

MISUSE OF DRUGS AND OTHER SUBSTANCES

- **Rationale**

The governing body believes that the school has a responsibility to inform and educate students of the consequences of substance use and misuse. They recognise the importance of the school's pastoral role in the welfare of its students and believe that the curriculum has a vital role to play in this area.

The governing body further believes that the possession, use or supply of illegal and other unauthorised drugs is unacceptable. They recognise their responsibility to have in place procedures for managing drug related incidents, which are clearly understood by all.

- **Policy**

The governors wish to discourage the misuse of drugs and other substances including alcohol, tobacco and solvents by students and the illegal supply of these substances. The governing body is committed to the health and safety of the students in their care and will take action to safeguard the well-being of its students. The purpose of the school's misuse of drugs and other substances policy is to:

- encourage personal responsibility in all forms of behaviour;
- provide support and information for young people and their parents;
- clarify the legal requirements and responsibilities of the school
- reinforce and safeguard the health and safety of students and others who use the school
- clarify the school's approach to drugs for all staff, students, governors, parents or carers, external agencies and the wider community
- enable staff to manage drugs on school premises, and any incidents that occur, with confidence and consistency, and in the best interests of those involved

Guidelines

I Definition of "Drugs"

Within this policy 'drugs' mean:

- all illegal drugs
- all legal drugs, including alcohol, tobacco, vaping liquids and volatile substances

- all over-the-counter and prescription medicines.

2 Drug Education

By providing drug education, we aim to:

- increase students' knowledge and understanding and to clarify their misconceptions about drugs;
- develop students' personal and social skills to make informed decisions and keep themselves safe and healthy;
- enable students to explore their own and other people's attitudes towards drugs, drug use and drug users;
- ensure the safety of staff and students when on the school site.

In particular, we will:

- provide the information and support for students to be able to make lifestyle choices
- encourage a supportive ethos in which issues can be discussed and questions answered
- provide appropriate role models and examples to illustrate a healthy lifestyle and take a firm stance against illegal drugs
- raise awareness for students of the importance of their choices in forging a healthy lifestyle
- recognise the valuable role that medication can have
- acknowledge that not all people may make healthy choices, and examine some of the reasons why and the impact this can have
- enable students to develop self-awareness and realise the power they have to determine their own lives
- provide a whole-school approach to issues of healthy lifestyle
- draw attention to the effect that peers can have upon the decisions that we make and the need to take a considered approach to this
- alert student to ways of seeking additional help and support where necessary
- ensure that students have access to balanced information and views against which they can clarify their own opinions
- help students establish the difference between fact, opinion and belief.

3 Medication

It should be noted that some students will need to use medication regularly as part of their own special needs. This might be for either physical or emotional reasons. Care should be taken at all times to draw a distinction between different types of drug use to enable students to see the value that drugs can have in our society to large groups of people.

4 In the Event of Disclosure

There may be times during discussions about drugs when students make disclosures. If this happens, the teacher should listen sensitively to what the student has to say, while avoiding further disclosure in front of the class. At the end of the lesson, it might be appropriate to spend some time with the student to allow them the opportunity to speak. The safeguarding policy should be followed and no questions should be asked or information written down at this stage. Confidentiality cannot be promised.

As soon as is reasonable, the class teacher should pass on their own concerns to the designated person who will follow the agreed procedure for disclosure handling. The class teacher should always ensure he or she remains calm and should not appear shocked by what students might have to say. It is important that students understand the ground rules during any discussion and that they do not put pressure upon one another to reveal personal information.

5 Dealing with drug-related incidents

A drug incident is likely to involve suspicions, observations, disclosures or discoveries of situations involving illegal and other unauthorised drugs. They may fit into the following categories:

- drugs or associated paraphernalia are found on school premises
- a student demonstrates an inappropriate level of knowledge of drugs for their age
- a student is found in possession of drugs or associated paraphernalia
- a student is found to be using drugs on the school premises
- a student is found to be supplying drugs on school premises

- a student, parent/carer or staff member is thought to be under the influence of drugs
- a student discloses that they or a family member are misusing drugs
- a staff member, parent or student has information that the illegitimate sale or supply of drugs is taking place in the local area

6 Establishing the Nature of Incidents

The school will conduct a careful investigation to judge the nature and seriousness of each incident. Staff will ensure that students involved in the incident are separated whilst the initial investigation is taking place.

If substance misuse is suspected, a member of staff will interview the student in the presence of a colleague if deemed appropriate.

7 Responding to incidents and the imposition of sanctions

The school will consider each incident individually and recognises that a variety of responses will be necessary to deal with incidents. Any response will balance the needs of the student with those of the wider school community, and aim to provide students with the opportunity to learn from their mistakes and develop as individuals.

However, the head teacher will normally exclude any student found in possession of an illegal drug.

The head teacher will inform the police if a student is found supplying drugs on school premises or on a school organised activity and will exclude the student concerned. Unless there are exceptional mitigating circumstances, the exclusion will be permanent.

If there is clear evidence that illegal drugs have been used or consumed on school premises, the student will be excluded from school. Unless there are exceptional mitigating circumstances, the exclusion will be permanent. This principle will also apply when the student is off the premises but is representing the school e.g. on a school trip or on school transport.

When conducting a search the school should always ensure that a second adult witness is present. Searches should be conducted in such a way as to minimise potential embarrassment or distress. Every effort should be made to persuade the person to hand over voluntarily any drugs. Where the individual refuses and the drug is believed to be illegal, and the school wishes to proceed along formal lines, then the police must be called. The police can conduct a personal search if they believe a crime has taken place, or to prevent harm to themselves or others following an arrest. Schools are not permitted to detain a person without their consent unless a citizen's arrest is made.

If students hand over drugs or alcohol to an unaccompanied member of staff without being asked and before a formal search begins, the member of staff should request immediate support from an appropriate colleague.

Staff may search school property (for example students' lockers) if they believe drugs to be stored there. Prior consent should always be sought. Individuals should be made aware that if consent is refused the school may still proceed with a search. However, where consent is refused, the school will need to balance the likelihood that an offence has been committed against the risk of infringing the individual's privacy without just cause.

Any sanctions used should always be justifiable in terms of the seriousness of the incident; the identified needs of the student and the wider school community; consistency with published school rules, codes and expectations; consistency with disciplinary action for breaches of other school rules such as theft, violence and bullying.

If a student admits to using or supplying drugs off school premises, the head teacher will inform the student's parents or carers. The school will actively cooperate with other agencies such as the police, and drug and alcohol support agencies etc. in dealing with incidents.

Where appropriate, the head teacher will inform Children's Services as soon as possible of cases of drug or solvent misuse.

The head teacher should ensure that the reporting of incidents remains in the best interests of the young people, their families and the school. Students will be made aware that some information cannot be held confidential, and made to understand that if certain disclosures are made certain actions will follow. At the same time students will be offered sensitive and appropriate support.

The head teacher should keep the governing body informed at all times of matters relating to a drug incident.

The head teacher or his representative should keep relevant staff informed. Careful attention should be given to respecting the confidentiality of those involved.

8 Parents and Carers and Drug Incidents

In any incident involving illegal and other unauthorised drugs the school will normally involve the student's parents and 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 student's safety at risk then the school will exercise caution when considering involving parents or carers. In any situation where a student may need protection from the possibility of abuse, the school's designated teacher for safeguarding will be contacted and local child protection procedures followed.

Parents/carers should be encouraged to approach the school if they are concerned about any issue related to drugs and their child. The school will refer parents or carers to other sources of help, for example, specialist drug agencies or family support groups.

When dealing with parents or carers under the influence of drugs on school premises, staff should attempt to maintain a calm atmosphere. On occasions, a teacher may have concerns about discharging a student into the care of a parent or carer. In such instances the school should discuss with the parent or carer if alternative arrangements could be made, for example asking another parent or carer to accompany the child home.

Where the behaviour of a parent or carer under the influence of drugs repeatedly places a young person at risk or the parent or carer becomes abusive or violent, staff should consider whether to invoke safeguarding procedures and/or the involvement of the police.

9 Recording an Incident

The school will keep a full record of every incident. Storage of sensitive information about students or staff will be kept in a secure place and will be in line with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998.

Staff should note that records, including notes of any discussions with students, may be used in any subsequent court proceedings. Notes should include the time, date, place and people present, as well as what was said.

- **Monitoring, Evaluation and Review**
 - a) The policy will be reviewed every third year by SLT.
 - b) The Pastoral Assistant Headteacher and the subject leader for personal wellbeing will monitor drug education.

- **Dissemination of the Policy**

The full policy and programme of study are available on request to parents, the LA, and OFSTED through the Headteacher.

Date approved by governors	March 2022
Date for review	March 2025

Appendix: Dealing with Medical Emergencies involving Drugs

In all incidents involving drugs, staff should give priority to well being e.g. dealing with any medical emergencies with first aid and summoning appropriate help before addressing other issues. Where staff have any concerns they should seek medical assistance immediately.

Always:

- assess the situation
- if a medical emergency, send for medical help and ambulance

Before assistance arrives

If the student is conscious:

- ask them what has happened and to identify any drug used
- collect any drug sample and any vomit for medical analysis
- **do not** induce vomiting
- **do not** chase or over-excite them if intoxicated from inhaling a volatile substance
- keep them under observation, warm and quiet

If the student is unconscious:

- ensure that they can breathe and place in the recovery position
- **do not** move them if a fall is likely to have led to spinal or other serious injury which may not be obvious
- **do not** give anything by mouth
- **do not** attempt to make them sit or stand
- **do not** leave them unattended or in the charge of another student
- notify parents/carers

For needle stick (sharps) injuries:

- encourage wound to bleed. Do not suck. Wash with soap and water. Dry and apply waterproof dressing
- if used/dirty needles have caused the injury seek advice from a doctor

When medical help arrives

- pass on any information available, including vomit and any drug samples. Staff should complete an accident form as soon as they have dealt with the emergency.