



THE ACADEMY OF  
**ST FRANCIS  
OF ASSISI**

# Drugs Policy

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Person Responsible for Policy:	Deputy Headteacher / Designated Safeguarding Lead
Governing Committee:	SGB
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This policy has been written with reference to national and LA guidelines and been informed by relevant research data. Where the document refers to drugs, this includes alcohol, tobacco, illegal drugs, medicines, new psychoactive substances (NPS/‘legal highs’) and volatile substances, unless otherwise specified

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. This policy is written with due reference to Working together to safeguard children (HM Government, 2015); Keeping children safe in education (DfE, 2022); What to do if you’re worried a child is being abused (HM Government 2015); and DfE and ACPO drug advice for schools (DfE 2012).

The school does not condone the use of illegal substances, unauthorised substances, new psychoactive substances (NPS/‘legal highs’) or the misuse of alcohol, tobacco, e-cigarettes, glue, solvents, prescribed and over-the-counter medicines. In this context, the school will always act to safeguard pupils’ wellbeing. The Academy reserves the right to apply sanctions to pupils for drugs related incidents in line with the Behaviour Policy.

### **1. Rationale**

The Academy of St Francis of Assisi actively seeks to provide an environment where all members of the community are safe from harm. As such, the school takes a robust approach to any individual or group that breaches our behaviour, drugs or anti-bullying policies.

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 effects, 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.

### **2. Aims of the policy**

The purpose of the policy is to:

- clarify the legal requirements and responsibilities of the school
- reinforce and safeguard the health, wellbeing and safety of pupils and others who use the school
- clarify the school’s approach to drugs for all staff, pupils, governors, parents/carers, external agencies 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 drug education and the values and ethos of the school
- provide a basis for evaluating the effectiveness of the school drug education programme and the management of incidents involving illegal and other unauthorised drugs
- set out the arrangements for collaboration and communication with local agencies offering targeted and specialist support for young people in need and their families

### **3. Policies to be considered in conjunction with this policy**

- Behaviour and Relationship Policy
- [DfE Keeping children safe in education, 2022.](#)
- [DfE and ACPO drug advice for schools \(September 2012\)](#)
- [HM Government Working together to safeguard children \(2015\)](#)
- Staff Code of Conduct and guidelines
- Health and Safety Policy
- Home / School Agreement
- Child Protection / Safeguarding Policy

- [DfE Searching, Screening and Confiscation at School \(February 2014\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/554415/searching_screening_confiscation_advice_Sept_2016.pdf)  
[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/554415/searching\\_screening\\_confiscation\\_advice\\_Sept\\_2016.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/554415/searching_screening_confiscation_advice_Sept_2016.pdf)
- Supporting Students with Medical Conditions Policy

#### 4. Scope of the Policy

This policy relates to any student within the school boundaries (any area within the perimeter fence or school fields) and on a school visit where a student is in the charge of the school or school staff, whether within or outside of school hours. This policy also relates to any student wearing the school uniform or who has an easily identifiable association with the Academy, whether within or outside of school hours.

#### 5. Drugs on school premises

The legal definition of premises of a school 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 school at the time e.g. premises of a school trip or visit.

#### 6. Definitions and Terminology

The definition of a drug given by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime is:

**‘A substance people take to change the way they feel, think or behave.’**

A drug is a substance that affects the way in which the body functions physically, emotionally or mentally. For purposes of this policy, by ‘drugs’ we are referring to illegal substances and also legal substances such as: alcohol, tobacco, volatile substances, over the counter or prescription medicines and new psychoactive substances.

By drugs paraphernalia we mean items such as cannabis grinders, rolling papers, filters, matches, lighters and pipes etc.

The term ‘drugs’ and ‘drug education’, unless otherwise stated, is used throughout this document to refer to all drugs:

- all illegal drugs (those controlled by the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971)
- all legal drugs, including alcohol, tobacco, volatile substances (those giving off a gas or vapour which can be inhaled), khat and alkyl nitrites (also known as poppers), psychoactive substances and other unauthorised substances.
- all over-the-counter and prescription medicines.

#### 7. Management of a drug related incidents

##### 7.1 Responding to an incident

A drug incident may be any of the following:

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

## **7.2 Possible types of drugs**

### **Tobacco**

The Academy is a non-smoking site by law, in compliance with the 2006 Health Act; this includes all buildings, school grounds and fields and in the interests of health and hygiene, the school requests that people refrain from smoking outside school gates. Students are not permitted to bring to school smoking materials, including matches and lighters. In the interests of health and safety, should a student be found in possession of any of these on school premises, they will be confiscated and parents informed. Smoking on or within close proximity of the school premises will result in a sanction or suspension. This also applies to 'vaping' and the use of electronic cigarettes.

### **Alcohol**

The school also adheres to the Licensing Act of 1964 and other alcohol legislation. No alcohol may be brought on to school premises or consumed during the course of a school day. Any adult (or staff, students, parents, carers 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 school. Parents will be asked to collect their children from the school and will be encouraged to seek immediate medical support.

### **Medicines in School**

All medicines / controlled drugs are locked in the medicine cabinet in Student Services. Procedures are in place for the control of those drugs. Students may carry epi-pens, inhalers and antihistamine in their school bags where necessary, and parental permission has been given. Please also refer to the Supporting Students with Medical Conditions Policy.

### **Illegal drugs and 'psychoactive substances'**

No illegal drugs, psychoactive substances or drug paraphernalia are allowed to be brought on to, or used on school premises. Bringing any such items onto school premises is considered a serious breach of this drugs policy. Seeking to influence or glamorise illegal drug use or the use of psychoactive substances either in person on school premises or via social networking sites is also considered a serious breach of this drugs policy. Disciplinary action will follow.

### **Solvents**

The school 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. Students are not permitted to be in possession of solvents. Bringing solvents or hazardous substances onto school premises is considered a serious breach of this drugs policy.

## **7.3 Procedure for drug related incidents**

A drug incident may be any of the following:

- Finding drugs, or related paraphernalia, on school premises
- Possession of drugs by an individual on school premises
- Use of drugs by an individual on school premises
- Supply of drugs on school premises
- Individuals disclosing information about their drug use Student reports of parents, staff or other students using drugs
- Hiding drugs in or around the school premises for later collection (by themselves or by third parties)
- Glamourising or encouraging the use of drugs and other substances
- Appearing intoxicated whilst at school

First Aid provision is the first consideration. Pastoral staff or Leadership are responsible for contacting the student's parents/ carers, and the student must then be supervised until they are able to be taken home safely.

Should a student bring, or if the school has good reason to believe that a student has brought drink or drugs into school (including substances labelled as 'Legal Highs' or Shisha Pens), and a search is required, the following procedure should be followed:

- A second adult witness is present throughout;
- Seal the confiscated item(s) in a plastic bag and include details of the date and time of the seizure/find and witness present;
- Store it in a secure location, such as a safe or other lockable container with access limited to senior members of staff;
- If the seizure is believed to be illegal drugs notify the police without delay, who will collect it and then store or dispose of it in line with locally agreed protocols. The law does not require a school to divulge to the police the name of the pupil from whom the drugs were taken but it is advisable to do so;
- Record full details of the incident, including the police incident reference number;
- Inform parents/carers, unless this is not in the best interests of the pupil. Parents may be invited into school to discuss drug use, support and possible sanctions;
- Identify any safeguarding concerns and develop a support and disciplinary response which may include a referral to Social Care.

#### **7.4 Searching and confiscation**

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

Staff may confiscate any drugs or drug paraphernalia in accordance with this policy. (See also DfE "Searching, Screening and Confiscation at School" guidance). If students are considered to be at risk or in possession of an unauthorised substance, parents/ carers should be contacted immediately. If this is not considered to be in the best interests of the student, safeguarding procedures should be followed.

The Academy works closely with Merseyside Police and the Safer School Police Officer (SSPO). If students are involved with any activity which breaks the law the police may be involved in intimate searches and the confiscation of items, 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 legal action, if any, should be taken.

#### **7.5 Designated member of staff**

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy Headteacher will normally be responsible for coordinating the management of drug-related incidents. Incidents will be dealt with after assessing the situation and will be reported to the Headteacher. All incidents and responses will be recorded within 24 hours.

If it is established that the incident is drug-related, the Headteacher will inform the Chair of Governors. All incidents should be noted immediately by staff and countersigned by witnesses.

If the Headteacher or DSL are not available, or the incident occurs off-site, the procedure should be followed by the most senior or designated responsible member of staff

#### **7.6 Response, Support and Sanctions**

- Students found in possession of drugs or drug-related paraphernalia may be reported to Police
- Suspensions will normally be considered where a student is found in possession of drugs or drug related paraphernalia
- Permanent exclusions may be considered in cases of extremely serious cases or as part of a pattern of persistent behaviour
- All exclusions are monitored carefully by the Governing Body

- Drug testing and use of Passive Search Dogs may be used

At our school the welfare of the pupil is paramount and intervention will be made if the school feels a student is showing signs which indicate particular risks of, or from, involvement with drugs, whether their own or the involvement of their parents'/carers'. We believe that early intervention, where possible, is significant. Such interventions may include:

- Support and advice in school (Counsellor, School Nurse, Head of Year, Tutor, Inclusion and Attendance Officer)
- Referral to specialist outside agencies for support,
- Working with the Police

Support is available through the pastoral system, to ensure a caring response to pupils in distress. Interventions will be considered if the school 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.

We work closely with our Safer School Police Officer. 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.

### **7.7 Staff**

Any staff bringing unauthorised drugs to work or being at work in an intoxicated state (including being 'on duty' on school trips) could be subject to disciplinary procedures and possible police prosecution. On the basis of the duty of care that all teachers have for the students, it is the expectation that all staff will inform the Headteacher immediately should such an incident occur.

In adherence to school smoking policy, any staff smoking on school premises during normal school hours, or who bring illegal drugs onto school premises, will be deemed in breach of their contract.

The school undertakes to make every effort to support staff in such circumstances and encourage them to seek professional help.

### **8. Parents/ Carers and drug-related incidents**

The school aims to be aware of the impact that drug misuse by parents or carers can have upon a child and that it can sometimes, but not always, put a child at greater risk of emotional or physical risk and harm. The school aims to be alert to any behaviour that may indicate that a student is experiencing any such difficult home circumstances.

The Academy will liaise with external agencies as necessary in such cases, observing the school policy on confidentiality. Where parents/ carers are intoxicated upon school premises, staff will always attempt to maintain a calm atmosphere, but their paramount concern is for the welfare and safety of students. Where the behaviour of a parent/ carer in this respect is persistent, staff may seriously consider whether safeguarding procedures should be put into place and the police involved if necessary.

### **9. Staff development**

All staff and relevant Governors will be made aware of the Drugs Policy as part of their regular Safeguarding training. Key staff will attend drug awareness training.

## **10. Drugs Education**

Delivery of Drugs Education will be provided between the National Curriculum element in Science, RE and through PCHSE, by both teachers and visitors from expert and accredited external agencies. Students will also be informed through assemblies.