

Drug Policy



Review Date	Sept 25
Review Frequency	Annually
Date for Next Review	Sept 26
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Drugs Policy 2025

Whale Hill Primary School is committed to the health and safety of its members and will take action to safeguard their well-being. We will actively discourage the use of illegal substances, alcohol or tobacco and the misuse of glue, solvents, prescribed and over-the-counter medicines. We acknowledge the importance of our pastoral role in the welfare of young people and through the general ethos of the school, will seek to enable pupils needing support to come forward.

Purpose of the Policy

- To support the school's endeavour to maintain the safety and well-being of all pupils, staff and visitors.
- To clarify legal responsibilities, entitlements 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 a whole school approach to drug education in the context of the school curriculum.

Inclusive Definition of Drugs

We define a drug as a substance that, when taken into the body, changes the way we feel, the way we perceive things, and the way our body works. This definition includes illegal substances and legal substances such as alcohol, tobacco, solvents and medicines.

Rationale/Key Principles

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 effects, but also that every drug has potential harm. For this reason, all drugs need appropriate and responsible care and management. To be able to make informed choices, staff and pupils need to understand the nature of drugs, their social status, their uses and effects.

Boundaries, Including Relevance of the Policy to School Trips and Visits

The legal definition of premises of the school includes everything within the property boundaries. This includes, buildings, outbuildings, playgrounds, fields and it also extends to include other settings such as vehicles or any venue managed by the school at the time of e.g. premises of a school trip or visit. The policy will also relate to pupils' use of the premises and grounds beyond the school day.



Context

We will provide all pupils with drug education as an integral part of our Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) curriculum. This takes place within the 'Healthy Me' unit which is taught in the second half of the Spring term.

Ethos

Drug education in our school aims to enable pupils to make healthy informed choices by increasing their knowledge, exploring a range of attitudes towards drug use and developing and practising decision-making skills. Jigsaw, the programme we follow for PSHE, is based on national guidelines for good practice and is specifically designed to be age appropriate and relevant to our pupils.

Content

It is felt that drug education should start at least two to three years before the likely age of experimentation. Drug issues will be reinforced throughout the child's education, matching their increasing understanding and maturity.

Key Stage 1

Children should be introduced to ideas about how to keep healthy and the role of drugs as medicines. In Year One, Children are taught about medicine safety alongside the importance of safety with other household items. This is a concept which is revisited in Year Two when children are encouraged to think about why certain foods and medicines can be good for their bodies and to compare these choices to other unhealthier options.

Key Stage 2

Children should be introduced to the fact that whilst all medicines are drugs, not all drugs are medicines. They should also begin to be aware of the harmful effects on health of abuse of tobacco, alcohol and other drugs. In Year Three, children learn about attitudes towards drugs. This is built upon in Year Four when children think in greater detail about the harmful effects of smoking and alcohol and link this to learning about peer pressure. In Year Five, children are taught in further detail about smoking, including vaping, and alcohol and its link to anti-social behaviour. Finally, in Year Six, children think about the importance of taking personal responsibility, how substances impact the body, exploitation (including county lines and gang culture). This is linked to learning about emotional wellbeing and mental health.

The drug education programme will provide opportunities for pupils to:

- Explore attitudes and values around drug misuse.
- Practise decision making skills.



- Become aware of peer pressure.
- Develop assertiveness skills.
- Consider the consequences of risk taking.
- Learn how to access sources of help and information.
- Emphasise the benefits of a healthy lifestyle.
- Evaluate media messages on drug use.
- Learn about the importance of personal responsibility for our choices and actions.

Use of Visitors and Outside Speakers

Outside agencies may be involved in the planning and teaching of the drug education programme and will be asked to adhere to our school policy. We use visitors to support our planned teacher lead programme of education, in line with national and local guidance. The class teacher is always present when visitors are working with our pupils.

Managing Drug Related Incidents

Pupils, staff and visitors to the premises are made aware of the school's drug policy.

Routine Arrangements

- Medicines

The school has a procedure for the administration of medicines that must be followed for everyone's safety.

• Alcohol

No alcohol will be consumed during a normal school day. Alcohol is not permitted on the school premises except by the permission of the Headteacher. Any adult under the effects of alcohol will be asked to leave the premises for the safety of the whole school.

• Tobacco and Vapes

The school and its grounds are no smoking or vaping areas at all times. Pupils are not permitted to bring to school smoking materials, including matches, vapes and lighters. In the interests of health and safety, should a pupil be found in possession of any of these on school premises, they will be confiscated.



- **Solvents**

The school will ensure that potentially hazardous substances are stored safely, and pupils will be supervised if it is necessary that they encounter them in the course of their work. Pupils are not permitted to be in possession of products such as solvents and aerosols. (Only exception permitted is aerosol ventolin / any other approved medicines administered in the presence of an adult and stored in a locked medicine cupboard.)

- **Illegal Drugs**

No illegal drugs are allowed to be brought on to or used on school premises. To protect the health and safety of the school community regular checks will be made of the site to ensure that drug paraphernalia, particularly needles and syringes, are cleared away safely and legally.

Incidents

A drug related incident may include any of the following:

- Finding drugs, or related items 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 or reports of drug possession supply or drug use.

Guiding Principles

The school is aware of its legal responsibilities regarding drug related incidents and in responding to them. The school's first responsibility is for the welfare of the individual, balanced with the need to protect the community.

The Headteacher will be responsible for coordinating the management of drug related incidents, offering sources of support and liaising with outside agencies.

The school acknowledges the importance of its pastoral role and will support all concerned in ensuring the well-being of its pupils. Parents will be encouraged to become involved as much as possible to achieve a successful drugs education programme.



Procedures

Medical Emergencies

If an individual is unconscious, is having trouble breathing, is seriously confused or disorientated, has taken a harmful toxic substance or is otherwise at immediate risk of immediate harm medical help will be sought and first aid given if required. The priority will be the pupil's safety.

Hearsay/Rumour

Drug use is often discovered by hearsay. This should be passed on to the Headteachers and safeguarding team who should record the matter on CPOMS as hearsay evidence, thus enabling a record of teacher's concerns to be compiled. Where the hearsay evidence is not supported through further reports or incidents for one school year the evidence will be removed from the records.

Suspicious Behaviour

Behaviour that could indicate involvement with drugs should also be logged so that patterns of behaviour can be observed, and concerns acted upon where necessary.

Searching, Confiscation and Screening Searching

School staff can search a pupil for any item if the pupil agrees.

Head teachers and staff authorised by them have a statutory power to search pupils or their possessions, without consent, where they have reasonable grounds for suspecting that the pupil may have a prohibited item.

Confiscating

School staff can seize any prohibited item found as a result of a search. They can also seize any item; they consider harmful or detrimental to school discipline.

Searching with Consent

School staff can search pupils with their consent for any item.

Schools are not required to have formal written consent from the pupil for this sort of search – it is enough for the teacher to ask the pupil to turn out his or her pockets or if the teacher can look in the pupil's bag or locker and for the pupil to agree.

Schools should make clear in their school behaviour policy and in communications to parents and pupils what items are banned.

If a member of staff suspects a pupil has a banned item in his/her possession, they can instruct the pupil to turn out his or her pockets or bag and if the pupil refuses, the teacher can apply an appropriate punishment as set out in the school's behaviour policy.



Finding Substances

If a substance or equipment thought to be either illegal or harmful is discovered, it should be removed to a place of safe keeping in the presence of a witness from the teaching staff. If the substance is known or suspected to be illegal the police must be informed. If a substance is found on a pupil the above procedure should be followed and the incident recorded including:

- The date and time of the find or retrieval
- The size and appearance of the substance
- The names of those concerned
- The action taken

Any equipment associated with drug misuse should be handled with care, recorded and in the case of such items as needles and syringes, they should be placed in a secure and rigid container for collection by the appropriate person. If these are found on a pupil, the pupil's parents should be informed. If children are found in possession of tobacco, alcohol, glue, solvents or prescribed or over-the-counter medicines, parents will be informed, and appropriate steps taken.

In an emergency arising from an incident involving abuse, the well-being of the pupil is paramount. In all instances:

- Separate the child involved from the rest of the group.
- Decide and implement the next best step in terms of the child's welfare.
- Inform parents.

Supply of Illegal Substances

It is an offence to produce or supply any controlled drug on school premises. The police will be involved in such circumstances.

Returning Confiscated Articles

Articles confiscated and not required by the police must be returned to parents. They will be informed in writing within 24 hours of articles confiscated and an explanation given as to why it is inappropriate to return the article to the child. It will be made clear that there is a time limit of one week for the items to be recovered or they will be disposed of by the school.

Recording



All incidents will be recorded within 24 hours.

Confidentiality

Complete secrecy can never be promised to a pupil, though information given in confidence will not generally be disclosed to anyone else. If a pupil chooses to disclose that they are using a drug without medical authorisation, particularly when seeking support, this information will not be used against them notwithstanding any illegal / controlled substances. However, action will be taken to ensure that the pupil comes to no serious harm if this is considered a significant risk. Staff have a commitment to inform the pupil in advance of any disclosure of information to others and if possible, enable the pupil to be involved in the process. Staff are committed to protect a young person's anonymity where their information may implicate others.

Searching Without Consent

What can be searched for? (for the purposes of this policy) illegal drugs, tobacco, alcohol, glue, solvents or prescribed or over-the counter medicines.

Any article that the member of staff reasonably suspects has been, or is likely to be, used to commit an offence, or to cause personal injury, or damage to property; and any item banned by the school rules which has been identified in the rules as an item which may be searched for.

Who Can Search?

A head teacher, or a member of school staff authorised by the head teacher.

When Can You Search?

If you have reasonable grounds for suspecting that a pupil is in possession of a prohibited item.

The law also says what must be done with prohibited items which are seized following a search.

Training For School Staff

When designating a member of staff to undertake searches under these powers, the headteacher should consider whether the member of staff requires any additional training to enable them to carry out their responsibilities.

Establishing Grounds for a Search

School staff can only undertake a search without consent if they have reasonable grounds for suspecting that a pupil may have in his or her possession a prohibited item. The member of staff must decide in each case what constitutes reasonable grounds for suspicion. For example, they may have heard other pupils talking about the item or they might notice a pupil behaving in a way that causes them to suspect that the pupil is concealing a prohibited item.



The powers allow school staff to search regardless of whether the pupil is found after the search to have that item.

School staff may wish to consider utilising CCTV footage to make a decision as to whether to conduct a search for an item.

Any weapons or items which are evidence of an offence must be passed to the police as soon as possible.

Staff Training and Support

We recognise the need for staff to receive appropriate training to support their work in delivering the school programme of drug education and dealing appropriately with incidents should they arise. The Headteacher, or other appropriate member of staff, will try to organise training related to the identified needs of staff as required.

All staff need to understand and support the rationale and aims of drug education and be aware of the legal implications and their responsibilities.

This policy will be reviewed in September 2026.

Links with other policies

This policy is linked with the following policies:

Equality

Child Protection

Behaviour

Anti Bullying

PSHE

Weapons

