



Drugs Policy

September 2023

Responsibility	Richard Rainbird-Hitchins
Date of last review	September 2023
Date of next review	September 2024

Signed:

Head Teacher

Date: 13.09.2023

Signed:

Designated Safeguarding Lead

Date: 13.09.2023

Drug Education Policy

The Aspire Academy fully recognises its responsibilities for safeguarding children. This policy is to be read in conjunction with the Safeguarding Children Policy (Including Child Protection), dated September 2023.

Rationale

Drug use is a health education issue. We acknowledge that some children of compulsory school age are likely to experiment with drugs, including illegal substance, legal 'highs', and may be under pressure to do so. The school will utilise the support of health and social services, the police and other agencies as well as parents/carers in its drugs education delivery. Some pupils are referred to us from commissioning schools because of their involvement with drugs use.

Range of Substances Covered

This policy encompasses the following:

- Volatile (sniffable) substances (for example petrol, nitrites, butane, aerosols);
- Over-the-counter medicines (for example paracetamol, cough medicines);
- Prescription medicines (for example tranquillisers, amphetamines, anabolic steroids);
- Alcohol;
- Tobacco;
- Illegal drugs (for example cannabis, heroin, LSD, ecstasy);
- Legal 'highs'.

Drug Education Curriculum

Aims:

- To educate young people to grow up safely in a society where drugs are available.
- To empower young people to make informed choices by increasing and by challenging attitudes.
- To encourage responsible behaviour in relation to substance use and misuse and to explore related health and social issues.
- To develop the skills that will enable young people to resist the pressures to take drugs.

Delivery

Drug education is provided within the PSHE programme and in other subject areas such as Citizenship and within the Drugs Awareness sessions delivered by the school Interventions team. Learning will be progressive, beginning in Year 7, but will be flexible enough to adapt to identified needs of pupils and a local climate which can change. Further and up to date drugs education will be provided to pupils via assemblies, appropriate visiting professionals, updated literature and health notice boards. The school will support parents/carers in developing their understanding of drugs issues; for example, through written information provided on the school website (which can be found on the following page <https://www.theaspireacademy.org.uk/parent-info/>) or meetings held to discuss individual needs of pupils, where support is identified and relevant referrals made to the necessary health or support professionals.

Staff Training

Ongoing training on drug related issues will be provided to staff. The Aspire Academy work closely with Cranstoun (here4youth) who will lead staff training as well as counselling sessions for identified pupils relating to this issue.

Definition of a Drug Related Incident

Drug misuse refers to both the inappropriate use of drugs intended for medical use and the use of drugs with no accepted medical purpose. The school's policy on drug misuse refers to school excursions and all school related activities, on or off the school premises, supervised or not.

The school naturally has an interest in drug related incidents involving pupils beyond school hours and off school premises. However, the possibility or desirability of action will be assessed in the light of individual circumstances, and the extent to which such incidents impact on school.

Dealing with Drug Related Incidents in School

Each incident will be dealt with in the light of its unique set of circumstances. Although the following are probable courses of action, the final decision on how to respond to a drug related incident rests with the Head Teacher or the Deputy Head Teacher in his absence, who will have taken into account all relevant factors. Parents/Carers will be informed and, where appropriate, involved (e.g. school disciplinary board, police interview).

If any member of staff has concerns regarding possible drug misuse by a pupil, that member of staff must report the matter to the relevant Head of Year who will report the issue to the Head Teacher/DSL to allow for the relevant decisions to be made connected to action to be taken.

Any pupil suspected to be “under the influence of drugs” will be carefully dealt with by the staff at The Aspire Academy and may need to go home on “medical grounds”, whilst discussions take place with parents/guardians. A Formal discussion will take place with the family via the Head of Year, at the earliest possible opportunity and the commissioning school will be informed.

Any pupil found in possession or known to have been in possession, of a controlled drug or drug using paraphernalia on school premises will normally face a suspension from school, pending the outcome of police enquiries. This will also apply to legal ‘highs’. If there is evidence of an intention to supply or purchase drugs this will also normally result in a suspension. Following a suspension, a second offence may result in a referral back to their mainstream school where a decision will be made as to whether to permanently exclude the pupil or not.

If such a substance is brought on to school premises with the purpose of supplying others, this will normally result in the pupils being referred back to their referring school where a decision will be made as to whether to permanently exclude the pupil or not. In such cases the incident will be reported to the police.

Any pupil found in possession of, or using alcohol or volatile substances on school premises, in wilful defiance of school rules, is likely to be suspended from school.

Any pupil found in possession of, or smoking tobacco products on school premises, in wilful defiance of school rules, will be issued with a period of detentions and parents/carers will be informed. Persistent defiance of the ‘no smoking’ rule is likely to result in a suspension. Support will be offered to all pupils who are found to be regular smokers to help them quit and to advise on healthy lifestyle options.

A suspended pupil and his/her parents or carers will be provided with contact addresses, support and advice from health and specialist services, as appropriate.

A written record of a pupil’s involvement in a drug related incident will be kept in their personal file.

Confidentiality

Names of pupils involved in drug related incidents will be conveyed to staff only when the facts have been fully established. Staff will observe the confidentiality of this information in conversations with other people, whether in or out of school.

The Head Teacher, is responsible for handling any media approaches. Responses will be made, where possible, through a typed press release, to avoid verbal responses being misconstrued. Pupils will not be identified to the media.

Police Involvement

The police may have three distinct roles in relation to drugs:

1. Advisory: The school will seek informal advice from local police as necessary in all likelihood from our Police Community Support Officer liaison.
2. Investigative: The school may request police investigation where an offence is suspected.
3. Educative: The school will seek specialist support in the delivery of the drug education curriculum.

Reporting

Suspected Substance use, awareness that a pupil's life is being affected by family use, or a pupil's detailed knowledge of substance abuse are all of concern relating to the safety of that pupil and as such should be reported to the Designated Senior Member of Staff for Safeguarding (Richard Rainbird-Hitchins) or one of his Deputies (Claire Windsor-Pepelow, Michael Grimes, Zoe Kingston, Beata Payne, Nick Bruton, Jo Weston, Samantha Brazier or Jodi Conyers) who will inform him or the Head Teacher as soon as possible as a matter of urgency.

Dissemination Maintenance and Review of Policy

Parents/Carers will be made aware of the policy via the school website. Pupils will be made aware of the policy during personal development time.

Linked Policies and Guidance

The Aspire Academy's Safeguarding Children Policy (Including Child Protection), dated September 2023.