



Dame Alice Owen's School
The Dame Alice Owen Foundation - 1613

SUBSTANCE MISUSE (DRUGS) POLICY

Agreed by the Governing Body Curriculum Committee
To be reviewed
(reviewed every 2 years)

October 2020
Summer 2022

To be monitored by the Headteacher, the Deputy Head, Pastoral and the Governing Body Curriculum Committee.

1. Aims

This policy covers the possession, use and misuse of both legal and illegal drugs.

We live in a society where legal and illegal drugs are readily available to young people. Our policy spells out how we educate students about drugs and how we deal with drug related incidents within the bounds of school jurisdiction. What can be defined as school jurisdiction is laid out in the behaviour policy.

We aim to:

- make the School's approach to drugs clear.
- ensure that the School fulfils its safeguarding responsibilities regarding drugs.
- outline the education process for staff and students and within this, how we promote healthy lifestyles.
- enable staff to manage any incidents relating to drug possession or use within the confines of our jurisdiction.

2. Substances covered by the policy

A drug can be defined as *'a substance people take to change how they feel, think or behave'*. These include but are not limited to:

- Alcohol
- Illegal drugs such as cannabis, cocaine, heroin, ecstasy etc
- Volatile substances such as aerosols, butane gas, Nitrous oxide
- Psychoactive drugs e.g. LSD
- Prescription medicines with a potential for abuse e.g. Ritalin.

Whilst some students are over the legal age for alcohol, they are still prohibited to possess alcohol on site.

Tobacco is not covered under this definition, smoking on the school site is prohibited. Possession and use of tobacco on school site is covered under the Behaviour policy.

Some prescription drugs are potentially harmful; it is recognised that some students may be in possession of these for legitimate reasons and they have no potential for abuse e.g. asthma inhalers. Students are prohibited from carrying paracetamol on their person.

3. Drug Education

The school has a responsibility to promote student wellbeing, and as part of this we need to provide students with the relevant information allowing them to manage risk and reduce the likelihood that they will be harmed by the use of legal and illegal drugs.

We aim to:

- increase student knowledge and understanding of drugs
- counter inaccurate messages and myths, which students may receive about drugs
- consider, in particular, short and long term effects of drugs, laws relating to drugs
- raise awareness on the impact of drugs on families and communities and personal behaviour, the availability and acceptability of drug use with peers, and the moral, social and emotional issues surrounding drugs
- help students distinguish between different substances, to consider their use, misuse, benefits and harms
- develop students' personal and social skills to make informed decisions about staying safe including how to find information and advice and to develop coping strategies
- enable students to explore their own and other people's attitudes towards drugs and their use.

To achieve these aims:

- Aspects of Drug Education occurs within the Science, PE, Religious Studies as well as the Drama and English curriculum.
- Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) curriculum is taught within extended form time, by a team of staff who specialise in that aspect of the RSE curriculum.
- we work with visiting presenters. Students find presentations from visiting specialists highly engaging and informative. Sometimes we complement our curriculum with a range of specialist outside agencies, in particular from youth groups, health agencies and the Police. Before they present to the students there is an in depth discussion with the visitors to ensure that the material delivered is appropriate to our particular student body and takes into account any particular sensitivities. We also ensure that the presenters are fully aware of the material used by the School with their 'in-house teaching'. Allied to this we ensure that there is an opportunity for follow up sessions within the form time structure. We allow students to give confidential feedback and follow up on any issues these sessions may bring to light.

4. Managing drug related issues

This section of the policy relates to the government's guidance on managing drug related incidents within the school jurisdiction

www.gov.uk/government/publications/drugs-advice-for-schools

The School treats all aspects of drug possession and misuse extremely seriously. We appreciate that each situation needs to be considered individually and that all aspects of an incident need to be taken into account. Given that drug problems rarely occur in isolation, responses need to take a holistic approach rather than focus solely on the drugs.

When dealing with any drug related incident, the utmost priority must be placed on safety, managing any medical emergencies with first aid and summoning appropriate help.

4.1. Suspected intoxication

Student safety is paramount and the required support needs to be found. If a student is found to be intoxicated on school premises, the student will firstly be placed in a safe place under the supervision of an adult. The relevant member of the Pastoral team and a member of the SLT will be informed. The parent/carer will be informed as soon as possible and asked to come to school to collect their child.

4.2. Suspected possession

- A member of the Pastoral team and/or SLT will be informed. The student will be removed to an appropriate location and will be under constant supervision. The

student will be interviewed and a statement taken. Other statements will be taken as appropriate in order to gain as full an understanding of what has happened as soon as possible. A second adult witness will be present throughout. Please see Appendix one for guidance on searching.

4.3. Supplying drugs within school jurisdiction

- A member of the pastoral team and/or SLT will be informed. The student will be removed to an appropriate location and will be under constant supervision. The student will be interviewed and a statement taken. Other statements will be taken as appropriate in order to gain as full an understanding of what has happened as soon as possible. A second adult witness will be present throughout. The School could take steps to permanently exclude the student(s). Please see Appendix one for guidance on searching.

4.4. Possession of drugs of any sort on the school site

- A member of the pastoral team and/or SLT will be informed. The student will be removed to an appropriate location and will be under constant supervision. The student will be interviewed and a statement taken. Other statements will be taken as appropriate in order to gain as full an understanding of what has happened as soon as possible. A second adult witness will be present throughout. This could lead to fixed-term exclusion; or even permanent exclusion for repeat offenders. Please see Appendix one for guidance on searching.

4.5. Recording the incident

In all cases, the [Drug Related Incident Form](#) will be completed and stored within the student's school file. If drugs are found, the following procedures will be followed:

- Section 91 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 enables the School to confiscate, retain and dispose of a student's property as a disciplinary penalty if it is reasonable to do so. This applies even if the substance does not come under the remit of this policy. If it is felt that it might be harmful or detrimental to good behaviour, discipline and the student's safety, it can be retained. If the legal nature of the substance cannot be determined then it should be treated as a controlled drug. Please see Appendix one for further information about confiscation.
- A full record of the proceedings will be made, including a police incident reference number if appropriate.
- The Headteacher, in consultation with the relevant Pastoral Director will decide on the appropriate sanction which can include fixed term or permanent exclusion.
- The Pastoral team will decide on the best form of support for the student and family.

5. Policy training

All relevant staff will be made aware of their responsibilities under this policy and will receive relevant training and support according to their responsibility.

6. Useful links

Young Minds - <https://youngminds.org.uk/find-help/for-parents/parents-guide-to-support-a-z/parents-guide-to-support-drugs-and-alcohol/>

Hope UK - <https://www.hopeuk.org/>

Talk to Frank - <https://www.talktofrank.com/>

Appendix one - Searching and Confiscation at School

This section provides a quick guide and summary of the government guidance, but details in the government guidance can be referenced as part of this policy. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/searching-screening-and-confiscation>

Who can search?

- Anyone who is authorised by the Headteacher can conduct a search. There is no need to have consent for a search if the item is a banned item from the School. Failure to do so is treated as any other kind refusal and can lead to the appropriate disciplinary action.
- The member of staff searching a student must be the same sex as the student being searched, and there must be a witness (also a staff member) to the search. If possible, the witness should also be the same sex as the student being searched.
 - There is a limited exception to this rule. A staff member can carry out a search of a student of the opposite sex and may do this without a witness present, where they reasonably believe that there is a risk that **serious harm** will be caused to a person if they do not conduct the search immediately and where it is not reasonably practicable to summon another member of staff.
- Students can be asked to remove outer clothing - that is an item not worn next to the skin. An intimate search can only be carried out by someone with more extensive powers e.g. police officer.

What can be searched for?

The items below are classified as 'banned from school' and as such can be searched for and confiscated without consent:

- Knives or weapons, alcohol, illegal drugs and stolen items
- Tobacco and cigarette papers, fireworks and pornographic images
- Any article that the member of staff reasonably suspects has been, or is likely to be, used to commit an offence, or to cause personal injury, or damage to property
- Any item banned by the school rules which has been identified in the rules as an item which may be searched for.

Informing Parents of search

- The School is not required to inform parents before a search takes place or to seek their consent to search their child. A record of the search must be kept.

Confiscation

- Confiscated substances should be passed onto the Headteacher or member of SLT without delay. The substance should be placed in a sealed and labelled container. It should also be signed and dated and stored in a safe or lockable container with access only to SLT.

- The Police must be notified without delay. The confiscated items must be passed onto the Police at the first opportunity. The School has no legal responsibility to pass on information relating to the person from whom the drugs were confiscated.