

Charitable Objects of St. Catherine's School - The Objects for which the Company is established are to promote and provide for the advancement of education by providing, conducting, governing, carrying on and maintaining in the United Kingdom, or elsewhere, a boarding or day school or schools for girls in which the teaching shall be in accordance with the principles of the Church of England.



St Catherine's School, Bramley
WHOLE SCHOOL POLICY
Drugs Policy

The Whole School refers to all staff and students in the St. Catherine's Preparatory and Senior Schools which includes: Early Years/Foundation Stage (EYFS), Pre-Prep School (Key Stage 1), Prep. School (Key Stage 2); Middle School (Key Stage 3); Senior School (Key Stage 4) and the Sixth Form (Key Stage 5).

This policy was reviewed in August 2023 in line with the School's Policy Review Schedule which ensures that all policies are kept up to date and replaces that which was written in 1996 and updated in 1998 and 2005, 2008, 2009, 2014, 2016 and 2019.

This should be viewed in association with the Confidentiality and Privacy Policy, Medical Policy, First Aid Policy and Health and Safety Policy.

INFORMATION FOR PREP. AND SENIOR SCHOOL PUPILS AND PARENTS

The word "drug" is a general term for any substance that can chemically alter the mind or the body. It is our aim to educate our pupils to understand the effects of use/misuse of over-the-counter medications; prescribed medication; legal drugs such as alcohol and tobacco and other legal substances used to induce a "high" and to provide information about the consequences of being in possession of, or using, illegal substances.

The School is committed to caring for the health and safety of all its members and will take action to safeguard their well-being. We will do whatever we can to discourage the misuse of substances in the School community. In order to be able to exercise its duty of care, the School cannot accept as an excuse that the misuse of substances happened outside school if there is evidence that the person is affected by them whilst in school.

In particular, the School has a moral and legal responsibility to protect all its pupils from danger and provide them with a safe learning and living environment whilst in the School's care. All staff therefore have a responsibility to act as good role models.

To this end the School will not tolerate smoking, vaping, the abuse of alcohol, misuse of legally purchased or prescription drugs, solvents, supplements and naturally occurring substances (e.g., magic mushrooms) or the possession or taking of illegal drugs. Pupils are taught about the dangers of misuse of the above through lessons and lectures in PSHE (Life Matters) and Biology, informally in the Medical Centre, and by displays of relevant news articles and posters. Pupils may, and indeed are encouraged to, discuss any anxieties about drugs with Medical Centre staff. The School also offers information and advice to parents in handbooks and occasional PTA lectures.

The sanctions for the pupils regarding any breach of these rules are set out later on in this policy. Whenever there is concern that such sanctions need to be invoked, parents will be informed as soon as possible. Should it be deemed appropriate for the pupil no longer to attend the School, the Headmistress will help the parents over the next steps to be taken in order to minimise the detrimental effects for their daughter.

At all times the welfare of the individual will be at the heart of the consequences and will be balanced with consideration for the welfare of the community as a whole. The School will look at each case separately, taking into consideration all aspects and recognising its proper responsibilities.

The School makes stringent efforts to deter any misuse of substances through setting firm and clear boundaries, explaining and reminding all its members what these boundaries are through education.

In order to safeguard the community, the School reserves the right to carry out a search of a pupil's accommodation, possessions or person if there is any suspicion that she might be in possession of any illegal substances or any legal substances that are not allowed in School, e.g., alcohol. Such a search will generally be undertaken by two senior members of staff and with the pupil herself present, but there will be circumstances where this cannot be the case in the interests of the whole school community.

OVER THE COUNTER AND PRESCRIBED MEDICINES

Procedure

- With the exception of those over 16 in the Senior School all pupils must hand in all medicines to the Medical Centre. In the Prep. School pupils must give all medicines, direct or via their form teacher, to the office staff. This should include any natural remedies, over the counter medications and prescribed medications, with the exception of asthma inhalers, adrenalin injectors, insulin and emergency medication agreed by the medical centre.
- The Medical staff reserve the right to remove any medicines or homeopathic remedies which have not been approved or prescribed by the School Doctor. All medications must be clearly labelled with the pupil's name and should be accompanied by a letter from the parents to the Medical Staff explaining the reason for administration, the dose required and the frequency of administration.
- Medical Staff need to be informed of any health-related incidents which occur whilst pupils are not in school, especially after holidays.
- Normally the Medical Staff or, in the Prep. School, the Office staff, will administer any non-prescribed medications as on the list agreed by the School Doctor and also administer any prescribed medications. In the absence of such staff or on school trips, a limited number of non-prescription medications and prescribed medications may be given by a qualified First Aider or an expedition leader, providing parental permission has been received.
- Medications for emergency use for pupils who have known medical conditions are kept in both Prep. and Senior School staff rooms, allowing 24-hour access.

SMOKING

The School operates a "No Smoking" policy. All medical authorities accept that the smoking of tobacco or the use of an electronic cigarette is harmful to the health of the smoker and also to non-smokers who are exposed to tobacco smoke/vapors. In addition, the use of lighters and matches in school buildings can pose serious safety risks.

An electronic cigarette, also known as an e cigarette, e-cig, smokeless cigarette or vape is an electrical device that simulates the effect of tobacco smoking by producing an inhaled vapor. Some brands contain nicotine and other brands do not.

The vapor may contain harmful chemicals, including carcinogens, that may also be dangerous to others in the immediate area of users.

- Any pupil in possession of cigarettes, electronic cigarettes, lighters or matches will be given a school detention in the first instance and parents will be informed. A second offence may lead to suspension.
- Any pupil caught smoking, using an electronic cigarette, lighter or matches on the School premises may be suspended.

ALCOHOL

The misuse of alcohol affects decision making and can endanger the health and safety of both the user and others.

- Drinking or being found in possession of alcohol is forbidden for all pupils, other than alcohol provided at School functions for the 6th form. Any pupil found in possession of alcohol will be suspended immediately for a period of time determined by the Headmistress/Head of Boarding.

MISUSE OF LEGALLY PURCHASED OR PRESCRIPTION DRUGS, SOLVENTS AND NATURALLY OCCURRING SUBSTANCES

The misuse of any drugs is dangerous to health. Under these circumstances misuse is defined as taking medication prescribed for others and not for oneself, e.g. overdosing on paracetamol, or the passing to others of such medication without the permission of Medical Centre staff. In these circumstances parents would be informed immediately and the pupil may be suspended.

At all times the welfare of both the individual concerned and the whole school community will be addressed.

THE USE OF ILLEGAL DRUGS

It is the School's intention to take all steps available within the law to maintain an environment that is free from illegal drugs and in which pupils are not tempted to use them.

It is an offence under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971:

- a) to supply or offer to supply a controlled drug to another
- b) to be in possession of, or to possess with intent to supply to another, a controlled drug
- c) knowingly to allow premises to be used for the consumption of a prohibited substance.

In the interests of everyone in the School community, every rumour will be investigated and the following steps will be taken in the event of any suspicion of drug misuse or possession:

- 1) The relevant Headmistress or a member of the Senior Management Team will be contacted. Once informed of any concerns a decision will be made as to the best way to proceed.
- 2) A search will be carried of the girl's locker/dormitory by two senior members of staff.
- 3) If it was suspected that illegal drugs were on site, the Police would be called and it is likely that specialist drug detection dogs would be used.
- 4) The School Nurse and/or the School Doctor will be consulted for relevant support and advice.

- 5) A test will be requested if there are reasonable grounds to suspect that a pupil is taking drugs. Erratic behaviour, poor work or any other unusual and uncharacteristic signs may constitute reasonable grounds according to the individual case.
- 6) Parents or Guardians will be informed in advance of the test if possible and have the right to be present, if it is practicable. This may not always be the case as timing is of critical importance.
- 7) The pupil will not be allowed to use her mobile phone and will be asked to hand it in.
- 8) A biological specimen may be requested and will be taken under the supervision of a medically qualified person (urine testing or mouth swabs may be taken). A female member of staff will attend with the pupil.
- 9) If a pupil refuses to give her consent to a test, she will be warned that the School may proceed as if there had been a positive test.
- 10) Random testing will not normally be used in School, but in sufficiently serious circumstances may be a condition of a pupil's return to the School.
- 11) Involvement with illegal and abuse of legal drugs may result in the pupil being asked to find another school.
- 12) The School reserves the right not to divulge to parent/s or others any confidential information or the identities of pupils or others who have given information which has led to suspension, or the requirement to remove a pupil from the School or any information which the Headmistress and Chairman of the Governors have acquired during an investigation.

It is important that parents inform the Headmistress if they have any reason to think their daughter may have been involved with drugs or other substance misuse at home or at school.

Similarly if the School becomes aware that the parents of a pupil may be using drugs the matter should be referred to the Headmistress or the Designated Safeguarding Lead, and the matter would be considered under the School's Child Protection (Safeguarding) Policy.

THIS POLICY WILL BE REVIEWED IN 2026/27

Signature of Senior School Headmistress:
Mrs Alice Phillips

Signature of Prep. School Headmistress:
Miss Naomi Bartholomew

Date: