

# Drugs Policy

The School places the utmost importance on its responsibility for ensuring the health and safety of its pupils. The DfE has evidence to support the view that the age of 13 years is a threshold in terms of the risk of experimentation with illegal drugs, and it is crucial that drugs education is delivered to pupils well before they are likely to be drawn into experimentation. Abbotsholme is committed to working in partnership with parents, health professionals and appropriate outside agencies in promoting a responsible and healthy lifestyle.

## Statement on the Use of Drugs in School

**The School finds it unacceptable for any member of the community to be in possession of, use or supply any drugs or substances that are illegal, or that the Headmaster considers to be inappropriate to have and use at school. These acts are thus against the school rules. Being in the company of anyone carrying out these activities is also a serious breach of our rules.**

## A Definition of Drugs

Drugs are substances which alter the way the mind or body functions.

This policy covers:

1. Legal drugs such as: alcohol; tobacco and other forms of smoking (e.g. shisha); solvents; 'poppers' and substances known as 'legal highs'; and high caffeine drinks.
2. Prescription or over the counter drugs such as tranquillisers and pain killers.
3. Illegal drugs such as ecstasy, cannabis, cocaine, crack, heroin.
4. Any paraphernalia that is associated with the above.

## Overview

The School actively discourages the use of drugs/substances and treats cases of use by pupils as serious misconduct.

- The use of drugs is an offence against the School rules. The School prohibits pupils having or using cigarettes, electronic cigarettes, matches, lighters, alcohol, illegal drugs, 'legal highs' and solvents on the School site or on transport and excursions.
- Also see separate school policies for anti-smoking and for alcohol.
- Pupils below the age of 16 are not permitted to consume or keep high caffeine drinks, on the school site or on school trips.
- Any detected drug-use is a serious offence. Those using drugs may expect to forfeit their right to remain in school.
- Trafficking in drugs will lead to automatic expulsion.
- If a pupil is found to be using drugs the Headmaster might, at his discretion, and if the pupil makes the necessary undertakings, offer the pupil the opportunity to return to school after a period of suspension. This would be conditional upon an agreement to undertake drug tests as and when required to do so by the Headmaster. If a pupil failed a drug test whilst under this regime, the expulsion would, at that stage, become automatic.
- If any pupil is suspected of being under the influence of drugs, then he or she may be required by the Headmaster to take a drugs test in school. Failing such a test would be an offence against school rules, regardless of whether the drugs were taken on or off the

school premises or in school time, and the pupil would then be subject to the same disciplinary approach as someone discovered to be in possession of or to be using drugs on school premises.

## **Responding to Drug Related Incidents**

When responding to situations involving drugs the following principles apply:

- All drug related incidents should be dealt with effectively and consistently.
- All situations will be carefully considered before deciding on the response.
- The Headmaster may, if he feels it is appropriate, open envelopes sent to the school address.
- The needs of the individual involved will be balanced against the needs of other students and the school as a community.
- The first response will be in line with existing school rules, codes and expectations i.e. questioning a pupil, written account, etc.
- The Headmaster reserves the right to drug test a pupil if he feels it is appropriate.
- Parents will be involved at an early stage.
- Support agencies will be involved if appropriate.
- The Police will be informed of incidents involving drugs or where substances cannot be identified.

## **Procedure for staff**

If a member of staff has a concern that a pupil has an involvement with inappropriate substances/drugs, then he/she should report the matter to the Headmaster, with the evidence. The member of staff should NOT carry out an investigation, unless requested to do so.

The Headmaster will then seek advice from appropriate agencies, including the police, School Medical Officer, etc. then decide on an appropriate course of action.

## **Guidance for staff in supporting the School's policy**

School staff provide a powerful and influential role model for pupils. At all times the conduct, attitude and expressed opinions of staff must give a positive lead to pupils and reinforce a responsible attitude towards the use of drugs.

School staff are expected to be vigilant at all times in relation to:

- Evidence of drug misuse on the School site.
- Unexplained presence of strangers in the local vicinity of the school.

## **Medicines: Prescription and non-prescription**

Pupils are not allowed to bring non-prescription medicines to school. Pupils who are required to take prescribed medication, as a course of treatment must:

- Bring a letter from home containing details of the medicine involved, frequency of administration and dosage.

- Provide the medicine in question in the original box with prescription and pupils name and directions for administration.
- The medicine should go to the Health Centre who will keep it under lock and key and be responsible for administering doses.
- Collect his or her medicine(s) at the end of the school day. It is the pupil's responsibility to do this.

The above does not include inhalers for asthma, which pupils are permitted to carry.

## **Drugs Education**

Priority will be given to a programme of education and support about drugs at all levels of the school via PSHCE lessons, tutorials and workshops. Pupils, parents and staff will be regularly updated on developments in drug misuse to ensure that sensible discussions can take place and decisions can be made about the misuse of drugs.

The proprietor will be informed of the programme through regular updates and consultations.

### **Aims of this Programme**

1. To provide appropriate and accurate information about substances, and to increase knowledge and understanding of the implications and possible consequences of use and misuse.
2. To promote the development of self-esteem, decision-making skills and knowledge that allows pupils to resist drug misuse, through addressing the social, legal and moral impact of drugs as well as the health considerations.
3. To support pupils towards the development of a healthy lifestyle, enabling them to make informed choices by increasing knowledge and challenging attitudes.
4. To ensure continuity, progression, sensitivity and appropriateness to the age and maturity of pupils, including those with special educational needs.
5. To comply with the requirements of DfE standards.
6. To be responsive to the change in the trends of drug misuse and to offer a sensible and consistent message.
7. To work in partnership with parents, health professionals, police, social services and other outside agencies.

### **Content**

The content of the drug education programme is appropriate to age and maturity of the pupils. It is set within the PSHCE programme and the Science syllabus. This is taught as part of emotional health and wellbeing and sex and relationship education. Tutor periods are also allocated. The School's Head of PSHCE will take responsibility for the delivery, evaluation and review of the drugs education programme. The Health Advisor and her team will be involved in the support and education of the pupils.

1. KS1 and 2 pupils will be taught safety issues around medicines and household substances, and be taught a number of important principles concerning the workings of the body. The effects and dangers of alcohol, caffeine and tobacco will be explored.
2. KS3 and KS4 pupils will learn about the effects of solvents, tobacco, shisha smoking, caffeine, over-the counter medicines, alcohol and other drugs on the body, as specified by

the National Curriculum. Pupils also look at this policy as part of a homework task and are encouraged to discuss it with parents. KS5 will discuss legal implications, effects of and consequences of drug taking.

Role-play, discussions, group work, structured games; audio-visual aids and an outside speaker will be used to complement the work of the School. Parents are invited to attend a talk from the outside speaker, too. We actively seek to engage parents in this issue.

The Head of PSHCE uses pre and post-topic surveys to assess awareness of these issues and assess the effectiveness of teaching strategies.

Information will be presented in an objective and balanced manner, to help provide understanding of:

- The different types of drugs.
- Law enforcement in relation to drugs offences.
- The physiological and psychological effects of individual drugs.
- The implications of drug misuse for the individual, family and society.

Appropriate teaching strategies ensure a safe learning environment in which this education take place.

### **Staff Support and Training**

- Awareness training for all staff is ongoing.
- School works closely with LEA authorities and other outside agencies.

## **Review of this Policy**

This policy will be reviewed regularly in response to the fluidity and rapidity with which the drug culture changes. Pupils' acquired knowledge and needs will change regularly, and the school has a responsibility to ensure it is meeting new demands, as they arise.

## **Searches and confiscation**

At Abbotsholme, trust and respect are important principles underlying the school's philosophy. We would therefore hope the need to conduct a search on whatever basis would be a rare one. Sadly, there will be occasions when there is a need to search a room, belongings, bag or a person, where there is a reason to believe that the pupil has prohibited items (please see below) - items which infringe the school rules, or potentially, the law of the land. The police may be contacted.

Pupils have a right to respect for their private life. Any search carried out must be justified and proportionate and take into account the pupil's human rights under article 8 of ECHR. This policy takes note of the DfE's guidance *Screening, Searching and Confiscation (February 2014)*. The key points in relation to conducting a search are set out below:

- School staff can search a pupil for any item if the pupil agrees. This can include, for example, looking in the pupil's bag and locker and requesting that they turn out their

pockets. There is no requirement for the pupil to give a formal written consent for this. It is enough that a request is made and acceded to.

- School staff can seize any prohibited item found as a result of a search. They can also seize any item, however found, which they consider harmful or detrimental to school discipline.
- The Headmaster and staff have a statutory power to search pupils or their possessions, without consent, where they have reasonable grounds for suspecting that the pupil may have a prohibited item. These items are:
  - Knives or weapons.
  - Alcohol.
  - Illegal drugs.
  - Any substances intended to resemble drugs, legal drugs, performance enhancing drugs, anabolic steroids, glue or any other substance held for purposes of misuse.
  - Stolen items.
  - Tobacco and cigarette papers.
  - Fireworks.
  - 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 to or damage to the property of any person.

### **Procedure for carrying out a search**

A search should always be carried out with a second adult witness. A search should ideally be carried out with the pupil's consent and in most cases the pupil will be present. If a pupil refuses to give consent, parents' permission may be sought. A search without consent may be carried out for knives, weapons, alcohol, illegal drugs, tobacco, fireworks and pornographic images. It should also be noted that searches do not require the consent of the pupil or their parent when this concerns illegal items or when there is a reason to believe that there may be harmful images stored on an electronic device. A written record of all searches is made. Parents are always informed after a search has taken place.

### **Confiscation**

School staff may confiscate any prohibited item or any item which is considered harmful to school discipline. An example may be a laptop or mobile phone which a pupil uses in an inappropriate way during school hours. Any item confiscated should be kept safe and the details of the confiscation logged. An indication should be given at the time of confiscation when the item is likely to be returned. Illegal items will not be returned.

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