

Drugs and Substance Abuse Policy (Senior School)

Context

Silcoates is committed to promoting and protecting the health and safety of our pupils and staff and will take action to safeguard their wellbeing.

The School does not condone either the misuse of drugs (including tobacco, alcohol, electronic cigarettes and legal high substances) or the illegal supply of these substances.

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.

Although the majority of young people of school-age do not abuse drugs, all pupils are likely to be exposed to the effects and influences of drugs in the wider community and be increasingly exposed to opportunities to try both legal and illegal drugs. Such experiments may lead to serious and far-reaching consequences not only for themselves, but their families, their communities and society in general. For children and young people in particular, drugs can impact on their education, their relationships with family and friends and prevent them from reaching their full potential.

Definitions

A drug is a substance that affects the way in which the body functions physically, emotionally or mentally.

This policy covers not only illegal drugs (such as cannabis, cocaine and ecstasy) but legal ones too, like alcohol, tobacco, vapes, SNUS, solvents, and drugs sold over the counter or provided on prescription.

Psychoactive Substances (NPS) are those sometimes referred to as 'Legal Highs'. The Psychoactive Substances Act 2016 has been introduced to restrict the open retail of psychoactive substances by banning the sale, supply and importation of these drugs.

Aims

The aims of this policy are as follows:

- To support the school'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 school community by providing clear guidance and procedures on drug related issues to ensure clarity and consistency.
- To develop, monitor and review a whole school approach to drug education in the context of the Personal Development curriculum at Silcoates.



Drugs on the School site

The legal definition of the premises/site of a school includes everything within the property boundaries including buildings, outbuildings, playgrounds, fields and also extends to any venue managed by the school at the time e.g. premises of a school trip or visit. This includes during term time and holidays.

Illegal drugs: Pupils must not have illegal drugs in their possession, use and/or be under the influence of any illegal drugs or supply another person with an illegal drug.

Alcohol: No alcohol will be consumed during the course of a normal school 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 school. Parents will be asked to collect their children if they are deemed to be under the influence of alcohol. It is also prohibited to drink or be in possession of alcohol when on school trips, except on occasions sanctioned by the Head or the member of staff in charge of that trip. This permission will only be granted to those pupils who are over 18 years old.

Tobacco/Vapes: The school is a 'no smoking' site at all times. Pupils are not permitted to bring to school smoking materials including ready rolled cigarettes, tobacco, cigarette papers, pipes, matches and lighters. In the interests of health and safety, should a pupil be found in possession of any of these on the school premises, they will be confiscated and parents informed. All vaping and nicotine replacement products (such as SNUS and patches) are also not permitted on the school site at any time.

Medicines: The First Aid policy, which is published on the School's website, explains the procedure for the administration of medicines in School. This must be followed for everyone's safety. Prescribed drugs must be stored with and distributed by the School nurse.

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 school work. Otherwise, pupils are not permitted to be in possession of 'sniffable' products.

Responses to drug-related incidents

A drugs incident may be any of the following:

- Finding drugs, or related items, on school premises.
- A pupil coming to school under the influence of drugs.
- Possession of drugs by an individual on school premises.
- A pupil supplying drugs to another person.
- Use of drugs by an individual on school premises.
- Supply or retail of drugs on school premises.
- Individuals disclosing information about their drug use.
- Reports of parents, staff or pupils using drugs.



- Anyone bringing drugs to school.

Individuals in possession of drugs

If a member of staff discovers substances which are suspected to be harmful or illegal, they should:

- Ask the pupil to hand over the substance voluntarily in the presence of an adult witness.
- Note the time, place and circumstances when the substance came into their possession.
- Accompany the pupil to the Head or Senior Deputy Head and not allow any physical contact with other students.
- Searches will be approved by the Head and conducted by a member of the SLT who is the same sex as the pupil and with a witness present.
- Confiscate any recovered substance into the possession. (See DfE guidance on Searching, Screening and Confiscation).

If the drug is suspected to be illegal, the school will contact the Police. Upon confiscation the drugs will be placed in secure storage until the enquiries are concluded. Illegal substances will be disposed of, as advised by the Police, as soon as possible. Parents will be informed (for a pupil) and other professionals will be informed or consulted as appropriate.

Where it is suspected that a child may be under the influence of drugs while in school, a full search of their possessions will take place. Parents of all pupils involved will be informed and their co-operation sought. The Chair of Governors or, in his/her absence, the Vice-Chair, will be informed of the incident.

Each case will be considered separately on its merits, but the following sanctions would normally apply:

- A pupil who supplies drugs or other solvents (either personally or through a drug dealer) will face Permanent Exclusion. Supply includes gifting drugs to others without financial reward.
- A pupil who has an illegal or controlled drug in his/her possession would normally be suspended for a fixed period for a first offence. The School will consider what counselling and other action needs to be taken before, during and after the period of suspension. A Pastoral Support Plan would be used for any pupil who returns to school following a drug related suspension. The School will also investigate any external risk factors (such as county lines), and involve Social Services where appropriate. For a second offence, a pupil would normally face Permanent Exclusion.
- For a first offence, a child under the influence of drugs in school would be sent home, under supervision of a parent or guardian. It may be necessary for the pupil to undertake a drug test in order to be best supported.

If a pupil is involved in a drug-related incident outside the School's jurisdiction, the Head will assess the implications for the pupil and the School and determine the best course of action, which may include a drugs test.



Depending upon the seriousness of the incident, a decision will be made as to what action would be required, though Permanent Exclusion would not normally be appropriate for the first offence outside school offence. In any event, the pupil and parents would be informed of the Head's decision.

Roles and responsibilities

The Head will ensure that:

- Governors, the SLT and the Heads of Section understand this policy fully.
- A drugs education programme is provided as part of the Personal Development curriculum.
- Teachers are provided with training and guidance, so that they are confident and skilled to teach drug education and to respond to drug-related incidents.
- Pupils are aware of the rules on drugs and of the consequences of breaking them.
- Clear procedures are in place for responding to drug-related incidents.
- Those pupils who have a concern about drugs are provided with support.
- Sanctions for incidents are consistent with the Behaviour, Rewards and Sanctions Policy, which is published on the School's website.
- The School actively co-operates with external agencies to deliver its commitment to drugs education.
- A record of any drug related issues will be kept and reviewed to spot any patterns or trends which may inform appropriate actions.

All staff are expected to:

- Report incidents or rumours of drug misuse to a member of the SLT.
- Promote positive attitudes towards healthy lifestyles.
- Enable young people to identify sources of appropriate personal support.

All teachers are expected to:

- Enable pupils to make healthy, informed choices by increasing knowledge, exploring their own and other people's attitudes and developing and practising personal skills to resist peer group pressure, and help friends and relatives involved in drug misuse.
- Provide accurate information about substances.

Pupils are expected to:

- Follow the school rules.
- Alert the staff to any drug-related incidents on or around the School site.

Parents are encouraged to:

- Endorse the School's approach to drugs education.
- Work in partnership with the School to overcome the misuse of drugs.

The Governing Body will ensure that:

- The School does not knowingly allow its premises to be used for the production, consumption or supply of any controlled drug in addition to solvents, alcohol and tobacco, other than for alcohol only under licence for a PA/fundraising event.



- The School, parents and external agencies work together to support any pupil involved in drug abuse.
- They understand how to deal with drug-related suspension and exclusion procedures.

Confidentiality

In managing incidents involving drugs, and in drug education lessons, teachers cannot and should not promise total confidentiality. The boundaries of confidentiality will be made clear to pupils.

The School is fully committed to ensuring that the application of this policy is non-discriminatory in line with the UK Equality Act (2010). Further details are available in the School's Equal Opportunity Policy document.

Reviewed by:

Mr Evans – Senior Deputy Head (Pastoral)

Date of last review:

June 2026

Date of next review:

June 2027



Silcoates School
Wrenthorpe
Wakefield
WF2 0PD

01924 291 614
enquiries@silcoates.org.uk
silcoates.org.uk
Charity number: 1158796

Head: Mr Phil King
BA (Sheffield) PGCE (Sheffield) NPQH (BPN)