



Hope Academy

A joint Catholic & Church of England Academy

Drug Education Policy

2024



Status	Statutory
Responsible Authority	Local Academy Council
Date Approved	July 2024
Responsible Person	R. Harkness-Brennan/A. Green
Review Date	July 2026
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Purpose

The aim of this Drug Education Policy is to acknowledge and clarify the school's role in drug prevention and drug education and ensure it is appropriate to pupils' needs. The policy will provide information about procedures in response to any drug-related incident and provide guidance to teachers, support staff and outside visitors.

This Drug Education Policy forms part of a range of documents and policies which relate to keeping Hope Academy children safe.

In particular, this policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Behaviour Policy
- Care and Control Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- E-safety Policy

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Legislation and Statutory Guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's guidance, [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) and [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#) and [DFE and ACPO Drug Advice 2012](#). We comply with this guidance and the procedures set out by our local safeguarding children board and local authority guidance on managing drug related incidents in school.

This policy is also based on the following legislation and guidance:

Under the *Misuse of Drugs Act 1971* it is an offence:

- to offer or supply drugs to another person
- to be in possession of drugs or to possess drugs with the intention of supplying them to another person
- for the occupier or manager of premises knowingly to permit the use of drugs on those premises or to allow their supply or production

DFE Guidance. Searching, screening and confiscation

Definition:

Drugs are those that are legal, such as alcohol, tobacco and solvents, over the counter and prescribed drugs and illegal drugs including: cannabis, ecstasy, heroin, crack/cocaine and LSD.

The school believes that the possession and use of drugs, in school, or during the school day, is inappropriate. All the drugs covered in this policy are not permitted to be bought, sold, or otherwise obtained on school premises or during the school day - including when pupils are on school visits. These rules apply to adults working at and for the school. Exceptions will be made for adults and pupils who need to take prescribed medicines where appropriate.

The Boundaries of the Policy:

The jurisdiction of this Policy includes staff, students, parents/carers, partner agencies working in the school and visitors to the school. The policy applies on the school site, during school visits and on school transport. Students and staff attending educational courses in other educational institutions will be subject to this policy and to the host educational establishment's drug policy. Illegal and other unauthorised drugs are not acceptable within the boundaries identified within the policy.

Aims of the Policy:

The aim of this Drug Education Policy is to acknowledge and clarify the school's role in drug prevention and drug education and ensure it is appropriate to pupils' needs. The policy will provide information about procedures in response to any drug-related incident and provide guidance to teachers, support staff and outside visitors.

A Drug Education Policy ensures that schools take a whole school approach on the issue of drugs as part of the commitment to being a healthy school. Teachers need to be confident and skilled to teach drug education and pupils, who are concerned about drugs, need to be supported.

The policy aims to have clear procedures for responding to drug-related incidents. Sanctions for incidents will be consistent with the school's discipline policy.

Statement about the Academy's attitude towards drugs:

- The possession or use on the school premises of any controlled substance, or the attendance at school under the influence of any controlled substance by anyone, will be treated as an act of gross misconduct.
- The possession/use of alcohol, tobacco products or E-cigarettes, by a pupil on the school premises or in attendance at a school activity, will be dealt with through the school behaviour management system.
- The Academy recognises that young people will be particularly prone to experimentation with drugs, alcohol and tobacco, and are vulnerable to the influence of those who seek to promote such experimentation for whatever reason. Vulnerable pupils will be identified and offered the appropriate support relevant to their individual needs and circumstances. Other agencies (e.g. Child Protection, YPDAAT, police) may need to be involved.
- The Academy believes that tobacco, alcohol and drug education is a whole school responsibility and is most effectively delivered through the Academy's Inspire Programme, through Science education and the PE curriculum.

Educational programmes to raise awareness:

Key Stage 3 Pupils will:

- know the rules relating to medicines, alcohol, tobacco, solvents and illegal drugs;
- recognise personal responsibility for decisions about substance use;
- know the basic facts about substances including their effects and relevant legislation;
- understand the consequences of ignoring the law;
- be aware of myths, misconceptions and stereotypes linked with substance use;
- develop appropriate techniques for coping with situations in which substance use occurs;
- know scientific terminology including the following words: use, misuse, abuse, addiction, Tolerance, overdose and withdrawal;
- be aware of different categories of drugs, including stimulants, depressants, painkillers and hallucinogens;
- be aware of the misuse of drugs in sport;
- understand the effects of different levels of intake of alcohol.

Key Stage 4 Pupils will:

- know the rules relating to medicines, alcohol, tobacco, solvents and illegal drugs and responses to drug related incidents;

- be informed about drugs including their legal status, effects and appearance;
- question how would you know if drug use was becoming a problem;
- understand the personal, social, financial, biological and psychological effects of drug misuse;
- understand that the UK is a drug using society and recognise the patterns of use and their effects e.g. the risk of spread of HIV infection through shared needles;
- recognise that individuals are responsible for choices they make to drug use and the longer and short-term consequences of making decisions;
- be informed of patterns of drug use/misuse locally and nationally and the impact on the community and wider society;
- be able to analyse safe levels of intake e.g. tobacco use is never safe, limited use of alcohol, identifying and assessing risks;
- know the dangers associated with specific drugs, mixing drugs, the effect on the environment and moods, risks of drug use;
- understand legal responsibilities and rights;
- question the role of the media in influencing attitudes towards drugs, particularly smoking and alcohol;
- understand drug policy in this country, including education, prevention, policing and legal aspects, penalties, treatment and rehabilitation;
- understand decision making and assertiveness in situations relating to drug use; be able to manage conflict and aggressive behaviour;
- understand attitudes towards drugs, drug users and misusers and laws relating to drugs including licensing and retailing laws.

Procedures to deal with drug related incidents:

Good practice would support the view that response to drug related incidents should be coordinated through a named member of staff who is clearly identified to all staff and students. No member of staff should ever deal with an incident alone or without consulting the designated person or the Principal in their absence.

Every drug-related incident must be dealt with in accordance with individual circumstances and must be compliant with the Human Rights Act.

Designated Member of Staff: Mrs Rachel Harkness Brennan – Assistant Principal, DSL

All drug related incidents should be treated as a medical emergency first and a disciplinary matter second. Staff should stay calm, not panic and remember that the effects of any substance on a young person are unpredictable. If the person is conscious, but intoxicated, they should not be left alone at any time but should be sat in a quiet, well-ventilated room. Staff should talk quietly and calmly and if they are distressed staff should be as reassuring as possible.

Student Services should be informed and first aid administered if deemed necessary. In extreme circumstances the young person may lose consciousness. Normal Academy emergency procedures should be carried out i.e. recovery position, summon help, inform general office and summon emergency services.

Assessment of Needs:

After any immediate medical needs have been addressed, the nature and circumstances of any incident should be established and an assessment made of the needs of the student.

Searches, handling of illegal drugs and involvement of the police:

If students are found in possession of drugs, it is important to stay calm, quiet and non-confrontational. The aim should be to gather information and ensure that there is no medical emergency. It is lawful to confiscate an illegal drug in order to prevent an offence being committed and staff should take possession of any substances involved.

Any searches must comply with The DFE Guidance, Searching, Screening and Confiscation. Designated Academy staff are legally allowed to inspect desks and lockers for this purpose and can ask, but not insist, that pupils turn out their bags and pockets. However, any action taken must be proportionate to the situation and each incident must be considered on its own merits. For example, it will no longer be acceptable to search a whole class if only some are thought to be involved. Any search of a student should take place with at least two members of staff present and a record of the event should be made and kept on file.

Academy staff must not search a young person, or their bags and belongings, without permission. If such action is deemed unavoidable, the designated member of staff should consider asking the police to carry out the search. Such a decision should not be taken lightly and should be undertaken only when proportionate to the individual circumstances pertaining to the incident. Where students are under suspicion of being in possession of drugs and refuse permission to search their belongings, they may receive a fixed term suspension.

The police will, where possible and appropriate, support the action taken by the Academy in relation to any pupils involved. However, there may be circumstances of which the Academy is unaware, and that are beyond its control, that dictate otherwise. For instance, there have been occasions when a third party has informed the police of the incident and premature destruction of the drug has led to problems for the Academy. It is also important that the police are aware of drug incidents even when pupils are not involved (e.g., if suspected illegal drugs are found on the Academy premises). This is so that the police can build up a clear understanding of what drugs are available within the community so that they can develop appropriate responses to the situation.

Recording Drug related incidents:

Each situation should then be discussed, with the Principal, so that the appropriate course of action can be co-ordinated and, in particular, a decision made as to whether the police should be notified and at what stage. All drug related incidents will be logged on CPOMS and referrals to external agencies may also be made.

Academies are allowed to dispose of illegal drugs by, for example, flushing them down a toilet. Should that decision be made then it is vital that a witness is present during the disposal and that a record is made of the action taken. Whilst the law does not require it, a drug may also be handed to

the police and local advice supports this course of action. Any drugs, or items suspected to be drugs, should be placed in a sealable bag and should then be retained in a secure place until handed to the police.

The nature of each situation will determine the urgency of police involvement and a developing knowledge of the issues involved will allow the drugs co-ordinator to apply a consistent and appropriate response. Where doubt exists, the police should be contacted for advice. Some situations will result in immediate police attendance. Others will allow for the drugs to be handed over at a later date.

Responses to Drug Related Incidents:

A variety of responses are available, when dealing with drug-related incidents, and these are entirely at the discretion of the Principal. Some options involve:

- Counselling services
- EHAT
- Mentoring programmes
- Isolating students on the Academy premises
- Pastoral support programmes (PSPs)
- Review of IBP as appropriate
- Case conferences
- Intensive in-Academy programmes
- Consultation with YPDAAT
- Safeguarding referral made
- Fixed-term suspension
- Permanent exclusion

The aim of the Academy will always be to support the students to overcome any drug related issues alongside any disciplinary procedures that may take place.

Parental involvement:

Unless it is considered harmful to the child, their parents will be informed as soon as possible of the drug related incidents. They will be a partner in overcoming the drug related issue.

Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed biannually unless incidents occur that suggest a review is need.