

DRUGS AND HARMFUL SUBSTANCES* POLICY

* In this policy, we regard the term 'drugs and harmful substances' to refer to any psychoactive or intoxicating agent, or substance that if taken inappropriately – like a prescribed drug – would be harmful to the person.

This policy applies to the Senior School.

Introduction

Young people – not least those living in a big city – experience pressure to use, or experiment with, drugs and harmful substances, including alcohol, tobacco, so-called legal highs or prescription drugs. At Alleyn's we address this pressure and the risks it can bring to our pupils in both the curriculum and the co-curriculum. We take seriously the need to educate children about the risks of involvement with drugs and to maintain an environment free from the risk of harmful substances. On rare occasions alcohol may be consumed by senior pupils on school premises or at school events off-site, but only when there are staff present. Smoking and e-cigarettes are prohibited on the school site at all times.

This policy complements the policies that pertain to other important matters of life at school, including Safeguarding, Pupil Code of Conduct, Mental Health and Well-being and the Alleyn's Vision and Values. In addition, the matter of potential misuse of drugs and harmful substances is covered in the PSHE curriculum, which raises issues to do with harmful substances at age-appropriate stages of a pupil's time at Alleyn's.

The major responsibility for taking care in these matters, of course, falls to parents, as substance misuse usually takes place at times when children are outside of the School's daily care. However, Alleyn's provides a space where pupils, teachers and parents can inform themselves and communicate about the issues and risks involved. For this policy to be effective, there must be agreement about the steps the School will take when the use of drugs or harmful substances comes to its attention. The steps that the School will ordinarily take are guided by the joint publication from the Department for Education (DfE) and the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO), "*DfE and ACPO drug advice for schools. Advice for local authorities, headteachers, school staff and governing bodies*" (September 2012) and the DfE publication, "*Searching, screening and confiscation: Advice for headteachers, school staff and governing bodies*" (February 2014 revised July 2015). Both documents are available here:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/270169/drug_advice_for_schools.pdf

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/444053/Searching_screening_confiscation_advice_Reviewed_July_2015.pdf

Policy aims

Our policy at Alleyn's emphasises the following points:

- We aim to provide pupils with accurate and age-appropriate information about drugs, including legal highs, prescription medication and other harmful substances, and make them aware of the possible consequences of their use;
- We treat knowledge of the misuse of drugs or harmful substances – whether outside school or not – as a matter of serious concern, that will be addressed within the School's disciplinary and pastoral frameworks;

- We consider the bringing of drugs or harmful substances onto the School site as a serious matter of disciplinary concern. Such substances could put the safety of other pupils at risk, and a pupil known to have brought such substances onto the School premises places his or her position at the School at risk;
- We aim to encourage and enable each pupil to make up his or her own mind about these matters and to have strategies to help withstand pressure, especially in social settings;
- We aim to work with parents to provide:
 - a) a clear statement of our position on these matters;
 - b) opportunities to articulate our shared concern about the dangers that can arise;
 - c) a random drugs testing regime after the establishment of a drugs contract, signed by the pupil and his or her parents or carers, that can act as a deterrent and as an incentive to healthy habits and decision-making;
 - d) pastoral care for any pupil in need including the offering of counselling and guidance;
- We aim to gain the agreement, support and co-operation of parents with the aims and implementation of this policy.

This policy has been drawn up in accordance with the guidance contained in the publications by the DfE and ACPO mentioned above and the publication, "*Behaviour and discipline in schools: Advice for headteachers and school staff*" (February 2014) available here:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/463452/Behaviour_and_discipline_in_schools_guidance_for_headteachers_and_staff.pdf

Given our concerns for the welfare of the pupils and the reputation of the School, this policy applies at all times and not only when pupils are at the School or under the direct supervision of the School in activities held during holidays, week nights or weekends.

The Implementation of the Policy

This policy is implemented to encourage the best decision-making by all pupils at Alleyn's. It aims to be a deterrent as well as a guide to good behaviour through pastoral support and in the curriculum and co-curriculum. The Head takes overall responsibility for the policy and its implementation, and he refers concerns that come to his attention for action by the Senior Deputy Head.

Curriculum and Co-curriculum

A continuing programme of education about drugs and other substances is delivered in the curriculum primarily through the PSCE programme where matters are raised at appropriate stages in a child's development. Other opportunities exist in the co-curriculum (*eg* in Games provision) for the appropriate raising of awareness and opportunities for discussion.

Involvement of parents

Parents are informed when any change is made to this policy. Opportunities are regularly taken to raise the matters in open forums with parents, such as information evenings at the invitation of the APA, the Heads of Section or the Senior Deputy Head. Parents are encouraged to contact the School if they have concerns about the harmful use of substances by children at Alleyn's.

Individual pupils

Urgent pastoral support will be provided for any pupil who seeks it. Pupils have, on occasion, asked voluntarily to be placed on the drugs contract for it to act as an incentive to help them change patterns of behaviour. In such cases a pupil can speak to any member of staff who will pass on the information to the Head of the relevant Section who will inform the Senior Deputy Head. The Head will be made

aware but the management of the matter, as one of pastoral and disciplinary concern, will be the responsibility of the Head of Section and ultimately the Senior Deputy Head.

Following up concerns about use and misuse of drugs and harmful substances

The School will investigate any report of involvement with drugs or harmful substances by a pupil, and this might involve the searching of pupils and possessions (see below). The initial investigation will usually involve speaking to the pupil, and the Senior Deputy Head (or other member of staff authorised by the Head) will have another member of staff (usually the Section Head) present. The Senior Deputy Head may ask for a written account of circumstances and may ask to inspect personal belongings or take belongings for further analysis. The Senior Deputy Head will make contact with parents as far as is practicable. Sources of information will not be disclosed.

Searching pupils and their possessions – possible confiscation of possessions

The Senior Deputy Head and/or staff authorised by the Head, may search a pupil or a pupil's possessions, with or without his/her consent, when they have reasonable grounds for suspecting that a pupil has a prohibited item in his/her possession. In the guidance published for schools by the DfE (February 2014), it is stated that, "Schools are not required to inform parents before a search takes place or to seek their consent to search their child. There is no legal requirement to make or keep a record of a search". It is also stated that, "Schools would normally inform the individual pupil's parents or guardians where alcohol, illegal drugs or potentially harmful substances are found, though there is no legal requirement to do so." It is further stated that complaints about searching should be dealt with through the normal school complaints procedure.

There is information about alcohol and prohibited items in Section 2 of the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 and on pp.3-4 of the DfE Guidance issued in February 2014 (reviewed July 2015).

Following a search, whether or not anything is found, the School will make a record of the person searched, the reason for the search, the time and the place, who was present and note the outcomes and any follow-up action.

General power to confiscate

Section 91 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 (in line with the publication: "*Behaviour and discipline in schools: Advice for headteachers and school staff*" - February 2014) enables a member of staff to confiscate, retain or dispose of a pupil's property as a disciplinary penalty, where reasonable to do so.

Where the person finds other substances, or paraphernalia that might be associated with drugs or substance use, which are not believed to be controlled drugs these can be confiscated where a teacher believes them to be harmful or detrimental to good order and discipline. This would include new psychoactive substances or 'legal highs'. If school staff are unable to identify the legal status of a drug, it should be treated as a controlled drug.

Every effort will be made that any search of a pupil's outer clothing (usually the pupil is asked to empty pockets) or a pupil's possessions (e.g., locker, pencil case, bag) will be conducted in such a manner as to minimise embarrassment or distress. Any such search will be carried out in the presence of the pupil and another member of staff. When a pupil is searched, the searcher and the second member of staff present will be the same gender as the pupil.

Where the staff find anything which they have reasonable grounds for suspecting is a prohibited item, they may seize and retain it for handing to the police or disposal.

Where the pupil declines to allow a search, this will be taken into account in any subsequent action in response to the concern.

Police involvement

If the School seizes an illegal drug and/or drug taking paraphernalia, the School may involve the police as soon as is reasonably practicable, normally through contacting the local police liaison officer for Southwark schools. The School will follow the advice of the police and may contact them even before an illegal drug has been seized.

The School's drugs contract and testing

If, outside the context of confidential counselling, the Head, Senior Deputy Head or other relevant member of staff forms a reasonable suspicion that a pupil has been involved with drugs or harmful substances, the pupil may be placed on a so-called drugs contract. The contract will require the pupil and his or her parents to sign an agreement with the School. Failure to agree to the signing of this contract would usually put the place of the pupil at Alleyn's in jeopardy, and would be followed-up with parents in the first instance usually by the Head.

The drugs contract sets out the expectation that for the remaining time of the pupil at Alleyn's, the School can – without prior notice – take a sample of hair from the pupil and send it to a professional testing facility to check if substances have recently been used. A test result that comes back indicating use of drugs or harmful substances⁺ during the period of the drug contract will normally put the place of the pupil at the school in jeopardy.

Following concerns about the use of drugs or harmful substances the School will aim to manage the matter as one primarily of pastoral concern. Pupils will be informed whom they might speak to at the School and also whom they might consult confidentially outside the School. The School will consider each incident individually and recognises that a variety of responses will be necessary to deal with different concerns.

However, where an individual's behaviour raises serious concerns about the safety and welfare not only of that pupil but of other pupils at the School, or where a drugs contract has been established but a test returns with an indication of continuing use, then the pupil would normally be asked to leave the School. Such behaviour includes any attempt to share or sell harmful substances to fellow pupils while under the responsibility of the School during the School day or on a school activity in time outside the School day.

Policy reviewed in September 2020 and will be reviewed:

- after any serious concern about use of drugs or harmful substances, or
- in September 2021, or
- if new guidance is published in the meantime by the DfE.

⁺The drugs that are tested for include the following:

Amphetamines (including methamphetamine); Benzodiazepines; Buprenorphine; Cannabis; Cathinone; Clozapine; Cocaine; Fentanyl; Haloperidol; Ketamine; Lysergic acid diethylamide (LSD); Mephedrone; Meperidine; Mescaline; Methadone; Opiates; Phenylcyclidine (PCP); Propoxyphene; Tramadol; Trazodone; Zolpidem.