



Drugs Policy

Ratified: January 2020

Ratified by: C.Barlow & Governor Education Committee

Next Ratification Due: January 2024

It is the role of the College to provide a safe, caring and protective environment for all its students. This policy is aimed at reducing the risk of exposure to harmful substances and enabling students to take responsibility for their own health and welfare. The pastoral role of the College, including assemblies and the delivery of an effective PSHEe programme, provides a proactive approach to drugs education whilst also stating clearly the actions which will be taken in the event of students' involvement in drugs.

This policy should be read in conjunction with other policies, the staff handbook and the sixth form code of conduct.

Context:

Social and cultural:

All drugs have the potential to harm; but some drugs are more harmful than others. For a small number of people, drugs lead to serious and far reaching consequences not only for themselves, but their families, their communities and society in general. For young people in particular, drugs can impact on their education, their relationships with family and friends and can prevent them from reaching their full potential.

All young people need to be able to make safe, healthy and responsible decisions about drugs, both legal and illegal. Schools play a central role in helping them make such decisions by providing education about the risks and effects of drugs; by developing their confidence and skills to manage situations involving drugs; by creating a safe and supportive learning environment; and ensuring that appropriate support is given to those for whom drugs are a concern.

However schools and Colleges cannot act alone. They are part of a broader prevention picture which includes parents/carers and a range of partner agencies. By working together, we can help young people navigate their way through what is a complex social issue. The College works positively with other services to enhance and communicate the information available to young people on these issues and understand the impact they have on communities. It also seeks to work together with agencies to provide the necessary support and services as required.

The majority of young people of school-age have never used an illegal drug. Most will at some stage be an occasional user of drugs for medicinal purposes and many will try tobacco or alcohol. Some will continue to use on a regular basis. There are complex motivations behind a young person's decision to first experiment with alcohol, tobacco, volatile substances and illegal drugs. However, very few of those who experiment with illegal drugs will go on to become problem drug users.

Local and national guidance:

This policy has been written taking into account guidance from the DfE and ACPO drug advice for schools and The East Sussex Drug and Alcohol Action Team and should be read in conjunction with the East Sussex Drugs and Alcohol at Work Policy.

The team working in East Sussex with young people is **The Under 19's Substance Misuse Service** who help young people and their families that are affected by drugs and alcohol. The service aims to offer one to one support to young people under 19 years who have alcohol/drug issues. The service offers level 2-4 (prevention -treatment) service provision including an assessment, case work and access to a range of holistic specialist interventions focused around the young person's health, wellbeing and social functioning.

Purpose of the drug policy:

- ✓ To clarify the legal requirements and responsibilities of the College
- ✓ To reinforce and safeguard the health and safety of students and others who use the College
- ✓ To clarify the College's approach to drugs for all staff, students, governors, parents/carers, external agencies and the wider community
- ✓ To give guidance on developing, implementing and monitoring the drug education programme
- ✓ To enable staff to manage drugs on College premises, and any incidents that occur, with confidence and consistency, and in the best interests of those involved
- ✓ To ensure that the response to incidents involving drugs complements the overall approach to drug education and the values and ethos of the College
- ✓ To provide a basis for evaluating the effectiveness of the College drug education programme and the management of incidents involving illegal and other unauthorised drugs

Key responsibilities:

If any member of staff has concerns about any drug related incident then they should immediately inform a member of the senior leadership team.

The person to oversee any major drug issues in the College would be the AHT Behaviour & Safety. The person responsible for the development and delivery of the drug education programme in the College is the head of PSHEe.

Statement on the use of drugs, where and to whom the policy applies:

Students must not bring any controlled drugs, drug paraphernalia, cigarettes, tobacco products (papers, matches, lighters), alcohol, vape, vape products or volatile substances onto the College site at any time. This policy is clear that the

possession, consumption, use or supply of illegal and other unauthorised drugs is unacceptable within the College boundaries.

The College boundaries extend beyond the College premises and perimeters to include journeys to and from College in College uniform, work experience, residential trips, College link courses and any other occasions when they are representing the College.

Any breaking of these rules may result in a range of punishments, including permanent exclusion. Alcohol may only be brought onto the College site by an adult with the Headteacher's permission.

This policy applies to all staff, students, parents/carers, governors and partner agencies working in the College.

The College's definition on drugs:

The definition of a drug given by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime is:

“chemical substances that affect the normal functioning of the body and/or brain”

The term drugs and drug education unless otherwise stated is used throughout this policy to refer to all drugs:

- ✓ all illegal drugs (those controlled by the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971)
- ✓ all legal drugs including (but not limited to): alcohol, tobacco, volatile substances (those giving off a gas or vapour which can be inhaled), poppers and substances that at present produce a legal high (these are constantly monitored by the government and some maybe categorised under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971)
- ✓ all over the counter and prescription medicines

The health needs of the College body:

The first concern in managing drugs is the health and safety of the College community and meeting the needs of the students. The College statement on illegal or other unauthorised drugs as defined above is clear. The first concern in dealing with a medical emergency involving drugs is the health and safety of the College community and meeting the needs of the students. Appropriate help/first aid should be summoned before further issues are addressed.

Confidentiality:

The welfare of young people will always be central to our policy and practice. However, teachers will not be able to promise complete confidentiality. Information about a student in relation to drugs will follow the same procedure as for other sensitive information. The HoY, appropriate Assistant Head Teacher and Headteacher will be informed and further help sought if appropriate.

Medicines:

Some drugs may be authorised in College, namely medicines. If a student is on medicine either prescribed by a doctor or over the counter medicine with parental instruction, this must be discussed with the Welfare office where some medicines can be kept for self-administration during the day by mutual agreement only.

Volatile substances:

Some solvents or hazardous chemicals are legitimately used by College staff or students - these substances are stored securely (in line with COSHH regulations) and managed to prevent inappropriate use or access. Arrangements are set out in the College's health and safety policy.

Alcohol:

Use and consumption of alcohol by staff and adult visitors on the College premises can only be authorised by the Headteacher.

The College recognises that there may be occasions when a member of staff may experience difficulties in relation to alcohol misuse outside of College. Staff are encouraged to discuss this with line managers so that support can be put in place. The College offers confidential counselling through East Sussex County Council. In addition, an Occupation Health Referral can be actioned if appropriate.

Tobacco:

In keeping with East Sussex County Council policy, the College is a non-smoking site.

Drugs education and drugs prevention:

The College provides a comprehensive and planned drugs education curriculum for all students, as part of the Personal Social Health and Economic Education (PSHEe) programme and in other areas of the curriculum.

The PSHEe Coordinator has responsibility for ensuring that there is effective drugs education embodied within the PSHEe curriculum.

This aims to provide all students with knowledge, attitudes and skills to be able to make informed decisions about drugs, including tobacco and alcohol. The College acknowledges that a positive College ethos helps students to feel valued and part of the College community, and in so doing, helps to foster positive self-images which may help students to cope better in situations involving drug abuse.

The College's response to a drugs-related incident:

Parental involvement:

Parents will be contacted if their child is involved in breaking the rules on drugs and advised on how the College intends to proceed. Where it is felt that to do this might put the child's safety at risk or if there is any other cause for concern for the child's safety at home then the College will exercise caution when considering contacting parents/carers. In any situation where it is felt the child may be at significant risk of harm and require protection the College's safeguarding and child protection procedures will be followed. Opportunities will be made available for parents to get support and guidance concerning drugs and other health related issues. Parents are encouraged to approach the College if they are concerned about any issue relating to drugs and their child and the College can refer to specialist support.

Police involvement:

In most cases, any punishment is likely to be a College rather than police matter. However, the College is aware of the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 which makes it an offence to possess or supply drugs. This Act also allows individuals to take possession of an illegal drug to prevent someone else committing an offence, providing that they either hand it to the police or destroy it immediately. The College maintains strong links with the local community police through their involvement in the drugs education curriculum, which helps students to have a greater understanding of the role of the police and about drugs and the law. It is the policy of this College to contact the local police where it is believed that an incident has involved illegal substances.

Disciplinary response:

Situations where College rules on drugs are broken will result in punishment. The type of punishment cannot be categorically stated as it will depend on the exact nature and degree of the offence. Sanctions will include fixed term exclusions, community service and permanent exclusion will be considered. The sanction for drug dealing within the College as described above will most probably be permanent exclusion.

Counselling response:

The students' welfare is paramount and in all incidents involving drugs, referral for counselling or support will be actively considered. The College has contacts with local drugs agencies and advisers who can offer some counselling and work with students as part of the drugs education programme. We believe that those students who are misusing illegal drugs and volatile substances should be encouraged to seek help at the earliest possible stage so that they can be given appropriate support and guidance.

Searches and disposal of drugs related items:

College searches:

The College will ensure that a second adult witness is present. If this is refused they will consider whether to call the police. Searches will be conducted in such a way as to minimise potential embarrassment or distress.

It should be noted that under DfE Screening, searching and confiscation guidelines along with article 8 of the Human Rights Act 1998 the College reserves the right to search personal property without consent, the College is entitled to do personal searches of students when they are believed to have drugs on their person, this is in place to protect the human rights of the other students in the College. The College will not normally exercise this right.

Personal searches:

When a person is suspected of concealing illegal or other unauthorised drugs every effort will be made to persuade that person to hand over voluntarily any drugs, in the presence of a second adult witness. Where the individual refuses and the drug is believed to be illegal, and the College wishes to proceed along formal lines, the police will be called.

Searches of College property:

Staff may search College property, for example, students' lockers if they believe drugs to be stored there.

Searches of personal property:

The College reserves the right to search personal property without consent. After any search involving students, parents/carers will normally be contacted by the College, regardless of whether the result of the search is positive or negative.

The law permits College staff to take temporary possession of a substance suspected of being an illegal drug for the purposes of preventing an offence from being committed or continued in relation to that drug providing that all reasonable steps are taken to deliver it to a person lawfully entitled to take custody of it.

In taking temporary possession and disposing of suspected illegal drugs staff will:

- ✓ ensure that a second adult witness is present throughout
- ✓ seal the sample in a plastic bag and include details of the date and time of the seizure/find and witness present.
- ✓ store it in locked cabinet
- ✓ **without delay** notify the police, who will be asked to collect it and then store or dispose of it.

The law does not require a College to divulge to the police the name of the student from whom the drugs were taken, but in the case of an illegal or unauthorised drug the College will normally do so. Liaison will take place to ensure the safe disposal of any substances.

Where a student is identified the police will be required to follow set internal procedures. To record full details of the incident, including notes of any discussions with the student. These should include date, time place and people present. The police incident reference number should also be included.

Staff should not attempt to analyse or taste unknown substances. Police may advise on analysis and formal identification. If formal action is to be taken against a student, the police will make arrangements for them to attend a local police station accompanied by an appropriate adult for interview. Only in exceptional circumstances should arrest or interviews take place at College. An appropriate adult should always be present during interviews, preferably a parent/carer or duty social worker.

Legal drugs:

The police will not always necessarily be involved in incidents involving legal drugs, but the College will inform trading standards or police about the inappropriate sale or supply of tobacco, alcohol or volatile substances to students in the local area.

Alcohol and tobacco (including e-cigarettes):

Parents/carers will be informed that the alcohol/tobacco/e-cigarettes has been disposed of. In cases where a disciplinary proceeding is necessary, items will be disposed of, once this has taken place.

Volatile substances:

Given the level of danger posed by volatile substances, the College will arrange for their safe disposal.

Medicines:

Parents/carers will be informed and will be asked to collect and dispose of unused or date-expired medicines.

Disposal of drug equipment:

Needles or syringes found on College premises will be placed in a sturdy, secure container, using gloves. A sharps container is kept in the Welfare office for this purpose, out of reach of students. Used needles and syringes will be disposed of appropriately and not put in domestic waste.

The College's response to misuse of drugs by adults:

If parents/carers are suspected of being under the influence of drugs or alcohol on College premises, staff should attempt to maintain a calm atmosphere and call for a second adult, if necessary. On occasion, a teacher may have concerns about discharging a student into the care of a parent/carer. In such instances, the College will discuss with the parent/carer if alternative arrangements could be made, for example asking another parent/carer to accompany the child home.

If staff members are suspected of being under the influence of drugs or alcohol on College premises, senior staff should attempt to maintain a calm atmosphere and call for a second adult, if necessary. Should further support be required, the College subscribes to a staff counselling service. This is available to all staff and is free and confidential. Further details can be found in the staff handbook. Disciplinary actions for staff are covered under their employment contract.