
Queen Elizabeth's School

DRUGS POLICY

1. Our aim and commitment

The aim of the Queen Elizabeth's School Drugs Policy is to:

- ensure the school is fulfilling its safeguarding responsibilities by ensuring that pupils are protected from harm in a safe environment for learning and teaching;
- ensure that pupils understand which drugs and substances are controlled by the Misuse of Drugs Act and the possible consequences of possessing or supplying them;
- ensure that pupils develop the skills, knowledge and understanding to make informed decisions about drugs which are not so controlled; and
- co-operate with the Police in the detection and prevention of crime.

We acknowledge and uphold the Government's commitment to the safety and wellbeing of children in the Children Act and other relevant legislation and, in order to fulfil our statutory and pastoral duties in relation to drug issues, we will:

- give the highest priority to promoting a healthy and safe School environment through clear standards and firm discipline;
- respond to drug-related incidents promptly and decisively;
- educate our pupils about the serious health risks of drugs and their link with crime and social exclusion;
- train and support staff to detect cases of suspected drug abuse and respond appropriately; and
- develop positive working relationships with relevant individuals and agencies.

For the avoidance of doubt, "drugs" and "prohibited substances", when referred to in this policy, also include alcohol, tobacco, electronic cigarettes ('e-cigarettes', also known as vape or vaping machines), volatile substances (e.g. aerosols, solvents, glue or petrol), medicines and those substances which produce similar effects to illegal drugs but are not controlled under the Misuse of Drugs Act. These latter substances are commonly referred to as 'legal highs' or 'new psychoactive substances' (NSPs)). Despite their technical or alleged legality, these substances are not necessarily safe, as sufficient research may not yet have been carried out to assess their safety and/or they may contain controlled drugs making them illegal to possess. If there is uncertainty in this context about what a substance is, it will be treated as a prohibited substance.

2. Our method

We will:

- continue to promote a School culture that values and celebrates health and good citizenship, and in which drugs-related activity holds negative status;
- implement clear standards and procedures for drugs-related incidents;
- deliver a comprehensive drug education programme as part of pupils' wider personal and social development, and evaluate its impact;
- exercise our power to search a pupil's property and confiscate, retain or dispose of a pupil's property if it is or is believed to be drugs related (Education and Inspections Act 2006 ss 91, 94); and
- undertake a prompt and structured audit of all critical incidents.

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3. Dissemination

- The policy will appear on the Parent and Staff Portals of eQE.
- Drugs related education will be delivered mainly through the Personal Development Time (PDT) / tutorial programme but also in other areas of the curriculum.
- Briefing Evenings in the autumn term will provide the Headmaster with an opportunity to inform parents on matters relating to the Drugs Policy.

4. Implementation

The Governors intend that the School will remain an environment that is free from illegal drugs, the paraphernalia of drugs, substances intended to resemble drugs and free from an acceptance of the 'culture' of drugs. Our guiding principle reflects that of the DfE in that the possession, use or supply of illegal and other unauthorised drugs within the School's community is unacceptable.

Implementation of the policy will be based upon trust and understanding between pupils, staff and parents and is seen as being in the best interests of all who work at the School.

The policy intends to act as a positive and effective deterrent to the use, possession of or supply of illegal substances.

The Headmaster takes overall responsibility for the policy and its implementation, also for liaison with the Governing Body, parents and appropriate outside agencies.

The senior staff in charge of pastoral care and Heads of Year will have general responsibility for handling the daily implementation of this policy through delivery of this area of the curriculum.

Within the tutorial system and other areas of the curriculum, information will be conveyed about drugs whilst developing communication skills, social skills, self-esteem, assertiveness, and personal and social responsibility. The School will make its pupils fully aware of the legal and ethical debates surrounding drug use and will seek to educate its pupils to live healthy lifestyles and to make appropriate choices in doing so.

The senior staff in charge of pastoral care will oversee the pastoral care implications of this policy, and:

- a continuing programme of education about drugs will be maintained throughout the School. The programme will be delivered in a number of areas of the curriculum;
- Form Tutors will deliver information about the dangers of drug abuse and the consequences of failing to adhere to the School's policy;
- assemblies will be used, as appropriate, to support the delivery of the drugs education programme;
- the programme of education for students will be complemented by in-service training for staff;
- where appropriate, parents will be kept informed of any changes or developments to the School's programme of drugs education;

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- parents will be informed and reminded during the parents' briefing meeting evenings for pupils in Years 7, 8, 9, 10 and 12 of the School's Policies regarding the management of a drugs-related incident; and
- help will be provided for any students genuinely seeking it as part of, and in accordance with, the School's Safeguarding Policy.

Pupils who attend School whilst under the influence of drugs or alcohol are unable to participate fully in learning; they may also represent a safety risk to themselves or others. Such behaviour will be regarded as a breach of this policy and treated accordingly.

Any breach of this policy will be treated as a very serious disciplinary matter. Pupils who fail to comply with this policy and:

- bring prohibited drugs on to the premises;
- are in possession of prohibited substances in School or on their way to and from School;
- supply prohibited substances in School or on their way to or from School;
- use prohibited substances in School or on their way to or from School; or
- use, possess or supply drugs whilst participating in any school activity off site,

will be dealt with by the Headmaster and could be permanently excluded.

The Headmaster may inform the Police of the possession, consumption or supplying of an illegal drug, since each constitutes a criminal offence. This includes situations whereby evidence suggesting the possession, use or supplying of illegal drugs emerges online or on social media, or is brought to the attention of the School from such platforms.

Should similar evidence of illegal activity come to light in relation to members of staff of the School, the Headmaster may similarly inform the Police. The possession, use or supplying of illegal drugs, or coming to work under the influence or impairment of a drug, is a disciplinary matter for all staff and could lead to disciplinary action being taken in accordance with the Staff Disciplinary Procedure. This could potentially lead to dismissal.

Visitors to the School, including parents, may be denied access to the School site if they are judged to be under the influence of drugs.

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LINKED
POLICIES

- Code of Conduct for Staff and Governors
- Complaints Policy
- Home-School Agreement
- Information and Communication Technology Policy
- Pupil Discipline Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy
- Staff Disciplinary Procedure

LEGISLATION
&
REFERENCE
MATERIALS

- Children Act, 1989
 - DfE and ACPO drug advice for Schools (2012)
 - Education and Inspections Act, 2006
 - Misuse of Drugs Act, 1971
 - Psychoactive Substances Act, 2016
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Approved by the Governing Body on 24 February 2022

Signed

B.R. Martin, Chairman of the Governing Body