



THE ACADEMY OF
**ST FRANCIS
OF ASSISI**

Drugs Policy

Review Period	Two Yearly
Person Responsible for Policy	Assistant Headteacher for Behaviour & Attendance
Date of Governor Approval	March 2021
Date for Review	March 2023

This policy is under continuous review by the Senior Leadership Team and the Governors' Admissions, Inclusion and Ethos Committee because of the changing drugs scene both nationally and locally.

Ethos of the Academy

The philosophy of the Academy is to provide a supportive and nurturing environment in which all pupils are enabled to develop their learning and personal skills to achieve their personal best. We strive carefully to prepare them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences that they may encounter in their future lives and this policy has been written in accordance with this philosophy.

Rationale

It is our aim to help all pupils to be able to take their place safely in a world where a wide range of drugs exists. We recognise that some drugs have beneficial medicinal purposes, but also that every drug has potential harm. For this reason, all drugs need appropriate and responsible care and management. In order to be able to make informed choices, staff and pupils need to understand the nature of drugs, their social and legal status, their uses and effects.

Definition of a drug

A drug is a substance that affects the way in which the body functions physically, emotionally or mentally. This definition includes illegal substances and also legal substances such as: alcohol & tobacco, volatile substances, over the counter & prescription medicines.

Aims of the policy

- To support the Academy's endeavour to maintain the safety and well-being of all pupils and staff
- To clarify legal responsibilities, entitlement and obligations
- To support all the members of the Academy community by providing clear guidance and procedures on drug related issues to ensure clarity and consistency
- To develop a whole Academy approach to drug education in the context of the curriculum of the Academy

Policy background

This policy has been written with reference to national and LA guidelines and been informed by relevant research data.

Drugs on the Academy premises

The legal definition of premises of an Academy includes everything within the property boundaries including buildings, outbuildings, playgrounds, fields and also extends to include other settings such as vehicles, boats, marquees or any venue managed by the Academy at the time e.g. premises of a Academy trip or visit.

- **Medicines**

The Academy has a policy/procedure for the administration of medicines that must be followed for everyone's safety.

- **Alcohol**

No alcohol will be consumed during the course of a normal Academy day. Pupils and visitors under the effects of alcohol will be asked to leave the premises and return at a later date for the safety of the whole Academy. Parents will be asked to collect their children

- **Smoking**

The Academy is a no smoking site at all times. Pupils are not permitted to bring to the Academy any smoking materials, including matches and lighters. In the interests of health and safety, should a pupil be found in possession of any of these on Academy premises, they will

be confiscated and parents informed

- **Illegal drugs**

No illegal drugs are allowed to be brought on to, or used on Academy premises

- **Solvents**

The Academy will ensure that potentially hazardous substances are stored safely, and pupils will be supervised if it is necessary that they come into contact with them in the course of their work. Pupils are not permitted to be in possession of such products.

- **Responses to drug related incidents**

A drug incident may be any of the following:

- Finding drugs, or related paraphernalia, on Academy premises
- Possession of drugs by an individual on Academy premises
- Use of drugs by an individual on Academy premises
- Supply of drugs on Academy premises
- Individuals disclosing information about their drug use
- Rumours of parents, staff or pupils using drugs
- Reports of parents, staff or pupils using drugs

The Academy is aware of its legal responsibilities in regard to drug related incidents and in responding to incidents, seeks to work in line with local and national guidance. A member of the SLT will normally be responsible for co-ordinating the management of drug-related incidents, offering sources of support and liaising with outside agencies. Incidents will be dealt with after making an assessment of the situation and will be reported to the Head of School. All incidents and responses will be recorded within 24 hours.

Appropriate support will be offered to those with substance related problems. Talking with an individual about a drug related incident will have as its purpose to confirm or reject suspicions or allegations, rather than conduct a wider investigation.

Evidence of drug use or possession will not necessarily result in permanent exclusion. Permanent exclusion will only be considered in serious cases and will be in accordance with DCSF guidance on exclusions. A case conference will be called if necessary. Each case will be assessed and levels of sanctions may vary according to the seriousness of the incident and the pupil's involvement.

Individuals in possession of drugs

If any pupil or adult on Academy premises is found in possession of an unauthorised drug it will be confiscated, if possible. If the drug is suspected to be illegal, the Academy will contact a police officer for discussion. Illegal substances will be handed to the police as soon as possible and not stored. Parents will normally be informed (for a student) and other professionals such as the LA, Youth Service, Police, GP, Social Services will be informed or consulted as appropriate.

Confidentiality

Complete secrecy can never be promised to a pupil, though information given in confidence will not generally be disclosed to anyone else. In particular, if a pupil chooses to disclose that they are using a drug without medical authorisation, this information will not be used against them. However, action will be taken to ensure the pupil comes to no serious harm if this is considered a risk. Regarding disclosures staff need to carefully define and communicate the boundaries of confidentiality offered.

Support for students

At our Academy the welfare of the student is paramount. We maintain that constructive strategies
Drugs Policy

that enable pupils to continue to benefit from continued education are preferable to exclusion.

Following actions to preserve safety, the health & emotional needs of pupils will be considered. Support is available through the pastoral system, to ensure a caring response to pupils in distress. Interventions will be considered if the Academy feels a pupil is showing signs which indicate particular risks of, or from, involvement with drugs, whether their own or their parents'/carers'. Such interventions may include consultation with parents/carers and other agencies, possible case conferences and subsequent referral. Permanent exclusion from the Academy will rarely be considered as permanently excluded pupils become significantly more vulnerable to drugs than those within formal settings.

Searches

In line with recent legislation the staff at the Academy reserve the right to search students if they have reason to believe that they are carrying offensive weapons or illegal substances. Similarly students can expect to be physically restrained if they present a danger to themselves or other members of the community.

Searches will be carried out by Head of Year or members of the Senior Leadership Team and Parents/Carers will always be informed when this has happened.

If inappropriate articles are brought in to the Academy or used inappropriately they may be confiscated and kept in the Academy safe for collection at the end of the day. If these items are dangerous or illegal they may be handed to the Police for safe disposal.

The Academy works closely with its Police Liaison Officers. If students are involved with any activity which breaks the law the police may be involved in the confiscation of items, Restorative Justice Conferencing, group work and education as well as links with home. Parents/Carers will always be informed when the police are involved and given the opportunity to attend any interviews.

Similarly, the police will be involved if any student is suspected of having contact with an illegal substance. This includes possession, using or dealing. In such cases, the police will decide what course of action should be taken.