

# Drugs Policy



SAMUEL WARD

## 1. POLICY STATEMENT

The Academy recognises its responsibility to offer a balanced education to all students in relation to all forms of drugs use. It also recognises and values the role of parents in these matters. This will influence students in making personal decisions about drugs. The Academy is clear that bringing or using drugs on the Academy premises at any time, or during Academy-related activities, is unacceptable and will be a disciplinary matter.

## 2. DEFINITION

A drug is any substance which, when taken, has the effect of altering the way a person feels, sees, thinks or acts. For the purpose of this Policy a drug includes everyday substances, such as ‘over the counter’ medicines (e.g. Paracetamol, Contac, etc.), prescribed drugs (e.g. benzodiazepines, etc), solvents and glues, alcohol and tobacco, as well as illegal drugs covered by the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 (e.g. Cannabis, Ecstasy, etc.).

The Academy is likely to concern itself with issues related to the possession, supply or usage of the following:

- i. drugs covered by the Misuse of Drugs Act;
- ii. prescription – only medicines not being used in accordance with an officially issued prescription;
- iii. ‘over the counter’ remedies not being used in accordance with the manufacturer’s recommendations, or improperly obtained;
- iv. solvents and other volatile or intoxicating substances (including alcohol).

## 3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the responsibility of the **Governing Body** to establish a whole Academy policy and procedure for Drugs and to monitor the effects of the procedure. Governors should:

- i. have access to drug information and training;
- ii. endeavour to encourage a supportive atmosphere within the Academy so that students feel able to confide a drug-related problem;
- iii. be aware of their legal responsibilities over drugs on Academy premises.

It is the responsibility of **the Principal and other managers** to assist the Governors to develop a drugs policy and to set the ethos in the Academy and develop programmes which help students to make healthy lifestyle decisions. They will also address promptly any breaches of Academy rules in relation to drugs, using informal procedures where possible but implementing formal procedures where necessary.

It is the responsibility of all **staff** to familiarise themselves, and comply, with this policy and procedure in accordance with relevant professional standards.

Teachers:

- i. should have access to information, training and expertise concerning drugs and their misuse;
- ii. with appropriate training, should be able to deliver drug education within PSHE and other areas of the curriculum and have access to the necessary resources;
- iii. should be prepared to discuss in privacy with any student who confides a drug-related problem, be aware of the system within the Academy for dealing with such and know where to seek advice (see Vice-Principal (Student Development and Well-being));
- iv. should understand that the rules for students apply to teachers, with the exception of alcohol which may be consumed in certain restricted areas or situations in the absence of students, as in individual Academy policies;
- v. as employees, should know the disciplinary action to be taken if they contravene their terms and conditions of employment;
- vi. should know when to adopt a pastoral or disciplinary approach towards students;
- vii. should know the Academy's procedures concerning illness linked to known or suspected drug usage.

It is the responsibility of **students** to make healthy lifestyle decisions and understand the consequences of breaking Academy rules on drugs. Students:

- i. will have access to drug information and education through all Key Stages;
- ii. should feel able to talk in confidence to a member of staff about a drug-related problem without fear of reprimand; they should also understand the limits of confidentiality that operate within the Academy and know who to turn to if a friend is experiencing a problem;
- iii. should understand that 'drugs' should not be brought to, sold, passed on or obtained on Academy premises or on holidays, field trips and visits organised by the Academy;
- iv. should understand that deliberately breaking Academy rules will result in action being taken;
- v. should understand the difference between voluntarily confiding a drug-related problem to someone at the Academy and being found deliberately breaking Academy rules on drugs;
- vi. should report immediately to the Academy office in any case of feeling unwell in connection with drug usage and inform staff that the illness is drug-related.

It is the responsibility of **parents** to support the work of the Academy to help students develop healthy lifestyles and to affirm the Academy rules on drugs.

- i. should be aware that information concerning drugs and their misuse is given to students and have access to it themselves;
- ii. should feel able to contact the Academy about any drug-related problem at home;
- iii. should be aware of the Academy's rules concerning drugs;
- iv. should expect to be contacted if their child is caught breaking Academy rules on drugs;
- v. should understand the disciplinary procedures adopted by the Academy;
- vi. should expect further action to take place after consultation with the appropriate agencies.

## **4. PROCEDURES**

The Procedures associated with the policy include proactive approaches to reducing the harm associated with drug use and reactive approaches for responding to actual or suspected drug usage.

## **5. Proactive Approaches**

### **5.1. Creation of a positive Academy ethos:**

Every attempt will be made to create a positive Academy ethos which will help students to feel valued and to be a part of the Academy. This will include:

- i. valuing students, e.g. through the creation of good facilities for students such as lockers, carpeted areas, displays of work;
- ii. regarding the efforts that students make, e.g. through the Academy 'rewards' system with prizes awarded for effort and achievement;
- iii. giving students a voice in decisions made concerning the Academy, e.g. Student Council;
- iv. ensuring that the diverse needs of students are met as far as possible and that, in particular, special educational needs are effectively catered for;
- v. doing as much as possible to encourage good relationships between students, parents and teachers, other staff and Governors;
- vi. ensuring that students are aware of the professional, pastoral and counselling facilities that are available to them both within and outside Academy;
- vii. encouraging students not to wear, or bring into the Academy, any articles which advertise or promote the use of drugs.

### **5.2. Encouragement of activities between staff and students**

Whenever possible, staff and students should be brought together in situations beyond a normal 'classroom' situation. This could include:

- i. extra curricular activities, e.g. clubs, sporting events and matches;
- ii. Academy trips, residential courses, holidays;
- iii. specially organised activities and events, e.g. 'fun' days.

## **6. Drugs Education Programme**

However drug education is delivered in the Academy, the programme must:

- i. have coherence, progression and be student centred;
- ii. contain accurate and balanced information linked to an exploration of attitudes to drugs;
- iii. aim to educate and help personal decision-making skills which can assist in the making of choices and in the management of situations involving drug use.

Relevant staff will be appropriately trained for such a programme and be aware of external agencies which can support work done in the Academy. (There is a team of practitioners drawn from the Health Service, Essex School Improvement and Advisory Service, Police and the Drug and Alcohol Action Team who are able to support drugs education.)

### **6.1. Dealing with the media**

The Academy would wish to make it known that it has a definite policy on drugs and deals with any problems in a proactive way. However, it would not want details of individual cases to be made public. The Academy would seek to ensure that the issue of drugs will be dealt with by the media on an area basis.

### **6.2. Reactive approaches**

Procedures for dealing with situations arising in the Academy will be carried out in accordance with the flowchart contained in Appendix A.

If a student is discovered to be using or possessing a substance that is not permitted on Academy premises or is thought to be illegal, the following action shall be taken:

- i. those involved should be approached and the substance(s) confiscated and placed in a sealed container in the safe;
- ii. the parents of those involved should be informed;
- iii. those involved should be questioned and if there is any doubt about the nature of the substance obtained then the Drug and Alcohol Team or Police should be contacted;
- iv. the Police, via the Academy's Liaison Officer, must be informed;
- v. the student should be placed on a fixed-term exclusion whilst preliminary investigations are made;
- vi. in the event of a student successfully contesting an accusation of possession of supply of a drug, then s/he is legally entitled to seek redress through the Courts;
- vii. implement the Academy-based guidance approach.

### **6.3. The Academy-based guidance approach**

In the case of a student in 6.2 above, a report should be prepared by the Academy and a copy given to both the parents and the Academy-based Advisory Committee (Appendix B). This Committee will meet with the student and parents in order to consider all the circumstances surrounding the drug-related incident.

If, during the meeting with the parents and student new information is obtained which indicates that the matter was of a more serious nature then the Committee may refer the case back to the Principal who will decide whether to seek permanent exclusion.

The Academy-based Advisory Committee can recommend that one or more of the following courses of action will be taken:

- i. the student to return to the Academy but her/his work and behaviour are carefully monitored;
- ii. in-Academy guidance will be provided on a regular basis with an appropriate member of staff;
- iii. external course/counselling and/or treatment to be organised;
- iv. a report to be prepared by the Academy each half-term and issued to members of the Academy-based Advisory Committee. The Chairman of this Committee may call a further meeting if s/he feels that the student is not making sufficient progress.

Membership of the Advisory Committee will be determined by the Academy. However, the Academy will ensure that Academy Governors involved are not also members of the Governing Body's Discipline Committee.

#### **6.4. The disciplinary approach**

There are certain situations where the disciplinary approach will be appropriate. These may include the following:

- i. the discovery that the student is in possession of drugs, is in the act of using drugs, or is supplying drugs on the Academy premises or during the Academy day;
- ii. the situation as in (i) above, combined with a range of poor behaviour which has been punished in various ways already;
- iii. the situation as in (ii) above and/or where the student has previously been found to be in possession of, using or supplying drugs and has had disciplinary action taken before.

Where the Academy is considering permanent exclusion, the Academy's normal procedures and considerations will apply, as set out in Academy's policy document.

The Governing Body Discipline Committee has the power either to confirm the Principal's recommendation to exclude or not. If the decision is taken to allow the student to return to the Academy, the student and parents must then meet with the Academy-based Advisory Committee in order to ensure that appropriate counselling, Academy-based discipline and support is arranged.

## **7. SITUATIONS AND RESPONSES**

Responses should be tailored to the different situations that might arise within the Academy. These responses should however be consistent with the roles and responsibilities outlined in Section 3 above.

In general, the counselling approach is the preferred action in a situation where a student is known to be using drugs.

If guidance is being offered within the Academy, an appropriate person may be the form tutor, Progress Leader, senior member of staff or teacher specifically requested by the student. The objectives of such guidance would be similar to those normally applied in pastoral situations:

- i. to provide a non-threatening, non-condemnatory atmosphere in a private situation within which a student is able to feel free to discuss personal issues;
- ii. in a non-directive way, to facilitate the process whereby a student can come to an independent decision about her/his problem and situation;
- iii. to aid the student in considering the options open to her/him and possible ways forward.

The student will be made aware that it may not be possible for the information given to remain totally confidential and that certain people may have to be informed, but that confidentiality will be maintained beyond certain key people. It will also be made clear that disciplinary action as a result of the guidance session is unlikely. Such action cannot, however, be ruled out completely, as the reason for the disclosure made to one teacher shortly after a discovery made by another. If possible, counselling will be arranged by the Academy.

### **7.1. Emergency**

This situation is one where a person has lost consciousness as a result of drug use or has gone into a coma through overdosing. The Academy's normal emergency procedure should be followed:

- i. summon staff with first aid qualifications;
- ii. do not panic or leave the person alone;
- iii. place the person in the recovery position;
- iv. telephone 999 for an ambulance;
- v. contact a senior member of staff or Progress Leader;
- vi. telephone parents;
- vii. the person's friends should be questioned to determine which substance has been used; evidence, e.g. tablets, bottles, syringes, etc. should be gathered; this may help hospital staff identify what substance has been taken; samples of any vomited material may also be needed;
- viii. afterwards, allow the member of staff some time to unwind; s/he may be in a state of shock and may benefit from the support of other people;
- ix. record all information on the appropriate form.

### **7.2. Intoxication**

It is difficult to talk to a person who is intoxicated or 'high' and in such a situation it is important to keep the person under observation so s/he does not wander off and get into dangerous situations. If a person is intoxicated but conscious, the following actions should be taken:

- i. sit her/him down in a quiet room or area;
- ii. ensure good ventilation; open a window;
- iii. remain calm; do not shout or issue threats;
- iv. help calm her/him down if s/he is distressed;
- v. first aid should be administered if necessary;
- vi. contact a senior member of staff or Progress Leader;

- vii. telephone parents;
- viii. record all information on the appropriate form.

**7.3. Disclosure**

This situation is one in which a student discloses to a member of staff that s/he has been using drugs. The member of staff must bear in mind the likely desire of the student for total confidentiality and should react positively to this expression of trust. However, the member of staff should make the student aware that it may not be possible for the information to remain totally confidential and that certain people may have to be informed, e.g. a properly trained counsellor either within or outside the Academy or the named person for child protection. The paramount concern should be for the student’s welfare.

**7.4. Suspicion/Rumour**

Staff should be wary about acting on the basis of rumours of drugs within the Academy. However, if the Academy has been notified by parents, students or members of the community that there is a concern over using or distributing of drugs then, in the interest of students’ health and safety the Progress Leader or a member of the Senior Leadership Team may need to discuss these issues immediately with both students and parents of the students concerned. It is also erroneous to believe that the drug user can be spotted from physical or behavioural signs, many physical and behavioural changes may have more to do with adolescent growth than with substance use.

**8. MONITORING AND REVIEW**

The Vice Principal (Student Development and Well-being) will report on the Drugs Policy to the Principal as appropriate.

The Principal will report to the Governors’ Student Well-being Committee on any relevant aspects of the working of the Policy as appropriate.

The Governing Body will review the Policy every two years.

Academy staff were consulted on this document and it was accepted by the Operations & Assets Committee on:	
It was ratified by the Governing Body on:	