

West Park School

DRUGS POLICY

The policy is informed by DfE and ACPO drug advice for schools, local authorities, headteachers, school staff and governing bodies 2012.

West Park School 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 violates our behaviour, drugs or anti-bullying policies.

This is a school where British Values are upheld; as such the responsibility to maintain high standards of behaviour lies with all members of our school community.

It is our aim to help all students to be able to take their place safely in a world where a wide range of drugs exist.

Education and Prevention

We believe that accurate knowledge for young people is key, so we ensure that age-appropriate education and support is provided through the PSHE programme, Personal Development Lessons, Science lessons as well as during tutor time and assemblies.

We also recognise the importance of training of staff and will make sure this is regular, up to date and context specific.

Definition of a Drug

A drug is a substance that affects the way in which the body functions physically, emotionally or mentally. For the purpose of this policy, by 'drugs' we are referring to:

- All illegal drugs (those controlled by the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971)
- All legal drugs, including alcohol, tobacco, vapes, volatile substances (those giving off a gas or vapour which can be inhaled), ketamine, khat, alkyl nitrites (known as poppers) and new psychoactive drugs ('legal highs')
- All over-the-counter and prescription medicine
- Drugs paraphernalia- items such as canisters, cannabis grinders, rolling papers, filters, matches, lighters and pipes

Drugs on school premises

The legal definition of school premises includes everything within the property boundaries, including buildings, outbuildings, playgrounds, fields and also extends to include other settings such as vehicles, or any venue managed by the school at the time

e.g. premises of a school trip or visit and when the school is deemed to be in loco parentis.

This policy applies to all school staff, students, parents/carers, trustees, and other partner agencies working with the school.

Alcohol

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 later 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. Pupils will also be sanctioned inline with the Behaviour and Discipline Policy

Smoking and vaping

School premises are a no smoking site at all times. 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. Pupils will also be sanctioned in line with the Behaviour and Discipline Policy. This also applies to “vaping” and the use of electronic cigarettes.

Illegal drugs and “psychoactive substances”

No illegal drugs, new psychoactive substances or drugs 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. Pupils engaging in these activities will be sanctioned in line with the Behaviour and Discipline Policy. They will then be referred to outside agencies to safeguard and support them.

Solvents

The school will ensure that potentially hazardous substances it authorises are stored safely. Students 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.

Responses to drug related incidents

A drug incident may be any of the following:

- Finding drugs, or related paraphernalia, on school premises
- Possession of illegal or unauthorised 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

Any response to drug related incidents needs to balance the needs of the individual student concerned with the wider school community.

Exclusion from school is not an automatic response to a drug incident but permanent exclusion is considered in serious cases where:

- There is a serious breach or persistent breaches of our Drugs and/or

Behaviour Policies and allowing a student to remain on role at West Park School would seriously Harm the education, safety or welfare of the student or others in the school.

A member of the SLT will (normally) be responsible for co-ordinating the management of drug-related incidents. They will work with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and will offer sources of support and liaise with outside agencies. Incidents will be dealt with after making an assessment of the situation and will be reported to the Headteacher. All incidents and responses will be recorded within 24 hours.

Drug Misuse Outside the School Premises

In line with Behaviour in schools Advice for headteachers and school staff

(September 2022) the school may impose sanctions on a student for misusing drugs outside schools when students are:

- taking part in any school-organised or school-related activity or
- travelling to or from school or
- in some way identifiable as a student at the school.

The school may also impose sanctions on a student for misusing drugs at any time, whether

or not the conditions above apply, if the misuse:

- could have repercussions for the orderly running of the school or
- poses a threat to another student or member of the public or
- could adversely affect the reputation of the school.

Individuals in Possession of Drugs

If any student or adult on school premises is found in possession of an unauthorised drug it will be confiscated, if possible. If the drug is suspected to be illegal, the school will contact a police officer for discussion and advice. Illegal substances will be handed to the police to be legally destroyed as soon as possible and not stored. Parents and Carers will be informed (unless for safeguarding reasons this is not in the best interests of the student) and other professionals such as the local authority, Young Offenders Service, Aquarius, Police, GP, Social Services will be informed or consulted as appropriate.

Confidentiality

West Park School will always seek to work with parents and carers when information or allegations of drug use are made. There may be occasions when, for safeguarding reasons, this may not be appropriate (please refer to our Child Protection Policy and Privacy Statement for more information on this).

Complete confidentiality can never be promised to a student though information given in confidence will not generally be disclosed to anyone else. If a student 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 try to ensure the student comes to no serious harm if this is considered a risk. Regarding disclosures staff will follow the advice given in the Child Protection Policy, and at the annual safeguarding training.

Support for students

At our school the welfare of the student 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 or Assistant Head of Year, Tutor or a member of the school safeguarding team)
- Referral to specialist outside agencies for support, e.g. Aquarius, Early Help team.

- Working with the Police

Right to Search

In line with Searching, Screening and Confiscation Advice for schools 2022 the staff at West Park School reserve 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.

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.

Links to other policies

- Behaviour and Discipline Policy
- Safeguarding