

2025

# Drugs Policy



SOUTHCHURCH  
HIGH SCHOOL

## Review Framework

The policy should be reviewed annually or earlier in light of changes in legislation or DfE guidance

	<b>Date</b>
This policy was originally created in:	December 2012
It was reviewed in:	March 2019
It was ratified by the Local Governing Board on:	25 March 2019
It was reviewed in	September 2020
It was ratified by the Local Governing Board on:	19 October 2020
Reviewed in [No changes]	September 2021
Reviewed in [No changes]	September 2022
Reviewed in [Revised and updated]	November 2025

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## Definition of a drug

A drug is a substance that affects the way in which the body functions physically, emotionally or mentally. For the purposes of this policy, this definition includes illegal substances and also legal substances such as: vapes, alcohol and tobacco, volatile substances, over the counter and prescription medicines.

## Reference documents and linked policies:

- Drugs: Advice for Schools DfE September 2012
- DfE School Discipline and Exclusions
- Behaviour Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Smoke Free Policy
- Supporting Students at School with Medical Conditions Policy

## Introduction

Southchurch High School has a whole-school approach to drugs as part of its commitment to being a healthy school. The policy aims to enable students to make safe, healthy and responsible decisions about drugs, both legal and illegal. This is done by providing education about the risk and effects of drugs; by developing students' confidence and skills to manage situations involving drugs; by creating a safe and supportive learning environment; and ensuring that those for whom drugs are a concern receive appropriate support.

Although the majority of young people of school-age do not abuse drugs, all students are likely to be exposed to the effects and influences of drugs in the wider community and be increasingly exposed to opportunities to try both legal and illegal drugs. Such experiments may lead to serious and far reaching consequences not only for themselves, but their families, their communities and society in general. For children and young people in particular, drugs can impact on their education, their relationships with family and friends and prevent them from reaching their full potential.

The appendices to this policy name the relevant drugs and set out the procedures to be followed when any misuse has been identified. To protect the safety and wellbeing of all students and staff, drugs must not be possessed or bought, sold, or otherwise obtained on school premises or during the school day, including when students are on school visits.

The school may also impose sanctions on a student for misusing drugs at any time, whether or not on school premises or on a visit, if the misuse:

- could have repercussions for the orderly running of the school or
- poses a threat to another student or member of the public or
- could adversely affect the reputation of the school.

The policy and procedures apply to all adults working at and for the school. Individual exceptions will be made for students and staff who need to take prescribed medicines. [See Supporting Students with Medical Conditions Policy]

Self-respect and a healthy lifestyle are part of an approach which will enable our students to make the right choices for themselves and their families now and in the future. It is important to note that the school sees inappropriate drug use by students as something to be challenged, and changes in behaviour sought through support and counselling wherever possible. Complete confidentiality can never be promised to a student, though information given in confidence will not generally be disclosed to anyone else. In particular if a student chooses to disclose that they are using a drug without medical authorisation, this information will not be used against them. However, action will be taken to try to ensure the student comes to no serious harm if this is considered a risk. Regarding disclosures, staff will follow the advice given in the Safeguarding policy, and at the annual safeguarding training.

It is likely that any student found to have been distributing illegal drugs in return for payment will be permanently excluded from school and the police contacted.

## Roles and responsibilities

**The Headteacher** will ensure that:

- the senior leadership team is appointed to have general responsibility for handling the daily implementation of this policy

- a planned drug education programme is provided as part of the curriculum, that enhances knowledge and understanding, attitudes and personal and social skills
- teachers are provided with training and guidance so that they are confident and skilled to teach drug education and to respond to drug-related incidents
- students are aware of the rules on drugs and of the consequences of breaking them
- clear procedures are in place for responding to drug-related incidents
- those students who have a concern about drugs are provided with support
- sanctions for incidents are consistent with the school's discipline policy
- the school actively co-operates with external agencies to deliver its commitment to drugs education

**All staff** are expected to:

- report incidents of drug misuse to a member of the senior leadership team
- promote positive attitudes towards healthy lifestyles
- enable young people to identify sources of appropriate personal support

**All teachers** are expected to:

- implement the drug education programme and attend associated training to increase their understanding of the implications and possible consequences of use and misuse
- enable students to make healthy, informed choices by increasing knowledge, exploring their own and other people's attitudes and developing and practising personal skills to resist peer group pressure, and help friends and relatives involved in drug misuse
- provide accurate information about substances
- widen their own and the students' understanding of related health and social issues, e.g. sex and sexuality, crime, HIV and AIDS

**Students** will be expected to:

- follow the school rules
- alert the staff to any drug-related incidents on or around the school site

**Parents** will be encouraged to:

- endorse the school's approach to drugs education
- work in partnership with the school to overcome the misuse of drugs

**The Local Governing Board** will ensure that:

- the school does not knowingly allow its premises to be used for the production, consumption or supply of any controlled drug, in addition to solvents, alcohol and tobacco
- the school, parents/carers and external agencies work together to support any student involved in drug abuse
- the Governors' Discipline Committee understands how to deal with drug-related exclusion procedures

## Monitoring and evaluation

The relevant Committee of the Local Governing Board will receive an annual report on:

- the curriculum programme for teaching about drugs
- the number and nature of drug-related incidents, and the outcomes of any disciplinary proceedings; these will be analysed by gender, ethnicity and year group and compared with previous years

## APPENDIX 1

### List of Relevant Drugs [this list is for example only and is not exhaustive]

#### Illegal drugs include:

Amphetamines (Speed)  
 Barbiturates  
 Cannabis (any form e.g. hash, grass, pot, marijuana, dope, oil)  
 Cocaine  
 Crack  
 Ecstasy / MDMA  
 Hallucinogens: natural  
 Hallucinogens: synthetic  
 Heroin  
 Ketamine  
 Muscle-building steroids  
 Mephedrone (Meow meow)  
 Opiates  
 Tranquillisers

Class A	Class B	Class C
Ecstasy	Cannabis	Tranquillisers
LSD	Synthetic cannabinoids	Some painkillers
Heroin	Amphetamines	Gamma hydroxybutyrate [GHB]
Cocaine	Methylphenidate (Ritalin)	Ketamine
Crack	Pholcodine	
Magic mushrooms (Amani)		
Amphetamines (if prepared for injection)		

**Class A, B and C** drugs are termed as controlled substances under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971, with **Class A** being those considered most harmful.

#### Legal drugs include:

- Alcohol
- Prescription drugs
- Solvents
- Tobacco and E-cigarettes
- Poppers

For further information please visit the 'Frank' website:  
[www.talktofrank.com](http://www.talktofrank.com)

## APPENDIX 2

### Guidelines for Management of Drugs within the School

#### Principles of good practice

- For any drug incident, the utmost priority will be placed on safety, meeting any medical emergencies with first aid and summoning appropriate help
- The school has a range of responses to drug incidents. Any response will balance the needs of the individual against those of the wider community and should be determined after a full and careful investigation
- Clear referral protocols and communication routes will be established between the school and the range of agencies providing support to young people. In making referrals careful attention will be given to issues of confidentiality
- In any incident involving illegal and other unauthorised drugs the school involve the student's parents/carers, unless this would jeopardise the student's safety.
- The school will make a full record of every incident

#### Definition of a drug incident

Incidents are likely to involve suspicions, observations, disclosures or discoveries of situations involving illegal and other unauthorised drugs.

They could fit into the following categories:

- Drugs or associated paraphernalia, e.g. Rizlas, are found on school premises
- A student being found in possession of drugs or associated paraphernalia
- A student being found to be supplying drugs on school premises
- A student, parent/carer or staff member is thought to be under the influence of drugs
- A staff member has information that the illegitimate sale or supply of drugs is taking place in the local area
- A student discloses that they or a family member/friend are misusing drugs
- Hiding drugs in or around the school premises for later collection (by themselves or by third parties)
- Glamorising or encouraging the use of drugs and other substances

#### Management responsibilities

It is vital as an organisation that we send a clear message to the whole school community that the possession, use or supply of illegal and other unauthorised drugs, for example 'legal highs' within school boundaries is unacceptable.

The school has designated responsibility for the management of drug incidents to a senior member of staff. Through this policy all staff will be made fully aware of the procedures for managing incidents, including who they should inform and who has authority regarding issues such as searching school property and involving the police.

#### Monitoring and record keeping

All drug-related incidents will be written down and kept as confidential items. No entry will be made to any student's record until all evidence has been gathered and corroborated. The school will regularly follow up drug related incidents in order to monitor progress.

## Appendix 3

### Disciplinary Action

In line with recent legislation the staff at Southchurch High School reserve the right to search students if they have reason to believe that they are carrying offensive weapons or illegal substances. Similarly students can expect to be physically restrained if they present a danger to themselves or other members of the community.

Searches will be carried out by Heads of Year, Student Support Assistants or members of the Senior Management Team and Parents/Carers will always be informed when this has happened.

If inappropriate articles are brought into school or items are used inappropriately they may be confiscated and kept in the school safe for collection at the end of the day. If these items are dangerous or illegal they may be handed to the Police for safe disposal.

Students should be aware that the school will endeavour to support anyone who voluntarily seeks its help with drug related problems.

Students also need to know and understand that bringing drugs, for **any** purpose, onto the school site or on school visits, will be dealt with severely, as will using school grounds or educational trips to make deals for the supply of drugs.

As a general principle, any student involved in any form of drug related incident will normally be isolated whilst a thorough investigation takes place. During or immediately following this isolation period, a decision will be made as to the most appropriate action plan. Such action plan may involve exclusion.

Any student:

- i) Who brings drugs to school, and/or is otherwise involved in any form of drug related incident, will be disciplined and their parents will be informed
- ii) Who knowingly brings illegal drugs into school will be reported to the Police
- iii) Found in possession of illegal drugs will be reported to the Police  
*(Unless in exceptional circumstances; for example where it has been proved that a student has been coerced or bullied into carrying a substance)*

Permanent exclusion will be considered in serious cases and will be in accordance with DfE guidance on exclusions. A case conference will be called if necessary. Each case will be assessed and levels of sanctions may vary according to the seriousness of the incident and the student's involvement.

#### **The School reserves the right to exclude permanently students who:**

- a) Persistently place themselves, other students or staff at risk through their drug taking activities
- b) Sell drugs to other students on the school premises, its environment, home to school transport or school excursions.
- c) Coerce other students to take drugs by threat or other persuasive activity