

The Catholic High School Chester Drugs Policy

Approved by	Full Governing Body
Date	1 st October 2024
Next Review Date	2029

DRUGS POLICY 2023/2024

The purpose of this policy is to safeguard the welfare of the whole school community. The school is committed to promoting the health, safety and welfare of all members of its community, and recognises the potential harm that the misuse of drugs (see definition of drug below) may cause. There is no place for drugs in school.

DEFINITION

A drug is any substance that affects the way in which the body functions, physically, emotionally or mentally. It includes legal substances, such as alcohol, tobacco (including e-cigarettes) and solvents, volatile substances, over the counter or prescribed drugs and illegal drugs such as cannabis, ecstasy, heroin, crack/cocaine, LSD, Ketamine and alkyl nitrites (poppers).

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

AIMS

- To prevent the school community from dangers and spread of drug abuse.
- To provide all students with the knowledge and skills to be able to make informed decisions about drugs.
- To prevent drugs misuse.
- To provide help and advice where necessary.

BROAD GUIDELINES

1. STATEMENT ON THE USE OF DRUGS IN SCHOOL

All the drugs covered by this policy are not permitted to be brought onto, sold, consumed, passed on or obtained on school premises or on any journey to and from school or during the school day or at any time when involved in a school related activity.

2. PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Parents will be informed of the drug education curriculum and have the opportunity to raise concerns. This policy will be available on our school website. Parents will be contacted if the student is found to be breaking the rules on drugs. Parents may also be informed of any suspicions relating to drugs misuse.

3. EDUCATIONAL RESPONSE

A planned drugs education programme is provided through the tutorial programme as well as through the Science Curriculum. The programme is designed to enable pupils to make healthy, informed choices by increasing knowledge and awareness of the issues around drugs misuse and the support available as required.

4. COUNSELLING RESPONSE

Appropriate counselling and support will be offered where a student has been identified as having

experimented with illegal drugs or is in danger of doing so.

The school will ensure that students vulnerable to drug misuse are identified and receive appropriate support either from within the school or through referral to other services, including the Drug Intervention Service. Staff will give no guarantee of confidentiality if a student admits drug misuse, but will point to sources of confidential information.

5. DISCIPLINARY RESPONSE

The school will ensure that pupils are aware of the rules on drugs and of the consequences of breaking them through the website, student planners and assemblies. Clear procedures are in place for responding to drug related incidents as detailed in Appendix 1. The sanction imposed against students involved in drugs-related incidents will be determined in the light of the particular situation but all incidents carry the risk of permanent exclusion, even if it is a first offence. Permanent exclusions related to possession of drugs have been upheld by our Governing Body

Appendix

MANAGING DRUGS RELATED INCIDENTS IN SCHOOL

(This part of the policy covers illegal drugs as defined by the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971).

1. These incidents are defined as the possession, use or supply of drugs by students in school or on educational visits. This includes paraphernalia relating to drug taking;
2. Any adult who has reason to be concerned that a student may be misusing drugs or is under the influence of drugs MUST inform the Leadership Team immediately;
3. All such incidents will be carefully investigated and written statements will be taken from students involved. The investigation will be led by a member of the Leadership Team.
4. Any drugs that are found in school will be secured on the school site and the police will be alerted to their existence immediately;
5. A trained first-aider will be involved wherever there is a direct danger to the health of a student;
6. Parents will be informed at the earliest opportunity if their child is involved in an investigation;
7. In accordance with the law, students will be invited to empty their bags and pockets for searching where the school has reasonable grounds to be suspicious. If a pupil refuses the invitation to empty their bags/pockets then the school may call the Police and parents/carers. Possession will be taken of any suspected substance. A search of a student's person is not permitted. A member of the Leadership Team should undertake the search of a student's bag. During a search there must always be two members of staff present.
8. The sanction imposed against students involved in drugs-related incidents will be determined in the light of the particular situation but all incidents carry the risk of permanent exclusion, even if it is a first offence.
9. The Chair of Governors will be informed.

SENSIBLE EXCEPTIONS TO THE POLICY

School events held throughout the year in the evenings will often provide alcohol for parents and visitors and at social events alcohol will be on sale. Staff will ensure that students are not served alcohol if they are under age.

Intoxicated parents/carers

Our schools rules for drugs apply to all people who are on the school premises and we expect that parents/carers and staff will adhere to these rules. If a parent/carer comes to school and appears to be under the influence of drugs, they will be asked to leave. If they have come to collect their child, we will sensitively offer to phone for someone else to come and collect the child. If we are concerned that the child is at risk then we will follow the Child Protection procedures.

Approved and ratified by the governing body 26 July 2014

Reviewed and approved by the governing body 12 December 2019

Reviewed and approved by the governing body 1 October 2024