



BENSHAM MANOR *School*

Drugs and Substance Misuse Education Policy

Last reviewed: July 2025



INTRODUCTION

It is the aim of Bensham Manor School to educate its pupils to make informed personal choices and decisions in order to avoid putting themselves, or others, in danger. It is recognised that drugs and alcohol are widely available and that there is a national problem particularly among young people. The purpose of this policy is to actively discourage, and hopefully prevent, pupils from misusing substances at any time. Any cases of misuse of substances by pupils (or staff) will be treated as serious misconduct. Guidance and professional help will be preferred options to disciplinary measures where inappropriate involvement with substances is suspected. However, where a case is proved, sanctions will be applied demonstrating the seriousness with which the School regards the possession, supply, intent to supply or use of drugs/substances.

In cases where there has been a serious breach of School expectations, the Headteacher can exclude a pupil from the School (serious breaches of the Behaviour Policy include drug/substance related offences). Each case will be examined fairly and thoroughly before a judgement is made about the appropriate sanction for an individual pupil.

It would normally be the case that a pupil would not be excluded permanently for a “one-off” or first offence. It would normally be the case that a pupil would be excluded permanently only if there has been a serious breach of the School’s Discipline/Behaviour policies and after a range of alternative strategies have been tried and failed.

However, a pupil will be excluded permanently even for one-off incidents such as:

- supplying or selling drugs/substances to other school pupils
- acting as a go-between in the sale and purchase of drugs/substances

These actions are deemed to be so serious that allowing the pupil to remain in the School might seriously harm the education, safety and welfare of others in the School.

For the purposes of this policy the term “drug” is taken to mean controlled drugs, non-prescribed medicines, and all illegal substances whether classed as hard or soft drugs. It will be reviewed as appropriate to take account of significant changes made locally or nationally. The term “substance” refers to alcohol and prescribed medication when used inappropriately or by someone other than the person for whom it was prescribed.

DRUGS EDUCATION AS PART OF THE PSHCE PROGRAMME

The drugs education of pupils will take into account the need for pupils to have accurate information appropriate to their age, stage of development, and actual behaviour patterns.

This information will include:

- School Behaviour Policy and the partnership agreement
- The law relating to drugs and misuse of other substances
- Information about drugs, their legal status, their street names, their effects, their legitimate uses
- Understanding of the level of social acceptability or otherwise of these drugs
- Understanding of where the potential dangers lie, including the psychological and physiological effects and how their families might be affected by their misuse
- Understanding of pupils’ own role in minimising or removing dangers, and how to achieve this
- Sources of support, help and advice should pupils need them.

- a) The need for pupils to attain the personal and inter-personal skills necessary for coping with life in society where many kinds of drugs will continue to be available, many of which are likely to be illegal, and all of which are potentially harmful. These skills include seeking and sifting information,

critical

thinking; decision making, assertiveness and resisting peer pressure.

- b) The need for pupils to develop and maintain a level of self-esteem so they will value their personal welfare and that of others, and take conscientious care of themselves and of others.
- c) The need for pupils to know that, although information will be treated sensitively, total confidentiality cannot be maintained where illegal substances are involved.
- d) The training and support needs of the staff delivering this area of the curriculum.

SUPPORT AND TRAINING FOR STAFF

The school will work closely with the LA, the Police, the voluntary sector and other agencies working in the field of drugs education and support. Teachers, non-teaching staff and governors will be given access to training and regular updates as appropriate.

SUSPICION OF MISUSE: SIGNS TO LOOK FOR

Suspicion of misuse may be aroused by certain behavioural and other signs, which may in turn be associated with deterioration in a pupil's welfare and/or performance. All staff are expected to be aware of the signs of possible drug abuse and to report any concerns about a pupil to the Headteacher or a member of the Leadership Team, who will decide if further investigation is warranted.

The signs listed below may indicate drug or other substance abuse, but their presence alone is not conclusive proof, as some of them may be due to adolescence.

- Decline in academic performance
- Unusual outbreaks of temper, mood swings, restlessness, irritability - general attitude problems
- Excessive tiredness without obvious cause
- No interest in physical appearance, or appearance changes
- Lack of appetite, perhaps unexpected loss of weight
- Sores or rashes especially on the mouth or nose
- Heavy use of scents, colognes, etc. to disguise the smell of drugs
- New friends possibly in older age groups
- Unwillingness to take part in school activities
- Irregular attendance at school.

ACTION FOLLOWING MISUSE, INCLUDING SANCTIONS

If pupils become involved with drug abuse, every attempt will be made to support each pupil educationally and personally at a level appropriate to their needs. School sanctions however will also operate. If there is any evidence or suspicion that there is unauthorised pupil involvement with legal or illegal drugs (possession or supply), then further investigation may be necessary. Responsibility for initiating any further investigations rests with the Headteacher, who will make every effort to ensure that they are conducted fairly and with as much openness towards the affected pupil as the circumstances may reasonably allow. In such cases:

- a) a careful written record will be made
- b) parents/guardians will be informed as soon as possible of a pupil's possible involvement in drug-misuse
- c) if medical aid is needed (or might be needed) it will be provided or sought at once (parents/guardians will be kept fully informed)

any substance suspected of being a drug may be confiscated: depending on the nature of the substance, it may then be returned to a parent/guardian or passed directly to the Police

a) The Headteacher, DSL or a member of SLT must be kept fully informed.

An urgent meeting should take place to decide whether others outside the School should be informed. These will include parents and may include the Police. If an offence against the Misuse of Drugs Act is suspected or substantiated, the police will be informed by the Headteacher or a member of SLT.

PUPIL RECORDS

Information in a pupil's file in connection with drugs-related offences may be kept for a maximum of 6 years, and should then be destroyed.

The person responsible for ensuring the implementation of this policy is the Headteacher as part of their overall responsibility for education and discipline in the school.

BOUNDARIES OF THE SCHOOL

This policy applies to all pupils on their way to school, on their journey home from school, on all school transport and within the boundaries of the school.

a) It also includes all school organised visits, such as sporting trips, day trips and residential overnight stays.

