



# **Drugs and Substance Abuse Policy**

**Agreed by Governors: Spring 2026**

**To be reviewed: Spring 2029**

### **Aims of this policy**

- To clarify the legal requirements and responsibilities of the school
- To reinforce and safeguard the health and safety of students and the whole school community
- To clarify the school's approach to drugs for all staff, students, governors, parents/carers, external agencies and the wider community
- To give guidance on developing, implementing and monitoring the drug education programme
- To clarify the procedures for responding to and managing any drug-related incidents that may occur so that they are managed with confidence and consistency and in the best interests of those involved
- To ensure that the response to incidents involving drugs and the drug education programme complement the values and ethos of the school
- To provide a basis for evaluating the effectiveness of the school drug education programme and the management of incidents involving illegal and other unauthorised drugs
- To reinforce the role of the school in contributing to local and national strategies.

### **Policy context**

As part of their statutory duty to promote students' wellbeing, schools have a clear role to play in preventing drug and substance misuse. The Drugs Education Policy has been developed with reference to Department for Education advice and guidance: DfE and ACPO drug advice for schools (DfE-000012012) which is non-statutory and was produced to help answer some of the most common questions raised by school staff in this area.

The drugs education of students takes into account the statutory requirements within the National Curriculum.

Other related policies and documents include

- PSHE and Citizenship Policies
- Child Protection/Safeguarding Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Medical information

### **Where and to whom the policy applies**

This policy applies to all school staff, students, parents/carers, governors and other partner agencies working with the school. The policy applies to the school premises, the school day, while travelling to and from school, journeys in school time, work experience, day and residential trips and when the school is deemed to be in loco parentis.

### **Definition of 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". Here, "drugs" and "drug education" is used to refer to

- 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, alkyl nitrites (known as poppers) and new psychoactive drugs ('legal highs')
- all over-the-counter and prescription medicines.

### **The school's stance towards drugs, health and the needs of students**

The possession, use or supply of illegal and other unauthorised drugs in Dothill School is not acceptable. The school is committed to safeguarding the health, safety and wellbeing of all members of the school community. In providing drugs education and education relating to substance misuse and responding to incidents involving drugs, our first concern is the pastoral care and health and safety of students.

### **Drugs Education**

#### **Aims of Drug Education**

Drug education is a major component of drug prevention.

The following aims of drug education at Dothill will be consistent with the values and ethos of the school and laws of society as well as being appropriate to the age, ability and maturity of the students, and relevant to their particular circumstances:

- To increase students' knowledge and understanding and clarify misconceptions about
  - the short and long-term effects and risks of both legal and illegal drugs
  - the rules and laws relating to both legal and illegal drugs
  - the impact of drug/substance misuse on individuals, families and communities
  - local and national use
  - the complex moral, social, emotional and political issues surrounding drug/substance misuse
  - the risk associated with 'county lines' and gang-related drugs issues
- To develop students' personal and social skills to make informed decisions and keep themselves safe and healthy, including
  - promoting positive attitudes to healthy lifestyles
  - assessing, avoiding and managing risk
  - communicating effectively
  - resisting pressures
  - finding information, help and advice
  - devising problem-solving and coping strategies
  - developing and maintaining self-awareness and self-esteem in order to motivate them to value their welfare and conscientious care of themselves
- To enable students to explore their own and other peoples' experience towards drugs, drug use and drug users, including challenging stereotypes, and exploring media and social influences
- To ensure that children have access to and knowledge of up to date information as sources of help. This includes local and national helplines, local youth and community services and drug services. These sources are used in addition to the school's own drug and alcohol education, plus the STAR programme delivered by Telford and Wrekin community police.

## **Drug Education Content**

Dothill provides a planned drug education curriculum through the National Curriculum in Science, PSHE and Citizenship. Other curriculum areas such as Religious Education and Physical Education also contribute to aspects of the drug education curriculum.

### **Organisation**

#### a) Delivery

Discreet lessons as part of the STAR programme of study in all key stages. The STAR lessons, which have a specific drugs education focus, are delivered by Telford and Wrekin community police. Other staff who may deliver specific aspects of Drug Education will have access to on-going advice, support and appropriate training as part of their own professional development.

#### b) Visitors

Occasionally, appropriate and suitably experienced and/or knowledgeable visitors from outside school may be invited to contribute to the delivery of drug education e.g. Loud Mouth theatre group, CSOs etc.

#### c) Teaching strategies

A variety of teaching strategies are used including teacher exposition, discussion, project learning, research, questionnaires, quizzes, distancing techniques, DVD, on-line materials, external contributors, individual and group work, peer education, case

studies, media analysis, structured games, reflection. Active learning methods are used at all times.

#### d) Students with special educational needs (SEN)

Relevant staff will ensure that drug education is accessible to students with special educational needs by considering resources and materials used, timings, teaching strategies etc.

#### e) Resources

A wide variety of materials is available to teachers and for inspection by parents on request.

#### f) Monitoring and evaluation

This is conducted through some lesson observation and book scrutiny from SLT, Science and PSHE curriculum leaders.

## **Management of drug-related incidents**

### **Defining a drug-related incident**

Drug-related incidents include any or all of the following:

- drugs or drugs paraphernalia found on school premises
- children in possession of illegal or unauthorised drugs
- children supplying unauthorised or illegal drugs
- children under the influence of drugs, or exhibiting signs of intoxication or illness
- disclosure of drug use
- information which suggests children are involved in substance misuse

- illegitimate sale/supply of drugs in the school vicinity
- involvement in 'county line' or gang-related drug issues

**If there are any suspicions, observations, disclosures or discoveries of situations involving illegal and other unauthorised drugs (possession, supply or imbibing):**

- Utmost priority will be placed on safety, meeting any medical emergencies with first aid and summoning appropriate help before addressing further issues. If in doubt, medical assistance will be sought immediately.
- The Headteacher or an available member of SLT will be informed of the situation immediately.
- Dialogue with the student(s) will be undertaken by the Headteacher or a member of SLT as soon as possible in order to determine the facts. The emphasis will be on listening to what people have to say and asking open rather than closed or leading questions. Consideration will be given to separating any students involved in the incident and ensuring that a second adult witness is present.
- The Headteacher or a member of SLT will inform, consult and involve others as necessary. Careful attention will be given to respecting the confidentiality of those involved.
- Where they have reasonable grounds for suspecting that a student(s) may have an illegal or unauthorised drug, they will be escorted to a senior member of staff who will make every effort to encourage the individual to hand the item(s) over voluntarily, in the presence of a second member of staff. Where possible the gender of the member of staff carrying out a search will correspond to the gender of the student. Where the individual refuses, the Headteacher, or member of staff authorised by them, may exercise their statutory power to search the student(s) or their possessions, without consent. Education and Inspections Act 2006 (s93)
- Staff may search school property if they believe drugs to be stored there. Prior consent will always be sought. Individuals will be made aware that if consent is refused the school may wish to proceed with a search.
- After any search involving students, parents/carers will normally be contacted by the school, regardless of whether the result of the search was positive or negative.
- Any substance suspected of being a drug will be confiscated. In taking temporary possession of a suspected substance, a second adult witness will be present, the sample will be sealed in a plastic bag with details of the date, time and witness present and then locked in the security cupboard. If the substance is suspected to be an illegal drug, the police will be notified immediately, in order that they may collect it for identification and then store or dispose of it in line with locally agreed protocols. In the majority of cases, parents will be notified immediately unless this is not in the best interests of the student.
- A detailed record of the incident will be made by the Headteacher or DSL. A copy of the record will be kept by the Headteacher and DSL. There will be no other copies of the incidents.
- The school will maintain vigilance about drug-related incidents in the local community through contact with police and other relevant agencies.

**Responses to drug/substance related incidents**

The school will consider each incident individually and will employ a range of responses to deal with each incident. Any response will balance the needs of the individual with those of the wider community and will aim to provide students with the opportunity to learn from their mistakes and develop as individuals.

- i. While there is no legal obligation to inform the police, if an offence against the Misuse of Drugs Act is suspected or substantiated, it will be appropriate to consider contacting the police. If so, the Headteacher, or member of staff authorised by them, will make the call.
- ii. If necessary, an urgent meeting will take place on the same day as the incident, or as soon as possible (between the Headteacher and appropriate member of SLT) in order to decide whether others outside the school should be informed. These may include parents/carers, the appropriate personnel in the LA, Childrens' Social Care and police.
- iii. Responses to / sanctions against students who commit drug offences will be decided following dialogue between the Headteacher, appropriate member(s) of staff, Drugs Liaison Officer and other appropriate colleagues.
  - Possible responses include:
    - targeted intervention
    - referral
    - counselling
    - behaviour support plans
    - inter-agency programmes
    - pastoral support programmes
  - Responses and sanctions will consider:
    - the seriousness of the incident
    - the short- and long-term welfare of the student(s) concerned
    - the short- and long-term welfare of other students
    - guidance in DfE and ACPO drug advice for schools (DfE-00001-2012)
    - consistency with published school rules, codes and expectations
- iv. The Headteacher will take responsibility for liaison with the media if required.

### **Early Intervention**

The school has a key role in identifying students at risk of drug misuse. The process of identifying needs should aim to distinguish between students who require general information, those who could benefit from targeted prevention, and those who require a detailed needs assessment and more intensive support.

The school will also be alert to behaviour which might indicate that the child is/has experiencing adverse childhood experiences. Where problems are observed or suspected or if a child chooses to disclose that there are difficulties at home, safeguarding procedures will be followed.

### **Tobacco-smoke Free School**

Dothill is a non-smoking/ vaping school for all staff, students and visitors.

### **Role of the Governors**

As part of their general responsibilities for the strategic direction of the school, governors have a key role to play in reviewing and monitoring this policy.

## **Dissemination**

All staff, parents/carers and students will be reminded of this policy and its procedures on a regular basis. Details are in the Staff Handbook.

The policy and schemes of work are available on request to parents through the Headteacher

## **Annex A - References:**

'Drug Strategy 2010 2010 HM Government Reducing demand, restricting Supply, building recovery: Supporting people to live a drug free life'

'DfE and ACPO drug advice for schools' Sept 2012 DfE

'Smoking, drinking and use survey - 2009' April 2012 DfE

PSHEE Key Stage 3 & 4 PoS Nov 2011 DfE (non-statutory programme of study)

Science and Citizenship Key Stage 3 & 4 PoS Nov 2011 DfE

## **Annex B – Useful Organisations**

Addaction is one of the UK's largest specialist drug and alcohol treatment charities. As well as adult services, they provide services specifically tailored to the needs of young people and their parents. The Skills for Life project supports young people with drug misusing parents.

Website: [www.addaction.org.uk](http://www.addaction.org.uk)

ADFAM offers information to families of drug and alcohol users, and the website has a database of local family support services.

Tel: 020 7553 7640

Email: [admin@adfam.org.uk](mailto:admin@adfam.org.uk)

Website: [www.adfam.org.uk](http://www.adfam.org.uk)

Alcohol Concern works to reduce the incidence and costs of alcohol-related harm and to increase the range and quality of services available to people with alcohol-related problems

Tel: 020 7264 0510.

Email: [contact@alcoholconcern.org.uk](mailto:contact@alcoholconcern.org.uk)

Website: [www.alcoholconcern.org.uk](http://www.alcoholconcern.org.uk)

ASH (Action on Smoking and Health) A campaigning public health charity aiming to reduce the health problems caused by tobacco.

Tel: 020 7739 5902

Email: [enquiries@ash.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@ash.org.uk)

Website: [www.ash.org.uk](http://www.ash.org.uk)

Children's Legal Centre operates a free and confidential legal advice and information service covering all aspects of law and policy affecting children and young people.

Tel: 01206 877910

Email: [clc@essex.ac.uk](mailto:clc@essex.ac.uk)

Website: [www.childrenslegalcentre.com](http://www.childrenslegalcentre.com)

Children's Rights Alliance for England - A charity working to improve the lives and status of all children in England through the fullest implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Email: [info@crae.org.uk](mailto:info@crae.org.uk)

Website: [www.crae.org.uk](http://www.crae.org.uk)

Drinkaware - An independent charity that promotes responsible drinking through innovative ways to challenge the national drinking culture, helping reduce alcohol misuse and minimise alcohol related harm.

Tel: 020 7307 7450

Website: [www.drinkaware.co.uk/](http://www.drinkaware.co.uk/)

Drinkline - A free and confidential helpline for anyone who is concerned about their own or someone else's drinking.

Tel: 0800 917 8282 (lines are open 24 hours a day)

Drug Education Forum – this website contains a number of useful papers and briefing sheets for use by practitioners:

Website: [www.drugeducationforum.com/](http://www.drugeducationforum.com/)

DrugScope is a centre of expertise on illegal drugs, aiming to inform policy development and reduce drug-related risk. The website includes detailed drug information and access to the Information and Library Service. DrugScope also hosts the Drug Education Practitioners Forum.

Tel: 020 7520 7550

Email: [info@drugscope.org.uk](mailto:info@drugscope.org.uk)

Website: [www.drugscope.org.uk](http://www.drugscope.org.uk)

FRANK is the national drugs awareness campaign aiming to raise awareness amongst young people of the risks of illegal drugs, and to provide information and advice. It also provides support to parents/carers, helping to give them the skills and confidence to communicate with their children about drugs.

24 Hour Helpline: 0800 776600

Email: [frank@talktofrank.com](mailto:frank@talktofrank.com)

Website: [www.talktofrank.com](http://www.talktofrank.com)

Mentor UK is a non-government organisation with a focus on protecting the health and wellbeing of children and young people to reduce the damage that drugs can do to their lives.

Tel: 020 7739 8494.

Email [admin@mentoruk.org](mailto:admin@mentoruk.org)

Website: [www.mentoruk.org.uk](http://www.mentoruk.org.uk)

National Children's Bureau promotes the interests and well-being of all children and young people across every aspect of their lives.

Tel: 020 7843 6000

Website: [www.ncb.org.uk](http://www.ncb.org.uk)

Family Lives - A charity offering support and information to anyone parenting a child or teenager. It runs a free-phone helpline and courses for parents, and develops innovative projects.

Tel: 0800 800 2222

Website: <http://familylives.org.uk/>

Re-Solv (Society for the Prevention of Solvent and Volatile Substance Abuse) A national charity providing information for teachers, other professionals, parents and young people.

Tel: 01785 817885

Information line: 01785 810762

Email: [information@re-solv.org](mailto:information@re-solv.org)

Website: [www.re-solv.org](http://www.re-solv.org)

Smokefree - NHS Smoking Helpline: 0800 169 0 169

Website: <http://smokefree.nhs.uk>

Stars National Initiative offers support for anyone working with children, young people and families affected by parental drug and alcohol misuse.

Website: [www.starsnationalinitiative.org.uk](http://www.starsnationalinitiative.org.uk)

Youth Offending Teams – Local Youth Offending Teams are multi-agency teams and are the responsibility of the local authority, who have a statutory duty to [prevent offending by young people under the age of 18.

Website: <https://www.gov.uk/youth-offending-team>