



Drugs and Alcohol Policy

1. Purpose:

The Drugs and Alcohol Policy aims to:

- acknowledge and clarify the school's role in preventing the misuse of drugs and drug education and ensure it is appropriate to pupils' needs;
- provide information about procedures in response to drug-related incidents;
- provide guidance to teachers, support staff and governors;
- have clear procedures for responding to drug-related incidents and applying appropriate consequences.

The Reach Free School operates a zero tolerance approach to possession of, or intent to supply, drugs and drug paraphernalia on the school premises or in other situations outlined below. The school views possession of drugs, drug paraphernalia or intent to supply as a serious breach of the school's behaviour policy, which may, or is likely to, result in permanent exclusion.

2. Definition

Drugs are those that are legal, such as alcohol, tobacco and solvents, over the counter and prescribed drugs, legal highs, and illegal drugs for example cannabis, ecstasy, heroin, crack/cocaine and LSD (this is not an exhaustive list).

The Reach Free School believes that the possession and use of drugs in school, or during the school day, or on school visits, is inappropriate except for:

- drugs that have been medically prescribed.
- the consumption of small quantities of alcohol by senior pupils, with meals, on approved and supervised occasions.

NB: Over the counter medicines are explicitly referred to separately in the First Aid Policy.

This policy applies at all times, including when staff are acting in loco parentis. This includes educational visits in line with the School Educational Visits Policy. Where staff consume alcohol on such visits it must be in moderation and in accordance with maintaining their duty of care. All pupils, staff and parents, guardians and carers should be aware of these rules.

3. Drugs Education

The Drugs Education Policy ensures that we take a whole school approach on the issue of drugs. This forms part of the REACH Time (PSHE) programme taught during Reach Beyond and the Drug and Alcohol Policy is referenced in lessons.

3.1 Drugs education will:

- enable pupils to make healthy, informed choices by increasing knowledge, exploring their own and other people's attitudes, and developing and practising skills;
- promote positive attitudes towards healthy lifestyles;
- provide accurate information about substances;
- increase understanding about the implications, risks and possible consequences, of use and misuse;
- encourage an understanding for those experiencing or likely to experience substance use;

- widen understanding about related health and social issues e.g. sex and sexuality, crime, HIV and AIDS;
- seek to minimise the risks that users and potential users face;
- enable young people to identify sources of appropriate personal support.

4. Community

4.1 The school actively co-operates with other agencies such as community police, social services, health and drug agencies to deliver its commitment to drug education.

4.2 The school will make occasional use of outside speakers, either with pupils or parents, guardians and carers, providing that the speakers are felt to be in sympathy with the aims of the school's Drugs Education policy in section 3 above.

4.3 Given parental support, appropriate counselling and help will be offered to pupils who are misusing drugs in their life outside school, via the Deputy Headteacher.

5. Responsibility

5.1 The Headteacher takes overall responsibility for the policy and its implementation, for liaison with the Governing Body, parents, guardians and carers and appropriate outside agencies and for ensuring that all staff dealing with substance issues are adequately supported and trained.

5.2 The following are normally delegated:

Drugs education within the Curriculum – to the Head of Science, who coordinates drugs education within that subject, and to the Reach Beyond Coordinator who is responsible for the Drugs component in REACH Time (PSHE).

Deputy Headteacher who carries out the initial stages of investigation into drug possession or drug related incidents.

5.3 Drug Related Incidents – Medical Response

The usual response is to contact the Welfare Officer and liaise with the Deputy Headteacher.

6. Investigation

The Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher will normally inform parents if there are allegations or suspicions of drug abuse emanating from staff or pupils, unless the grounds seem very slim. It may be appropriate to point out that these allegations are being relayed 'as a matter of report rather than of accusation'. Suspicions or accusations of drug possession on the school premises must be brought to the attention of the Deputy Headteacher, who will coordinate the investigation and keep the Headteacher informed.

6.1. The DfE and ACPO Drug Advice for Schools document offers useful guidance on this. In carrying out the investigation, it is important to note that:

- A pupil should be reminded of the importance of cooperation with the school.
- Two staff should be present (except for preliminary investigations) and careful written records kept.
- The pupil should be asked whether they are in possession of drugs. If they say 'no' they should be invited to co-operate by turning out their pockets and handing over their bag to be searched¹.
- Pupils may also be asked to unlock their locker and the school can search this without the pupil's consent if necessary.

¹[Searching, screening and confiscation: advice for schools 2022 \(use from 1 September 2022\)](#)

- If the pupil refuses to cooperate, a decision must be made as to whether to release them or whether to ask parents, guardians or carers to come to school and use their authority to ensure cooperation.
- If a personal search is unavoidable it may be appropriate to contact the police and request this.
- Any pupil who is in possession of drugs is likely to try to 'dump' them surreptitiously. Teachers need to be aware of this and to keep a watchful eye.
- The request to 'go to the toilet' is one obvious ploy. Teachers also need to be aware that pupils, even if 'isolated' may communicate by text message/mobile phone/ Chromebook.
- Any drugs confiscated from pupils will be given to the police for disposal as soon as possible.
- Whether or not drugs are found, parents must be informed of the school's investigation.
- There is no legal obligation to inform the police, but it is the school's policy to do so except in exceptional circumstances. A school cannot knowingly allow its premises to be used for the production or supply or consumption of any controlled drug. If it is suspected that substances are being regularly exchanged or sold on the premises, details regarding those involved, with as much information as possible, will be passed to the Police together with a request for a police investigation.
- The Headteacher will inform the Chair of Governors about substantive drugs investigations.

7. Consequence

The school will consider each substance incident individually and will consider very carefully the implications of any action it may take. It seeks to balance the interest of the pupil involved, with the interests of the other school members. Because of the severity of drug misuse, abuse and dealing, any pupil who possesses a prohibited or illegal substance at school or on a school activity will be permanently excluded. Under unusual circumstances the Headteacher may consider alternative arrangements if there are special educational needs or other clear mitigating factors, which would mean a permanent exclusion is not appropriate.

8. Publicity

The Headteacher will take responsibility for liaison with the media, where required. If the police have been informed about a drugs incident, and until they have taken whatever action they decide on, enquirers from the media should be told that no comment can be made, other than to confirm the school has asked the police to investigate. The media will normally contact the police press office. Careful consideration will be given to whether the wider parent body should be informed and whether a press statement should be issued.

9. Alcohol (Over 18s Only)

Pupils are not permitted to bring alcohol on to the school premises at any time. The Headteacher and/ or Governing Body may allow alcohol onto the premises in small quantities for special events or occasions.

10. Tobacco

Pupils are not permitted to bring tobacco on to the school premises at any time. A designated smoking area for staff is currently provided. The Headteacher and/ or Governing Body, reserves the right to remove this provision at any time.

11. E-Cigarettes (Vaping)

Pupils are not permitted to bring e-cigarettes onto the school premises at any time, nor are they allowed to be used when travelling to and from the school or in school uniform at any time.

11. Monitor and Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years by the Governing Body or in the event that it is deemed necessary.

12. Links with other policies

Health and Safety Policy
 First Aid Policy
 PSHE and Citizenship policy
 Equality Scheme
 Behaviour Policy
 Exclusion Policy
 Staff Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Policy
 Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Created: July 2013

Revised: June 2023

Ratified by the Governing Body: October 2013

Date of Last Review: June 2023

Date of Next Review: June 2025

Change History	Date	Change(s) Made	Change Author	EDI ²
V1.0	NA	Policy created	NSI	
V1.1	NA	Minor amendments to the wording of the policy	RBO	
V1.2	NA	Clarified responsibilities in section 5 and replaced House Time with REACH time	RBO	
V1.3	NA	Policy reviewed - no changes, but minor amendments to the wording of the policy	RBO	
V1.4	Nov 2020	Policy reviewed and updated to reference a zero tolerance approach to possession of drugs in school and permanent exclusion being the likely outcome of any pupils caught in possession.	RBO	
V1.5	May 2021	Minor changes made to reflect developments in the REACH Time programme and consequences. Additional linked policy added.	SHO	
V1.6	June 2023	Minor changes to reflect the introduction of the Reach Beyond programme and staff changes	ASM	Yes

² Any changes or revisions to the policy have considered equality, diversity and inclusion.