

Drugs and Other Substances Policy

This policy should be read in conjunction with the school Behaviour Policy.

It is the aim of Radnor House to help all pupils to be able to take their place safely in a world where a wide range of drugs and other substances exist. Young people face growing pressures to use or experiment with controlled drugs, alcohol, tobacco and other substances. Our purpose at Radnor House is to do all we can to reduce these pressures, to educate children about the risks of involvement with drugs and to maintain an environment free from illegal drugs and from the temptation to use illegal drugs and other harmful or potentially harmful substances.

The responsibility for the education of our pupils is shared with parents, and effective communication and co-operation are essential to the implementation of this policy. The school offers advice to parents and also hopes that parents will share concerns with the school should they consider their child is involved in illegal drug usage. Parents are asked to give their wholehearted support to these aims.

It is also our purpose at Radnor House:

- to ensure compliance with the criminal law, under which it is an offence for any person to possess, use, supply or sell controlled drugs or for the school to allow its premises to be used for those purposes;
- to help develop in each of our pupils the moral courage to reject those parts of 'youth culture' which may be harmful to their health, integrity, independence, opportunities and respect for the law;
- to maintain the integrity of the school community, to reflect the wishes of parents, and to provide support and confidential counselling for those who may otherwise be tempted to take risks or experiment with illegal drugs;
- to provide a firm disciplinary framework for dealing with pupils who bring illegal drugs into school and use or tempt others to use them at or away from school premises. Pupils involved with illegal drugs in this way can expect to be asked to leave the school;
- to increase understanding of the implications and possible consequences of use and misuse, and the law;
- to provide pupils with accurate information about drugs and other harmful or potentially harmful substances and make them aware of consequences of substance misuse, thus to enable pupils to make informed choices by increasing knowledge, challenging attitudes and developing coping strategies;
- to actively discourage the use of illegal drugs and to treat cases of illegal drug usage by pupils as serious misconduct, which will be investigated, and which may lead to the imposition of serious sanctions against pupils.

Availability:

This policy is made available to parents, staff and pupils in the following ways: via the school website, within the Parent Policies Folder in the reception area, and on request from the school office.

Monitoring and Review:

- This policy is subject to continuous monitoring, refinement and audit by the Principal.
- The Principal undertakes a formal annual review of this policy.

Signed

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Amy Cavilla', written in a cursive style.

Amy Cavilla
Principal
September 2024

1 Drugs

1.1 Terminology

In this policy, the term 'drugs' refers to controlled drugs and substances, illegal drugs and substances, including but not limited to cannabis, cocaine, heroin, ecstasy, LSD or amphetamines or substances intended to resemble drugs. In the appropriate context, it also refers to anabolic steroids, legal drugs obtainable on or off prescription, and/or all other substances that, when abused, may damage the health, safety and welfare of a pupil, including but not limited to solvents, alcohol and tobacco. Involvement with drugs includes the possession, use, supplying and dealing with drugs or the paraphernalia of drugs.

1.2 Rationale

The Drugs Policy at Radnor House reflects the school's values, ethos and aims, in that it seeks to educate young people and to nurture their talents and potential so that each one may become a confident, responsible and useful member of society. It also seeks to send a clear moral message to pupils that drugs are dangerous and involvement with drugs is wrong.

Radnor House considers that the use of drugs is likely to undermine a pupil's health, safety, independence, opportunities and respect for the law. The use of drugs will also damage the integrity of the school community by exposing other pupils to temptation and to the risk of criminal proceedings. We strongly and actively discourage the use of drugs and a drugs 'culture'.

A continuing and progressive programme of education about drugs is maintained throughout the school, both as part of the Reflections programme and as part of the academic curriculum. The drugs education programme also provides pupils with information about drugs, including their effects and dangers, and details of the law concerning drugs.

No pupil (or parent) at Radnor House School may bring illegal drugs on to school premises or use them during approved school activities, e.g. sports fixtures, day and residential trips, DofE expeditions, etc. Pupils must expect to be excluded permanently from school, regardless of whether or not the pupil is about to take public examinations.

If a pupil is in the company of another pupil or pupils who are caught using an illegal drug (or any substance that contravenes this policy), the school reserves the right to deal with the matter as a breach of school discipline.

A pupil found to have supplied or used or been in possession of drugs or other illegal substances is likely to be required to leave the school immediately.

If any pupil comes to a member of staff for help or advice over drugs, the school will do its best to respond sympathetically. At the same time, the school's prime duty is to protect other pupils and the reputation of the school. No one has the right to conceal evidence that the law is being broken. The police will be informed of any pupil who is believed to be breaking the law.

If the school has reasonable grounds for suspecting that a pupil is in possession of a prohibited item – including alcohol, illegal drugs, tobacco, cigarette papers and other substances referred to in this policy – they can search the pupil, and seize any prohibited item found as a result of a search. The school can also seize any item it considers harmful or detrimental to school discipline. Searches are conducted following the advice from the Department for Education contained within their publication 'Screening, searching and confiscation - advice for headteachers, school staff and governing bodies', DfE January 2018.

1.3 Aims

- To reinforce and safeguard the health, safety and welfare of each pupil and of the school community;
- To ensure legal compliance where it is unlawful for any person to possess, use, supply or sell controlled drugs;
- To provide pupils with accurate information about drugs and other harmful substances and to make them aware of the consequences of drugs and substance misuse;
- To promote a healthy lifestyle through informed judgements;
- To help develop the moral courage to reject peer group pressures which may lead to experimentation with, and thereby use of, drugs;
- To actively discourage the use of drugs and to treat cases of drugs usage by pupils as serious misconduct, which will be investigated and which, if proven, will result in serious sanctions being imposed;
- To ensure that all staff, both teaching and support staff, are fully aware of the school's policy towards drugs and that they have received appropriate training and guidance to help them to implement the policy in a consistent manner.

1.4 Responsibilities

Principal – reviews the Drugs Policy and ensures that staff are aware of the content of the policy.

Head & Deputy Head Pastoral – draw up, implement and ensure that the Drugs Policy is appropriately known to pupils.

Reflections Co-ordinator – draws up, implements and reviews the drugs education programme to respond to the needs of pupils and external influences.

Reflections Teachers – deliver the school's drugs education programme through the PSHEE curriculum and give feedback to the Reflections Coordinator about the effectiveness of the programme.

Heads of Department – ensure that, within their departments, where appropriate, opportunities are taken to reinforce the school's policy on drugs and to deliver the appropriate drugs education, as detailed in the drugs education programme.

Subject Teachers – deliver the appropriate drugs education in the classroom.

School Nurse – supports and advises staff and pupils by providing appropriate up to date information about medical issues relating to drugs.

All Staff – Drugs prevention and education are whole school issues. All staff, both teaching and support, must be aware of the school's policy and how it relates to them, should they have to deal with a drugs-related incident. The staff must be committed to putting into practice the school's values, ethos and aims.

1.5 Implementation

All pupils in the school receive a progressive and age-appropriate programme of drugs education. This is delivered through the Reflections programme and through academic subjects where appropriate.

The school is vigilant with regard to drugs related issues, which includes teaching and support staff being alert to warning signs of drugs or other abuse. Staff receive appropriate training to recognise evidence of drugs abuse and to deal with drugs-related issues should they arise.

If any suspicion of drugs use arises, it is reported immediately to the Principal, who decides if further investigation is warranted. If it is confirmed that there are reasonable grounds for suspecting that a pupil may have been using drugs, further investigations are conducted.

The school will investigate any rumour about involvement with illegal drugs or substances. The investigation may involve segregating a pupil for no longer than necessary; asking him/her questions; asking him/her to give a written account of particular circumstances; searching his/her personal belongings; taking possession of property for analysis; and/or asking the pupil to provide a urine sample under appropriate supervision. Investigations will be conducted fairly and in accordance with natural justice.

The pupil will have reasonable access to a telephone, toilet, food and drink and will not be left unaccompanied for long periods of time. Interviews will normally be conducted by the Head and/or Pastoral Deputy Head in the presence of the pupil's Head of Year, Form Tutor or another teacher. Sources of information will not normally be disclosed. Parents will be kept informed so far as practicable.

1.6 Searching

Before any search is undertaken, consent will usually be sought from parents or from the pupil if s/he is of sufficient maturity and understanding. The member of staff leading the search will determine whether or not the pupil is able to provide this consent and may request the additional opinion of a medically qualified member of staff if required. If the pupil refuses consent, s/he will be asked to say why he has refused, and this will be taken into account in any subsequent disciplinary procedure. The school will be entitled to draw inferences from the response and general demeanour and the police may be informed. If a parent refuses consent, the school may draw inferences from the parent's general demeanour and the police may be informed.

Searches without consent: In relation to alcohol and prohibited items as defined in Section 2 of the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971, the Principal, and staff authorised by the Principal, may search a pupil or a pupil's possessions, without consent, where they have reasonable grounds for suspecting that a pupil has a prohibited item in their possession.

Searches generally: If staff believe a pupil possesses or has stored drugs, other substances and/or paraphernalia used in the taking of drugs and other substances, it may be appropriate for a member of staff to carry out:

- a search of outer clothing; and/or
- a search of school property, e.g. pupils' lockers or desks; and/or
- a search of personal property (e.g. bag or pencil case within a locker).

Searches will be conducted in such a manner as to minimise embarrassment or distress. Any search of a pupil or their possessions will be carried out in the presence of the pupil and another member of staff. Where a pupil is searched, the searcher and the second member of staff present will be the same gender as the pupil.

Where the Principal, or staff authorised by the Principal, find anything which they have reasonable grounds for suspecting is a prohibited item, they may seize, retain and dispose of that item.

2 Alcohol

2.1 Rationale

For many, the drinking of alcohol is a sociable and enjoyable part of our British culture and tradition. However, the abuse of alcohol can result in many problems in our society, i.e. crime, violence and accidents. The risks to health posed by alcohol abuse have also long been established. There may also be a risk of addiction. As a school, we believe that it is our responsibility to do all we reasonably can to educate our pupils about alcohol and prevent them from abusing it or becoming addicted.

2.2 Prevention

The school brings the risks of alcohol abuse to the attention of pupils in the following ways:

- for each year group, as part of the structured Reflections and SRE programme: material appropriate to their age is presented to pupils, with the opportunity for subsequent discussions in lessons and in tutor time;
- for pupils in science classes: the topic is referenced in Key Stage 4 courses;
- for all pupils: the School Nurse ensures that health promotion posters are displayed. Literature and other advice are freely available to any pupil who seeks help.

2.3 Consequences

In cases where pupils are found to have purchased, or be in possession of, or to have consumed alcohol, or where a pupil is found suffering from the effects of alcohol abuse, the response from the school seeks to meet three aims:

- to provide a deterrent to the pupil and to others;
- to persuade the pupil not to abuse alcohol in the future;
- to support the pupil in their efforts not to abuse alcohol in the future.

Support is offered through discussions with the pupil, parents and pastoral staff. The School Nurse may also be involved.

Sanctions will be applied in proportion to the level of seriousness, in accordance with the school's Behaviour Policy, up to and including a pupil being asked to leave the school in the most serious case.

Pupils should be aware that those found in the company of drinkers will be treated as drinkers, and dealt with in the same way.

3 Tobacco

3.1 Rationale

The risks to health posed by smoking tobacco and e-cigarettes have long been established. As well as the potential harm caused by addiction to nicotine, there may also be an attendant risk of starting a fire when smoking a traditional cigarette. As a school, we believe that it is our responsibility to do all we reasonably can to deter our pupils from starting, or continuing, a potentially addictive habit. Smoking or the possession of cigarettes, or e-cigarettes, by pupils is therefore forbidden on the school site, on school buses and on any school trip or activity involving time spent away from the school.

3.2 Prevention

The school brings the risks of smoking to the attention of pupils in the following ways:

- for each year group, as part of the structured Reflections programme: material appropriate to their age is presented to pupils, with the opportunity for subsequent discussions in tutor groups;
- for pupils in science classes: the topic is referenced in Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 courses;
- for all pupils: the School Nurse ensures that health promotion posters concerning smoking are displayed. Literature and other advice is freely available to any pupil who seeks help.

3.3 Consequences

In cases where pupils are found smoking or in possession of cigarettes, the response from the school seeks to meet three aims:

- to provide a deterrent to the pupil and to others;
- to persuade the pupil not to smoke in the future;
- to support the pupil in their efforts not to smoke in the future.

Support is offered through discussions with the pupil, parents and pastoral staff. The School Nurse may also be involved.

Sanctions will be applied in proportion to the level of seriousness, in accordance with the Behaviour Policy, up to and including a pupil being asked to leave the school in the most serious case.

Pupils should be aware that those found in the company of smokers will be treated as smokers, and dealt with in the same way.

4 Solvent Abuse

4.1 Rationale

Solvent abuse can take many forms. For the purposes of this policy, the term 'solvent abuse' includes any activity in which a pupil deliberately inhales fumes which have an intoxicating or sedative effect. The policy covers lighter fluid, glues and other commercially available products, in addition to organic solvents and products not usually on sale to the public.

Solvent abuse is generally not illegal, though the attendant risks can exceed those associated with abuse of illegal drugs, alcohol and tobacco, with statistics showing that one in four first time experiences of solvent abuse prove fatal. As a school, we believe that it is our responsibility to do all we reasonably can to deter our pupils from participating in such a potentially dangerous activity.

4.2 Prevention

The school brings the risks of solvent and drug abuse to the attention of pupils in the following ways:

- as part of the structured Reflections programme: material appropriate to their age presented to pupils, with the opportunity for subsequent discussions in tutor groups;
- for pupils in science classes: the broad topic of harmful substances is raised in Key Stage 4 courses.

4.3 Consequences

In cases where pupils have taken part in solvent abuse, the response from the school seeks to meet three aims:

- to provide a deterrent to the pupil and to others;
- to persuade the pupil not to repeat the activity in the future;
- to support the pupil in their efforts not to repeat the activity in the future.

Support is offered through discussions with the pupil, parents and pastoral staff. The School Nurse may also be involved.

Sanctions will be applied in proportion to the level of seriousness, in accordance with the Behaviour Policy, up to and including a pupil being asked to leave the school in the most serious case.

5 Parents

If parents attending school premises appear to be under the influence of drugs, including alcohol, they will be asked to leave, and the member of staff making the request should refer the matter to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead.

If a member of staff suspects that a parent has driven or will drive while under the influence of drugs or alcohol, the member of staff should report the matter to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, or a member of the senior leadership team, who may telephone the police.

If the Designated Safeguarding Lead reasonably believes that a child is at immediate risk of harm from a parent who is under the influence of drugs or alcohol, the child will not be released into the care of the parent and the school's safeguarding procedures will be followed.