

North Oxfordshire Academy

Drugs & Substance Misuse Policy

This policy is under continuous review by the Senior Leadership Team and the Governing Body because of the changing drugs scene both nationally and locally.

Ethos of the school

The philosophy of the school is to provide a supportive and nurturing environment in which all students are enabled to develop their learning and personal skills. This strives carefully to prepare them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences they may encounter in their future lives and this policy has been written in accordance with this philosophy.

Rationale

It is our aim to help all students 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 medicinal effects, but also that every drug has potential harm. For this reason, all drugs need appropriate and responsible care and management. In order to be able to make informed choices, staff and students need to understand the nature of drugs, their social and legal status, their uses and effects.

Definition of a drug

A drug is a substance that affects the way in which the body functions physically, emotionally or mentally. This definition includes illegal substances and also legal substances such as: alcohol & tobacco, volatile substances, psychoactive substances, over the counter & prescription medicines.

Aims of the policy

- To support the school's endeavour to maintain the safety and well-being of all students 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 a whole school approach to drug education in the context of the curriculum of the school

Policy background

This policy has been written with reference to national and LA guidelines and been informed by relevant research data. This includes the 'DFE and ACPO drug advice for schools' document.

Drugs on school premises

The legal definition of premises of a school includes everything within the property boundaries including buildings, outbuildings, playgrounds, fields and also extends to include other settings such as vehicles, boats, marquees or any venue managed by the school at the time e.g. premises of a school trip or visit.

• Medicines

The school has a policy/procedure for the administration of medicines that must be followed for everyone's safety. We follow procedures recommended by Oxfordshire Health & Safety guidelines



- **Alcohol**

No alcohol will be consumed during the course of a normal school day. Students 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. In the interests of health and safety, should a student be found in possession of alcohol on the school premises, it will be confiscated and parents informed

- **Smoking**

The school is a no smoking site 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 informed

- **Illegal drugs**

No illegal drugs are allowed to be brought on to, or used on school premises

- **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 sniffable products

- **Responses to drug related incidents**

A drug incident may be any of the following:

- 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 parents, staff or students using drugs
- Reports of parents, staff or students using drugs

The school is aware of its legal responsibilities in regard to drug related incidents and in responding to incidents, seeks to work in line with local and national guidance as outlined in The Right Responses. A member of the SLT (Craig Burrows) will normally be responsible for co-ordinating the management of drug-related incidents, offering sources of support and liaising with outside agencies. Incidents will be dealt with after making an assessment of the situation and will be reported to the Principal. All incidents and responses will be recorded within 24 hours.

Appropriate support will be offered to those with substance related problems. Talking with an individual about a drug related incident will have as its purpose to confirm or reject suspicions or allegations, rather than conduct a wider investigation.

Evidence of drug use or possession will not necessarily result in permanent exclusion. Permanent exclusion will only be considered in serious cases and will be in accordance with DCSF guidance on exclusions. A case conference will be called if necessary. Each case will be assessed and levels of sanctions may vary according to the seriousness of the incident and the student's involvement.



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 possible. If the drug is suspected to be illegal, the school may wish to contact a police officer for discussion. Illegal substances will be legally destroyed or handed to the police as soon as possible and not stored. Parents will normally be informed (for a student) and other professionals such as the LA, Youth Service, Police, GP, Social Services will be informed or consulted as appropriate.

Dealing drugs

Any student proven or suspected to be dealing drugs to students of North Oxfordshire Academy within the school grounds or in the community will be dealt with by the police and may face permanent exclusion.

Confidentiality

Complete secrecy can never be promised to a student, though information given in confidence will not generally be disclosed to anyone else. In particular if a student chooses to disclose that they are using a drug without medical authorisation, this information will not be used against them. However, action will be taken to ensure the student comes to no serious harm if this is considered a risk. Regarding disclosures staff need to carefully define and communicate the boundaries of confidentiality offered.

Support for students

At our school the welfare of the student is paramount. We maintain that constructive strategies that enable students to continue to benefit from continued education are preferable to exclusion.

Following actions to preserve safety, the health & 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 their parents'/carers'. Such interventions may include consultation with parents/carers and other agencies, possible case conferences and subsequent referral. Permanent exclusion from school will rarely be considered as permanently excluded students become significantly more vulnerable to drugs than those within formal schooling.

In line with recent legislation the staff at North Oxfordshire Academy reserve the right to search students if they have reason to believe that they are carrying offensive weapons or illegal substances. Similarly students can expect to be physically restrained if they present a danger to themselves or other members of the community.

Searches will be carried out by members of the Senior Management Team and Parents/Carers will always be informed when this has happened.

If inappropriate articles are brought in to school or used inappropriately they may be confiscated and kept in the school safe for collection at the end of the day. If these items are dangerous or illegal they may be handed to the Police for safe disposal.

See the parent handbook/behaviour policy documents for North Oxfordshire Academies procedure for detention and exclusion. We commit to informing parents in advance in writing or by telephone if these sanctions are to be imposed.

North Oxfordshire Academy works closely with its Police Liaison Officers. If students are involved with any activity which breaks the law the police may be involved in the confiscation of items, Restorative Justice Conferencing, group work and education as well as links with home. Parents/Carers will always be informed when the police are involved and given the opportunity to attend any interviews.



Similarly the police will be involved if any student is suspected of having contact with an illegal substance. This includes possession, using or dealing. In such cases, the police will decide what course of action should be taken.

This policy will be reviewed in June 2016.

[Links to other policies \(these can be found on the academy website\)](#)

- Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy

Useful Organisations

- **Addaction** is one of the UK's largest specialist drug and alcohol treatment charities. As well as adult services, they provide services specifically tailored to the needs of young people and their parents. The Skills for Life project supports young people with drug misusing parents. Website: www.addaction.org.uk
- **ADFAM** offers information to families of drug and alcohol users, and the website has a database of local family support services. Tel: 020 7553 7640 Email: admin@adfam.org.uk Website: www.adfam.org.uk
- **Alcohol Concern** works to reduce the incidence and costs of alcohol-related harm and to increase the range and quality of services available to people with alcohol-related problems Tel: 020 7264 0510. Email: contact@alcoholconcern.org.uk Website: www.alcoholconcern.org.uk
- **ASH (Action on Smoking and Health)** A campaigning public health charity aiming to reduce the health problems caused by tobacco. Tel: 020 7739 5902 Email: enquiries@ash.org.uk Website: www.ash.org.uk
- **Children's Legal Centre** operates a free and confidential legal advice and information service covering all aspects of law and policy affecting children and young people. Tel: 01206 877910 Email: clc@essex.ac.uk Website: www.childrenslegalcentre.com
- **Children's Rights Alliance for England** - A charity working to improve the lives and status of all children in England through the fullest implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Email: info@crae.org.uk Website: www.crae.org.uk
- **Drinkaware** - An independent charity that promotes responsible drinking through innovative ways to challenge the national drinking culture, helping reduce alcohol misuse and minimise alcohol related harm. Tel: 020 7307 7450 Website: www.drinkaware.co.uk/
- **Drinkline** - A free and confidential helpline for anyone who is concerned about their own or someone else's drinking. Tel: 0800 917 8282 (lines are open 24 hours a day)
- **Drug Education Forum** – this website contains a number of useful papers and briefing sheets for use by practitioners: Website: www.drugeducationforum.com/ 14

