



Drugs and Substances Policy

OAKWOOD PARK GRAMMAR SCHOOL	
Approval status	Approved
Last reviewed on:	November 2025
Next review due on:	November 2027

Rationale

All staff at Oakwood Park Grammar School recognise the importance of educating for life in all its fullness. As part of our commitment to ensuring we remain aspirational for all pupils, we aim to develop a school culture where pupils know how to be safe and healthy and are equipped with the tools to manage their academic, personal and social lives, in a positive and fulfilling way.

Aims of this policy

- To clarify the legal requirements and responsibilities of the school
- To reinforce and safeguard the health and safety of students and school community
- To clarify the school's approach to drugs for all staff, students, governors, parents/carers, external agencies and the wider community
- To give guidance on developing, implementing and monitoring the drug education programme
- To clarify the procedures for responding to and managing any drug-related incidents that may occur so that they are managed with confidence and consistency and in the best interests of those involved
- To ensure that the response to incidents involving drugs and the drug education programme complement the values and ethos of the school
- To provide a basis for evaluating the effectiveness of the school drug education programme and the management of incidents involving illegal and other unauthorised drugs
- To reinforce the role of the school in contributing to local and national strategies.

Policy context

As part of their statutory duty to promote students' wellbeing, schools have a clear role to play in preventing drug misuse. This Drugs and Substances Policy has been developed with reference to Department for Education advice and guidance: DfE and ACPO drug advice for schools (2012) which is non-statutory and was produced to help answer some of the most common questions raised by school staff in this area.

Schools also have a statutory duty as set out in Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education (September 2020) to ensure that pupils are empowered and informed to create a happy and successful adult life by having the 'knowledge that will enable them to make informed decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships and to build their self-efficacy.'

The policy is also underpinned by Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025), The National Curriculum Framework for Schools in England – December 2014 (Specifically statutory guidance that the Key Stage 3 science curriculum should contain a unit of work about the effects of recreational drugs -including substance misuse) on behaviour, health and life processes, and The Education Act - 2011

Other related policies and documents include

- Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Suspensions and Permanent Exclusion Policy
- PSHE Policy

Where and to whom the policy applies

This policy applies to all school staff, students, parents/carers, governors and other partner agencies working with the school. The policy applies to the school premises, the school day, while travelling to and from school, journeys in school time, work experience, day and residential trips and when the school is deemed to be in loco parentis.

Definition of Drugs

The definition of a drug given by the United Nations office on Drugs and Crime is: "A substance people take to change the way they feel, think or behave". Here, "drugs" and "drug education" is used to refer to:

- all illegal drugs (those controlled by the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971)
- all legal drugs, including alcohol, tobacco, e-cigarettes and 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 medicines
- all drugs paraphernalia including; pipes, cigarette papers, filters, grinders etc.

The school's stance towards drugs, health and the needs of students

The possession, use or supply of illegal and other unauthorised drugs in OPGS is not acceptable. The school is committed to safeguarding the health, safety and wellbeing of all members of the school community. In providing drugs education and responding to incidents involving drugs, our first concern is the pastoral care and health and safety of students. Any breach of the school behaviour policy involving drugs/illegal substances is considered a serious breach and dealt with accordingly.

Drugs and Illegal Substances Education

Aims of Drug and Illegal Substances Education

Drug and Illegal Substance Education is a major component of drug prevention.

The following aims of drug education at OPGS will be consistent with the values and ethos of the school and laws of society as well as being appropriate to the age, ability and maturity of the students, and relevant to their particular circumstances:

- To increase students' knowledge and understanding and clarify misconceptions about
 - the short and long-term effects and risks of drugs, alcohol and illegal substances
 - the rules and laws relating to drugs, illegal substances and alcohol - the impact of these things on individuals, families and communities
 - local and national use - the complex moral, social, emotional and political issues surrounding drugs, illegal substances and alcohol
 - the risk associated with 'county lines' and gang-related drugs issues
- To develop students' personal and social skills to make informed decisions and keep themselves safe and healthy, including - promoting positive attitudes to healthy lifestyles
 - assessing, avoiding and managing risk
 - communicating effectively
 - resisting pressures - finding information, help and advice
 - devising problem-solving and coping strategies
 - developing and maintaining self-awareness and self-esteem in order to motivate them to value their welfare and conscientious care of themselves
 - sign posting support for individuals and families

- To enable students to explore their own and other peoples' attitudes towards drugs, drug use and drug users, including challenging stereotypes, and exploring media and social influences
- To ensure that students have access to and knowledge of up to date information as sources of help. This includes local and national helplines (including Talk To FRANK for drugs, NHS Smoking Services for tobacco and vaping), local youth and community services and drug services. These sources are used in addition to the school's own drug and alcohol education

Roles and Responsibilities

- Responsibility for coordination – Senior Deputy Headteacher, Assistant Headteacher – Personal Development
- Senior Deputy Headteacher - liaises with Kent Police and other youth agencies regarding up-to-date information on the local picture with regards to local trends in drug use and areas deemed to pose safeguarding risks to young people
- Assistant Headteacher – Personal Development has responsibility for planning drugs education as part of role in overseeing PHSE at the school
- Headteacher – determining a sanction inline with the Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy and Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Policy (both available on the school website).
- Staff delivering specific aspects of drug education will have access to on-going advice, support and appropriate training as part of their own professional development
- Staff delivering specific aspects of drugs education are required to follow the school's Safeguarding Policy if they have concerns about an individual or group of pupils following the delivery of a drugs education lesson
- Where concerns are raised, the school's DSL will act in accordance with the school's Safeguarding Policy. This may culminate in making a Front Door Referral to the local authority
- The school also utilises external bodies specialising in drugs education, such as The Kenward Trust and Switch Cafe to deliver assemblies or work with students as part of our enrichment day programme. Safeguarding checks are carried out and delivery is tailored to the school's requests
- Assistant Headteacher – Personal Development - responsible for the monitoring and evaluation of the PHSE programme of which drugs education is an integral part. This is conducted through some lesson observation and feedback from staff and students
- Curriculum Leader for Science - responsibility for elements of drugs education as set out within the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum

Management of drug-related incidents

Drug-related incidents include any or all of the following:

- drugs or drugs paraphernalia found on school premises;
- students in possession of illegal or unauthorised drugs;
- students supplying unauthorised or illegal drugs;
- students under the influence of drugs, or exhibiting signs of intoxication or illness;
- disclosure of drug use;
- information which suggest student(s) are involved in substance misuse;
- illegitimate sale/supply of drugs in the school vicinity and beyond;
- involvement in 'county line' or gang-related drug issues

If there are any suspicions, observations, disclosures or discoveries of situations involving illegal and other unauthorised drugs (possession, supply or imbibing):

- I. Utmost priority will be placed on safety, meeting any medical emergencies with first aid and summoning appropriate help before addressing further issues. If in doubt, medical assistance will be sought immediately.

- II. The Headteacher or an available member of SLG will be informed of the situation immediately.
- III. Dialogue with the student(s) will be undertaken by the Headteacher or a member of SLG as soon as possible in order to determine the facts. The emphasis will be on listening to what people have to say and asking open rather than closed or leading questions. Consideration will be given to separating any students involved in the incident and ensuring that a second adult witness is present.
- IV. The Headteacher or a member of SLG will inform, consult and involve others as necessary. Careful attention will be given to respecting the confidentiality of those involved.
- V. Where they have reasonable grounds for suspecting that a student(s) may have an illegal or unauthorised drug, they will be escorted to a senior member of staff who will make every effort to encourage the individual to hand the item(s) over voluntarily, in the presence of a second member of staff. Where possible the gender of the member of staff carrying out a search will correspond to the gender of the student. Where the individual refuses, the Headteacher, or member of staff authorised by them, may exercise their statutory power to search the student(s) or their possessions, without consent. Education and Inspections Act 2006 (s93)
- VI. Staff may search school property, for example, students' lockers, if they believe drugs to be stored there.
- VII. If something illegal, or of concern is discovered then parents and carers will be notified by the school.
- VIII. Any substance suspected of being a drug will be confiscated. If the substance is suspected to be an illegal drug, the police will be notified immediately, in order that they may collect it for identification and then store or dispose of it in line with locally agreed protocols. In the majority of cases, parents will be notified immediately unless this is not in the best interests of the student.
- IX. A detailed record of the incident will be made on Record My, as per the school procedures.
- X. The school will maintain vigilance about drug-related incidents in the local community through contact with police and other relevant agencies.

The school will consider each incident individually and will employ a range of responses to deal with them, as per the Behaviour Policy

Early Intervention

The school has a key role in identifying students at risk of drug misuse. The process of identifying needs should aim to distinguish between students who require general information, those who could benefit from targeted prevention, and those who require a detailed needs assessment and more intensive support. The school will also be alert to behaviour which might indicate that the child is experiencing difficult home circumstances. Where problems are observed or suspected or if a child chooses to disclose that there are difficulties at home, safeguarding procedures will be followed. This may include involving sources of support for the child such as Early Help, Children's Social Care and Youth Services.

Role of the Governors

As part of their general responsibilities for the strategic direction of the school, governors have a key role to play in reviewing and monitoring this policy.

Dissemination

This policy is published on the school website. Links to policies on the school website are shared with parents.

