

Drugs Education and dealing with any Drug-related Incidents Policy

This policy is linked closely with the PSHEE programmes, drawn up by the Heads of School, and in line with local and national guidance e.g. Drugs: Guidance for Schools DfES 0092/2004, guidance from QCA and local Healthy Schools documentation.

The term 'drug' encompasses prescribed medicines, legal drugs (e.g. over-the-counter medicines, alcohol, tobacco, solvents, ketamine, khat and alkyl nitrites) and illegal drugs (those controlled by the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971).

The academy must be informed by parents if prescribed medicines need to be brought into school and these will be stored securely in the main school office, unless otherwise agreed. All drugs are potentially harmful and we are, therefore, keen to ensure that we have in place clear and consistent procedures which promote the safety of all our school community (staff and pupils).

1. Drugs Education Programme

Aims

- To help pupils develop, extend and practise the skills they need to cope responsibly in a drug-using society
- To provide access to reliable, up-to-date, objective and balanced information about drugs, including medicines and legal drugs
- To give opportunities for pupils to explore a range of attitudes to drugs and to drug users, including their own and each other's
- To emphasise the school's focus upon personal safety and personal health and to explore issues relevant to pupils, which are raised by the uses of drugs in society
- To foster competence and confidence in pupils' critical thinking and decision-making skills
- To contribute to raising and maintaining high self-esteem in all pupils
- To identify sources of further information and reliable support

Drugs Education forms part of the Tutorial Programme as follows:

Year 7

Topics covered include peer pressure, awareness of different substances (including legal and illegal drugs, smoking and alcohol), drugs and the law, how people become involved in drugs and how it affects the people around them - socially, emotionally and financially, how drugs can affect a healthy lifestyle and how drugs and healthy lifestyles are linked.

Year 9

Students look at the media and the cult of celebrity and how this can be a powerful influence on young people. Celebrities and the reporting of their drug and alcohol problems can have a profound effect upon teenagers, this can be used in tutorial with a positive context rather than a negative influence.

Year 10

The issue of drugs is addressed in the context of the law and the legal system through citizenship. We also look at the social issues regarding drugs and alcohol and anti-social behaviour, for example binge drinking amongst teenagers and the image of young people in the press and media.

Year 11

We develop pupils' knowledge of the consequences of drug taking and the effects on health. We also revisit the law and possession of drugs, the classification of drugs and the consequence of the drugs trade on developing countries. The social dilemmas faced by teenagers and the pressures to try illegal drugs are also looked at.

There is a continuous process of evaluation of all parts of the tutorial programme, including drugs awareness, which takes place as part of monthly tutors' meetings.

2. Managing Drug-related Incidents

If any drug-related incidents should occur, the safety and wellbeing of the child will always be the overriding concern. We will take action when pupils are in school, travelling to and from school and on school trips.

Each incident will be considered, taking into account the circumstances of the individual and their parents. We do, however, have a zero-tolerance approach to pupils consuming or being in possession of alcohol, tobacco or illegal drugs and offenders would be given either a fixed term or permanent exclusion. Dealing in drugs would lead to an automatic permanent exclusion.

Parents will be contacted at the earliest opportunity. Police and other appropriate agencies will be informed according to the needs of the individual and wider academy community. There may be media interest in any drug-related incidents. Confidentiality of pupils will be a priority. The Headteacher or her representative would respond to media questions. If unauthorised drugs (including medicines, alcohol, tobacco, matches, lighters, volatile substances) are discovered on academy premises, they will be confiscated and either destroyed or stored in the academy office. Only legal drugs would be returned, if appropriate, to parents.

The police will be informed as a matter of course if illegal drugs are ever found on academy premises or in the possession of pupils whilst travelling to and from the academy or on school trips. If a pupil's safety is considered to be under threat because of use of drugs by the pupil or within his/her family, then child protection procedures will be followed and a referral made to

Social Services. A decision will be made whether the child is:

- (a) at immediate risk of significant harm;
 - (b) at potential risk of significant harm;
- or
- (c) would benefit from services to avoid future risk of significant harm, impairment to health and/or development.

If parents/carers should come onto academy premises clearly under the influence of drugs then they shall be asked to leave. If they refuse then assistance should be sought from the police.

Parents and carers are encouraged to approach the academy to discuss issues and/or share concerns. The governing body has been consulted in the drawing up of this policy and it will be reviewed every two years.