



Drugs Policy 2021-2022

Drugs Policy

The Meadows School believes that the possession and use of unauthorised drugs is wrong and therefore we do not condone their use in or out of school.

Terminology

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), ketamine, khat and alkyl nitrites (known as poppers).
- All over-the-counter and prescription medicines.

Boundaries

The possession or use of prohibited substances on The Meadows School site is absolutely forbidden. The "school site" (as defined) will apply in the following situations:

- All school grounds, inside and outside the school designated buildings,
- Other designated premises, if pupils are part educated at partner institutions,
- Educational trips and journeys (residential and non-residential),
- Work experience placements,

Pupils returning to the school site who are suspected to be under the influence of substances taken whilst off site are also included under this policy

Drugs Education

The School provides a planned drug education curriculum as part of PSHE that reflects knowledge and understanding, attitudes and personal and social skills. Drugs education will educate about:

Drugs Education is taught by a teacher supported by a teaching assistant but where appropriate outside visitors may contribute to drugs education i.e. school nurse, drugs liaison police officer, Humankind. Teachers and learning mentors have access to on-going support and training as part of their own professional development and teaching materials are reviewed for quality and relevance.

Staff are informed of the Misuse of Drugs Act and are aware of the legal aspects and effects of substance misuse. The PHSE curriculum includes a Drugs Awareness programme.

Managing a drugs related incident

If staff have knowledge either by what has been seen or has been told by a reliable source – that a prohibited activity is taking place SLT must be informed. There is no legal obligation to inform the police, though they may be able to give relevant support or advice.

Circular 4/95 states that 'Although there is no statutory requirement to do so, the Secretary of State would expect the police to be informed when illegal drugs are found on the School premises.

- An incident involving unauthorised drugs in school is most likely to involve alcohol, tobacco or volatile substances, rather than illegal drugs.
- The first priority is safety and first aid, i.e. administering first aid and calling the emergency services if deemed necessary.
- If any pupil be found in possession of an unauthorised drug, the substance will be confiscated, in the presence of a witness and put in the safe of the main office. It is permitted by law for school staff to take temporary possession of a substance suspected of being a controlled drug for the purposes of protecting a pupil from harm and the offence of possession.
- A record of the incident and all witness statements will be kept by the Head Teacher, who will record all the relevant details.
- The Head Teacher will be informed and will take a lead role in deciding how to respond further
- Parents / carers will normally be informed
- Parents/carers will be advised of additional support available.
- No member staff should attempt to analyse or taste an unidentified substance
- We may contact the local police for advice or in order to identify and or dispose of the substance if it is not something we can do ourselves, although it is not a legal obligation for us to do so.
- If a pupil is suspected of concealing illegal drugs on their person every effort will be made to secure the voluntary production of such drugs. This will be carried out in the presence of a witness.
- The range of responses used for rule breaking will be similar to those for other transgressions and will depend upon the nature and gravity of the offence.
- If any pupil is thought to be 'under the influence' medical help in the form of a paramedic / ambulance will be sought at once and first aid will be given if required. This is not an appropriate time to question the pupil. The priority will be the pupil's safety.

The following staff are trained and qualified in First Aid:

Tom Abbit
Stephanie Atkinson,
Ian Clark,
Avril Craik
Dominic Dimuccio,
Caroline Fishburn,
Emma Walker

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The School will consider each substance incident individually and recognise that a variety of responses will be necessary to deal with incidents in order to act in the best interests of both the pupil and the School community.

Confidentiality in managing a drugs related incident regard will be given to issues of confidentiality. Teachers cannot and should not promise total confidentiality. The boundaries of confidentiality will be made clear to pupils.

Parental / carer drug use disclosure by pupils and/or observed behaviours by staff of parents / carers under the influence of drugs will be dealt with under the Safeguarding Policy.

Smoking

The Meadows School is a smoke free environment in line with Durham Council policy and national legislation.

Smoking is not permitted on site.

Students suspected of bringing cigarettes, e-cigarettes, vapes and smoking paraphernalia into school will be approached in a non-confrontational manner and searched (unless individual risk-assessment states otherwise). Authorised searches can be performed by the Head Teacher and T5 staff. If found, cigarettes and smoking related items will be confiscated.

If a student is observed smoking, the following strategies will be utilised:

- Staff challenge (non-confrontational).
Staff have a duty of care to educate students about the health related dangers of smoking. Staff must also remain mindful of their need to exercise a duty of care and understand the potential dangers connected with the school site positioned next to a busy roads and the potential for damaging the positive relationship between the school and the local community.
- Phone call home and or letter home
- Offer of school based targeted education and health promotion
- Offer of in school / home support via School nurse.
- Meeting with parent/carer to support changing behaviour

External referral to the Durham Drugs and Alcohol Team is in discussion with parents / carers and young people to confirm consent and agreement as the service is able to support those who want to change their behaviour.

Strategies used to educate students about the dangers of smoking are embedded in the curriculum. Targeted education sessions are promoted alongside developing a healthy lifestyle.

Risk assessment for individual students document behaviours.

Staff Issues

Any employee of the School taking illegal drugs on school premises or during school hours or selling or buying such drugs or under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol during school hours will be reported to the Council's designated officer and will be suspended on the grounds of potential gross misconduct and would face possible summary dismissal following a Management Committee disciplinary hearing. Employees are warned that the effects of taking drugs can last for many days after they are taken. An employee may therefore be judged to be under the influence of drugs days after they are taken.

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