



**BEDFORD
GIRLS
SCHOOL**

Drugs Education Policy

Reviewed: August 2024

Next Review: August 2026

Reviewed by: Deputy Head – Student Engagement and Welfare

Aims

The central aim of our drugs education programme is to ensure that our students have the information they need on which to base their decisions about drugs use.

Objectives

- to ensure that our students know and understand the law as it relates to the handling and use of drugs.
- to ensure that our students know and understand the properties of, and the risks associated with, a range of substances, including nicotine, alcohol, legal and illegal drugs.
- to encourage them, and to equip them, to resist any temptation or pressure to be drawn into substance abuse of any kind.
- to prepare them for a world in which the unaware young person can easily be taken advantage of.
- to inform them about appropriate further sources of expertise, advice and support.
- to ensure that they know and understand the consequences of becoming involved with the handling or abuse of drugs whilst under the jurisdiction of the school.

The school's role

The school's role has six main aspects:

- within a structured education programme, the provision of information and of opportunities for discussion of related issues.
- the exercise of proper care and control of students when they are under the jurisdiction of the school.
- liaison with parents in respect of concerns about a student's social behaviour inside or outside the school context.
- clarification of the sanctions associated with a student on the school premises found in possession of, or found to be involved in the handling of, alcohol or cigarettes, including electronic cigarettes or vapes.
- clarification of the likely consequences for a student found in possession of, or found to be involved in the handling of, harmful and/or illegal drugs and solvents.
- being properly prepared to deal with incidents involving drugs on the school premises.

1. Provision of information and of opportunities for discussion of related issues

Specific information and advice about drugs is provided within the **Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE)** curriculum followed by all students, and is geared to the age of the year groups concerned. In the Junior School, the emphasis is on a healthy body, why people choose to use or not use drugs, including nicotine, alcohol and medicines as well as illegal drugs, whilst in the Senior School the complex issues of peer

pressure and risky social contexts increasingly come into play. The contributions of the police and visiting health education experts are much valued by staff and students alike.

Discussion of the effect of drugs use occurs in **Science**, notably in the GCSE Biology syllabus and, when motor vehicle stopping distances are being considered, in Physics. Related issues are also likely to be raised as topics for discussion in **English**.

We bear in mind throughout that, even though a student might themselves not be at risk, their life might be affected indirectly by the use and abuse of drugs by members of their family or by members of their social circle. Younger students regularly express concerns about the risks being taken by those they care about.

2. The exercise of proper care and control of students when they are under the jurisdiction of the school

Our students are aware of our expectation that, with the exception of Sixth Formers, they will remain on the school premises throughout the day. The presence of a team of teachers who walk through the school monitoring behaviour at breaks and lunchtime helps to discourage students from poor behaviour on the school premises. Students know that, if they are found, or known, to have left the premises, there will be consequences, and parents will always be informed.

The climate we aim to create is one of taking responsibility; our experience is that, if students are putting themselves at risk in some way, other students will usually find a way of discreetly informing a member of staff, who will then take the necessary action.

The Educational Visits Policy document includes detailed advice to staff about the importance of maintaining a high level of supervision and of expecting a commensurate high standard of behaviour.

3. Liaison with parents in respect of concerns about a student's social behaviour inside or outside the school context

Our monitoring and recording of any concerns staff have about a student's social behaviour is well-developed, the form tutor, senior tutor and Heads of Years having a key role. It may well be in school that the first signs of trouble are noted; failure to complete homework tasks, lack of concentration, discernible changes in the handling of relationships, poor punctuality, deterioration in personal appearance are all potential indications of a student at risk. Any one of these indicators will lead in due course to a contact with parents; a combination of factors will indicate that contact with parents should be made without delay, so that the underlying cause for concern can be identified.

4. Clarification of the sanctions associated with a student on the school premises found in possession of, or found to be involved in the handling of, alcohol or cigarettes

Parents will always be informed when a student is found to be in possession of, or found to be involved in the handling of, alcohol, cigarettes and e-cigarettes. Such items, along with matches or lighters, will be confiscated and the student will face consequences, in line with our Positive Behaviour Policy. Repeated offences will lead to the student's future in the school being reviewed. A written record of every instance will be placed in the student's personal file and will be taken into account in the preparation of a school reference.

5. Clarification of the likely consequences for a student found in possession of, or found to be involved in the handling of, illegal drugs

It is an offence:

- a) to supply or offer to supply a controlled drug to another.
- b) to be in possession of, or to possess with intent to supply to another, a controlled drug.
- c) for the occupier or someone concerned with the management of any premises knowingly to permit or suffer on those premises the use, supply, attempted supply or offering to supply, of any controlled drug.

Respect for the law and for the well-being of the school community are two of the key principles upon which the school rests. If they violate these key principles, a student's position in the school is seriously reviewed.

6. Dealing with incidents involving drugs on the school premises

Guidance to Staff

Disclosure or suspicion of substance misuse:

Any disclosure or suspicion of substance misuse by a student when under the jurisdiction of the school **must** be referred immediately to the Headmistress.

Disclosure or suspicion of substance misuse by a student when beyond the jurisdiction of the school **must** be referred as soon as possible to the relevant Head of Year.

The discovery on the school premises of substances suspected to be harmful, illegal or deserving of investigation:

Remove the substance immediately, preferably in the presence of a witness, and make a note of the time, place, circumstances and outline description of the discovery. If a witness is not available, the priority is the removal of the substance, prior to preparation of the written record and passing on the substance to the Headmistress.

Do not interfere with the substance or any packaging, or investigate its nature. Do not keep the substance on your person or in a place of safekeeping; to do so may place you at risk.

Take the substance without delay to the Headmistress or, in her absence, to one of the Deputy Heads or a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

The discovery on a student of substances suspected to be harmful, illegal or deserving of investigation:

When receiving or removing substances from a student do so, if possible, in the presence of a witness. If a witness is not available, do not put off receiving or, within the bounds of your professional discretion, removing the substance.

Make a note of the time, place, and circumstances and outline description of the receipt or removal. When possible, ask a witness to countersign the record.

Do not interfere with the substance or any packaging, or investigate its nature. Do not keep the substance on your person or in a place of safekeeping; to do so may place you at risk.

Take the student, and the substance, without delay to the Headmistress or, in her absence, to the Deputy Heads or a member of SLT, who will ensure that the substances are placed in a sealed container and locked away.

The discovery of equipment associated with substance misuse, especially needles and syringes

All such equipment should be handled by adults only, wearing protective gloves, and with the utmost care. Students should never be allowed to touch them.

Make a note of the time, place, circumstances and outline description of the receipt or removal. When possible, ask a witness to countersign the record.

The items should be handed to the Headmistress or, in her absence, to the Deputy Heads or a member of SLT without delay, when they will be placed as soon as possible in a rigid, sealed container and locked away.

If items are not required for evidence, they can be placed in the 'sharps' box in the Health Centre and then disposed of safely.

Any response to drug-related incidents needs to balance the needs of the individual pupils concerned with the wider school community. In deciding what action to take, we will follow our Positive Behavior policy. Drug use can be a symptom of other problems and we would seek to involve or refer pupils to other professional services as needed.

Confidentiality

The interests of any students involved and of the whole school community remain paramount, and in any case the principle of natural justice must prevail. This means that the outcome of investigations subsequent to a discovery of substances believed to be harmful, illegal or deserving of investigation should not be pre-empted by unsubstantiated gossip or allegation. The good reputation of individual students and of the school community may depend upon the discretion of the staff in their handling of very sensitive information.

The Headmistress will undertake to ensure that information about individual cases is disseminated to colleagues on a need-to-know basis.

Helpful Sources

[DfE and ACPO drug advice for schools \(September 2012\)](#)

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

Website: www.talktofrank.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

Website: www.drugscope.org.uk