



Drugs Policy

Date of Policy: May 2024

Date of next review: May 2026

Who the review will involve: Governors, SLT, Staff,

Senior member of staff responsible for overseeing that this policy is implemented and regularly reviewed: Headteacher

ETHOS

The Avon Valley School actively seeks to provide an environment where all members of our 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.

INTRODUCTION

All children and young people need to be able to make safe, healthy and responsible decisions about drugs, both legal and illegal. The Avon Valley School has a central role in helping students make such decisions by providing education about the risk and effects of drugs and through developing their confidence and skills to manage situations involving drugs. The school aims to do this by creating a safe and supportive learning environment and ensuring that those for whom drugs are a concern receive appropriate support.

We consider that the use of drugs is detrimental to the development and education of our students and is likely to undermine their health, safety, independence, opportunities and respect for the law. The use of drugs will also undermine the integrity of The Avon Valley School community by exposing other students to temptation and to the risk of criminal proceedings.

This policy aims to enable students to make healthy, informed choices by increasing their knowledge and understanding of drugs and their effects, challenging their attitudes and helping them to develop skills such as being assertive and a positive example amongst peers.

The Avon Valley School is aware that some students are more vulnerable to drug misuse and that we can help to reduce the impact of risk factors and strengthen protective factors by promoting:

- Supportive and safe relationships
- Regular school attendance
- The ability to cope with the social and academic demands of school life
- Strong and supportive social networks
- Good social skills
- A good knowledge of the effects and risks associated with drugs
- Realistic self awareness and self esteem
- A good knowledge of general health and how to ensure good mental health
- A good knowledge of how to access help and information
- Counselling and other support mechanisms
- Participation in extracurricular activities
- Working in partnership with parents/carers

The Avon Valley School recognises the effect of the use and misuse of drugs on individuals in society and the school's role in reducing misuse. As part of the community, we seek to work with our partners and outside agencies to provide a safe environment in which our students and staff at The Avon Valley School can lead and develop a healthy lifestyle.

Purpose and Application

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Reinforce and safeguard the health and safety of pupils and others who use The Avon Valley School.
- Enable staff to manage effectively drugs related incidents on school premises.
- Clarify the school's approach to drugs for all staff, students, governors, parents/carers, external agencies and the wider community. Make clear the legal responsibilities and requirements of The Avon Valley School.
- Ensure that the response to incidents involving drugs compliments the overall approach to drug education and the values and ethos of The Avon Valley School.

This policy applies to all students, parents/carers, governors and partner agencies working in The Avon Valley School. It can include journeys to and from school in school uniform, work experience, educational visits and visits to external educational providers. Students must not bring illegal or controlled drugs, cigarettes or alcohol onto the school site at any time.

The Headteacher takes overall responsibility for the policy and its implementation, for liaison with the Governing Body, parents and appropriate outside agencies. The Headteacher will ensure that all staff dealing with substance issues are adequately supported and trained. The Head of PSHE has oversight for the drugs education within the PSHE schemes of work.

Definition

The Avon Valley School defines a drug as a substance which, 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 also legal substances such as alcohol, tobacco, solvents and medicines.

Drugs Education

- **Context**

We will provide all students with drug education as an integral part of our Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) and Citizenship programme, delivered in conjunction with the RE curriculum

- **Ethos**

Drug education in our school aims to enable students to make healthy informed choices by increasing their knowledge, exploring a range of attitudes towards drug use and developing and practicing decision making skills. The programme we follow will be based on national and local guidelines for good practice and be appropriate to the age and experience of our students.

- **Content and delivery**

Teaching will be based on an understanding that a variety of approaches should be used in order to meet the differing needs and learning styles of students. It is recognised that active or participatory learning styles can be particularly helpful in developing skills, knowledge and values.

- **Use of visitors and outside speakers**

We use visitors to support our planned teacher led programme of education, in line with national and local guidance. The class teacher is always present when visitors are working with our students, however there may be occasions where a student works alone with a member of the COMPASS drug support service – this will be done only after parental consent has been given.

Managing Drug Related Incidents

- **Medicines**

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

- **Alcohol**

Students are not allowed to arrive under the influence of alcohol or bring alcohol onto the school site. Parents and visitors under the effects of alcohol will be asked to leave the premises for the safety of the whole school and may be banned from the site.

- **Tobacco / Vapes**

The school is a no smoking site - indoors and outdoors, including school vehicles - 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/carers will be informed. Confiscated items will be disposed of, or handed over to parents/carers at their request. Follow up consequences will be issued in line with the schools Anti Smoking Policy.

Solvents

- The school will ensure that potentially hazardous substances are stored safely, and 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 solvent based products.

Illegal and controlled drugs

- No drugs are permitted to be brought on to, used, shared or supplied on school premises.

A drug related incident may include any of the following:

- A student who is suspected of being under the influence of a drug
- Finding drugs, or related paraphernalia 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 of drug possession supply or drug use
- Reports of drug possession supply or drug use

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 risk of immediate harm, medical help will be sought and first aid given if required. The priority will be the student's safety.

- **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 the drug is suspected to be illegal, the school will contact the police and immediately hand over the drug. If the substance cannot be legally destroyed or disposed of it will be handed to the police as soon as possible and not stored for any longer than is necessary. Talking with an individual about a drug related incident will have as its purpose to confirm or reject suspicions or allegations, rather than to conduct a wider investigation. Parents of students will be informed and other professionals from the LA, Young Persons Substance Misuse Service (COMPASS), Youth Service, Police, School Health Service, Social Services, etc., may be informed or consulted as appropriate.

- **Support for students**

Following actions to preserve immediate safety, the health and emotional needs of students will be considered. Support is available through the pastoral system to ensure a caring response to students in distress. Interventions will be considered if the school feels a student is showing signs which indicate particular risks of, or from, involvement with drugs, whether their own or that of their parent or carer. Such interventions may include Early Help, Priority Family Referral, Social Care consultation and subsequent referral.

- **Recording**

All incidents will be recorded. Information will be stored securely in the student's file.

Responding to the needs of the pupil

Any response to drug-related incidents needs to balance the needs of the individual students concerned with the wider school community. The school will consider a range of support strategies which may include:

- Behaviour support
- Interagency Programme
- Pastoral Support

- Counselling
- Short term interventions
- Targeted prevention
- Specialist treatment

The school will monitor the outcomes of any support offered to pupils. Drug use can be a symptom of other problems and school will refer students to other services when needed

If school identifies that the young person may have additional needs to be addressed, an Early Help Assessment may be useful to assess this further.

Safeguarding the wider school community is of course of vital importance. In addition to supporting individual students, sanctions will be applied to send a clear message that drug use is not acceptable at Avon Valley and that repeated occurrences will lead to permanent exclusion.

Incident	First Occasion	Subsequent occasion
Arriving at school under the influence of alcohol or a solvent	1 day suspension	3 days suspension
Arriving at school under the influence of a class B/C drug or intoxicating substance	3 days suspension	5 days suspension
Possession / misuse on school site of a class B/C drug or intoxicating substance	5 days suspension Police involvement	Permanent exclusion
Supply of an intoxicating substance	5 days suspension or permanent exclusion Police involvement	Permanent exclusion
Supply of an illegal drug	Permanent exclusion Police involvement	N/A
Possession of drugs related paraphernalia, for example grinders	Confiscation. Parent contact. 2 days' internal isolation.	3 days suspension

'Occasions' will be considered to be over a rolling year period.

The Headteacher has the discretion to vary these sanctions should he/she deem it to be appropriate.

The above list may not be exhaustive. Incidents may occur which do not specifically fit in with the above list and when such incidents occur, sanctions will be enforced appropriately.

Any student involved in an incident that does not lead to permanent exclusion will be expected to take part in a drug prevention programme as part of the conditions of them continuing to a member of The Avon Valley School.

Parents/carers and drug incidents

Informing parents/carers

In any incident involving illegal and other unauthorised drugs, staff will normally involve the child's parents/carers and explain how the school intends to respond to the incident and to the pupil's needs. Where the school suspects that doing this might put the child's safety at risk (or there is any other cause for concern for the child's safety at home), then the school should exercise caution when considering involving parents/carers. In any situation, where a pupil may need protection from the possibility of abuse, the school's designated safeguarding lead should be consulted and school safeguarding procedures followed.

The school will encourage parents/carers to approach the school if they are concerned about any issue related to drugs and their child. The school may refer parents/carers to other sources of help, for example, specialist drug agencies or family support groups, as appropriate.

Confidentiality

Complete secrecy can never be promised to a student, though information given in confidence will only be disclosed to anyone else in the interests of Child Protection. If a student discloses that they are using a drug without medical authorisation, action will be taken to ensure that the student comes to no serious harm if this is considered a significant risk. Staff have a commitment to inform the student in advance of any disclosure of information to others and, if possible, enable the student to be involved in the process. Staff are committed to protect a young person's anonymity where their disclosure may implicate others. Regarding disclosures, staff need to carefully define and communicate the boundaries of confidentiality offered. If appropriate staff may need to follow safeguarding procedures and refer students to social care or the MASH.

Searches

The school will always seek consent and, whenever possible, ensure that a second adult witness is present. Powers defined under the Education Act 2011 that enables staff to search without consent will only be used to ensure the protection of pupils and staff as a proportionate response to a given situation. This will only be conducted by certain recognised competent staff. Searches will be conducted in such a way as to minimize potential embarrassment and distress. Parents/Carers will be informed if a search has been conducted.

Personal Searches & Searches of Personal Property

When a person is suspected of concealing illegal or other unauthorised drugs, or appears to be under the influence of any type of drug, they will be asked to consent to a voluntary search which will be completed by a competent person. Where the individual refuses, and the drugs are believed to be illegal, and the school wishes to proceed along formal lines, the police will be called. The school is not permitted to detain a person without their consent unless a citizen's arrest is made. However, consideration will be given to any dynamically changing situation and a search without consent may be considered by senior staff.

If a student appears to be under the influence of illegal drugs but denies having taken illegal substances, they may be asked to complete a drugs test. This is a voluntary process and parental consent will be sought alongside the consent of the student. Refusal to comply will be documented.

Searches of School Property

Staff may search school property, for example, students' lockers or desks if they believe drugs to be stored there.

Sniffer Dogs

The school is within their rights to bring sniffer dogs onto the school premises and will chose to exercise this right when there are reasonable concerns that students are bringing drugs on to the school site. The legislation relating to this is covered in: DfE and ACPO drug advice for schools - Advice for local authorities, headteachers, school staff and governing bodies.

Staff Conduct and Drugs

All incidents of allegations of drug misuse by staff must be directed to the Headteacher.

Police Involvement

Legal Drugs

The police will not normally be involved in incidents involving legal drugs, e.g. alcohol and tobacco. The school will however inform Trading Standards or police about the inappropriate sale or supply of tobacco, alcohol or volatile substances in the local area.

Illegal Drugs

The police will be contacted to dispose of any illegal drugs found on a person or on the school site. The name and contact details of the local police can be sought from the School Office.

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.

Additional Information Contacts:

Frank - offers free & confidential advice and where to find a support centre. Phone: 0300 123 6600 (24hr helpline) or visit www.talktofrank.com , e-mail: frank@talktofrank.com, SMS: 82111

Volatile Substance Abuse (VSA) Solve It - service promoting an understanding, awareness & education of the consequences of volatile substance abuse - www.solveitonline.co.uk Phone: 0300 330 1420, e-mail: info@solveitonline.co.uk

Release - a 24-hour confidential helpline offering advice on drug use & legal issues. Phone: 020 7324 2989, www.release.org.uk, e-mail: ask@release.org.uk

ADFAM National - provides confidential support & information for families & friends of drug users. Phone: 020 3817 9410, www.adfam.org.uk, e-mail: admin@adfam.org.uk . Aquarius Northamptonshire telephone support 0300 456 4292 www.aquarius.org.uk

Low-Down - advice & counselling for young people which is free & confidential. Phone: 01604 622223, www.thelowdown.info, e-mail: info@thelowdown.info

Your GP - can refer onto local drugs & alcohol counselling services.