

SUBSTANCE MISUSE POLICY

Approved by Full Governing Body on	13th December 2023
Next review date:	13th December 2024
Signed by Chair of Governors:	

The school has a clear and unambiguous statement that illegal drugs and certain legal drugs, may not be brought onto its site.

The purpose is to:

- Clarify the legal requirements and responsibilities of the school
- Reinforce and safeguard the health and safety of students and others who use the school, as they have the right to a safe, clean environment
- Clarify the approach to drugs for all staff, students, governors, parents/carers, external agencies and the wider community
- Give guidance on developing, implementing and monitoring the drugs education programme
- Enable staff to manage drugs on school premises, and any incidents which occur, with confidence and consistency, and in the best interests of those involved
- Ensure that the response to incidents involving drugs complements the overall approach to drug education and the values and ethos of the school
- Provide a basis for evaluating the effectiveness of the school drug education programme and the management of incidents involving illegal and other unauthorised drugs
- Reinforce the role of the school in contributing to local and national strategies

Scope

This policy applies on school premises, on visits and trips, during any other events or occasions related to the school and any occasions where the students are the responsibility of staff. The policy applies when the students are off site, on study leave or work experience.

When students are travelling to and from school they are considered to be representing the school and therefore the policy applies. The school reserves the right to take interest and impose sanctions for any misconduct by any student, or any member of staff, at any time, beyond the bounds of the school day, week and term, where such misconduct prejudices the good order and welfare of the school, its staff and students or brings the school into disrepute.

This policy is integrally linked to:

- Behaviour policy
- Exclusion policy
- Searching, Screening and Confiscation procedure

This policy applies to all staff, students, parents/carers, governors and partner agencies working with the school.

Definition and terminology

The definition of a drug given by the United National Office on Drugs and Crime is:

‘A substance people take to change the way they feel, think or behave’.

The term ‘drugs’ and ‘drug education’, unless otherwise stated, is used throughout this policy to refer to all drugs:

- all illegal drugs (those controlled by the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971)
- all legal drugs, including alcohol, tobacco, volatile substances (those giving off a gas or vapour which can be inhaled e.g. e-cigarettes or similar), ketamine, khat and alkyl nitrites (known as poppers)
- all over-the-counter and prescription medicines

The school’s stance towards drugs, health and the needs of students

The first concern in managing drugs is the health and safety of the school, community and meeting the pastoral needs of the students.

The possession, use or supply of illegal or other unauthorised drugs (to include possession of drug paraphernalia) (as designated by the Headteacher) within school boundaries are unacceptable.

Disciplinary response

Situations where school rules on drugs are broken will result in the application of the behaviour policy. The type of sanction cannot be categorically stated as it will depend on the exact nature and degree of the offence. Sanctions will include suspensions, community service and permanent exclusion will be considered. The sanction for drug dealing within the school will most probably be permanent exclusion.

Medicines

Some students may require medicines that have been prescribed for their medical condition during the school day. Staffing, administration, storage and record keeping procedures are all clearly set out in the Medication and First Aid policy.

This policy also sets out the circumstances in which a student may take non-prescribed/over-the-counter medicines, such as those providing relief from hay fever. School staff do not give non-prescribed medication to students unless supplied with written authorisation by the parent/carer.

In medical emergencies involving drugs, the policy states that the utmost priority will be placed on safety by summoning appropriate help before addressing further issues.

The School's Drugs Education Programme

The school believes that drug education is a major component of drug prevention. Drug prevention aims to: minimise the number of young people engaging in drug use; delay the age of onset of first use; reduce the harm caused by drugs; and enable those who have concerns about drugs to seek help.

The aim of drug education is to provide opportunities for students to develop their **knowledge, skills and attitudes** and understanding about drugs and appreciate the benefits of a healthy lifestyle, relating this to their own and others' actions. Drug Education is an entitlement for every student and is supported by Section 351 of the Education Act 1996.

Drugs education is an important aspect of the curriculum for all schools. It should:

Increase students' knowledge and understanding and clarify misconceptions about:

- the short and long-term effects and risks of drugs
- the rules and laws relating to drugs
- the impact of drugs on individuals, families and communities
- the prevalence and acceptability of drug use among peers
- the complex moral, social, emotional and political issues surrounding drugs

Develop students' personal and social skills to make informed decisions and keep themselves safe and healthy, including:

- assessing, avoiding and managing risk
- communicating effectively
- resisting pressures
- finding information, help and advice
- devising problem-solving and coping strategies
- developing self-awareness and self-esteem

Enable students to explore their own and other peoples' attitudes towards drugs, drug use and drug users, including challenging stereotypes, and exploring media and social influences.

Methodology and resources

Drugs education is a sensitive and controversial subject and it is, therefore, important that it is delivered in a safe, secure and supportive learning environment. Teachers try to ensure that all students are fully involved in lessons by using a variety of interactive and participatory teaching methods.

Staff support and training

The school gives updates to the whole staff during staff training regarding general drug awareness. This opportunity is also used to ensure that all staff have a good understanding of the school's Substance Misuse and other related policies. This understanding includes the first steps to take in managing drug related incidents and identifying and responding to students' needs.

Assessment, monitoring, evaluation and reviewing

This policy indicates that we do not judge achievement in drugs education, only in terms of gains in factual knowledge. As part of the PSHE provision, we use assessment to identify:

1. what knowledge and understanding students have gained and its relevance to them
2. what skills they have developed and put into practice
3. how their feelings and attitudes have been influenced during the programme

The methods of assessment include:

- student self-assessment - students reflecting on what they have learnt e.g. in oral work, written evaluations, posters or poems
- peer group assessment - students reflecting on what they have learnt, providing feedback to each other and reflecting on their roles in the group, using oral feedback
- teacher assessment - teachers observing, listening, reviewing written work and students' contributions to drama, role play and discussions

Drugs education work is regularly monitored and updated by the Head of Culture and Character in consultation with the senior line manager. Incidents involving drugs are recorded on CURA. The outline of these is shared by the DSL with the Head of Culture and Character and their senior line manager. This enables our curriculum to follow key trends with behaviour in our school.

Management of drug related incidents

If any drug related incidents should occur, the safety and well-being of the child will always be the overriding concern. Each incident will be considered taking into account the circumstances of the individual and the parents. Police and other appropriate agencies will be informed according to the needs of the individual concerned and the school. There may be interest in drug related incidents by the media. Confidentiality of students will be a priority. The Headteacher will respond to all media questions.

The standard of proof to be applied is the balance of probabilities.

The law permits school staff to take temporary possession of a substance suspected of being an illegal drug for the purposes of preventing an offence being committed or continued in relation to the drug providing that all reasonable steps are taken to destroy the drug or deliver it to a person lawfully

entitled to take custody of it. As a school, we ensure that:

- a second adult is present throughout,
- the drug is sealed in a plastic bag and the details are recorded to show the date, time and witnesses present,
- the drug is stored in a secure location,
- the police are notified without delay in order to collect and store or dispose of the drug in line with locally agreed protocols,
- full details of the incident and police incident reference number are recorded,
- parents/carers are informed, unless this would jeopardise the safety of the student,

(If the substance is not illegal, e.g. alcohol, tobacco, prescribed medicines, then a parent or carer can arrange to come into the school to collect the substance.)

Personal searches

School staff are allowed to carry out personal searches on students when they are suspected of having drugs on their person. However, the policy of the school is not to exercise this right. The students will be requested to hand over the drugs voluntarily in the presence of a second adult witness. If the student refuses, and the drugs are thought to be illegal, then the police will be called. The police will follow their procedures.

Search of school property

Staff may search school property if they believe drugs to be stored there. However, students must be made aware that if consent is refused, the school staff are within their rights to proceed with the search. Parents/carers will then be informed of the outcome of the search.

Search of personal property

The school staff reserve the right to search personal property without consent. Parents/carers can be called in to assist in the search if the school deems this necessary. In severe cases, the police could be called if the school wishes to proceed along formal lines.

The Headteacher can request police handlers to enter the school in order to detect illegal drug possession or use.

The school ensures that a careful investigation is conducted to judge the nature and seriousness of each incident. The school puts an emphasis on listening to what all parties involved have to say. All students involved in the incident are separated, and it is ensured that a second adult witness is always present. If, during the course of the investigation, the school decides that the police should be involved, then the school staff will cease their questioning. Searches will be carried out by a minimum of two authorised staff in an appropriate setting allowing a “student the right to expect a reasonable level of personal privacy”.

When dealing with parents/carers under the influence of drugs on school premises, the school staff will remain calm. Where the behaviour of a parent/carer under the influence repeatedly places a child at risk or the parent/carer becomes abusive or violent, staff will consider whether to invoke child protection procedures and/or the involvement of the police.

The needs of students

Posters of local and national helplines are displayed around the school and are available from the school nurse.

Referral and external support

In every case of an incident involving drugs, the school places the utmost priority on safety, meeting any medical emergency with first aid and summoning appropriate help before addressing further issues. If the school has any doubt, then medical assistance will be requested immediately. In all incidents involving drugs, referral for counselling or support will be actively considered. The school has contacts with local drugs agencies and advisers who can offer some counselling and work with students as part of the drugs education programme. We believe that those students who are misusing illegal drugs and volatile substances should be encouraged to seek help at the earliest possible stage so that they can be given appropriate support and guidance.

Legal drugs

The police will not always necessarily be involved in incidents involving legal drugs, but the school will inform trading standards or police about the inappropriate sale or supply of tobacco, alcohol or volatile substances to pupils in the local area.

Alcohol and tobacco

Parents/carers will be informed that the alcohol/tobacco has been disposed of. In cases where a disciplinary proceeding is necessary, items will be disposed of once this has taken place.

Volatile substances

Given the level of danger posed by volatile substances, the school will arrange for their safe disposal.

Confidentiality

The school cannot, and does not, promise total confidentiality. If a child requests that a piece of information exposed is kept confidential, then this will be honoured. However, the child will be made aware that this cannot be possible if:

- there is a child protection issue
- they are co-operating with a police investigation
- someone's life is in danger

Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Body will:

- Be responsible for approving, evaluating and reviewing this policy.

The Headteacher will:

- Ensure the implementation of this policy

The senior leadership team will:

- Support all the staff with regard to all the aspects of the policy

The Head of Culture and Character will:

- Be responsible for maintaining a high-quality programme for drug education which is then delivered to all students
- Monitor its implementation and review any current practice
- Support all teachers of RHPD with the programme's content

All teachers will:

- Act as role models of good behaviour
- Be aware of any signs or concerns and inform pastoral and/or senior staff if they
- suspect any substance misuse (within the "scope" of this policy)
- Make sure that they themselves behave in an appropriate way with regards to substance misuse/drugs. Inappropriate standards of personal behaviour, with regard to substance misuse/drugs, could result in disciplinary measures being taken.
- If staff members are suspected of being under the influence of drugs or alcohol on school premises, senior staff should attempt to maintain a calm atmosphere and call for a second adult, if necessary. Disciplinary actions for staff are covered under their employment contract and substance abuse referral and mitigation follows the West Sussex guidelines.

All non-teaching staff will:

- Act as role models of good behaviour
- Communicate relevant information about students to appropriate staff
- Make sure that they themselves behave in an appropriate way with regards to substance misuse/drugs. Inappropriate standards of personal behaviour, with regard to substance misuse/drugs, could result in disciplinary measures being taken.
- If staff members are suspected of being under the influence of drugs or alcohol on school premises, senior staff should attempt to maintain a calm atmosphere and call for a second adult, if necessary. Disciplinary actions for staff are covered under their employment contract and substance abuse referral and mitigation follows the West Sussex guidelines.

All students are expected to:

Be aware of the expectations of behaviour required by them, as set out in the Behaviour Policy.

All parents are expected to:

- Encourage their children to show respect for the school rules and support the school's authority and implementation of the Substance Misuse Policy.
- Be aware of the Home-School Agreement

The school realises that parents/carers have a crucial role in preventing problem drug use. Therefore, this policy and all up-to-date information on drug education are accessible at parental request. In any incident involving illegal and other unauthorised drugs, the school will involve the child's parents/carers and explain how the school intends to respond to the incident and to the student's needs. Where the school suspects that to do this might put the child's safety at risk or if there is any other cause for concern at home, then the school will exercise caution when considering involving parents.

Parents/carers are encouraged to approach the school if they are concerned about any issue related to drugs and their child.

Support Systems

The school has a number of mechanisms for supporting children, families and staff which may be considered by the school, including:

- A clear and supportive PSHE programme on Drug Education
- A well-structured pastoral team of Tutors, Lead Tutors, Heads of House/Sixth Form Managers and Heads of Year who can support any child and/or parent/carer with linked concerns
- Students are supported by peers and mentors across the school
- Professional development is offered to staff
- Close links with external agencies to ensure support is accessed when it is required

This policy has been developed according to the following guidance from the Department for Education:

- Drug Advice for Schools

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/270169/drug_advice_for_schools.pdf