



PARKSIDE MIDDLE SCHOOL DRUGS POLICY

**Dated: January 2023
Review date: January 2025**

Headteacher.....

Chair of Governors.....



PARKSIDE MIDDLE SCHOOL

DRUGS POLICY

Development Process

The policy has been drawn up in consultation with all teaching staff, other school staff, school nurse, parents, carers, pupils, and governors.

Location and Dissemination

Staff can access the policy in the Policies area on the 365-home page and on the school website.

Context and Relationship to other Policies

This policy should be used in conjunction with other relevant school policies – in particular: the Positive Behaviour, Attitudes and Relationships Policy, the Safeguarding Policy, etc.

The Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this policy is to

- Clarify the school's responsibilities and legal requirements.
- Reinforce and safeguard the health and safety of pupils and all school users.
- Clarify the school's approach to drugs for all members of the school and wider community.
- Give guidance on developing, implementing and monitoring the school's drug education programme.
- Enable staff to manage drugs and drugs-related incidents on school premises with consistency, and in the best interests of all involved.
- Ensure that the response to drug-related incidents is in line with the school's approach to the drug education programme and with the school's values and ethos.

Extent of the Policy

The limits of the school boundaries extend beyond the school premises to include all off-site pupil activities, such as work experience and school trips. The policy applies at all times when staff "duty of care" responsibilities apply.

Definitions

The policy covers any substance taken to change the way they feel, think or behave:

- All illegal drugs
- All legal drugs, including tobacco, alcohol and volatile substances
- All medicines

The School's Policy

The possession, use or supply of illegal and other unauthorised drugs within school boundaries is unacceptable.

If a pupil is suspected of being under the influence of drugs or alcohol on school premises, the school must prioritize the safety of the young person and those around them. If necessary, it should 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. If the child is felt to be at risk the Safeguarding Policy will come into effect and Social Services may need to be contacted, in line with DfES guidance.

When managing drugs and drug-related incidents, the first concern will be for the health and safety of all involved, followed by the pastoral concerns of pupils.

- The school will consider very carefully the implications of any action it may take.
- It will seek to balance the interests of the pupil involved, the other school members and the local community.
- Factors to be considered will include the age of the pupil, whether the incident involved one pupil or a group and whether peer pressure is evident.
- The fact that certain behaviour could constitute a violation of the criminal law will not in itself necessarily lead to a more punitive response.
- In all cases the school will ensure that the pupil has access to professional support and advice from the relevant services and agencies.

Some pupils may require medicines that have been prescribed for use during the school day. In most of these cases pupils will leave their medicines in the school office when they arrive in the morning and will return to take their medicine at the appropriate time. However, there are exceptions when pupils will be required to carry medication themselves, such as auto injectors and inhalers.

Responsibility for coordinating drug issues lies with the Headteacher who will involve all relevant people as appropriate.

Drug Education

The aim of the school's drug education programme is to provide opportunities for pupils to develop their knowledge, skills and attitudes and understanding about drugs and appreciate the benefits of a healthy lifestyle, relating this to their own and others' actions. When we refer to 'drugs' in this policy, this also includes alcohol, tobacco, medicines, volatile substances (e.g. aerosols, solvents, glue or petrol) and new psychoactive substances ('legal highs').

Drug education objectives:

- To increase knowledge and understanding of drugs and their effects by providing accurate information.
- To improve self-knowledge, particularly in terms of risk taking.
- To promote positive attitudes towards healthy lifestyles; to challenge and try to modify these when they may lead to behaviour harmful to health.
- To promote a sense of responsibility towards the use of drugs.
- To develop social skills such as making informed choices and resisting unhelpful pressures from peers and from advertising.
- To provide children with the confidence and skills to navigate the pressures and awareness of drug glamorizing on social media.
- To enable young people to identify sources of appropriate support.
- To widen understanding about related health and social issues such as sexual health and crime.

The programme will reflect the views and needs of pupils so that it is appropriate. It will be based on the requirements of the National Curriculum. It will be delivered within a whole school approach through well-planned PSHE.

The teaching of drug education will:

- Provide opportunities for active learning.
- Give accurate and unbiased information.
- Allow for the expression and consideration of a range of attitudes and values.
- Offer opportunities for discussion and reflection.

The programme is coordinated by Alexandra Field who is responsible for:

- Planning.
- Ensuring that staff feel confident and informed.
- Monitoring and review of the programme.

Managing drug-related incidents at school

The first priority will always be for the safety of all, meeting medical emergencies and securing appropriate help.

The school will employ a range of responses, so that the needs of the individual are balanced against those of the wider community. The precise response will be determined after a full and careful investigation into the exact nature of the incident. Pupils will be aware of the range of possible responses and the effect those responses may have on them.

Support for pupils as appropriate will be a priority, including referrals to agencies such as SPACE (Worcestershire's multi-agency substance misuse service for young people) and FRANK. In such cases careful attention will be given to issues of confidentiality, in line with the school's confidentiality policy.

The school nurse will be able to give advice regarding all health-related matters. The school will normally involve the pupil's parents/carers, unless this would jeopardise the pupil's safety. A full record will be made of every incident.

Discovery of Suspected Substances on School Premises

Staff discovering substances which are suspected of being harmful, illegal or requiring further investigation should observe the following guidance:

- Consider the possible need for first aid and follow the school's first aid procedures.
- If possible, remove the suspected substance from the location in the presence of a witness. If there is no witness, do not delay, remove the substance and take it to the Headteacher, or member of staff authorised to deputise.
- If a pupil is, or is thought to be, in possession of a suspect substance do not attempt to search the pupil. You may ask the pupil to voluntarily empty his or her pockets, bag, desk or locker with an adult witness present. You may not forcibly detain the pupil.
- Do not retain the substance on your person or in a place of safekeeping for a later time, since to do this could place you at risk.
- Record the time, place and circumstances of the discovery and also record the details of what was found, but do not investigate the substance.
- Where drug-related paraphernalia, such as needles and syringes, is discovered, do not attempt to handle this. It should be collected by the appropriate personnel in accordance with health and safety guidelines. The Headteacher must ensure that materials are placed in a secure container to await proper collection.
- No entry of an incident should be made on the pupil's record until the suspected substance is confirmed by the police as being a controlled substance. If the substance is not a controlled substance, then the entry on the pupil's record will be determined by the Headteacher.
- There is no legal obligation to inform the police, although they may be able to give relevant support and advice. Once the nature of the substance is confirmed, arrangements should be made with the local policing team officer for disposal.
- Where a substance is confirmed as being controlled, it is the responsibility of the Headteacher to notify the parents concerned, and, if necessary, to consider further action, including notifying the Chair of Governors.
- In circumstances where it is possible that the school premises are being used for illegal drug use, all reasonable steps must be taken to prevent this, in order to avoid contravening the law.

Detailed guidance to staff regarding discovery of substances can be found in the Worcestershire schools' protocol for managing drug-related incidents.

Working with the police

The school is not legally obliged to involve the police regarding illegal drugs, but we will work in partnership to the benefit of the school and wider community. The school is able to seek assistance from the local policing team officer, who will give guidance on the law, the identification and disposal of substances, and whether or not the police should be more actively and formally involved in a given situation.

Confidentiality

In managing drugs, and in drug education lessons, teachers cannot and should not promise total confidentiality. The boundaries of confidentiality will be made clear to pupils. If a pupil discloses information which is sensitive, not generally known, and which the pupil asks not to be passed on, the request will normally be honoured; exceptions to this will be:

- Where the child protection policy takes precedence.
- In order to cooperate with a police investigation.
- Where there has been agreement to refer to an external agency.

Every effort will be made to seek the agreement of the pupil before further sharing of sensitive information. Where information is to be shared, this will be strictly on a need-to-know basis.

For guidance on prescribed drugs for use by pupils please see the Medication Policy (including First Aid and Administration of Medicines and Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions).

Useful Contact Numbers:

Policing Team Officer PC Turberfield - 08457 44888

FRANK (Drugs Support Helpline) - 0300 123 6600

SPACE (Worcestershire's substance misuse service for young people) - 0800 169 6064

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