



Substance Misuse Policy

Approved by Headteacher: October 2025

Review Date: October 2027

Introduction

Wickham Church of England Primary School is committed to the health and safety of its members and will act to safeguard their well-being. We will actively discourage the use of illegal substances, alcohol or tobacco and the misuse of glue, solvents, prescribed and over-the-counter medicines. We acknowledge the importance of our pastoral role in the welfare of young people and through the general ethos of the school, will seek to enable pupils needing support to come forward.

Purpose of the Policy

- To support the school's endeavour to maintain the safety and well-being of all pupils, staff and visitors;
- To clarify legal responsibilities, entitlements and obligations;
- To support all the members of the school community by providing clear guidance and procedures on drug related issues to ensure clarity and consistency;
- To develop a whole school approach to drug education in the context of the school curriculum.

Key Roles and Responsibilities

Headteacher/Designated Safeguarding Lead: Graham Cutter

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads: Loren Way, Hollie Shilling, Amber Palmer

Inclusive Definition of Drugs

We define a drug as a substance that, when taken into the body, changes the way we feel, the way we perceive things, and the way our body works. This definition includes illegal substances and also legal substances such as alcohol, tobacco, solvents and medicines.

Rationale/Key Principles

It is our aim to help all pupils to be able to take their place safely in a world where a wide range of drugs exists. We recognise that some drugs have beneficial effects, but also that every drug

has potential harm. For this reason, all drugs need appropriate and responsible care and management. In order to be able to make informed choices, staff and pupils need to understand the nature of drugs, their social status, their uses and effects.

Boundaries, including Relevance of the Policy to School Trips and Visits

The legal definition of premises of the school includes everything within the property boundaries including buildings, outbuildings, playgrounds, fields and also extends to include other settings such as vehicles or any venue managed by the school at the time of, for example, a school trip or visit. The policy will also relate to pupils' use of the premises and grounds beyond the school day.

Drug Education

Context

We will provide all pupils with drug education as an integral part of our Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) and SMSC Curriculum. There will also be opportunities for teachers, parents and governors to participate in drug education sessions. These sessions will be a result of collaboration between the school and various support agencies.

Ethos

Drug education in our school aims to enable pupils to make healthy informed choices by increasing their knowledge, exploring a range of attitudes towards drug use and developing and practising decision-making skills.

Key Stage 1

Children should be introduced to ideas about how to keep healthy and the role of drugs as medicines.

Key Stage 2

Children should be introduced to the fact that whilst all medicines are drugs, not all drugs are medicines. They should also begin to be aware of the harmful effects on health of abuse of tobacco, alcohol and other drugs.

In line with these proposals drug education will be taught as part of the PSHE curriculum. This will be either within class topics or be specifically taught as and when appropriate.

The drug education curriculum will provide opportunities for children to:

- explore attitudes and values around drug misuse;
- practise decision making skills;
- become aware of peer pressure;
- develop assertiveness skills;
- consider the consequences of risk taking;
- learn how to access sources of help and information;
- emphasise the benefits of a healthy lifestyle;

- evaluate media messages on drug use.

Use of Visitors and Outside Speakers

Outside agencies may be involved in the planning and teaching of the drug education curriculum and will be asked to adhere to our school policy. The Class Teacher or a Teaching Assistant is always present when visitors are working with our pupils.

Managing Drug Related Incidents

- Children, staff and visitors to the premises are made aware of the school's drug policy.

Routine Arrangements

Medicines

- The school has a procedure for the administration of medicines that must be followed for everyone's safety.

Alcohol

- No alcohol will be consumed during the course of a normal school day. Alcohol is not permitted on the school premises except by the permission of the Headteacher. Any adult under the effects of alcohol will be asked to leave the premises for the safety of the whole school.

Tobacco

- The school and its grounds are no smoking areas at all times. Children are not permitted to bring to school smoking materials, including matches and lighters. In the interests of health and safety, should a child be found in possession of any of these on school premises, they will be confiscated.

Solvents

- The school will ensure that potentially hazardous substances are stored safely, and children will be supervised if it is necessary that they come into contact with them in the course of their work. Children are not permitted to be in possession of products such as solvents and aerosols (the only exception permitted is aerosol Ventolin/any other approved medicines).

Illegal drugs

- No illegal drugs are allowed to be brought on to, or used on school premises. To protect the health and safety of the school community regular checks will be made of the site to ensure that drug paraphernalia, particularly needles and syringes, are cleared away safely and legally.

Incidents

A drug related incident may include any of the following:

- Finding drugs, or related items on school premises;
- Possession of drugs by an individual on school premises;
- Use of drugs by an individual on school premises;
- Supply of drugs on school premises;
- Individuals disclosing information about their drug use;
- Rumours or reports of drug possession supply or drug use.

Guiding Principles

The school is aware of its legal responsibilities in regard to drug related incidents and in responding to them. The school's first responsibility is for the welfare of the individual, balanced with the need to protect the community as a whole.

The Headteacher will normally be responsible for coordinating the management of drug related incidents, offering sources of support and liaising with outside agencies.

The school acknowledges the importance of its pastoral role and will support all concerned in ensuring the well-being of its pupils. Parents will be encouraged to become involved as much as possible in order to achieve a successful drugs education curriculum.

Procedures

Medical emergencies

- If an individual is unconscious, is having trouble breathing, is seriously confused or disorientated, has taken a harmful toxic substance or is otherwise at immediate risk of immediate harm medical help will be sought and first aid given if required. The priority will be the pupil's safety.

Hearsay/Rumour

- Drug use is often discovered by hearsay. This should be passed on to the Headteacher or Deputy, who should record the matter as hearsay evidence, thus enabling a record of teacher's concerns to be compiled. Where the hearsay evidence is not supported through further reports or incidents for one school year, the evidence will be removed from the records.

Suspicious Behaviour

- Behaviour that could indicate involvement with drugs should also be logged so that patterns of behaviour can be observed and concerns acted upon where necessary.

Finding substances

- If a substance or equipment thought to be either illegal or harmful is discovered it should be removed to a place of safe keeping. If the substance is known or suspected to be illegal the police must be informed.

A record must be kept to include:

- the date and time of the find or retrieval;
- the size and appearance of the substance;
- the names of those concerned;
- the action taken.

Any equipment associated with drug misuse should be handled with care, recorded and in the case of such items as needles and syringes, they should be placed in a secure and rigid container for collection by the appropriate person. If these are found on a child, the child's parents must be informed.

Searching

Storage areas within the school grounds are the property of the school, and the Headteacher or his representative may authorise a search of these if there is reasonable suspicion. This must be carried out in the presence of a witness and the child (if this applies).

Staff should not search a child's property or person but should try to persuade the child to voluntarily produce the substance by asking to turn out pockets, or bags. If it is absolutely necessary to search a child, a police officer will be required, and parents informed as soon as possible. The police officer will only be able to carry out a search if there are reasonable grounds to suspect the child is in possession of an illegal substance.

If children are found in possession of tobacco, alcohol, glue, solvents or prescribed or over-the-counter medicines, parents will be informed and appropriate steps taken. In an emergency arising from an incident involving abuse, the well-being of the child is paramount. In all instances:

- separate the child involved from the rest of the group;
- decide and implement the next best step in terms of the child's welfare;
- inform parents.

Supply of Illegal Substances

It is an offence to produce or supply any controlled drug on school premises. The police will be involved in such circumstances.

Returning Articles which have been Confiscated

Articles confiscated and not required by the police must be returned to parents. They will be informed in writing within 24 hours of articles confiscated and an explanation given as to why it is inappropriate to return the article to the child. It will be made clear that there is a time limit of one week for the items to be recovered or they will be disposed of by the school.

Recording

All incidents will be recorded within 24 hours on CPOMS.

Confidentiality

Complete secrecy can never be promised to a child, though information given in confidence will not generally be disclosed to anyone else. If a child chooses to disclose that they are using a drug without medical authorisation, particularly when seeking support, this information will not be used against them notwithstanding any illegal / controlled substances. However, action will be taken to ensure that the child comes to no serious harm if this is considered a significant risk. Staff have a commitment to inform the child in advance of any disclosure of information to others and, if possible, enable the child to be involved in the process. Staff are committed to protect a young person's anonymity where their information may implicate others.

Staff Training and Support

We recognise the need for staff to receive appropriate training to support their work in delivering the school curriculum of drug education and dealing appropriately with incidents should they arise. The Headteacher, or other appropriate member of staff, will organise training related to the identified needs of staff as required.

All staff need to understand and support the rationale and aims of drug education and be aware of the legal implications and their responsibilities.