

Drugs Policy

The Meadows School believes that the possession and use of unauthorised drugs is wrong and therefore we do not condone their use in or out of school.

Terminology

The term 'drugs' and 'drug education', unless otherwise stated, is used throughout this document to refer to all drugs:

- All illegal drugs (those controlled by the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971).
- All legal drugs, including alcohol, tobacco, volatile substances (those giving off a gas or vapour which can be inhaled), ketamine, khat and alkyl nitrites (known as poppers).
- All over-the-counter and prescription medicines.

Boundaries

The possession or use of prohibited substances on The Meadows School site is absolutely forbidden. The "school site" (as defined) will apply in the following situations:

- All school grounds, inside and outside the school designated buildings,
- Other designated premises, if pupils are part educated at partner institutions,
- Educational trips and journeys (residential and non-residential),
- Work experience placements,

Pupils returning to the school site who are suspected to be under the influence of substances taken whilst off site are also included under this policy

Drugs Education

The School provides a planned drug education curriculum as part of PSHE that reflects knowledge and understanding, attitudes and personal and social skills. Drugs education will:

- Enable pupils to make healthy, informed choices by increasing knowledge, exploring their own and other people's attitudes and developing and practising skills.
- Promote positive attitudes towards healthy lifestyles.
- Provide accurate information about substances.
- Increase understanding about the implications and possible consequences of use and misuse.
- Encourage an understanding for those experiencing or likely to experience substance use.

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- Wide understanding about related health and social issues, eg sex and sexuality, crime, HIV and AIDS.
- Seek to minimise the risks that users and potential users face.
- Enable young people to identify sources of appropriate personal support
- Consider the visits with particular reference to pregnancy

Drugs Education is taught by a teacher or learning mentor but where appropriate outside visitors may contribute to drugs education i.e. school nurse, drugs liaison police officer, 4REAL, Jigsaw. Teachers and learning mentors have access to on-going support and training as part of their own professional development and teaching materials are reviewed for quality and relevance.

Staff are informed of the Misuse of Drugs Act and are aware of the legal aspects and effects of substance misuse. The PHSE curriculum includes a Drugs Awareness programme.

Managing a drugs related incident

If staff have knowledge either by what has been seen or has been told by a reliable source – that a prohibited activity is taking place, the SLT must be informed. There is no legal obligation to inform the police, though they may be able to give relevant support or advice.

Circular 4/95 states that 'Although there is no statutory requirement to do so, the Secretary of State would expect the police to be informed when illegal drugs are found on the School premises.

- An incident involving unauthorised drugs in school is most likely to involve alcohol, tobacco or volatile substances, rather than illegal drugs.
- The first priority is safety and first aid, i.e. administering first aid and calling the emergency services if deemed necessary.
- If any pupil be found in possession of an unauthorised drug, the substance will be confiscated, in the presence of a witness and put in the safe of the main office. It is permitted by law for school staff to take temporary possession of a substance suspected of being a controlled drug for the purposes of protecting a pupil from harm and the offence of possession.
- A record of the incident and all witness statements will be kept by the SLT, who will record all the relevant details.
- The Head Teacher will be informed and will take a lead role in deciding how to respond further
- Parents / carers will normally be informed
- We will advise the parents/carers of additional support available.
- No member of staff should attempt to analyse or taste an unidentified substance
- We may contact the local police for advice or in order to identify and or dispose of the substance if it's not something we can do ourselves, although it is not a legal obligation for us to do so.

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- If a pupil is suspected of concealing illegal drugs on their person every effort will be made to secure the voluntary production of such drugs. This will be carried out in the presence of a witness.
- The range of sanctions used for rule breaking will be similar to those for other transgressions and will depend upon the nature and gravity of the offence.
- If any pupil is thought to be ‘under the influence’ medical help in the form of a paramedic / ambulance will be sought at once and first aid will be given if required. This is not an appropriate time to question the pupil. The priority will be the pupil’s safety.

The following staff are trained and qualified in First Aid:

- Avril Craik
- Darrell McLaren
- Stephanie Atkinson
- Emma Walker

The School will consider each substance incident individually and recognise that a variety of responses will be necessary to deal with incidents in order to act in the best interests of both the pupil and the School community.

Confidentiality in managing a drugs related incident regard will be given to issues of confidentiality. Teachers cannot and should not promise total confidentiality. The boundaries of confidentiality will be made clear to pupils.

Parental / carer drug use Disclosure by pupils and/or observed behaviours by staff of parents / carers under the influence of drugs will be dealt with under the Safe Guarding Policy.

Staff Issues

Any employee of the School taking illegal drugs on school premises or during school hours or selling or buying such drugs or under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol during school hours will be reported to the Council’s designated officer and will be suspended on the grounds of potential gross misconduct and would face possible summary dismissal following a Management Committee disciplinary hearing. Employees are warned that the effects of taking drugs can last for many days after they are taken. An employee may therefore be judged to be under the influence of drugs days after they are taken.

Smoking

The Meadows School is a smoke free environment in line with Durham Council policy and national legislation.

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Smoking is not permitted on site. Students suspected of bringing cigarettes and smoking paraphernalia into school will be approached in a non-confrontational manner and searched (unless individual risk-assessment states otherwise). Authorised searches can be performed by the Headteacher and T5 staff. If found, cigarettes and smoking related items will be confiscated.

If a student is observed smoking, the following strategies will be utilised:

- Staff challenge (non-confrontational). Staff have a duty of care to educate students about the health related dangers of smoking. However, staff must also remain mindful of their need to exercise a duty of care and understand the potential dangers in driving students away from the school site and towards the dangers of busy roads and the potential for damaging the positive relationship between the school and the local community.
- Referral to school based smoking cessation facilitators.
- Phone call home.
- Letter home (if persistent offence).
- Meeting with parent/carer in response to repeated offence.

Strategies used to educate students about the dangers of smoking are embedded in the curriculum. If a student is caught smoking they will be referred to a cessation programme.

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