



# Misuse of Drugs & Alcohol Policy

## 1. Rationale and Aim

Samuel Whitbread Academy (SWA) believes unequivocally that taking illegal drugs is wrong. It is against the law, hazardous to health and has detrimental effects including a high correlation with crime rates and an impact on under-achievement in education. Of equal concern is the impact and effect of socially acceptable drugs such as tobacco and alcohol on its students.

SWA aim to:

- Ensure that SWA are free from illegal drugs and the use of solvents as drugs.
- Educate students on the effects of drugs (and solvents) on the mind and body. Drug education will take account of students' views so that it is both appropriate to their age and ability, and relevant to their circumstances.
- Provide opportunities for students to practice the personal and social skills and the strategies needed to deal with situations involving drugs.
- Promote the individual's self-confidence, self-esteem and self-worth.
- Explain the legal situation with regard to the use and misuse of drugs.
- Enable young people to identify sources of appropriate personal support
- Enable parents/carers to acquire knowledge and support

## 2. Policy

### Responsibility

The Principal will take overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy which is deemed to apply to all members of the academy community.

All staff have a responsibility for drug education and must be fully aware of this policy and its implications for themselves and for others in the community. Whenever adults interact with children and young people, they should recognise that their personal conduct can have a significant impact on the readiness of students to adopt responsible attitudes and behaviour in relation to drugs. It also specifically applies to all students on the academy premises and beyond, wherever they are within the care of academy staff. This includes trips, educational and residential visits.

The academy will also have an interest in the health and well-being of students beyond these school boundaries and would encourage parents/carers and expect others in the community (e.g. work experience/placement providers) to adopt the same principles.

Whilst acknowledging that the numbers of young people who use and misuse substances are rising, it is important to recognise that many young people are choosing not to do so. Their differing needs will be taken into account, but SWA believes it has a duty to inform and educate every student of the consequences of substance use and misuse. Students in need of support will be encouraged to seek help through the academy, its pastoral system/school counsellor in the first instance. We believe that effective education of our students is a responsibility shared between parents/carers, governors, staff and partner agencies working with the academy.

### The Law

It is an offence under the misuse of Drugs Act 1971:

- to supply or offer to supply a controlled drug to another in contravention of the Act.
- to be in possession of a controlled drug in contravention of the Act.
- for the occupier or management of any premises knowingly to permit the smoking of cannabis or the production, attempted production or supply, attempted supply of any controlled drug.

"The law permits a responsible person to take possession of a controlled substance in order to prevent someone else committing an offence provided that person follows one of two courses of action immediately:

1. You may destroy the drug you have seized
2. You may hand the drug to an authorized person (police officer)"

(Option 2 is recommended by the police.) ***This decision must be taken by the Principal or Vice/Assistant Principal in their absence.***

### **Drugs:**

Under the Misuses of Drugs Act 1971, it is generally illegal to possess or supply a drug covered by the Act, unless authorised (e.g. possessing drugs prescribed for personal medical use). Solvents are dangerous substances as well. Under the Intoxicating Substances (Supply) Act 1965, it is illegal for anyone to supply or offer to supply a substance if they know or believe that the substance being supplied will be inhaled by a person under 18 for the purpose of intoxication. It is against academy rules for students to inhale solvents for the purpose of intoxication.

Any student involved in illegal drugs and/or inhaling solvents when he/she is under the academy's authority can expect to receive extremely serious sanctions, and the police will be informed. Being under the academy's authority means:

- throughout the academy day, whether on or off the premises
- whenever he/she is involved in any activity organised by the academy
- whenever he/she is identifiable as a member of the academy

In addition, where it has been brought to the attention of the Principal that a student has been formally cautioned by the police for the possession of an illegal drug the academy reserves the right to exclude him/her.

### **3. Procedures for Drug Management**

If a student discloses to a member of staff that she/he is taking drugs, the member of staff should seek to offer support but make it clear to the student that he or she can offer no guarantee of confidentiality given the seriousness of drug misuse.

#### **Dealing with a drug misuse incident (on site) – a member of staff should:**

- Check safety of abuser and others
- Inform the Principal or member of the Senior Team
- Participate in subsequent action as required
- Never ignore it

Harmful or illegal drugs may be legally removed from a place or a person within the academy's jurisdiction by the police. Staff have a right to search any student who they believe is in possession of an illegal or harmful substance (please refer to the Screening, Searching & Confiscation Policy).

#### **Medical emergencies:**

The procedure for an emergency applies when a student or others are at immediate at risk or harm. A person who is unconscious, having trouble breathing, seriously confused or disorientated or who has taken a harmful toxic substance, should be responded to as an emergency.

The staff member's main responsibility is for any student at immediate risk, but they also need to ensure the well-being and safety of others.

The staff member should put into practice the academy's first aid procedures. **IF IN DOUBT, CALL MEDICAL HELP.**

## **MEDICAL EMERGENCY**

The following steps should be taken in a **medical emergency**:

- **Assess the situation**
- **If the situation is deemed to be a medical emergency, send for medical help and ambulance**

### **BEFORE ASSISTANCE ARRIVES:**

If the person is **conscious**:

- Ask the person what has happened and to identify any drug used
- Collect any drug sample and vomit for medical analysis
- Do not induce vomiting
- Keep the person under observation, warm and quiet

If the person is **unconscious**:

- Ensure that the person can breathe and place in recovery position
- Do not move the person if a fall is likely to have led to spinal or other serious injury which may not be obvious
- Do not give anything by mouth
- Do not attempt to make the person sit or stand
- Do not leave the person unattended or in the charge of another student

### **WHEN MEDICAL HELP ARRIVES:**

- Pass on any information available including vomit and any drug samples.

### **AFTER THE INCIDENT**

- The staff member involved should complete an incident/accident form as soon as they have dealt with the emergency.
- The following should be considered:
  - Has the initial incident been addressed and are all students safe?
  - Have any remaining drugs been confiscated and stored securely as evidence? (a witness should be present for this)
  - Has the member of staff with responsibility for child protection been informed?

## **NON-MEDICAL EMERGENCY**

The following steps should be taken in drug situations which are **non-medical emergencies**:

- Assess the situation
- Send for help (such as a member of the Senior Team)
- If it becomes a medical emergency, send for medical help and an ambulance.

### **BEFORE ASSISTANCE ARRIVES**

- Ask the person what has happened and to identify any drug used
- Collect any drug sample and any vomit for medical analysis
- Keep the person under observation, warm and quiet

### **WHEN HELP ARRIVES:**

- Pass on any information available including any drug samples.

The staff member involved should complete an incident/accident report form as soon as the incident has been dealt with.

## AFTER THE INCIDENT:

The following should be considered:

- Has the initial incident been addressed and are all students safe?
- Have any remaining drugs been confiscated and stored securely as evidence? (a witness should be present for this)
- Has the member of staff recorded carefully what happened, who was involved, where they were and when?
- Has the member of staff with responsibility for child protection been informed?

The student will then be interviewed by a member of the Senior Team and the police will be consulted concerning the nature of the substance. If it is an illegal drug, the student will be isolated immediately and his/her parents called to the academy. The Principal or allocated Senior Team member will speak with them and the student can expect to be excluded. The illegal drug will be handed over to the police who may prosecute the student. Students found with illegal drugs on their person are likely to be permanently excluded. Students found dealing drugs on site will be permanently excluded.

Any sanctions issued to the student should not only focus on the drugs but also address the students' recklessness, ignorance, bravado, rebellion or susceptibility to a stronger influence may also need consideration.

After the incident consideration should be given as to whether assistance from outside agencies is required – Who? Why? What? When? Members of staff should always refer these types of decisions to the designated members of staff.

## **Tobacco and Vaping**

Aims:

- to ensure that cigarette smoking and vaping is not tolerated at the academy
- to educate students as to the immediate dangers of smoking
- to encourage those pupils who do smoke to break free from the habit

Smoking and/or Vaping, or being in possession of cigarettes, tobacco or a vape, is prohibited when a student is under the academy's authority.

Students found smoking, vaping or in possession of cigarettes, tobacco or a vape can expect their parents to be informed and an appropriate punishment administered in line with the school behaviour policy. Subsequent offences may result in suspension. For a persistent offender the Principal reserves the right to review the pupil or student's place in SWA.

## **Alcohol:**

Aims:

- to develop knowledge and understanding about alcohol as a drug and its effects on the body
- to encourage sensible, appropriate and safe drinking behaviour
- to practice personal and social skills and the strategies needed to deal with situations where alcohol is present
- to educate the students as to the place of alcohol in the political, social and economic environment in which it exists.

Alcohol is a depressant drug, particularly when taken in large quantities. Even at low levels, the potential for serious accidents arises. The Licensing Act of 1964 makes it generally illegal for alcohol to be sold to anyone under the age of 18, or for a person under 18 to buy alcohol.

Drinking, or being in possession of alcohol is prohibited:

- in academy buildings or grounds
- when under the authority of the academy, in public houses and other licensed premises and whenever prohibited by law (the only exceptions to this are for year 13 students who are over 18 years of age who may be given the express permission of their Principal to drink alcohol at an event)
- whilst on academy outings and trips

Students found in possession of alcohol or using it, whilst under the authority of the academy can expect to receive a suspension.

### **Drug Testing**

Parents/carers and students should be aware that drugs testing may be carried out in conjunction with the police where there is concern regarding misuse of drugs.

### **Drug Operations**

The safety and well-being of all students and staff is paramount. For this reason SWA may find it necessary, in conjunction with the police, to run operations on site involving a police passive drug dog or itemiser sweeps. These operations will only be run if intelligence has been received to indicate the use of controlled drugs on the premises.

If an operation of this nature is felt necessary, at least two weeks in advance of the operation, all parents will be notified of the intention to run the operation and given the opportunity to raise objections. The operation will not be run without notification to and authorisation from the Chair of the Local Governing Body.

Prepared press statements will be agreed with the police and may be issued by both organisations on the day of the operation.

A letter will then be issued to parents advising that a drugs operation was carried out that day.

### **Warning Signs**

Early detection is extremely important and staff need to be vigilant. Presence of the following signs is certainly not conclusive proof of drug or solvent misuse but the presence of several signs may point to a need for greater vigilance.

In individuals-

Changes in attendance; decline in performance; tiredness; unusual mood swings; parental concerns; excessive spending of money; stealing; lack of interest in physical appearance; sores or rashes (nose and mouth); lack of appetite; heavy use of perfumes or sunglasses.

In groups-

Absence on certain days; keeping distance from supervision points; being the subject of rumours about drug taking; talking to strangers; stealing in gangs; associations with older person (not part of peer group); use of drug takers slang.

Objects associated with drug misuse-

Foil containers or wrappers; twists of paper; plastic bags; metal tins; discoloured spoons; straws; sugar lumps; syringes; cigarette papers and lighters; aerosol containers; stamps, stickers and transfers.

### **Support for parents:**

From time to time SWA will arrange sessions in which information about illegal drugs and their use will be presented, as well as on tobacco and alcohol.

### **Educational programme:**

SWA have a policy concerning the use of illegal drugs and substances, alcohol and tobacco. This is expressed in assemblies, science lessons and personal, health and social education.

### **Subject areas covered in lessons**

In science lessons the academy follows the National Curriculum Science Order concerning Drug Education. This is as follows:

- How smoking affects lung structure and gas exchange
- How abuse of alcohol, solvents and other drugs affect health
- The effects of solvents, alcohol and tobacco on the body and functions.

In PSHE lessons through tutor groups and assemblies, the following issues are address:

- Recognising personal responsibility for decisions about substance use
- Knowledge about the basic facts concerning substances including their effects and relevant legislation
- Awareness of myths, misconceptions and stereotypes linked with substance abuse
- The development of appropriate techniques for coping with situations in which substance abuse occurs
- Understanding that Britain is a drug using society and recognising different patterns of use and their effect
- Recognising the impact of peer group pressure on drug habits
- Individuals are responsible for the choices they make about drug use
- Being able to analyse safe levels of intake e.g. tobacco is never safe, limited use of alcohol may be safe
- Discussing the role of the media in influencing attitudes towards drugs, particularly smoking and alcohol

### **Media (including social media):**

In the event of any sensitive drug issue, staff should avoid direct contact with the media, passing information to the Principal to ensure any reporting is within the best interests of young people, their families and SWA. Staff should not release any information to social media sites without the express permission of the Principal.

### **4. Monitoring and Evaluation**

This policy will be regularly monitored and evaluated by all stakeholders. All staff will support this policy and work towards establishing a drug free environment for all students.

### **5. Implementation and Review**

This policy will be made known to all staff, parents/carers and governors, and published on the academy website. Copies are also available upon request from the academy office. This policy will be reviewed two yearly or as required.

### **6. Links to other policies**

Safeguarding (Incorporating Child Protection) Policy  
Behaviour Management Policy  
Screening, Searching and Confiscation Policy

### **7. Author and Date**

Approved by BEMAT Principals & Directors, issued February 2015  
Updated by Associate Principal, Children & Families (MJG) – June 2016  
Updated by Associate Principal, Children & Families (MJG) – November 2018  
Reviewed by Assistant Principal (CLH) – March 2021  
Reviewed by Associate Principal C.Kirkman - February 2023  
Reviewed by Assistant Principal C.Kirkman - January 2025

Date ratified by Governors – February 2025

Next review date – January 2027