



SUBSTANCE USE AND MISUSE POLICY

Introduction

Substance misuse is a term encompassing all mind-altering substances, commonly referred to as "drugs", and includes but is not limited to:

- All Illegal Drugs as defined by the Misuse of Drugs Act 1974
- New Psychoactive Substances (often referred to as Legal Highs)
- Prescription Drugs
- Over the counter drugs (OTC)
- Alcohol
- Tobacco
- Solvents (including 'poppers')
- Nitrous Oxide (N₂O, Hippy Crack, Laughing Gas)

It is illegal to possess, supply, cultivate, produce (or be 'concerned' in any of these activities) any drug covered by the Misuses of Drugs Act 1971 unless authorised (e.g. when prescribed for personal medical use). In addition, under the Intoxicating Substances (Supply) Act 1985, it is illegal for anyone to supply or offer to supply a substance if they know or believe that the substance being supplied will be inhaled by a person under 18 for the purpose of intoxication. Further legislation has been introduced (The Psychoactive Substances Act 2016) which states that it is an offence to produce, supply, offer to supply, possess with intent to supply, possess in a prison, import or export psychoactive substances. The offence if found guilty could carry a maximum prison sentence of 7 years.

Overall Aims of the Policy

At Whitgift School, it is considered essential that pupils be given opportunities to consider the effects of substances such as tobacco, alcohol and other drugs on themselves and others and to make informed and healthy decisions about the use of such substances.

We aim:

- To maintain an atmosphere in which the use of substances on the school premises is unacceptable;
- To enable pupils to make healthy, informed choices by increasing knowledge, challenging attitudes and developing and practising skills;

- To increase understanding about the possible consequences of use and misuse;
- To widen understanding about related health and social issues, e.g. crime, HIV and AIDS;
- To seek to minimise the risks faced by potential users;
- To enable young people to identify sources of appropriate support, including the relevant agencies.
- To ensure we have a safe and healthy environment for all our students at Whitgift

Disciplinary standards

The School is committed to upholding the highest standards of behaviour and good school practice. To this end it will take appropriate disciplinary action in relation to instances relating to the misuse of drugs.

Any pupil involved with illegal drugs (as outlined in the introduction of this policy and also including the handling of any drug paraphernalia or other involvement in any of this activity) on School premises while under School discipline or while on the way to or from school, can expect to be temporarily or permanently excluded from School. The Police will be informed of any incident involving illegal drugs.

The activities and contexts covered by this policy are:

- throughout the School day, whether on or off the School premises;
- whenever involved in any activity organised by the School;
- whenever identifiable as a member of the School;
- for a boarder, whenever they are under direct supervision of the Boarding Housemaster or one of his team.

Educational programme

The aims of this policy are communicated through a variety of activities and settings throughout the school day, delivering the information in a spiraling form of pastoral education, including in assemblies, form periods, integrated within various subjects and in Personal and Social Education lessons.

Below is more detailed information on specific areas:

Tobacco:

Smoking is the single most preventable cause of premature death and ill-health in our society. The School policy on smoking aims to give pupils the message that the habit creates health problems for smokers and non-smokers alike, that non-smoking represents the norm in society and that it receives support from the School and staff.

School Aims in this context:

- to maintain an environment where non-smoking is the norm and where pupils are not exposed to adult smoking;
- to educate pupils as to the immediate dangers of smoking;

- to encourage those pupils who do smoke to break free from the habit.

Smoking, or being in possession of cigarettes, tobacco, electronic cigarettes and all other 'smoking' devices (e.g. Shisha cigarettes and other flavored chemical devices) is prohibited:

- in School buildings and grounds;
- whilst in School uniform;
- when representing the School on outings and trips;
- at any time whilst under School discipline.

Alcohol:

Alcohol is a depressant drug, particularly when taken in large quantities. According to recent statistics, ten per cent of this country's 15 year old boys drink more than the recommended safe limit for male adults. If consumed in sensible amounts alcohol may produce feelings of relaxation and the health risks are considerably reduced if drinkers keep within the recommended levels. However, even at low levels, the potential for serious accidents is increased.

School Aims in this context:

- to develop knowledge and understanding about alcohol as a drug and its effect on the body;
- to encourage sensible, appropriate and safe drinking behavior;
- to practise personal and social skills and the strategies needed to deal with situations where alcohol is present;
- to educate the pupils as to the place of alcohol in the political, social and economic environment

Drinking, or being in possession of alcohol, is prohibited:

- in the School buildings or grounds (except for formal occasions sanctioned by the School);
- in public houses and other licensed premises whilst in school uniform and whenever prohibited by law;
- whilst on School outings and trips or at any other time whilst under School discipline (except for formal occasions sanctioned by the School).

Drugs:

Obtaining, possessing, supplying, cultivation or production (or being concerned in any of these activities) of controlled drugs (as defined by the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971) constitutes a criminal offence. This also includes prescription drugs if found in the possession of a student who does not have authority to have them i.e. a prescription in his name. 'Legal Highs', have increased in popularity over the years and already responsible for a large number of deaths and are now prohibited by the The Psychoactive Substances Act 2016 Solvents and Nitrous Oxide are also classed as 'banned' items for the purpose of students having them in their possession or involved in any supply.

School Aims in this context:

- to develop pupils' understanding of the difference between controlled and illegal drugs;

- to educate pupils on the effects of drugs on the mind and body;
- to provide opportunities for pupils to practise the personal and social skills and the strategies needed to deal with situations involving drugs;
- to promote an individual pupil's self-confidence, self-esteem and self-worth;
- to explain the legal situation with regard to the use and misuse of drugs;
- to provide counselling for pupils and their families where this is needed;
- to provide information about help agencies, regarding their presence, location and function.

Sharps found on Site

Sharps are defined as any needles, scalpels, or other articles that could cause wounds or punctures to personnel handling them. If a student or member of staff or any person finds a 'sharp' on site then they should immediately report this to the Second Master, or in his absence the Proctor or the Assistant Head (Pastoral). They should not touch or attempt to move the item but make sure it is not a danger to others. The medical team will recover the item and secure it safely in the sharps' box in the medical room. It will be then be reported to the police as necessary.

Reviewed by The Second Master and Assistant Head (Pastoral): August 2016

Next review: August 2017