



## DRUGS POLICY

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### AIMS

- To provide the information and support for children to be able to make lifestyle choices.
- To encourage a supportive ethos in which issues can be discussed and questions answered.
- Ensure the safety of staff and pupils when on the school site.

**Definition:** 'Drugs' here are taken to mean those that are legal, such as alcohol, tobacco and solvents, over the counter and prescribed drugs, and illegal drugs such as cannabis, ecstasy, amphetamines, heroin, crack/cocaine, LSD, etc. 'Drugs' also include New Psychoactive Substances (NPS) often referred to as 'Legal Highs'. (A separate policy exists for Alcohol, Tobacco and 'Vape' products).

### INTRODUCTION

Schools have a clear role to play in preventing drug misuse as part of their pastoral responsibilities. We at Hazlegrove are committed to promoting a healthy, safe environment in which good citizenship and respect for the law can flourish. We believe that it is important to deliver a clear, consistent moral framework that promotes the integrity of our community and gives all of our pupils the understanding and self-confidence to reject illegal drugs and substances.

### EDUCATION PROGRAMME

We have health education and PSHE programmes at Hazlegrove that focus upon the potential short-term and long-term risks to health from drug and substance abuse. As with our related programmes concerning alcohol and tobacco, they concentrate on teaching the importance of young people making healthy, informed choices. However, they also include an ethical dimension, designed to instill an understanding of the importance of complying with the criminal law. Our programmes involve pupils from Year 3 and continue throughout your child's time at the school. They extend across the curriculum, involving PSHE, Science and Drama lessons. We also cover the serious risks from abuse of illegal substances (and from alcohol and tobacco).

Our Medical staff play an active role in promoting greater awareness about the risks involved, and will offer informed medical advice. Pupils can discuss their individual worries about drugs or substances with their Tutor. They can also refer themselves to the School Nurse for individual guidance, without fearing sanctions or adverse report. We invite groups of parents and guardians to discussion groups

and meetings and are very conscious of the importance of working together in order to promote the well-being of your son or daughter.

## **SUPPORT**

If a pupil comes forward and voluntarily identifies himself/herself as a drug user and asks for help, or if his/her parents or friends ask for help on his/her behalf, we may, depending upon the circumstances and at the discretion of the Head, offer him/her the opportunity to reform his/her habit with the support of a drug testing programme and Counselling at the parents' expense. Schools are an important source of support for pupils experiencing problems with drugs and must ensure that all staff (teaching and non-teaching) understand the limits of confidentiality, balancing the desire to maintain confidentiality and support the child with the duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of the young person and others. The school Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and its procedures must be followed. Staff cannot and should not promise confidentiality to the pupil.

## **INVESTIGATION**

We will always investigate rumours about involvements in illegal drugs and substances, including questioning a pupil, searching his/her room and personal possessions. We will inform parents and guardians as a matter of urgency and invite them into the school to discuss the matter. If a pupil is suspected of being under the influence of drugs or alcohol on school premises, the school will prioritise the safety of the child and those around them. If necessary it will be dealt with as a medical emergency, administering First Aid and summoning appropriate support. Depending on the circumstances, parents or the police may need to be contacted.

DfE guidance states that: school staff can search a pupil for any item if the pupil agrees, noting that the ability to give consent may be influenced by the pupil's age or other factors. Headteachers and staff authorised by them 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. Prohibited items include alcohol and illegal drugs. The law says that the person conducting the search may not require the pupil to remove any clothing other than outer clothing.

Parental substance misuse has the potential to impact negatively on outcomes for children and young people. Substance use in itself is not a reason for considering a child to be suffering or at risk of suffering significant harm, although it may be a contributing factor. The DSL or Head will liaise with the police and/or external agencies where required if the child is felt to be at risk in accordance with the school's Safeguarding Policy. Social services may need to be contacted.

## **SANCTIONS**

Any response to drug-related incidents needs to balance the needs of the individual pupil concerned with the wider school community. Reference will be made to the School's Behaviour and Discipline policy.

The normal sanction for possession or involvement with drugs is expulsion although this should not be the automatic response to a drug incident but used in serious cases.

Drug use can be a symptom of other problems and so referral to other services may be necessary. Alternative sanctions, when there are mitigating circumstances, could involve suspension and a final warning. Any pupil found offering drugs to another pupil will be expelled and, following consultation with the Governors, the matter may be referred to the police.

### **National Support and Advice from Organisations**

- Drinkline: A free and confidential helpline for anyone who is concerned about their own or someone else's drinking: 0300 123 1110.
- Family Lives: A charity offering support and information to anyone parenting a child or teenager. It runs a free-phone helpline and courses for parents: 0808 800 222
- FRANK: National drugs awareness campaign to raise awareness among young people and their parents/carers: [www.talktofrank.com](http://www.talktofrank.com).  
Schools can receive free resources, updates, newsletters etc.
- Smokefree: NHS stop smoking support: [www.nhs.uk/smokefree](http://www.nhs.uk/smokefree).
- FRANK: Advice on what to do to help someone who's having a bad reaction to drugs: [www.talktofrank.com/emergency-help](http://www.talktofrank.com/emergency-help).