



THOMAS GAINSBOROUGH SCHOOL DRUGS POLICY

'DRUGS' REFERS TO ALL DRUGS INCLUDING MEDICINES, VOLATILE SUBSTANCES, ALCOHOL AND TOBACCO.

Date of Policy: September 2017

Date of Review: September 2019

INTRODUCTION

At Thomas Gainsborough School, we are aware of the complexity of risks to young people, at home, at school and in the wider community so cannot afford to be complacent. We consider it important that all our students are given information, empowering them to make informed decisions and helping to build their self-esteem.

- The school does not condone the misuse or supply of drugs and alcohol by members of the school, or community.
- The school is committed to the health and safety of its members and will take action to safeguard the well being of all its members.
- The school acknowledges the importance of its pastoral role in the welfare of young people and through the general ethos of the school.

In response to our shared concerns at a local and a national level, the school has a duty to inform and educate young people on the consequences of drug use and misuse in society. The school is pro-active on this matter, believing that Health Education is an integral part of the Personal, Social and Health Education of every student.

Fundamental to our school's values and practice is the principle of sharing with parents/guardians the responsibility for the education of young people, by keeping them informed and involved as much as possible. Effective communication and co-operation are essential to the successful implementation of this policy.

Whilst we acknowledge that there are a number of young people who use substances it is important to recognise that larger numbers of young people are choosing not to. We will continue to support their differing educational needs.

AIMS

To raise the self-esteem of students

- To provide accurate information about substances
- To enable students to make healthy informed choices, by developing knowledge and challenging attitudes.
- To increase understanding about the implications of, and possible consequences of, substance use and to seek to minimise the risks that young people face in society.
- To widen understanding about related social and health issues, such as HIV and Hepatitis B.
- To enable young people to identify and access sources of appropriate support.

These aims are fulfilled through aspects of the students' experience in both the formal and the informal curriculum. We deliver drugs education in the taught curriculum mainly through PSHE but a wide range of opportunities to reinforce learning occurs in other parts of the teaching programme.

The school works in partnership with other agencies, such as Social Services, LA and Health and Drug agencies to deliver its commitment to Drugs Education and to deal with drug related incidents.

Outside speakers supporting the school will be informed of the values held within this policy.

THE LAW ON DRUGS

The definition of a drug given by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime is:

A substance people take to change the way they feel, think or behave.

The terms 'drugs' and 'drug education', unless otherwise stated, are used throughout this document to refer to all drugs.

- all illegal drugs (those controlled by the Misuse of Drugs Act 2001)
- 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

PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH SUSPECTED DRUGS RELATED INCIDENTS IN SCHOOL

Use of prescribed drugs, on school premises, should be under the strict guidance of the GP and where necessary stored with Student Services.

General

In the event of hearing reports of possible misuse or involvement with illegal substances, a member of staff should inform first the Group Tutor verbally and in writing; he/she may already have background knowledge. The tutor passes this information to the Assistant Head teacher, Student Support. Students considered to be at risk will be offered support from the Student Support Team; whilst we do not consider it to be our role to offer counselling, students may be directed to a Support Agency or the school nurse. We cannot guarantee confidentiality and in as many cases as possible we will be seeking to involve parents/guardians.

Intoxication

In the event of students' intoxication, staff should send a reliable pupil for a member of staff or an appropriate adult. A First-Aider may also be necessary. Under no circumstances should the student be left alone with other students. If deemed necessary a student will be asked to empty their bags and a locker search will be conducted.

Possession

If students are found using illegal or controlled substances, they should be escorted to the Head teacher or a member of the Senior Leadership Team, who will inform parents/guardians and the police if necessary. Staff should beware of making direct accusations and should not attempt to remove the substance from the student. The substance will be removed to a secure place and the parents/guardians informed and the police will be informed. If deemed necessary a student will be asked to empty their bags and a locker search will be conducted.

Police may interview students on the premises, with the consent of the Headteacher, provided that efforts have been made to contact the parents/guardians. Interviews should be conducted with an appropriate adult present. .

If required the Head teacher will hold a prepared statement for media release agreed by the Governing Body; no one else should speak with the Press.

In the event of a drugs related incident, the CEO of the Samuel Ward Academy Trust and the Chair of the Governing Body or his/her Vice-Chair in his/her absence will be informed immediately by the Headteacher.

Discipline procedures

Intoxication

Once the student has been removed to a place of safety, the parents/guardians will be contacted and asked to collect their son/daughter. The parents/guardians will be asked in to school, to discuss the incident and to ensure that there is no recurrence. The parents/guardians will be given contact numbers of local support agencies and counselling will be recommended. The student will receive fixed term exclusion.

Possession/supplying

Similar procedures will be followed if a student is found in possession of illegal substances or solvents (see above). If we have absolute knowledge of possession, we are duty bound to inform parents/guardians and the police will be contacted.

Supplying drugs may be harder to define. If a student is found in possession of anything other than a very small amount of illegal substances, we will assume intent to supply.

The level of proof should be high but does not have to be absolute.

The Head teacher should consider on the balance of probabilities, whether the offence had been committed. Reliable witness statements would constitute proof.

It would not be necessary for a student to be caught red-handed or to be caught in possession.

Money does not have to change hands to qualify as 'supplying' drugs.

As with possession, the parents /guardians will be informed and the police. If supplying other students in school is proven, the student will be permanently excluded.

Drug-related exclusions

- Supplying an illegal drug is always a serious breach of school rules. Even for a one off or first offence, the Headteacher will judge that an incident involving supply of an illegal drug warrants permanent exclusion.
- A first instance of possession or use of a harmful or illegal substance could result in a permanent exclusion or fixed term exclusion depending on the circumstances.
- A second instance of possession or use of a harmful or illegal substance (throughout the period of a student's school life) will result in a permanent exclusion.
- A first instance of supplying (with or without charge) harmful or illegal substances will result in a permanent exclusion.

"In exceptional cases when a school decides to exclude permanently for supply of an illegal drug, repeated possession and/or use of an illegal drug on school premises, the Secretary of State would not normally expect the Governors' Discipline Committee or an Independent Appeal Panel to reinstate the pupil"

(Drugs: Guidance for Schools. DfES/0205/2003)

The following factors will have been considered:

- a proper investigation will have been carried out;
- all evidence available will have been considered to support the allegations, taking account of the school's behaviour and equal opportunities policies;
- the pupil will have been allowed to give their version of events;
- a check will have taken place to establish whether the incident(s) may have been provoked for example, by bullying or by racial or sexual harassment.

ORGANISATION OF THE SCHOOL DRUGS EDUCATION PROGRAMME

The substance co-ordinator will take responsibility for planning the drug education programme in conjunction with the Head of Science, the Assistant Heads and the PSHE/SMSC Co-ordinator. The programme will be delivered in some Science lessons, but mainly through Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE). It is recognised that basic training is required for all staff, including non-teachers in the awareness and delivery of drugs education. The emphasis in drugs education lessons will be on informing students of the facts and laws about drugs of all types and on building their self-esteem, rather than lecturing. The programme will also cover the effects of nicotine, e-cigarettes and alcohol.

Specific Issues

Parents/Carers need to be aware of the school policy and involved wherever possible. There are opportunities for staff to participate in drugs awareness sessions. Liaison with other agencies such as the Police, Educational Welfare Officer and support groups takes place frequently. When outside speakers are invited in to school and awareness of the school's ethos and policy will be given.

The policy will be reviewed on a biannual basis, with feedback to the Governing Body and parents/carers.

