



Drugs Education and Prevention Policy

Date of Last Review: November 2024

Reviewed by: R Beattie

Agreed by the Headteacher: November 2024

Next Review: November 2026



This school is fully committed to the safeguarding of all young people and vulnerable adults in its care. All staff have a duty of care to ensure that students are safe at all times.

The Governors believe that pupils are entitled to a school environment free of pressure to take drugs. Parents are entitled to assume that the School will not be an arena for offering or dealing in drugs.

This policy is written in accordance with DfE and ACPO Drug Advice for Schools, ([Drugs: advice for schools 2012](#))

The **purpose** of this policy is to:

- clarify the legal requirements and responsibilities of the School.
- reinforce and safeguard the health & safety of pupils and others who use the School.
- clarify the School's approach to drugs for staff, pupils, governors, parents/carers and the wider community.
- give guidance on developing, implementing and monitoring the drug education programme.
- enable staff to manage drugs on School premises, and any incidents that occur, with confidence and consistency, and in the best interests of those involved.
- ensure that the response to incidents involving drugs complements the overall approach to drugs education and the values and ethos of the School.
- provide a basis for evaluating the effectiveness of the school drugs education programme and management of incidents involving illegal and other authorised drugs.
- reinforce the role of the School in contributing to local and national strategies.

The Boundaries of the Policy

It is the policy of this school that any pupil on School premises, during organised School activities, on the way to or from School, or during lunchtimes when pupils are in the care of School, involved in the possession of illegal drugs is liable to a period of exclusion whether temporary or permanent. Furthermore, if a pupil on School premises, during organised School activities, on the way to or from School, or during lunchtimes when in the care of School, is found to have been supplying drugs then they will be liable to permanent exclusion (expulsion). The severity and individual circumstances of the offence will be taken into account in determining the eventual punishment.

Drugs – A Definition

‘A substance people take to change the way they feel, think or behave’
(United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime)

This definition includes all illegal and legal drugs including alcohol, tobacco and medicines.

The majority of young people of school age have never used an illegal drug. Of those who do experiment with illegal drugs, very few will go on to become problem drug users. However, most will, at some stage, be occasional users of drugs for medicinal purposes and many will try tobacco and alcohol. Every school, therefore, has a responsibility to consider its response to drugs and all schools are expected to have a policy which sets out the school’s role in relation to all drug matters. (DfE and ACPO Drug Advice for Schools, (September 2012).)

This policy includes both drugs that are illegal under legislation such as cannabis or cocaine and legal drugs such as alcohol, tobacco, volatile substances and medicines. Illegal and other unauthorised drugs are not acceptable within the boundaries identified within the policy.

It should be read in conjunction with the School’s:

- Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour and Rewards Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Health and Safety Policy.

The governors are committed to ensuring that President Kennedy School is a healthy school, free from the misuse of drugs and other substances. Illegal drugs should never be in school. Legal drugs are only allowed when they are medicines agreed by the Head Teacher for use in school under the Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy.

It is recognised that the standard of proof required of any investigation in deciding on guilt, and the subsequent punishment, is based on the balance of probability that any student has committed the offence. It is also recognised that this balance is such, when considering permanent exclusion, that the standard of proof required should be that the School is confident that they have sufficient evidence to suggest that the pupil committed the offence.

Involvement in drug-related activities out of a school context may also have implications for the welfare of other pupils in the School, together with the good name, ethos and discipline of the School. The School has a duty to protect its pupils from such harmful influences. Thus, any involvement with drugs whilst not in the direct care of School, may be construed as bringing the School into disrepute and prejudicial to the interests of the School and the welfare of its pupils, and become grounds for exclusion whether temporary or permanent.

At all times, the first concern for President Kennedy School in managing drugs is the health and safety of the school community, and meeting the pastoral needs of pupils as a whole. This will be balanced with the interests of the pupil(s) involved, and the School will always consider very carefully the implications of any action that it may take.

The School actively co-operates with other agencies such as the Police, Children's Social Care and the NHS to deliver its commitment to drugs education and to deal with incidents of substance use and misuse.

Alcohol

The school has a duty to discourage and deter unhealthy and immoderate patterns of drinking, while helping to educate pupils in the balanced, limited social use of alcohol, if and when appropriate.

Pupils are forbidden to bring alcohol onto school premises or take it with them on School outings, trips, fixtures etc. Infringement of this rule will be treated as a major disciplinary offence.

The following guidelines are provided for staff:

- The School must never be in the position of tolerating or conniving in the illegal purchase or consumption of alcohol.
- It is an offence for a person under the age of 18 to buy or attempt to buy alcohol in either on- or off-licensed premises, or to consume alcohol in a bar.
- Under-age drinking is forbidden and is a breach of the School behaviour policy.

Tobacco

Pupils must not bring or use tobacco on School premises or take it with them on School outings. To do so is a breach of the School behaviour policy.

Pupils are prohibited from having and purchasing tobacco for others under the age of 18. This is both a criminal offence and a breach of the school behaviour policy.

Part of the School's drugs education will include education about the dangers of tobacco. The School is legally required to be smoke free and will give appropriate guidance for those pupils who would like counselling or have expressed a desire to stop smoking.

Volatile Substances

The School takes great care in the use, security and management of solvents or hazardous chemicals. Such arrangements are set out in the School's Health and Safety Policy. The personal use of solvents by pupils is strictly prohibited.

Medicines (See Medical Needs Policy).

Some pupils may require medicines during the School day which have been prescribed for their medical condition. The administration of medicines will only be administered in accordance with the procedures used by the School Medical Team.

At no time during the day should a pupil have control of medicines. This also applies to non-prescribed medicines, such as paracetamol and hay fever relief. The only exceptions to this would be with the full approval and knowledge of the School Medical Team. (Examples might include anaphylaxis sufferers with epipens and asthma sufferers with inhalers).

Roles and Responsibilities

Governing Body

Governors have a key role in the development of the School's policies on drugs. As a matter of law, they are responsible for the safety of pupils while on school premises or while engaged in School activities. Such responsibilities have been delegated to the Head. Nevertheless, the Governing Body will wish to be confident that:

- the School staff responsible for investigation of drugs incidents and the member of staff responsible for drugs education and training have the appropriate time and expertise to fulfil the responsibilities expected of them.
- guidance is available to inform the School's policy, practices and procedures relating to drugs and education and the management of drugs, and both drugs education and the management of drugs in the School community are well planned in advance and undertaken in a professional manner.

Role of the Head Teacher

While the Head has an important role in being the focal point of the School, responsibility for the implementation of this policy may be delegated to other key staff. One senior leader may be responsible for the investigation of drugs incidents. Another suitably qualified leader may be responsible for drugs education and training.

The Head teacher will ensure:

- that the Governing Body is kept aware of the provision of drugs education and the management of drugs in the School community.

- that the Assistant Head Teacher responsible for investigations into drugs incidents and the members of staff responsible for drugs education and training are suitably trained and competent to discharge those tasks.
- that the Assistant Head Teacher responsible for investigations into drugs incidents competently discharges his/her responsibilities.
- that the members of staff responsible for drugs education and training competently discharge their responsibilities, particularly when dealing with the provision of drugs education and the management/training of staff, both to provide the education and to raise awareness of the issue of drugs within the School community.
- that the Head Teacher shall inform the Governors of any incident involving drugs at the School. The Head will normally ensure that the police are informed of any drug incident. Details regarding those involved, as well as any relevant information, will be passed to the police. The School will cooperate fully with any subsequent investigation that is then carried out by the police.

The Head Teacher will also take responsibility for liaison with the media. Drug misuse is an emotive issue and is likely to generate interest from the media. The School will take appropriate advice and legal guidance to ensure that any reporting of incidents remains in the best interests of the pupils, their families and the School.

Role of Senior Staff in Investigating Drugs Incidents

A member of the Senior Leadership Team will be responsible for investigating drugs incidents and this aspect of the role will include:

- ensuring that pupils and parents are aware of the School's strict approach and its rationale for drugs education.
- ensuring that a record is maintained and completed of any drugs incident and the subsequent outcome.

Role of Staff

All staff must:

- be vigilant at all times about the possible use or supply of drugs in the school community or otherwise in accordance with this policy.
- report any suspicions about drug use or supply to the Senior Leader responsible for investigation of drugs incidents immediately.
- attend such training sessions on the provision of drugs education or the management of drugs in the School community as they are reasonably required to attend from time to time.

- support this policy and the approach taken by the School towards the provision of drugs education and management of drugs in the School community.

If a pupil admits to a member of staff to using or supplying drugs off the school premises, a member of the Senior Leadership Team must be informed. In consultation with the Head, the police, social services and the parents of the pupil may be contacted.

Drugs Education

The Head Teacher will ensure that there is a planned drugs education programme.

The programme will:

- inform students about drugs and their effects;
- promote a positive attitude towards a healthy lifestyle;
- increase pupils' understanding of the health and social implications of the use and misuse of drugs;
- inform students about the course of action open to them if they or people they know become, or might become, involved in drugs activity; and
- inform students about support and resources available in School and outside School.

Action to be taken in incidents involving misuse of drugs

It is vitally important the staff, pupils and parents should be clear about the action that will be taken in any drug related incident. (See also Appendix)

1. Staff should ensure that all cases of misuse of drugs, or suspected misuse, are reported to the Head Teacher and the Safeguarding Officer.
2. In all instances involving substance misuse or supply on the School's premises, parents will be informed and their co-operation sought.
3. The School will consider each drug incident separately and consider the appropriate response, bearing in mind the circumstances of the case, and the need to balance the interests of the pupil, other members of the School and the wider community.

However, the governors believe that it is essential that parents and pupils are clear about the normal sanction that will be applied in particular instances, as follows:

1. a pupil who supplies any drugs or other solvents (whether legal or illegal, and regardless of the seriousness of the use) on the School premises will normally be permanently excluded for a first offence.
2. 'Supply' includes retailing drugs on the premises, communicating with a drug dealer on behalf of another pupil of the School, introducing fellow pupils to a drug dealer, and any other instance of procuring legal or illegal drugs for him/herself or other pupils.

'Supply' includes supplying for money or free-of-charge. Or giving, passing or offering to another party.

3. In the case of the supply of a drug which is legal (including over-the-counter drugs) the Head will assess the seriousness of the incident before deciding whether to exclude permanently or for a fixed period.

Before making a decision on exclusion the Head will ensure that a satisfactory investigation has been carried out.

A pupil who has any legal or illegal drug in his/her possession will normally be excluded for a fixed period **for a first offence**, to be determined by the Head Teacher after considering all the circumstances of the case. The Head Teacher will reserve the right to permanently exclude the pupil subject to the circumstances of the case.

The school will also determine what counselling needs to be provided and/or other action needs to be taken during or after the exclusion.

For a **second offence** the Head will determine whether a further fixed- term exclusion is appropriate or whether it is appropriate to exclude permanently. In coming to a decision the Head will take into account any medical/police/social service/ drug adviser reports that may be available, and consider whether further counselling is appropriate.

Offences outside the school

If a pupil is involved in a drug-related incident outside the School, the School will assess the implications for the pupil and the School and determine the best course of action bearing in mind the interests of the pupil and the interests of the School and wider community. Exclusion would not normally be appropriate for a first outside-School offence.

Involvement of the Police

Although there is no legal duty to inform the police of any drug incident in the School, the Governors' policy is that the Head will determine whether to inform the Police Liaison Officer and will seek any relevant support and advice. The Head Teacher must be mindful that the Governors cannot knowingly allow the premises to be used for the production or supply of any controlled drug, or the preparation or smoking of any illegal drugs.

Where the School suspects that drugs are being supplied on the premises, all relevant suspicions and information will be passed to the police.



Involvement of outside Agencies

Where the Head Teacher deems it necessary to inform the Referral and Assessment Service of any drug-related incident, he/she will do so as quickly as possible.

Staff training

The Head Teacher will ensure that staff (teaching and support staff) will receive appropriate training in drugs education and the handling of incidents that they might come across.

All staff should know this school policy and be informed of any changes to it.

Monitoring and Review

The (appropriate) committee of the Governing Body will receive termly reports on the implementation of the policy as part of the Safeguarding Review

The Governing Body will review the policy annually and will assess its effectiveness and whether any changes are necessary.

Any changes will be notified to the staff and parents.

DRUGS EDUCATION AND PREVENTION POLICY

Appendix 1: The Management of Drug Related Incidents

The management of drug-related incidents will include the following considerations:

Any member of staff who becomes aware of drug misuse by pupils, or has good reason to suspect it, must inform a member of the Senior Leadership Team who will decide whether and how to investigate. The Senior Leader responsible for investigation of drugs incidents will immediately inform the Head.

All investigations must observe principles of natural justice. These are observed if the pupil is not pre-judged; if the procedures are fair and impartial; if there is proper care for the well-being of the pupils being questioned; and if the pupil and parents are given a proper opportunity to be heard.

During questioning, a second member of staff must be present and keep a record. If a pupil shows signs of distress, he/she should be offered the opportunity of speaking to parents on the telephone or to have them present. At the end, the pupil should be asked to initial the notes (with date and time) or to write out their own account. If it is concluded that a serious breach has occurred likely to lead to temporary or permanent exclusion, the pupil should be segregated and, unless there are fears for the pupil's safety, the parents/carer will then be informed. The pupil will be removed from School pending the outcome of an investigation.

Parents will be informed of what is alleged, the evidence, and the disciplinary decisions made (suspension pending further investigation/ suspension/ permanent exclusion). They will also be informed of the School's complaints procedure, save for an exclusion which is handled under a separate procedure.

Witnesses should be interviewed in such a way as to preserve confidentiality. They should be asked to sign and date the notes of any meetings or make a written statement, with name, date and time. Hearsay will be treated with caution.

Witnesses must not be promised confidentiality although confidentiality will be maintained if possible.

The Senior Leader responsible will ensure that a record of the incident is made and that all paperwork is collated and stored safely. He/she will also evaluate the effectiveness of the procedures followed and whether any lessons can be learnt from the incident.

The Head Teacher will ensure the Police are informed of any illegal substance found or recovered and any such substance in the School's possession must be handed to the Police.

The Head Teacher will be responsible for ensuring that a full report of the incident is sent to the Chair of Governors.

DRUGS EDUCATION AND PREVENTION POLICY

Appendix 2: Action to Be Taken Upon the Discovery of Drugs

If a pupil is found in possession of drugs or associated paraphernalia, the member of staff who has discovered the possession or suspects the possession should immediately escort the pupil to a member of the relevant College Leadership Team or a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

Any member of staff discovering a substance on the School site should enlist a colleague as a witness wherever possible. If no colleague is nearby then the substance should not be left but removed anyway.

The following guidelines should be observed at all times:

1. The substance is removed with a record being kept of the time, place and circumstance.
2. The nature of the substance is not investigated but its approximate size and appearance is recorded.
3. When possible, the recordings should be signed by a witness.
4. The substance should be immediately taken to the Senior Leader responsible for investigation of the drug incident who will take it to the Head teacher. The substance should not be kept in a place of safe-keeping by any member of staff - to do so may place that member of staff at risk.
5. The Senior Leader responsible for the investigation of the drug related incident and the Head Teacher should sign and date a record detailing the time, date and circumstances of the findings.
6. The Head Teacher can choose to arrange for the Police to remove the substance from the premises, or may choose to dispose of it in an appropriate way.
7. In the event of a discovery of any equipment associated with the substance use, especially needles and syringes, pupils should not be allowed to handle such items. All equipment found must be handled by adults with the utmost care. The Head Teacher must ensure that materials are placed in a secure and rigid container to await collection by the appropriate service.