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# Drugs & Alcohol Policy

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Chew Valley School

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January 2016

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## **Chew Valley School Drugs and Alcohol Policy**

### **1. Rationale**

This Policy covers the use of illegal substances, “legal highs”, the misuse of prescribed drugs, use of alcohol and smoking. “Drug-Misuse” is defined as the non-medical use of drugs that are only intended for use in medical treatment and the use of drugs that have no accepted medical purpose.

The School will not tolerate the possession or misuse of drugs and alcohol by members of the school, nor the illegal supply of these substances on its grounds, when representing the school out of school hours, or on any school organised visits or trips. The school is a non-smoking area and all persons coming onto site are requested to refrain from smoking on or around our premises.

The school has a duty to inform and educate young people on the consequences of drug and alcohol use and misuse. The school is pro-active on this matter and makes health education a vital part of the personal and social education of every student.

Fundamental to our school’s values and practice is the principle of sharing the responsibility for education of young people with parents, by keeping them informed and involved at all times. Effective communication and co-operation is essential to the successful implementation of this Policy.

The School is committed to the health and safety of students and staff and will take all appropriate action to ensure their safety and safeguard their well-being. The School acknowledges the importance of its pastoral role with regard to the welfare of young people. Students who are tempted to use illegal substances, misuse legal ones or who are affected by addictions of adults in their family or community will be offered support through drugs or alcohol counselling agencies with whom the school liaises.

### **2. Aims**

This policy will acknowledge and clarify the school’s role in:

- preventing the misuse of drugs and alcohol;
- drug education and ensure it is appropriate to students’ needs;
- providing information about procedures in response to drug-related incidents and application of appropriate sanctions;
- providing guidance to teachers, support staff and governors.

### **3. Definition**

Drugs are defined as those that are legal, such as alcohol, tobacco and solvents, “legal” highs, over the counter, performance enhancing and prescribed drugs, and illegal drugs such as cannabis. The 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 and controlled via the Medical Needs Policy.

### **4. Curriculum**

Drug Education is taught primarily as part of the Health Education element of PSHRE. The spiral curriculum approach of tackling drugs (and other well-being themes) with every year group at increasingly sophisticated levels means that topics are revisited in greater detail and learning embedded as students move through the school. The lessons are sometimes supported by another member of staff, the school nurse or expert visitor. The School makes use of the Community Police Officer, Social Services, the LA and Health and Drug Agencies to assist us in teaching our Drug Education programme and to deal with incidents of substance use and misuse.

A Parents' information session is offered bi-annually to keep parents informed about the nature of the drugs and alcohol curriculum in PSHRE and also to provide useful updates and support and guidance on these issues. Some guidance and information is also within this document in Appendix 1.

As with all aspects of the Pastoral Curriculum, we endeavour to give students knowledge, understanding and skills in order that they can develop appropriate attitudes towards their own health and that of others.

## 5. Disciplinary Procedures

Detailed guidance on investigating a drugs or alcohol related incident can be found in Appendix 2.

### 1. Legal substances:

The procedures for dealing with the misuse of legal substances such as tobacco and alcohol are covered by the general School Rules. "Vaping" and e-cigarettes are not permitted in school. Students caught misusing these substances will either be placed in school detention or given a Fixed-Term Exclusion from school. Their parents will automatically be informed.

### 2. Illegal substances:

Any student who has brought an illegal substance to school and/or is caught in possession of an illegal substance in school or during a school organised activity or at any other time when the authority of the school pertains, **will be Permanently Excluded** from school except in very exceptional circumstances. The bringing in of or using of "legal" highs will also be treated in the same manner as illegal substances.

3. In all cases involving illegal drugs, the matter will be referred to the Police.

4. The Headteacher will outline the School's drugs and alcohol policy in a letter to parents and via assemblies yearly during the autumn term.

5. If a student presents in school as under the influence of drugs or alcohol, parents will be contacted and they will be immediately sent home.

## 6. Pastoral Care

Where a student has been identified by the school as having experimented with illegal drugs at home or in the home community, or as being at particular risk of doing so, consideration will be given to the provision of appropriate counselling and support. Where a student discloses to a teacher that he or she is taking drugs, the teacher should make clear to the student that he or she can offer no confidentiality and that the matter will need to be referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

The DSL will normally inform parents if there are allegations or suspicions of drug use emanating from staff or students about their children, and support offered.

### Related documents and Policies

Behaviour and Bullying Policy

Medical Needs Policy

PSHE policy

**Committee: Curriculum and Pupils**

**Approved: January 2016**

**Review date: January 2018**

## Appendix 1:

### Illegal Drug Effects

Often it is very difficult to detect whether a young person is using drugs, because some of the signs and symptoms noticed may simply be those associated with “normal” growing up.

General signs-, which may appear out of character for the child and indicate drug abuse –

- Loss of appetite.
- Being either unusually sleepy or unable to sleep at night.
- Bouts of talkative, excitable and overactive behaviour.
- Being unusually irritable, aggressive and even violent.
- Changing moods from happy and bright, to moody and confused for no apparent reason.
- Telling lies or acting secretively.
- Losing interest in schoolwork and truanting.
- Changing friendship patterns.
- Losing interest in hobbies and sport.
- Money or valuables disappearing from the home.
- Coming to the notice of the authorities for unruly, disorderly behaviour or dishonesty.
- Unusual spots, sores and marks on the body, arms or around the mouth and nose.
- Stains and chemical smells on clothing and about the body.

Additional indicators may include-

- Frequent absences.
- Above average sick record.
- Poor time keeping.
- Declining or variable & unreliable work performances.
- Impaired memory & inability to maintain concentration
- Periods of withdrawal & depression.
- Poor interpersonal skills.
- Hostile to advice / criticism.
- Complaints from fellow students / teachers.
- Borrowing money.
- Decline in personal hygiene.
- Tendency to be accident / incident prone.

**Legal Highs.** Over the last few years, stimulant tablets and capsules sold on-line and by shops and market stalls have changed. Previously, they were fairly benign herbal products containing mostly caffeine or ephedrine from herbs guarana and ephedra, whose effects were not much more than a strong cup of coffee. Recently, products containing compounds not previously used as drugs have been added. These are intended to be legal alternatives to amphetamine, cocaine or ecstasy. Because of their uncontrolled profile there are risks that each individual product or sample will have a dramatically different toxicity profile. They may also interact with legitimate medication. The chemicals are also not necessarily very pure. The packaging is usually misleading and they are often marked “not for human consumption”, “plant feeder”, “plant growth inhibitor”, or even “bath salts”. No one can know what the risks of taking these products are.

Sources of useful information are:

Drugscope – the UK’s leading independent centre of expertise on drugs, aims to inform policy development and reduce drug-related risk.

- [www.drugscope.org.uk](http://www.drugscope.org.uk)
- [www.drugeducation.org.uk](http://www.drugeducation.org.uk)
- [www.nc.uk.net](http://www.nc.uk.net)
- [www.drugs.gov.uk](http://www.drugs.gov.uk)
- [www.wrecked.co.uk](http://www.wrecked.co.uk)
- [www.talktofrank.com](http://www.talktofrank.com)
- [www.bdp.org.uk](http://www.bdp.org.uk)

#### **Appendix 2:**

1. A student should be reminded of the importance of co-operation with the school.
2. The student 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 searched.
3. If the student refuses to co-operate, a decision must be made as to whether to release him/her or whether to ask parents to come to school and use their authority to ensure co-operation. If a personal search is unavoidable it may be appropriate to contact the police and request this or seek assistance from the parent.
4. Any student who is in possession of drugs is likely to try and 'dump' them surreptitiously. Staff need to be aware of this and to keep a watchful eye. Staff also need to be aware that students, even if 'isolated', may attempt to communicate by text message/mobile phone.
5. Any drugs confiscated from pupils will be given to the police for disposal as soon as possible.
6. Whether or not drugs are found, parents must be informed of the school's investigation.
7. There is no legal obligation to inform the police, but it is the school's policy to do so. 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 onto the Police.
8. The Headteacher will inform the Chair of Governors about substantive drugs investigations.