

For this we stand:
to search for truth;
to live in love;
to grow together.



"Speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is Jesus Christ"

Ephesians 4

BISHOP WORDSWORTH'S SCHOOL SUBSTANCE USE AND MISUSE – POLICY

Definitions:

1. *'Parent(s)' includes guardian(s) or any person who has parental responsibility for the student or who has care of the student.*
2. *Is to', 'are to' and 'must' are obligatory. 'Should' is not obligatory but is good practice and is to be adhered to unless non-compliance can be justified.*

INTRODUCTION

1. This policy sets out the school's approach to preventing, responding to and managing incidents involving alcohol, tobacco, vaping products, illegal drugs/substances, prescription medication used inappropriately and other psychoactive substances. This Policy should be read in conjunction with the following Bishop Wordsworth's School policies:
 - a. PSHE and RSE Policy (Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education and Relationships and Sex Education Policy).
 - b. Behaviour Policy
 - c. Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
 - d. Medical Conditions Policy
2. In this policy, the word 'drug/substance' is used to represent legal or illegal substances including but not limited to alcohol, drugs, vaping, volatile substances or solvents which may be used for their physiological or psychological effect. Drug/substance does not refer to pharmaceutical products legitimately obtained from doctors or pharmacists by prescription or by purchase. However, the inappropriate use of prescription or proprietary drugs, and the use of so-called 'legal highs' (new psychoactive substances (NPS)) or the use of another individual's prescription drugs would constitute a concern under the terms of this Policy.
3. For the purposes of this Policy, the terms 'drug/substance misuse' and 'drug/substance related problem' include any substance misuse or substance-related problem, this include 'legal highs' or prescribed substances.
4. This Policy has regard to the current statutory guidance and advice issued by the Department for Education including:
 - a. Behaviour in Schools (2024);
 - b. Searching, Screening and Confiscation (2022);
 - c. Keeping Children Safe in Education (current edition);
 - d. Suspension and Permanent Exclusion (2023);
 - e. together with other relevant legislation and guidance relating to safeguarding, controlled drugs and health and safety.

PRINCIPLES

5. The Governors and Staff of the School are opposed to the misuse of substances and to the illegal use, advertising and supply of such substances by members of the School inside or outside the School environment.
6. Governors and Staff are committed to the health and safety of all members of the School community and are to take appropriate action to secure their well-being.
7. The School is committed to the prevention of substance misuse through education and support.
8. The School recognises that substance use or misuse may constitute both a behavioural matter and a safeguarding concern. Every incident will therefore be considered from both perspectives. Substance misuse may indicate wider vulnerabilities including exploitation, coercion, mental health concerns, neglect or abuse. Staff must report concerns promptly in accordance with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and record them using the School's safeguarding procedures. Similarly possessing, selling, advertising for sale or using drugs/substances on school premises is a serious breach of the Student Code of Conduct and Behaviour Policy and will be dealt with accordingly.
9. The School's response will be proportionate to the circumstances of each case and may include education, pastoral support, safeguarding intervention, disciplinary action, referral to external agencies and, where appropriate, police involvement.

THE SCHOOL'S RESPONSIBILITY FOR DRUG EDUCATION

10. The School recognises its responsibility to educate students about alcohol, tobacco, vaping, drugs and other substances. Through the PHRSE curriculum and wider pastoral provision, students will receive balanced and age-appropriate education that:
 - a. promotes informed and responsible decision-making;
 - b. develops awareness of the health, legal and social risks associated with substance use and misuse;
 - c. equips students to recognise and resist pressure to engage in substance misuse;
 - d. encourages students to seek help for themselves or others where concerns arise.

STUDENTS

11. Students will receive balanced, age-appropriate education about alcohol, tobacco, vaping, drugs and other substances through the School's Personal, Health, Relationships and Social Education (PHRSE) programme, assemblies and other educational opportunities. Students are expected to engage fully with this provision.
12. Students are expected to:
 - a. understand the health, legal and social risks associated with substance use and misuse;
 - b. know how to seek help for themselves or others where concerns arise;
 - c. speak to a trusted member of staff if they have concerns regarding substance use affecting themselves or another person;
 - d. understand that staff cannot guarantee confidentiality where there are safeguarding concerns and that information may need to be shared appropriately to safeguard students;

- e. report immediately to a member of staff or the School Office if they, or another student, become unwell in connection with substance use.

13. Students must not:

- a. bring, possess, use, supply or attempt to obtain prohibited substances on the School site, during any School activity, while identifiable as a student of the School;
- b. possess, use or supply drug, smoking or vaping paraphernalia;
- c. encourage or facilitate substance misuse by another student.

STAFF

14. Staff are responsible for:

- a. promoting the School's preventative approach to substance education;
- b. remaining alert to signs that may indicate drug/substance use or misuse and have an appropriate level of vigilance around drug/substance related matters;
- c. listening appropriately to students who disclose concerns, while making clear that confidentiality cannot be guaranteed;
- d. recording concerns promptly using the School's safeguarding procedures and reporting them to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or appropriate pastoral leader;
- e. responding to incidents in accordance with this Policy, the Behaviour Policy and the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy;
- f. undertaking training appropriate to their role.

15. Staff are expected to model appropriate behaviour and must not misuse alcohol, illegal substances or medication in a manner that brings the School into disrepute or places students at risk. Concerns and management of staff related drug/substance misuse will be managed in accordance with the Staff Code of Conduct and relevant employment procedures.

PARENTS

16. The School recognises that effective partnership with parents is fundamental to preventing substance misuse and supporting students. Consequently, parents are encouraged to:

- a. maintain open and honest conversations with their child about alcohol, drugs, vaping and other substances;
- b. contact the School promptly if they have concerns that their child, or another student, may be involved in substance use or misuse;
- c. engage positively with the School where concerns arise, including participating in meetings and supporting any pastoral, safeguarding or disciplinary measures that are considered appropriate;
- d. support their child in accessing any educational, pastoral or external support identified by the School or other agencies;
- e. familiarise themselves with this Policy, the Behaviour Policy and other relevant School expectations.

PROCEDURE FOLLOWING A DRUGS-RELATED INCIDENT

17. Any member of staff who discovers, suspects or receives information suggesting substance misuse must report the matter immediately to the appropriate pastoral leader and record the concern in accordance with the School's safeguarding procedures.
18. The School will ensure that any recovered substances or related items are secured safely. Where a search is considered necessary, it will be undertaken in accordance with the Behaviour Policy (para 45 – 2026).
19. Every incident will be investigated proportionately, taking account of both safeguarding and behavioural considerations. Parents will normally be informed at the earliest appropriate opportunity.
20. Where appropriate, the School may involve the Police, Children's Services or other external agencies. Decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis by senior staff.
21. Any disciplinary action will be taken in accordance with the Behaviour Policy.

CHANGES IN LEGISLATION

22. If, during the currency of this Policy, any statute or statutory instrument is enacted that adds to, modifies or is in conflict with any provisions of the Policy, then the Policy will be deemed to include any such statutory provision to the extent necessary to make the Policy compliant with that provision.

MONITORING & EVALUATION

23. Governors are responsible for:
- a approving and reviewing this Policy;
 - b monitoring its implementation and effectiveness through appropriate reporting
 - c ensuring that the School has appropriate arrangements in place to safeguard students and respond to substance-related incidents
 - d holding the Head to account for the implementation of this Policy.
24. This Policy will be reviewed by Governors annually. It was first adopted on 23rd May 1995. The most recent 3 years' review history is below:

5 th March 2024	Minor changes and removal of annex
25 th February 2025	Minor changes
22 nd June 2026	Changes to update policy in line with new legislation and provide structural clarifications