

Drug and Substance Misuse Policy



Approved by: Penny Harris (Director) Jane Cox (Director) **Date:** 1st September 2025

Last reviewed on: 1st September 2024

Next review due by: 1st September 2026

All policies are generated and reviewed with an awareness of equality and diversity in relation to pupils, staff and visitors. All policies are generated and reviewed placing safeguarding and wellbeing at the heart of all that we do.

1. Aims:

The policy aims to ensure that the school's approach taken on the issue of drugs is consistent and part of our commitment to the health and well-being of everyone involved. Staff will need to be confident and skilled to teach drug education and pupils need to receive up to date, relevant and accurate information as well as support.

This policy aims to make clear that management of drug related incidents will be consistent with the Behaviour Management policy.

2. Definition:

"Drugs" are taken here to mean those that are legal, such as alcohol, solvents, 'legal-highs', over the counter and prescribed drugs, and illegal drugs such as cannabis, ecstasy, amphetamines, heroin, crack/cocaine, LSD, Novel Psychoactive Substances (NPS) and any other substances covered by the 2001 Misuse of Drugs act or Psychoactive Substances Act 2016. The school prohibits all substances having psychoactive effects on the brain; depressants, stimulants, cannabinoids and hallucinogens.

The school believes that the possession and or use of such drugs during the school day or while travelling to or from education is inappropriate. The drugs/substances covered by this policy are not to be bought, sold or otherwise exchanged or brought onto the premises during the school day, or while pupils are on offsite activities or visits.

Individual exceptions will be made for pupils who require prescription medicines where appropriate. (see Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions policy)

3. Drug and Substance Misuse Education:

Drug and substance misuse education is an integral part of the Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) programme. The school will support staff in accessing training to extend their knowledge in this area.

The school aims to enable pupils to make healthy informed choices by increasing their knowledge, exploring a range of attitudes towards drug use and developing and practicing decision-making skills.

Teaching will be based on an understanding that a variety of approaches should be used in order to meet the differing needs and learning styles of pupils and the information provided will be appropriate to the age and experience of the young people being taught.

Visitors and outside agencies will be used to support the planned programme of education, in line with national and local guidance. We are careful to negotiate the use of visitors so that their contribution fits our needs and they are clear how their input fits into our planned programme.

Staff will have access to on-going advice, support and training as part of their own professional development. The school actively cooperates with agencies such as the police, health and drug agencies.

4. Responsibilities:

The school leader takes overall responsibility for the policy and its implementation, for liaison with parents, the local authority and appropriate outside agencies.

A school cannot knowingly allow its premises to be used for the production or supply of any controlled drug. Where it is suspected that substances are being sold on the premises, details regarding those involved, and as much information as possible, will be passed to the police.

5. Implementation:

If incidents involving substance misuse on the premises/during the school day, and following discussion with the pupil and staff, action will proceed as follows:

Procedures for an emergency apply when a person is at immediate risk of harm:

A person who is unconscious, having trouble breathing, seriously confused or disorientated or who has taken harmful toxic substance, should be responded to as an emergency. The main responsibility is for the pupil at immediate risk, but you also need to ensure the well-being and safety of others. Put into practice first-aid procedures. If in any doubt, call medical help.

Always:

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

Before assistance arrives if the person is conscious:

- ask them what has happened and to identify any drug used
- collect any drug sample and 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 person 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 them anything by mouth
- do not attempt to make them sit or stand
- do not leave them unattended or in charge of another pupil
- notify parents/carers

In cases of substance use/misuse on the premises, during the school day or during offsite visits etc., the case will be discussed with the young person and an incident report written; parents/carers will be informed as soon as possible. The support of outside agencies will be sought if appropriate. Action will take place in line with the Behaviour Management policy.

If a young person admits to using or supplying substances off the premises, the appropriate action will be to inform the school leader, who will inform the parents/carers. The support of outside agencies will be sought if appropriate.

While there is no legal obligation to inform the police, they may also be involved at the discretion of the School leader in consultation with staff who know the young person well.

The school will consider each incident individually and will employ a range of responses to deal with each incident. All incidents and causes for concern should be recorded and reported. In any such circumstances it is important to identify whether there is a safeguarding concern. Drug use can be a symptom of other problems and staff should involve or refer pupils to other services when needed. If there is need, a referral should be made as outlined in the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

6. Controlled drugs

It is legal to search pupils in certain circumstances and the procedures relating to this can be found in the Behaviour Management Policy. There are other circumstances, however, when staff may find themselves given controlled drugs by a pupil, or controlled drugs may be found lost or hidden on the school site. The advice in these circumstances is to:

- ensure a second adult witness is present
- seal the sample in a plastic bag and include details of the date and time of the find and the adults present
- store in a secure location, such as a safe or lockable container
- notify the police, who will collect it and then store or dispose of it in line with locally agreed protocols. The law does not require a school to tell the police the name of the pupil from whom the drug is taken or who is suspected of having brought it in. The decision as to whether or not to give this information is up to the School leader.
- record full details of the incident, including the police incident reference number
- inform parents, unless this would not be in the best interests of the pupil
- develop a support and/or sanction plan
- inform other involved professionals

7. Support and advice

It is the school's policy to support pupils for whom drug and substance misuse is an issue. The priority will always be to ensure internal and external support and guidance is available for all pupils affected by their own or other's drug/substance misuse, including parents. Sources can include:

ADDACTION – specialist drug and alcohol treatment charity. Provides services specifically tailored to the needs of young people and their parents. Their 'Skills for Life' project supports young people with drug misusing parents.

ADFAM – offers information to families of drug and alcohol users. Their website has a database of local family support services

ALCOHOL CHANGE– services available to people with alcohol related problems

ASH – Action on Smoking and Health- aiming to reduce health problems associated with tobacco use

DRINKAWARE – helping reduce alcohol misuse and minimise alcohol related harm

DRUGWISE– information for staff

FRANK – aims to raise awareness amongst young people of the risks of illegal drugs and to provide information and advice

RE-SOLV (Society for the Prevention of Solvent and Volatile Substance Abuse) – information for professionals, parents and young people

SMOKEFREE – NHS smoking helpline

8. Review

In order to ensure that this policy is relevant, if you have any comments please email directors@ontrackededucation.com