



ST. JOSEPH'S COLLEGE

(Mathematics and Computing Specialist School)

Drug and Banned Substances Policy

Reviewed by Governors - November 2015
To be reviewed June 2016

St Joseph's College

St Joseph's College is situated in a residential area bordering on Croydon and Lambeth. It would be irresponsible of St Joseph's College not to be aware of the threats and dangers posed by illegal substances. Of equal concern, is the impact and effect of drugs such as tobacco and alcohol on its pupils. With this in mind, the School Drugs Policy has been formulated. The philosophy of the school is to provide a supportive and nurturing environment in which all pupils are enabled to develop their learning and personal skills and to carefully prepare them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences they may encounter in their future lives and this policy has been written in accordance with this philosophy. This policy has been written with reference to national and LA guidelines and been informed by relevant research data.

1) Rationale

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 medicinal 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 and legal status, their uses and effects.

2) Aims of the policy

- To support the school's endeavour to maintain the safety and well-being of all pupils and staff
- To clarify legal responsibilities, entitlement 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 curriculum of the school

If any pupil is found in possession of a suspicious substance, it will be taken from him/her. The substance will then be taken immediately to the Deputy Head. The Headteacher will be informed straightaway. The pupil will then be interviewed by the Deputy Head. The police will be consulted concerning the nature of the substance. If it is an illegal drug, the pupil will be isolated immediately and his/her parents called to the school. The Headteacher will speak with them and the pupil can expect to be excluded. The illegal drug will be handed over to the police who may prosecute the pupil.

3) Definition of a drug

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

4) Medicines

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

5) Alcohol

No alcohol will be consumed during the course of a normal school day. Pupils and visitors under the effects of alcohol will be asked to leave the premises and return at a later date for the safety of the whole school. Parents will be asked to collect their children

6) Smoking

The school is a no smoking site at all times. Pupils are not permitted to bring to school smoking materials, including, electronic vapour devices, matches and lighters. In the interests of health and safety, should a pupil be found in possession of any of these on school premises, they will be confiscated and parents informed.

7) Illegal drugs

No illegal drugs are allowed to be brought on to, or used on school premises

8) Solvents

The school will ensure that potentially hazardous substances are stored safely, and pupils will be supervised if it is necessary that they come into contact with them in the course of their work. Pupils are not permitted to be in possession of solvent based products.

9) Responses to drug related incidents

A drug incident may be any of the following:

- Finding drugs, or related paraphernalia, 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 of parents, staff or pupils using drugs
- Reports of parents, staff or pupils using drugs

A member of the SLT will normally be responsible for co-ordinating the management of drug-related incidents, offering sources of support and liaising with outside agencies. Incidents will be dealt with after making an assessment of the situation and will be reported to the Headteacher. All incidents and responses will be recorded within 24 hours.

Appropriate support will be offered to those with substance related problems. Talking with an individual about a drug related incident will have as its purpose to confirm or reject suspicions or allegations, rather than conduct a wider investigation.

Although evidence of drug use or possession will not necessarily result in permanent exclusion, permanent exclusion will be considered in all cases and will be in accordance with 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 pupil's involvement.

10) Confidentiality

Complete secrecy can never be promised to a pupil, though information given in confidence will not generally be disclosed to anyone else. In particular if a pupil 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 ensure the pupil comes to no serious harm if this is considered a risk. Regarding disclosures staff need to carefully define and communicate the boundaries of confidentiality offered.

11) Support for pupils

At our school the welfare of the pupil is paramount. We maintain that constructive strategies that enable pupils to continue to benefit from continued education are preferable to exclusion.

Following actions to preserve safety, the health & emotional needs of pupils will be considered. Support is available through the pastoral system, to ensure a caring response to pupils in distress. Interventions will be considered if the school feels a pupil is showing signs which indicate particular risks of, or from, involvement with drugs, whether their own or their parents'/carers'. Such interventions may include consultation with parents/carers and other agencies, possible case conferences and subsequent referral.

St Joseph College works closely with its Police Liaison Officers. If students are involved with any activity which breaks the law the police may be involved in the confiscation of items, Restorative Justice Conferencing, group work and education as well as links with home. Parents/Carers will always be informed when the police are involved and given the opportunity to attend any interviews. Similarly the police will be involved if any student is suspected of having contact with an illegal substance. This includes possession, using or dealing. In such cases, the police will decide what course of action should be taken.