

Drug and Alcohol policy

Summary

Woodham Academy has an overriding concern for the development and well being of its students. We recognise the positive contribution of a healthy lifestyle free from alcohol, drug and substance abuse has on good behaviour, self-esteem and achievement. We aim to support our students in making safe, healthy and responsible decisions about the use of illegal and legal drugs through our curriculum and drugs education programme. We know that some students will be more vulnerable to drug misuse, and we strive to reduce risk factors for these groups by promoting a safe and supportive environment within school. We will maximise opportunities for success, by equipping all of our students with the skills and attitudes needed to cope with the academic and social demands of their school life, and by developing their skills to manage situations involving drugs and alcohol.

The possession, use or supply of illegal and other unauthorised drugs within school boundaries is unacceptable. This policy outlines agreed responses and procedures for managing incidents related to drug and alcohol use. It also acknowledges and follows advice from the Department for Education and the Association of Chief Police officers document, (January 2012), which is available from the school's office

Date first adopted June 2009

Review date Annually

Last Reviewed October 2019

1. Principles

Children achieve their maximum potential in an environment which is safe, secure and supportive of their needs. The majority of young people of school age will never use illegal drugs, however, many young people will try tobacco or alcohol. We acknowledge that there are complex motivations behind a young person's decision to try alcohol, tobacco, volatile substances or illegal drugs, and we also acknowledge that many young people who do experiment with drugs will not go on to become problem drug users. We recognise that the majority of young people will be exposed to the effects and influences of drugs in the wider community and through the media, and that they will be increasingly exposed to opportunities to try legal and illegal drugs. We are committed to the following principles:

- The development and well-being of the child is of paramount importance
- Drug education is a major component of drug prevention
- A healthy lifestyle and regular sleeping patterns make a positive contribution to good behaviour and self esteem – which in turn make a positive contribution to achievement
- We will use our school curriculum to provide opportunities for students to develop their knowledge and understanding about drugs and their effects
- We will use our school curriculum to provide opportunities for students to develop positive skills and attitudes about drugs and to appreciate the benefits of healthy choices
- We will minimise risk factors for vulnerable groups by providing a supportive and safe environment within school
- We will ensure that vulnerable young people receive appropriate support through the curriculum, pastoral system, student support or through referral to other services
- The possession, use or supply of illegal and other unauthorised drugs within school boundaries is unacceptable
- The school is committed to the Healthy Schools Standards relating to drugs education

2. Aims

This policy aims to:

- Ensure that we comply with legislation and guidance on drugs within school settings
- Clarify the school's approach to drugs for all staff, students, governors, parents/carers, external agencies and the wider community
- Give guidance on ensuring that our curriculum is appropriate and supports students in making healthy decisions in relation to drug use

- Clarify procedures for staff in managing drugs related incidents within school to ensure transparency and consistency
- Reinforce the role of the school in contributing to the local and national strategies to reduce drug use

3. Definitions

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

“A substance people take to change the way they feel, think or behave”

The terms “drugs” and “drug education” unless clearly stated otherwise are 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, ketamine, khat and alkyl nitrates, energy drinks
- All over-the-counter and prescription medicines

The term “drug/substance use” is drug taking, for example consuming alcohol, taking medication or using illegal drugs;

The term “drug/substance misuse” is drug taking which leads a person to experience social, psychological, physical or legal problems related to intoxication or regular excessive consumption and/or dependence. It may be part of a wider spectrum of problematic or harmful behaviour.

The term “school boundaries” is used to refer to any setting in which the school and its staff would be expected to have responsibility. This includes all locations including the main school site, school placements, work placements, school trips, school transport, educational visits or other off-site locations, where students or staff should be engaged in educational or other activities organised or directed by the school within the expected working day. This includes students or staff returning to school out of hours to take part in school activities such as a play, musical activity, parental consultation or school celebration. In line with our policies on behaviour and other related matters, we include the journey to and from school on public transport or other means in this definition, and all other times when students are in the immediate environs of the school or wearing uniform.

4. To whom does the policy apply

This policy applies to all staff, students, parents/carers, governors, visitors, volunteers and partner agencies working and visiting Woodham Academy.

5. The curriculum

The school delivers a broad and balanced curriculum which:

- (a) promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society, and
- (b) prepares pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.

As required by Education Act 2002 section 1 and 2 drug education is a major component of drug prevention and is an important aspect of the school curriculum. The aim of the drug education programme at Woodham Academy is to provide opportunities for students to develop their knowledge, skills, attitudes and understanding about drugs and appreciate the benefits of a healthy lifestyle relating this to their own and others’ actions. The education programme aims to support drug prevention by minimising the number of young people engaging in drug use; delaying the age of first use; reducing the harm caused by drugs; and enabling those who have concerns about drugs to seek help.

Our drugs education programme aims to achieve drugs prevention through:

- a) Increasing students’ knowledge and understanding and clarify misconceptions about
 - the short- and long-term effects and risks of drugs use
 - 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 and political issues surrounding drugs
- b) Developing their 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

- c) Enabling them to explore their own and other people's attitudes towards drugs, drug use and drug users, including challenging stereotypes, and exploring media and social influences

Our drug education is delivered through:

- Tutor time at KS3 and KS4 and Specialist Days which incorporates the statutory citizenship programme of study at KS3 and KS4, and the PSHE programme of study
- Our Science curriculum at KS3 and KS4

Our curriculum also supports the development of personal and social skills through:

- Tutor time activities at KS3 and KS4.

Approach:

- Drug education will be taught in a safe, secure and supportive learning environment
- Ground rules will be agreed, established and reviewed periodically through discussion with students
- Teachers will use a selection of active learning approaches – action research/mind-mapping/case studies/circle time/creative writing literature/discussion/external contributors/drama visits/formal debate/group work/interactive ICT/local surveys/media analysis/peer education/questionnaires/role-play/simulations/structured games/theatre-in- education/video supported by follow-up discussion etc.

External contributors are always interviewed by a senior member of staff before their first input. The class teacher will always share teaching the lesson and always be in the classroom. A copy of the drug policy will be made available to all outside speakers.

Provision is made for vulnerable students by assessing individual needs and working with external agencies to give the correct support.

The drugs education programme is supported by LA Consultants who provide resources and interactive workshops for the students. In addition, resources and/or expertise is provided by Durham CC, EDS, the Healthy Schools programme.

If teaching staff require additional guidance they can contact their Head of Department or Head of Learning or Head of PCC. Staff are also encouraged to seek support from other tutors or teaching staff to share good practice.

Staff Support and Training

- Trainee teachers and NQTs should be familiar with the programme of study for citizenship and the framework for PCC, relevant to the age range they teach as required by the Standards for Qualified Teacher Status (QTS). Trainees may be asked to contribute to aspects of the drug education programme, however this MUST remain the responsibility of the class teacher.
- Where a member of staff is unfamiliar with the drug education programme, they may request additional support from their HoL or Year team, or Head of PCC.
- All school staff should have general drug awareness and a good understanding of the school drug and other related policies. This should include first steps in managing drug related incidents and identifying and responding to students' needs.
- CPD - Staff will be given opportunity to access further training when appropriate funding and training is available
- The school will maintain a register of all staff who have received training.

Assessment - the elements of drug education that form part of the science curriculum are assessed in accordance with the requirement of the national curriculum.

Learning from the other elements of drug education will also be assessed as part of overall PCC provision.

To ensure the quality, relevance and effectiveness of the drug education programme it is essential to regularly monitor and evaluate the programme. Head of PCC is the designated member of staff for co-ordinating drug issues and is responsible for the overall monitoring of drug education. Their work will be overseen and monitored by Mrs S McGinney.

This monitoring may include:

- Lesson observations with feedback to teachers
- Looking at a sample of students work
- Teachers providing regular feedback on the scheme of work/lesson plans
- Monitoring curriculum plans weekly, mid-term and termly, with feedback to teachers
- Feedback from curriculum co-ordinators, heads of learning, class teachers and students about what has been covered
- Including drug education as a regular agenda item at year teams/pastoral team/Governor curriculum meetings.

Changes to the drug education provision will take place in response to changing local needs, as a result of review following monitoring, or to ensure consistency with the schools development plan. This will be implemented when and where appropriate.

6. Management of Drugs at school

Woodham Academy has adopted the guidance for responding to incidents involving drugs produced by the Local Authority – “County Durham – Hitting the Target” published in Dec 2008. This is based upon Drugs: Guidance for Schools 2012 (DfES).

In every case of an incident involving drugs, schools should place the utmost priority on safety, meeting any medical emergencies with first aid and summoning appropriate help before addressing further issues. If in doubt, they should seek medical assistance immediately.

6.1 Prescribed Drugs – medical purposes

Some students may require medicines that have been prescribed for their medical condition during the school day.

Further information and guidance is available in the Medicines in school policy

The school is aware that a long-term medical condition that has a substantial and adverse effect on a student’s ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities is recognised as a disability and that the Health Care Plan will therefore need to feed into a longer term School Access plan. Equalities Act 2010

The school is aware of the potential misuse of medicines. Medicines that have been prescribed for an individual must only be used by them. They must not be given or passed to a third party. Where a student is found to have taken another medicine prescribed for another student, the matter will be dealt with in the first instance as a medical issue and then as a discipline issue. It will be made clear to both the student who has been prescribed the medicines, and to the third party taking the medicine, the seriousness and potential dangers of taking someone else’s medication. Parents will be informed, and the student(s) may be disciplined.

6.2 Over the Counter drugs

For non-prescribed medicines students may only self administer over-the-counter medicines, such as those providing relief from period pains or hay fever, if parents have given consent. Further information and guidance is given in the Medicine in school policy.

6.3 Other legal drugs

6.3.1 Caffeine and other “high energy” drinks

In line with increasing national concern regarding the number of students consuming high levels of caffeine or similar substances through drinking “high energy” drinks or taking caffeine tablets, the school discourages their consumption. These are not allowed on school site and will be confiscated if seen. Where a student admits or is reported to be consuming these drinks or tablets in excess, or where moderate consumption is seen to affect the behaviour of the student, the student will be referred to student support, who will also contact parents. The student will be monitored by the Student Support team.

6.3.2 Smoking

We recognise that the school has an important role to play in raising students’ awareness of the dangers of smoking and in helping those who want to give up smoking to do so.

The school is a no-smoking site. Smoking of any kind, including ‘vaping’ is not permitted anywhere in the school buildings or on the school site by students, staff, visitors, parents, governors, volunteers, contractors or members of the public.

If an adult or non-student is seen to smoke or reported to be smoking within the school boundaries as defined in Section 3, they will be reminded that the school is a no-smoking site and will be asked to extinguish their cigarette, cigar, pipe, or equivalent. If they refuse to comply, they may be asked to leave the site. In addition, if a member of staff is seen to smoke or reported to be smoking within the school boundaries, this may also result in disciplinary action.

If students are caught smoking within the school boundaries as defined in Section 3, or in the immediate vicinity of the school whilst wearing school uniform, it will be dealt with as both a disciplinary matter and an educational matter – Students are not permitted to use e-cigarettes and any such usage will be dealt with as ‘normal’ cigarettes. Any student caught smoking should be dealt with in the following way:

Stage 1 - First Occasion

A letter, from school to the parents, informs them of the incident, reminds them of the health risks and warns that a day in the behaviour room will be imposed and of the serious consequences of a repeat offence. The Behaviour Welfare team will put the student into the behaviour room for one day. Part of the work set for that day will be a Health Education activity relating to the dangers of smoking.

Stage 2 - Second Occasion

If the student is caught smoking for a second time, another letter will be sent to the parents telling them that governors have been informed. An appointment will be made with the school nurse to discuss the problems associated with smoking and to offer guidance on giving up. The student will be given a final warning.

Stage 3 – Subsequent Offences

Should the student continue to offend, the parents will be required to attend a school meeting and the student may be excluded from the school site for a fixed period of time and will be required to attend smoking cessation sessions.

6.3.3 Alcohol

Alcohol is not permitted on the school site without the prior agreement of the Headteacher. In keeping with our duty of care, staff are not permitted to consume alcohol during the school day, or at any time when they will be subsequently supervising children.

The school recognises that there may be occasions when a member of staff may experience difficulties in relation to alcohol misuse outside of school. Staff are encouraged to discuss this with line managers so that support can be put in place. This may result in a referral to Occupational Health.

If students are caught drinking alcohol within the school boundaries as defined in Section 3, or in the immediate vicinity of the school whilst wearing school uniform, it will be dealt with as both a disciplinary matter and an educational matter. Any student caught drinking alcohol should be dealt with in the following way.

Stage 1 – First Occasion

If the student is caught drinking alcohol within the school boundaries, or in the immediate vicinity of the school whilst wearing school uniform, as defined in Section 3, parents will be contacted and where practicable, the student will be sent home. The student may be excluded from the school site for a fixed term. The student will be on report for a week. An appointment with an appropriate professional to discuss the problems associated with drinking alcohol and alcohol abuse will be made.

Stage 2 – Second Occasion

Should the student be caught a subsequent time drinking alcohol within the school boundaries, the parents will be required to attend a school meeting and draw up a home-school contract. A further appointment will be made with the Director of Assistant Headteacher and may result in a referral to local authority support or outside agency support. The student may be excluded for a fixed term.

6.4 Illegal drugs

All incidents involving students relating to illegal drugs MUST be reported to the designated member of the Leadership Team. This includes suspicions, observations, disclosures or discoveries of situations involving illegal and other unauthorised drugs. Commonly used terminology relating to illegal drugs and slang terms can be found in Annexes A & B.

6.5 Responding to Drug Related Incidents

A flow-chart summarising the procedures for dealing with unauthorised drug related incidents can be found in Appendix A7 of the LA guidance “Hitting the Target”.

6.5.1 Suspicions and Disclosures

If a member of staff is concerned for whatever reason that a student may be using illegal or unauthorised drugs, for example if their behaviour appears to be altered in some way, it should be reported as a matter of urgency to the Assistant Headteacher or Designated Safeguarding Lead. The member of staff should make careful notes outlining their concerns, paying careful attention to details such as the demeanour of the student, any noticeable physical changes in appearance, the time of day, standard of work achieved or other relevant details and pass these on to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. This will then be investigated carefully and thoroughly by the Student Support team.

If a student discloses information regarding drug misuse (for example about themselves, their family or friends) teachers cannot and should not promise total confidentiality. If a student discloses information which is sensitive, not generally known, and which the student asks not to be passed on, it should be discussed with the Assistant Headteacher, or another member of Leadership Team. The request will be honoured unless this is unavoidable in order for the school to fulfil its professional responsibilities in relation to:

- child protection
- co-operating with a police investigation

If the Director of Student Support, in consultation with the Headteacher, deems it appropriate, a search of the students' property or outer clothing may follow as outlined in Annex C - Guidelines for Searching Students.

6.5.2 Students found to be using drugs, or in possession of drugs or drug paraphernalia

After any search involving students, parents/carers will normally be contacted by the school, regardless of whether the result of the search is positive or negative. Where students are caught using or caught in possession of drugs or drug paraphernalia, these will be confiscated in line with the following legal guidance:

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 from being committed or continued in relation to that 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.

In taking temporary possession and disposing of suspected illegal drugs staff will:

- ensure that a second adult witness is present throughout
- seal the sample in a plastic bag and include details of the date and time of the seizure/find and witness present.
- store it in school safe
- without delay notify the local police contact, who will be asked to collect it and then store or dispose of it.

The law does not require a school to divulge to the police the name of the student from whom the drugs were taken but in the case of an illegal drug will normally do so, as NOT doing so, may be counter-productive for the school and the wider community. Our local contact is:

Name: P.C.S.O Jennifer Atkinson
Telephone: 07908 554228

If the school confiscates or finds drug paraphernalia such as needles or syringes within the school boundaries, these will be placed in a sturdy, secure container (e.g. a tin with lid) using gloves. Plastic bottles and soft drink cans should not be used.

The container should then be clearly labelled and stored in the school safe (or equivalent secure locked area if off-site). The local police contact will be notified and asked to advise on safe disposal.

The Assistant Headteacher and the Behaviour Welfare team will investigate the context, the nature and the seriousness of all drug related incidents, and assess the needs of those involved. If the Assistant Headteacher in consultation with the Headteacher decides that it is appropriate, they will inform the police about the nature of the incident and the names of the student(s) involved. This will be done after careful consideration of the evidence. The Local Authority offers the following guidance:

“staff should be aware that even if a student is caught giving or sharing drugs with a friend, they could well be charged with supply. Clearly factors such as the age of the young person, type of drug involved etc. should be considered. If, however, the police must be called, it is advisable to contact the Community Safety Officer and not to simply dial 999. Even if the Community Safety Officer is called in, that officer will still have to make a formal record of the event which will be held at the police station.

Implications of Police Involvement

County Durham Constabulary guidelines are quite clear that in the case of cannabis possession young people under 18 will be arrested and will receive a criminal record.

There may be implications for the school if the police are called out in response to a drug incident. Police involvement could cause the situation to escalate or even glamorise it. If the criminal justice system is involved, it is likely that teacher witnesses or even other students may be required to give evidence in a court hearing.”

If during the course of the investigation the decision is taken to involve the police, the school will cease its own investigations immediately to enable the police to conduct a full detailed enquiry.

6.5.3 General notes – responding to all drug related incidents

The possession, use or supply of illegal and unauthorised drugs within school boundaries is unacceptable.

Any response to a drug related incident will balance the needs of the individual with those of the wider school community. We aim to provide students with the opportunity to learn from their mistakes and develop as individuals, and so responses to drug related incidents will be determined on a case-by-case basis dependent on the best evidence available to us at the time.

Some responses may serve to enforce and reinforce school rules. Any sanctions will always be justifiable in terms of:

- The seriousness of the incident
- The identified need of the pupil 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, bullying)

Possible responses include:

- Early intervention and targeted prevention
- Referral
- Counselling
- Behaviour support plans and home school contracts
- Multi-agency support
- Fixed-term exclusion
- Pastoral support programmes
- A managed move
- Permanent exclusion

Exclusion is an extreme sanction. Any exclusion may ONLY be sanctioned by the Headteacher. The Headteacher will use discretion in determining whether exclusion is the most appropriate sanction in each case, and will determine the length and nature of the exclusion.

In considering whether permanent exclusion is the most appropriate sanction, the Headteacher will consider;

- a) The nature and gravity of the incident, or series of incidents
- b) The effect that the student remaining in the school would have on the education and welfare of other students and / or staff.

Although responses will be determined on a case-by-case basis, the most likely sanction for students who are known to be supplying illegal drugs will be permanent exclusion.

Referrals to outside agencies such as the Local Authority Drugs and Alcohol Action Team and Lifeline will be through the Student Support team. The Designated Safeguarding Lead and SENCo will maintain responsibility for regular and frequent links with outside agencies.

7.0 Parents and carers

If parents/carers are suspected of being under the influence of drugs or alcohol within the school boundaries, staff should attempt to maintain a calm atmosphere. If necessary they should call for a second adult, discretely if possible. On occasion, a teacher may have concerns about discharging a student into the care of a parent/carer. In such instances, the school will discuss with the parent/carer if alternative arrangements could be made, for example asking another parent/carer to accompany the child home. It may be necessary to invoke local child protection procedures if a student's safety is under threat. If in any doubt as to how to proceed, staff should seek advice from a member of the Leadership Team without delay.

8.0 Staff and governors

If a member of staff or governor is found to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol within the school boundaries, this may result in disciplinary procedures. In this case, the Headteacher, Chair of Governors or a member of the Leadership Team appointed by the Headteacher or Chair of Governors will investigate the matter fully and will report the findings of the investigation to the Governors who will treat the matter as a disciplinary matter. Where appropriate, additional help and guidance should be sought from the Local Authority officers.

9.0 Monitoring and Review

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will keep detailed records of the number and nature of all drug related incidents and report at least annually to the Leadership Team as to the effectiveness of the policy. The school governors will review this policy annually as part of the regular cycle of review and monitoring.

Annex A (reproduced from the LA guidance – Hitting the Target)

Commonly used terminology relating to unauthorised drug use

Addiction	Implies that a drug dependency has developed that has serious detrimental effects on the user
Analgesic	Pain killer
Benzodiazepines	Minor tranquilisers such as Temazepam or Valium
Dependence	A compulsion to take a drug to feel good or to avoid feeling bad. Associated with drug taking to avoid withdrawal
Depressant	A drug such as alcohol or solvents which suppresses neural activity
Detoxification	The process by which a user withdraws from the effects of a drug, this can be self or agency driven
Hallucinogenic	A drug which changes perception of sensory information, this can be visual, auditory or emotional
Harm reduction	Services available to people aimed at reducing the risks of using drugs
Opiates	Drugs derived from the opium poppy (mainly Morphine, Codeine and Heroin)
Opioids	Synthetics such as Methadone and Pethidine
Over the Counter	Drugs available without a prescription
Overdose	The use of drugs in such quantities that immediate adverse physical or mental effects occur. Can be deliberate or accidental; lethal or non-lethal
Paraphernalia	Equipment used in drug taking
Pharmaceutical drugs	Drugs available from chemists on prescription or over the counter
Polydrug use	Using more than one drug with the intention of enhancing or countering the effects of another. Polydrug use may occur because the user's regular choice of drug is unavailable at the time.
Problematic drug use	Drug use which causes harm – this could be physical, psychological or social to the user or to others
Recreational drug use	The use of drugs for pleasure or leisure
Stimulant	Those drugs such as amphetamine which act on the central nervous system to increase neural activity
Tolerance	The process by which the body gets used to repeated doses of a drug. The user may respond by increasing the dose to get and maintain an effect.
Treatment	Any action intended to influence or ameliorate drug taking behaviour
Volatile substances	Refers to all solvents and inhalants
Withdrawal	The body's reaction to the sudden absence of a drug to which it has adapted.

Annex B (Reproduced from the LA guidance – Hitting the Target)

“In addition to these terms there are a number of slang names for different drugs in common usage. The following list is not exhaustive and the words do change across localities and across time. The best way to keep informed is to ask the groups with whom you are working. Apart from geographical and temporal differences, it is important to remember the speaker’s context and experience affects the language used e.g. dope, gear, shit or stuff means cannabis to a cannabis user, but it means heroin to a heroin user. Such generic terms are the most common.

Alcohol	Peev, booze, hooch
Amphetamines	Speed, whizz, phet
Amyl nitrate	Poppers
Cannabis	Tac and blow are the most common but there are many names to describe cannabis resin and herbal cannabis. Skunk is a very strong herbal cannabis with a strong smell. Some names refer to how it looks e.g. “black” to the weight it is measured in i.e. a tenth (a sixteenth of an ounce) or to the way it is used i.e. a spliff is a cannabis cigarette; a lung, cloud, bong, bucket or dirty bag is a home-made device made from a plastic bottle
Cocaine	Coke, snow, Charlie
Crack	Rocks, freebase cocaine
Ecstasy	E, dove, Mitsubishi, cowie, disco biscuit, eckie etc. Names often refer to logo stamped on pill
Heroin	White, brown, smack, skag, horse. Injecting heroin is sometimes referred to as pinning or digging.
Ketamine	Ket, special K, K
LSD	Acid or trips
Liberty cap	Magic mushrooms, mushies, shrooms
Tranquilisers	Usually referred to by a derivative of their trade names e.g. roofies for Rohypnol, temmies or mazzies (Temazepam), vallies (Valium), lobbies (Librium), moggies (Mogadon). Beware, however because some young people refer to all prescription pills as wobs or wobbly eggs. This is because Temazepam used to come in egg-shaped capsules.

Annex C

Searching Students

We believe that every student has a right to privacy. However, in the following circumstances, staff may need to search a student:

- If the student is accused of or suspected of taking something that does not belong to them
- If the student is accused of or suspected of carrying offensive materials
- If the student is accused of or suspected of carrying any weapon or replica weapon, including folding pen-knives or sharpened objects that could be used to cause harm, or threaten harm, to themselves, another student, member of staff or member of the public
- If the student is accused of or suspected of carrying any illegal or controlled substances, including alcohol, cigarettes, glue or aerosols
- If the student is accused of or suspected of carrying electronic images on a mobile telephone or other recording device that involves bullying, offensive or illegal behaviour

In line with the Searching, screening and confiscation Act – January 2018 school staff can search a pupil for any item if the pupil agrees. Headteachers and staff authorised by them have a statutory power to search pupils or possessions without consent where they have reasonable grounds for suspecting the pupil may have a prohibited item.

Staff that suspect any student of carrying inappropriate items have the right to search them. These include: - knives and blades, offensive weapons, alcohol, controlled drugs or stolen articles, tobacco and cigarette papers, fireworks, pornographic images, any article that a member of staff reasonably suspects has been or is likely to be used to commit an offence, or cause personal injury or damage to property or any person, including the pupil. Headteachers and authorised staff can also search for any item banned by the school rules. Any suspicions should be referred to the Assistant Headteacher or a member of the senior leadership team.

When searching a student, a member of staff should:

- Seek the permission of the Headteacher
- Ensure that another senior member of staff is present. Under NO circumstances should a member of staff search a student without another member of staff present.
- Ensure that a female member of staff is present if the student to be searched is female
- Ensure that a male member of staff is present if the student to be searched is male.
- Make it clear to the student that the search is part of an investigation and that they should know that the outcomes have not been pre-judged

When searching a student, a member of staff may ask students to:

- Empty the contents of their bags and surrender the contents for scrutiny
- Empty the contents of their pockets and surrender the contents for scrutiny
- Remove outer clothing such as coats, jackets, hooded tops etc and surrender these for scrutiny

It is reasonable and expected that should the student be found to be in possession of someone else's property, offensive materials, illegal or controlled substances, any weapon (including replicas), or electronic images as described above, then these items may be confiscated by the members of staff conducting the search and held in a secure place within the school.

If the student refuses to co-operate with the search, the school may choose to isolate the student from their peers and keep them under adult supervision for a reasonable length of time until further action has been agreed. This further action may involve requesting parental presence to oversee or conduct the search and / or in the case of suspected illegal or controlled substances or stolen goods, contacting the police. If a student refuses to hand over a mobile phone or recording device, disciplinary action will be taken for refusal to co-operate with a reasonable request. Consent must be given to search messages/ images on a mobile phone.

In all circumstances, if a student has been searched by staff, the school will inform parents of the nature of the investigation and the outcome.

If during a search a student is found to be in possession of illegal or controlled substances, or a weapon that could potentially threaten harm or cause harm to another student or member of staff, THIS COULD LEAD TO A PERMANENT EXCLUSION.

In exceptional circumstances, for example if a student or member of staff is deemed to be at risk of immediate danger, the Headteacher may choose to invoke the power to search without consent in line with Government guidelines.

In taking temporary possession and disposing of suspected controlled drugs schools are advised to:

- ensure that a second adult witness is present throughout;
- seal the sample in a plastic bag and include details of the date and time of the seizure/find and witness present;
- store it in a secure location, such as a safe or other lockable container with access limited to senior members of staff;
- notify the police without delay, 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 divulge to the police the name of the pupil from whom the drugs were taken but it is advisable to do so;
- record full details of the incident, including the police incident reference number;
- inform parents/carers, unless this is not in the best interests of the pupil;
- identify any safeguarding concerns and develop a support and disciplinary response

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Government advice

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/drugs-advice-for-schools>

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/674416/Searching_screening_and_confiscation.pdf

Support and advice for families

<https://www.changegrowlive.org/content/lifeline-services-transferring-to-cgl-contact-details>

<http://www.talktofrank.com/>

<https://www.nhs.uk/smokefree>

<https://www.alcoholconcern.org.uk/concerned-about-alcohol>