where, although not legally obliged to do so, the school will feel it appropriate to inform parents and/or police.

The School has a statutory requirement to breach confidentiality:

- When a third party or child is at risk from serious harm
- When life is at immediate risk
- When a member of staff is required to give evidence in a court of law

We recognise the limitations of confidentiality in a school setting and therefore, we will provide information and/or opportunity for pupils and parents to access confidential advice, information and support through an appropriate outside agency.

Health and Safety

Where the health and safety of pupils is at immediate risk through intoxication or collapse, the School will act in accordance with the medical procedures as set out in the School's First Aid Policy

Any substance found in the vicinity of the incident and any information offered by friends or peers regarding the incident will be given to paramedics on their arrival.

The school is aware of the possible risk from drug paraphernalia being discarded on its premises and will take appropriate action to ensure the overall safety of the site. Any equipment found will be disposed of in line with school health and safety procedures.

Possession and disposal

In the case where a substance is found or confiscated on the premises, the Principal is informed, and prompt action taken to ensure its disposal. This is achieved by

- disposing of the substance, i.e., flushing the substance down the toilet, in the presence of a witness and recording the action taken;

In the case of a controlled drug

- A second adult witness will be present throughout
- The substance will be sealed in a plastic bag and details will be taken of the date and time of the seizure/find and the witness present
- It will be stored in a secure location, with access limited to senior members of staff
- The police will be notified without delay. The police will collect it and then store or dispose of it in line with locally agreed protocols. School is not required to divulge to the police the name of the pupil from who the drugs were taken but it is advisable to do so
- A full record will be taken of the incident, including the police incident reference number
- Parents will be informed unless this is not in the best interests of the pupil
- School will identify if there are any safeguarding concerns and develop a support and disciplinary response

In the case of a syringe

- Syringes or 'sharps' will be safely stored and disposed of

Under no circumstances will the substance be kept overnight on the premises or in the possession of any member of staff.

Police involvement

The school reserves the right where appropriate to contact with regard to any incident. There is no legal obligation on the school to inform the police of incidents, although it is recognised that they may be able to provide relevant support and advice. Parents will always be contacted where there is police involvement.

Dealing with rumour and hearsay

The school will deal responsibly with any information gained through rumour or hearsay. The decision to attempt to substantiate the information will depend on the circumstances involved; recognising that opening up discussion on rumours can be harmful. A record will be kept of any action taken.

Dealing with the media

In the case of contact or interest from the media or any drug-related issue, the Principal will be informed and will normally make any response. The Governing Body and where appropriate, parents will be kept informed.

Discipline and sanctions

The boundaries of acceptable behaviour in the school are outlined in the behaviour policy. Discipline and sanctions applied in the case of a drug-related incident will take into account many factors including the nature of the incident, the age of the pupil(s) involved and the circumstances surrounding the incident. In applying sanctions, the school recognises the need to balance the interests of the pupil(s) involved and the well-being of the whole school. The Principal and Governing Body will seek to help any student to work through her difficulties. Pupils giving or selling substances to others endanger the health and welfare of other pupils and will be dealt with appropriately. Please refer to the school Fixed period and Permanent Exclusions Policy.

Pastoral care and support for pupils at risk

The School seeks to provide all pupils with support and guidance through the pastoral system. Where pupils are identified as being at risk, every effort will be made to ensure they receive the appropriate balance of support and guidance to enable them and their family to overcome their difficulties.

Recording and Reporting

A record of all drug-related incidents will be kept for the protection of staff and pupils involved. Such records will be maintained centrally on MyConcern and will detail the nature of the incident and the action taken.

Managing Medicines

Some pupils require medicines that have been prescribed for their medical conditions. Please refer to the School's Medical Conditions Procedure as to how school manages medicines on-site.

Reviewed/Approved: December 2025
Next review: Autumn 2026

