

Policy Document

Drugs Policy

1. The School Position

The school recognises the importance of its pastoral role in the welfare of young people and through the general ethos of the school will support action to safeguard the health and welfare of everyone on site. (See statement of Purpose and School Aims.)

This policy is to enable staff, students, parents and anyone associated with the school to clearly understand the school's position on drugs. The school is actively opposed to the misuse of drugs and alcohol by members of the school and the illegal supply of those substances.

2. What do we mean by "drugs"

In this policy the term 'substance' refers to any legal or illegal substance taken into the body that changes the way a person feels or behaves. Clearly, the term includes illegal drugs, alcohol, volatile substances tobacco and medicinal products. Students with a medical condition who require the administration of medicine/prescribed drugs in school hours are covered under a separate school policy "Supporting students in school with Medical Conditions".

3. Principles and Practice

As part of the Pastoral Curriculum there are clear approaches, which are developmental from Year 7 to 11. They include teaching guidelines for all pastoral staff, co-ordinated by Directors of Learning. This is the pastoral programme taught by staff and updated each year.

A wide variety of visiting speakers who are specialists in these areas are used at appropriate times. They provide different perspectives and information to enhance student learning experiences.

4. Staff Training

Staff Training is continuous as part of the INSET Policy. It takes the form of general education and specific training for the relevant groups of staff which is designed to increase teacher confidence, awareness and knowledge. Outside agencies/advisors will be involved as appropriate.

5. Student Pastoral Programme

Subject teachers are able to incorporate these issues into their teaching, as and when they arise, either as part of the curriculum or the conduct of lessons. This does not preclude our legal obligation

for spiritual, moral cultural (mental and physical development of students). Please see the current PSHCE programme which includes lessons relating to:

- Substance use and misuse
- Enjoying a healthy and active lifestyle
- Illicit substances: why do people use drugs?
- The consequences of substance abuse and misuse

Targeted intervention is used as appropriate with the support of our partner organisations.

5. Management of Incidents

The School recognises the duty of care owed towards everyone who uses the site. Members of staff or anyone else using the site should report any incidents to the Head Teacher or Deputy Head who will discuss each incident and the context in which it occurred and take the appropriate action. The Governors have endorsed the Substance Use and Misuse Guidelines from the local authority subject to the following:

- That the Head Teacher will normally inform parents if a student is involved with a substance related incident.
- That the Head Teacher will exclude a student for possessing or misusing a legal or an illegal substance. (In the first instance a fixed term exclusion, subject to the outcome of investigations, which may become permanent).

This school is aware of the needs to maintain good contact with the Health and Police Authorities.

6. Premises Issues

No alcohol should be consumed by anyone on the site under 18 years of age. We expect staff to maintain a professional position on this issue. The school adopted a no-smoking policy on 12/02/98. In line with current statutory legislation no one is permitted to smoke on the school site and any perpetrator will be dealt with in an appropriate way. Staff should be aware of the role models they are expected to present to young people at all times.

7. School Excursions

School educational visits and excursions at home and abroad of whatever duration, are included in this policy. The leader of a foreign trip would be expected to make decisions under our laws if an incident occurs.

8. Communications

The responsibility for communicating the policy is shared by the full Senior Leadership Team together with the Governors.

Students will be made aware of the policy as part of the Pastoral Programme delivered by all form tutors and Directors of Learning also through assemblies and health education. Staff will be informed through policy discussion information included in the staff handbook and during in-service education.

This policy will be reviewed annually by Governors.

Suspected Substance Misuse -

Guidance for Staff

If you suspect that a student might be under the influence of a legal or an illegal substance you should keep the young person under supervision and send for assistance. Do not leave the student unattended. Parents/carers should not be contacted unless members of senior staff, Directors of Learning or their Assistants agree this is the correct procedure. This is because the police might become involved. If you are seriously concerned for the welfare of any young person, contact reception to summon an ambulance and first aid staff support.

Signs of possible drug abuse

These may occur quickly or over a longer period of time. This list is not exhaustive but gives examples of common ways of noting possible drug abuse. In the learning environment, sudden changes of behaviour, bloodshot eyes or pupils that are larger or smaller than usual, slurred speech, unexplained need for money or use of phone; secretive actions are potential signs of possible drug abuse. If you have a concern, then act accordingly and remember it is better to be safe than sorry.

Behavioural

- Drop in attendance and performance at work or school;
- Unexplained need for money or financial problems and may borrow or steal to get it;
- Engaging in secretive or suspicious behaviours;
- Sudden change in friends, favourite hangouts, and hobbies;
- Frequently getting into trouble (fights, accidents, illegal activities).

Physical

- Bloodshot eyes or pupils that are larger or smaller than usual;
- Changes in appetite or sleep patterns;
- Sudden weight loss or weight gain;
- Deterioration of physical appearance and personal grooming habits;
- Unusual smells on breath, body, or clothing;
- Tremors, slurred speech, or impaired coordination;
- Frequent minor illnesses (headaches, nausea, slight tremors, flu like symptoms);
- More frequent complaints of pain or illness;
- Frequent infections or infections which do not readily heal;
- Injuries occurring more often.

Psychological

- Unexplained change in personality or attitude;
- Sudden mood swings, irritability, or angry outbursts;
- Periods of unusual hyperactivity, agitation, or giddiness;
- Lack of motivation; appears lethargic or spaced out;
- Appears fearful, anxious, or paranoid, with no reason.

School

- Lacking motivation and deterioration in work ethic;
- Sleeping in class;
- Truancy;
- Sudden non participation in school activities;
- Disrespectful behaviour towards staff;
- Frequent poor behaviour.