




DINGLE COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

DRUG EDUCATION AND DRUG RELATED INCIDENTS POLICY

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Reviewed by:	Full Governing Board
Signed:	 (Headteacher)
Signed:	 (Chair of Governing Board)
Date:	25 th November 2025

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1. Development process

The school policy was produced by the School Leadership Team, in consultation with staff, governors, parents/carers and pupils. The policy was adopted by the Governing Body and is reviewed periodically.

2. Location and dissemination

The policy is made known to all staff; a paper copy is available upon request to the school office and is also stored electronically for all staff to access.

3. The context of the policy and its relationship to other policies

- The policy aims to ensure that the approach taken on the issue of drugs is a whole-school one and is part of our commitment to and concern for the health and well-being of the whole school community.
- This policy aims to make clear procedures for responding to and managing drug-related incidents. This policy should also be read in conjunction with the PSHRE Policy, Child Protection Policy, SRE Policy, Health and Safety Policy and Behaviour Policy. Sanctions for incidents will be consistent with the school's Behaviour Policy.

4. Local and national references

- This policy has regard to DfE and ACPO (now NPCC) Drug Advice for Schools (2012) and DfE Screening, Searching and Confiscation Advice for headteachers, school staff and governing bodies (updated 2022). DfE and ACPO Drug Advice for Schools states that as part of the statutory duty on schools to promote pupils' wellbeing, schools have a clear role to play in preventing drug misuse as part of their pastoral responsibilities. To support this, the current government strategy, "From harm to hope: A 10-year drugs plan" (2021) ensures that school staff have the information, advice and power to:
 - provide accurate information on drugs and alcohol through education and targeted information, including via the Talk to FRANK (drugs advice) service;
 - tackle problem behaviour in schools, with wider powers of search and confiscation;
 - work with local voluntary organisations, health partners, the police and others to prevent drug or alcohol misuse.
- The school has made a commitment to work in partnership with Dudley Health Promoting Schools Service by:
 - developing and delivering PSHE education and citizenship programmes in line with current legislation and guidelines;
 - maintaining and enhancing its healthy schools status.

5. The purpose of the policy

The aim of this policy is to acknowledge and clarify the role of the school in drug prevention and education and ensure it is appropriate to pupils' needs. The policy provides information and guidance about drug education, as well as procedures to respond to any drug-related incident, for pupils, teachers, support staff and outside agencies or individuals.

6. Where and to whom the policy applies

School will not tolerate the unauthorised use or possession of illegal and legal controlled drugs by pupils, staff or other members of the school community including parents/carers, in school time, on school premises or off-site during school organised activities such as educational visits and residentials. This also extends to alcohol, tobacco, volatile substances and states of intoxication. This is not an exhaustive list and it will be reviewed in accordance with circumstances as they develop.

7. Definitions and terminology

Drugs are defined broadly as a medicine or other substance which has a physiological effect when ingested or otherwise introduced into the body (Oxford English Dictionary). This includes:

- All illegal drugs (those controlled by the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971), including (but not limited to) cannabis, heroin, cocaine, LSD, ecstasy, amphetamines, ketamine, khat, magic mushrooms and synthetic cannabinoids.
- All legal drugs including (but not limited to) alcohol, tobacco, volatile substances and alkyl nitrites.
- New psychoactive substances (NPS), sometimes known as 'legal highs', are designed to mimic the effects of illegal drugs. Under the Psychoactive Substances Act 2016, it is an offence to produce, supply, or possess with intent to supply an NPS intended for human consumption. Many NPS now fall under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 as Class A, B, or C substances, meaning that possession of them is also illegal.

NPS are treated as unauthorised substances by this school policy and if there is uncertainty about what the substance is it will be treated as a controlled drug.

- All over the counter and prescription medicines.
- E-cigarettes and vaping devices are not controlled drugs but are treated as unauthorised items under this policy due to the health risks and potential for misuse.

8. The school's stance towards drugs, health and the needs of pupils

The school believes that the possession and or use of drugs in school, during the school day or while travelling to/from school is inappropriate. The drugs/substances covered by this policy are not to be bought, sold or otherwise exchanged or brought onto school premises during the school day, or while pupils are on school visits. Individual exceptions may be made for pupils who require prescription medicines where appropriate.

Drug-related incidents will be managed as safeguarding concerns where a pupil's welfare may be at risk, in line with 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (DfE, 2025) and the school's Safeguarding Policy.

9. Staff with key responsibility for drugs

- The Headteacher is the designated member of staff with overall responsibility for all drug issues within the school. This responsibility includes overseeing the planning and co-ordination of drug education and the management of drug incidents.
- All drug related incidents will be reported to the Headteacher, who will be responsible for co-ordinating the most appropriate response.

10. Staff support and training

Drug awareness training is provided for all staff and governors through INSET.

11. Management of drugs at school and on school trips

- Drug Incidents will be dealt with fairly and competently and with due regard for the facts as they present themselves as well as the health, pastoral, educational and welfare needs of any person involved. In a medical emergency an ambulance will be called for.
- Confiscated substances (e.g. alcohol or tobacco) will be disposed of; illegal or controlled substances will be sealed, labelled with date / time, witnessed, and handed to the police. This includes any associated drug paraphernalia.
- Staff will wear appropriate protective clothing to pick up syringes and they will be stored in a Sharps Box. The Sharps Box will then be disposed of as soon as is practicable.
- Procedures for searching, confiscation and disposal will follow the DfE 'Searching, Screening and Confiscation' guidance (2022). This document states that:
 - Searching
 - ❖ School staff can search a pupil for any item if the pupil agrees (note: the ability to give consent may be influenced by the child'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 are:
 - ◆ knives or weapons
 - ◆ alcohol
 - ◆ illegal drugs
 - ◆ stolen items
 - ◆ tobacco and cigarette papers
 - ◆ vapes / e-cigarettes
 - ◆ fireworks
 - ◆ pornographic images
 - ◆ any article that the member of staff reasonably suspects has been, or is likely to be, used to commit an offence, or to cause personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the pupil).
 - ❖ Headteachers and authorised staff can also search for any item banned by the school rules which has been identified in the rules as an item which may be searched for.
 - Confiscation
 - ❖ School staff can seize any prohibited item found as a result of a search. They can also seize any item, however found, which they consider harmful or detrimental to school discipline.

- Schools' obligations under the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR)
 - ◆ Under article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights pupils have a right to respect for their private life. In the context of these particular powers, this means that pupils have the right to expect a reasonable level of personal privacy.
 - ◆ The right under Article 8 is not absolute, it can be interfered with but any interference with this right by a school (or any public body) must be justified and proportionate.
 - ◆ The powers to search in the Education Act 1996 are compatible with Article 8. A school exercising those powers lawfully should have no difficulty in demonstrating that it has also acted in accordance with Article 8. This advice will assist schools in deciding how to exercise the searching powers in a lawful way.
- The Headteacher will be responsible for managing parents/carers under the influence of drugs on school premises and will involve police and other agencies where appropriate.
- Should a parent/carer arrive intoxicated on the school grounds the Headteacher will be called to assess the situation and decide on the appropriate course of action.

12. Police involvement

Should there be evidence or suspicion of illegal drugs being circulated amongst pupils the police will be informed, consulted or actively involved if necessary.

13. The needs of pupils

- Drug education should enable pupils to develop their knowledge, skills, attitudes and understanding about drugs and appreciate the benefits of a healthy lifestyle, relating this to their own and others' actions. Drug education should:
 - provide accurate information
 - correct misunderstandings
 - build on knowledge and understanding
 - explore attitudes and values towards drugs, drug use and drug users
 - develop pupils' understanding of rules and laws
 - develop pupils' interpersonal skills
 - develop pupils' self-awareness and self-esteem
 - explore the risks and consequences of their own and others' actions relating to drugs
 - be relevant to the needs of pupils and the school community
- Drug education in school will be sensitive to the cultural, religious and ethnic backgrounds of pupils while maintaining that the purpose of drug education is to prepare them for drug related incidents they may encounter throughout their lives.
- Appropriate differentiation of tasks, materials and resources will take place to ensure that the diverse needs arising from pupil's differing abilities and needs.

14. Working with external agencies

- Teachers should always maintain responsibility for the overall drug education programme, which is driven by the National Curriculum PoS (primarily Science and PSHE). External contributors should not be used as substitute teachers, nor should they constitute the entirety of the drug education programme. When working directly with pupils external contributors should add a dimension to the drug education programme that the teacher alone cannot deliver. External contributors have a valuable role to play in working alongside teachers. Contributions could include advising and assisting programme planning, supporting staff through training or team-teaching and providing direct classroom input.
- Any visitor to the school who has unsupervised access to pupils or who works in the school on a regular basis will be subject to Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks. Given that most external contributors will come to school infrequently and will not be left in sole charge of pupils, DBS checks will not normally be required. An external contributor who has not had a DBS check should not be left in sole charge of a pupil or pupils. In all instances, whether or not the external contributor is DBS checked, a member of staff must be present in the classroom for the whole of each lesson, so that they can maintain responsibility for class discipline and devise follow-up work to reinforce pupils' learning.
- When involving external contributors, the school will ensure that:
 - it is clear about the desired learning outcomes before deciding who is best able to help achieve them;
 - the external contribution is integrated into the school's programme, rather than being an isolated event;

- the external contributors are competent educators and facilitators and do not provide input outside their area of expertise;
- the content of lessons is negotiated to ensure that it meets the needs of pupils and is consistent with the overall aims of the drug education programme;
- all external contributors are fully aware of the school's values and approach to drug education, the drug and other relevant policies, including those covering confidentiality, disclosure and child protection, to ensure that their approach is consistent with that of the school;
- all external contributors are aware of their roles, responsibilities and boundaries, i.e. that they work to the professional boundaries of the teacher when taking part in curriculum activities;
- the value of the external contribution is assessed through pupil feedback and evaluation; this information should be shared and used to inform future work.
- A list of useful organisations is provided in DfE and ACPO Drug Advice for Schools (Appendix B).

15. Information sharing

- As an important source of support for pupils experiencing problems with drugs, school will respect the right to confidentiality of its pupils but will make it clear that teachers cannot and should not promise total confidentiality. There are important reasons why personal and sensitive information needs to be shared including a teacher's professional responsibilities in relation to Child Protection, co-operating with a police investigation and referral to external services.
- GDPR and the Crime and Disorder Act also allow personal information to be shared if there is an over-riding public interest in the first instance or to prevent crime and disorder in the second. However in assessing the suitability of sharing information all efforts will be made to encourage the pupil to give their informed consent.
- The following factors will be considered:
 - the seriousness of the situation;
 - what immediate and significant risks the pupil faces;
 - what implication, both positive and negative, keeping a confidence may have;
 - what significant harm could result from keeping the pupil's disclosure.
- Pupils will be made aware of the limits of confidentiality before they disclose a confidence whenever possible. If a confidence needs to be broken the school will explain to the pupil (and parents/carers as appropriate):
 - why the confidence has been broken;
 - who will be informed;
 - what will be disclosed;
 - how the information will be used;
 - that their privacy will still be respected and information is shared on a need to know basis.
- School will ensure that all staff, teaching and non-teaching, understand the limits of confidentiality.
- Any record of a drug-related incident will be handled in accordance with the UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018 to ensure confidentiality and data minimisation

16. Involvement of parents/carers

- The school is not required to inform parents/carers before a search takes place or to seek their consent to search their child. Under the DfE (2022) Searching, Screening and Confiscation guidance:
 - Recording: "Any search ... for a prohibited item ... should be recorded in the school's safeguarding reporting system, including whether or not an item is found." (para 44–46)
 - Informing parents: "Parents should always be informed of any search for a prohibited item ... and the outcome ... as soon as is practicable." (para 47)
- The school will inform the pupil's parents/carers where alcohol, illegal drugs or potentially harmful substances are found, in line with this guidance.
- The school will inform the pupil's parents/carers where alcohol, illegal drugs or potentially harmful substances are found, in line with this guidance.
- This policy is published on the school website and the attention of parents/carers is drawn to the school policies which they may access there.

17. The role of governors

- The Governing Board is responsible for adopting, reviewing and ensuring that this policy is effective and fit for purpose.

- The Headteacher is responsible for reporting on the effectiveness of policies and any incidents arising, as and when required and through the Headteacher's termly report to the full Governing Board.

18. Liaison with other schools

- There will be liaison with other schools regarding drug-related incidents should the need arise.

19. Liaison with other agencies

- There will be liaison with other agencies regarding drug-related incidents should the need arise.
- Responses will depend on the circumstances of the particular incident. Constructive methods of dealing with drug-related incidents will include:
 - early intervention and targeted prevention;
 - counselling;
 - behaviour support plans;
 - inter-agency programmes;
 - pastoral support programmes;
 - managed moves;
 - referral to external agencies.

20. Staff conduct and drugs

- School will not tolerate the unauthorised use or possession of illegal and legal controlled drugs by staff in school time, on school premises or off-site during school organised activities such as educational visits and residential. This also extends to a range of substances, including (but not exclusively) alcohol, tobacco, volatile substances, amyl nitrates, khat and states of intoxication.
- Staff are expected to conduct themselves in a manner which is in keeping with their professional status at all times. This is further outlined in the Staff Code of Conduct. Staff are also responsible for the reporting of concerns, including low-level, to the Headteacher.

21. Review frequency

This policy will be reviewed every three years or sooner if national guidance or local procedures change.