



St Mary's Catholic School is committed to the health and safety of all its members and will take action to safeguard their well-being. The possession, use or supply of illegal drugs in the school context, which is defined as on school premises or during any school activity, is totally forbidden. Any such instance will be viewed as an extremely serious disciplinary matter. The governors believe it is essential that parents and students are clear at the outset about the normal sanction that will be applied in particular instances, as follows: a student who supplies any drugs or other solvents (whether legal or illegal and regardless of the seriousness of the use) on the school premises will be at risk of permanent exclusion for a first offence.

### **Drugs Education**

We acknowledge the importance of our role in guiding and informing our students about drugs and seek to establish an atmosphere in which all in need of support can come forward. As part of our duty of care for the welfare of all our students, we believe we must inform and educate them on the consequences of drug use and misuse. Education is built into our Personal Development Programme for all students (Health and wellbeing module/ Staying safe offline and online module) and supported further by additional curriculum lessons, in line with the National Curriculum, assemblies and individual support for students across all key stages.

The aims of Drugs Education:

- To enable young people to make healthy, informed choices and decisions by increasing knowledge, challenging attitudes and developing and practising skills.
- To increase understanding about the implications and possible consequences of use and misuse and to develop a sense of responsibility for themselves and others.
- To encourage an understanding for those experiencing or likely to experience substance misuse.
- To develop an awareness of the influence of the media on behaviour.
- To seek to minimise the risks that users and potential users face.
- To enable young people to identify sources of appropriate personal help and support.
- To develop confidence and self-esteem to enable young people to cope with pressures and influences that may lead to the misuse of drugs.
- To widen understanding about related health and social issues.
- To inform parents of the work in school drug education and to help parents to develop their own understanding of the issues.
- To provide training and support in relation to drug issues for all staff.

### **School procedures to deal with drug and alcohol related incidents**

In all suspected cases, ensure the health & safety of students concerned and seek medical advice where necessary from first aider/school health advisor/paramedics.

Definitions of what the school considers to be drugs and alcohol:

- Illegal drugs
- Novel Psychoactive Substances (so called 'legal highs')
- Volatile Substances
- Alcohol
- Tobacco/ E-cigarettes and vapes (Including 'Dab pen's/Cannabis Vapes)
- Nicotine pouches
- Prescription medication taken by someone for whom it has not been prescribed or which has been taken in a way that does not comply with the school's Managing Medication Policy.
- Paraphernalia associated with any of the above.

This policy applies to students, staff, visitors, parents and partner agencies.

It applies on the school premises, during educational visits including residential ones, to students educated offsite and on the public transport system to and from school.

## **General Procedures**

### ***Procedure for Staff***

If you suspect that a student is involved in substance misuse or possession on the premises you should inform a Head of Year, Key Stage Leader or Senior Leadership Team member immediately. If you are teaching a lesson, use the school's on-call system without delay and a Pastoral or Senior leader will immediately come to support. Do not personally investigate this concern. Supervise and monitor the student, not allowing contact with other students, until support arrives.

### ***Procedure for Pastoral and Senior Staff***

In the event of an incident involving substance misuse or supply in school we will follow the procedures outlined in the DfE and ACPO drug advice for school publication September 2012.

- the incident will be initially dealt with (and procedures outline below implemented) by a Head of Year, Key Stage Leader or Senior Leader in school.
- the Headteacher or his representative will inform parents or carers at the earliest opportunity.
- after discussion with parents or carers, governors, pastoral staff and, where necessary, Police, the Headteacher will decide upon action to be taken. The interests of the student(s) involved will be balanced against the interests of other school members and the local community.
- the Headteacher reserves the right to exclude any students who brings drugs or alcohol into school, have them on their person, consume them, are under the influence of them or hand them out before, during or after the school day, including during school visits.

### ***Student Presenting Intoxicated on School Premises - Alcohol/Volatile Substances***

*(Substances not controlled under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971, therefore proactive police involvement would not ordinarily be needed)*

- If medical emergency: call for medical assistance/ambulance, follow first aid procedures until help arrives.
- If not a medical emergency: keep student calm and under observation.
- Contact parent or carer on health and safety grounds, and request student's removal if necessary.
- If student displays threatening or disorderly behaviour and Police support is needed, ring 101 or 999 depending on the level of threat.
- Complete school nurse referral.
- Apply behaviour policy sanctions as appropriate.

### ***Student Presenting Intoxicated on School Premises – Drugs***

- If medical emergency: call for medical assistance/ambulance, follow first aid procedures until help arrives.
- If not a medical emergency: keep student calm and under observation.
- Contact parent or carer on health and safety grounds, and request student's removal if necessary.
- If student displays threatening or disorderly behaviour and Police support is needed, ring 101 or 999 depending on the level of threat.
- Contact Police, who will support school in any further action regarding the legal aspect.
- Complete school nurse referral.
- Apply behaviour policy sanctions as appropriate.

### ***Student suspected of involvement in drug incident on school premises***

- Contact Police, who will collect information and support school in communicating with student(s) and families.
- Coordinate any in-school follow up with Police, who should keep school involved regarding any further investigation or criminal proceedings.
- Complete school nurse referral.
- Apply behaviour policy sanctions as appropriate.

### ***Students suspected of involvement in drug incidents off school premises but during school day***

- Contact Police, who will collect information and liaise with Community Manager.
- Do not contact parent or carer without consulting Police. Police will liaise, where appropriate, and support schools in communicating with student(s) and families.
- Coordinate any in-school follow up with Police, who should keep school involved regarding any further investigation or criminal proceedings.
- Complete school nurse referral.
- Apply behaviour policy sanctions as appropriate.

***Student found in possession of alcohol or tobacco/E-cigarette on school premises, on school trip or in vicinity of school, including journey to and from school***

- Respond to any health and wellbeing issues (see medical advice above).
- Inform parent or carer.
- Confiscate and dispose of appropriately within health and safety policy in school.
- Apply behaviour policy sanctions as appropriate.
- Remind the students concerned they may speak to the school nurse in confidence in the health drop-in.

***Student found in possession of a suspected drug on school premises, on school trip or in vicinity of school, including journey to and from school***

- Respond to any health and wellbeing issues (see medical advice above).
- Where at all possible, take possession of the drug involved.
- Secure the drug as evidence.
- POLICE ACTION REQUIRED DUE TO POTENTIAL CRIMINAL OFFENCE.
- Contact Police on 101 to create incident report.
- Police will attend and secure evidence.
- (Any arrest should take place off school premises in presence of parent or carer, unless the Officer in Charge is aware of other factors, which would require an on the spot arrest).
- Seek cooperation from student to remain on school premises (if they refuse, update police on 101 using incident number).
- (If on a school visit and in a different authority or country be aware that differences may exist in how forces respond).
- Do not contact parent or carer without consulting Police. Police will liaise, where appropriate, and support schools in communicating with student(s) and families.
- Police should remain in contact with the school and inform of outcome of the criminal proceedings.
- Complete school nurse referral.
- Apply behaviour policy sanctions as appropriate.

***Student found supplying suspected illegal drug on school premises***

- Where at all possible, take possession of the drug and any monies involved.
- Secure the drug as evidence.
- POLICE ACTION REQUIRED DUE TO POTENTIAL CRIMINAL OFFENCE.
- Contact Police on 101 to create incident report.
- (If on a school visit and in a different authority or country be aware that differences may exist in how forces respond).
- (Any arrest may take place on school premises due to the nature of the offence and to preserve any evidence during the investigation).
- Seek cooperation from student to remain on school premises (if they refuse, update police on 101 using incident number).
- Do not contact parent or carer unless Officer in Charge requests.
- Police should remain in contact with the school and inform of outcome of the criminal proceedings.
- Complete school nurse referral.
- Apply behaviour policy sanctions as appropriate.

***Staff member or visitor suspected of involved in drug incident on school premises***

- The Law around legal and illegal drugs also applies to all school staff and visitors, including parents.

- Apply protocols as above. For further support contact Police.

### The use of outside agencies

The school actively co-operates with outside agencies such as Community Police, Social Services and young people’s support agencies to support and enhance its teaching programme and to support its dealing with drug and alcohol related incidents.

### Searching Students

As outlined in the school’s policy for ‘Appropriate Physical Contact or Intervention’:

- On occasions a member of staff may have reasonable grounds to suspect that a student is in possession of an item or items which contravene school regulations and could potentially cause harm to the student or others. Under these circumstances The Education Act 2011 extends the power of staff to search students without their consent.
- Searches will be conducted by two members of staff, at least one of whom will be the same sex as the student.
- Students may be offered the opportunity to have their parents/carers present. However, depending on the situation this may not be possible.
- St Mary’s Catholic School does not endorse and will not undertake a physical search of any students’ person. Where necessary a student will be asked to remove his/her coat and/or blazer, empty all pockets, open their bags and in some circumstances remove their shoes and socks. Possessions and items of apparel that have been removed may then be searched by the staff present.
- If undesirable items are discovered the school will use its power of confiscation to retain the offending item(s).
- Parents/carers, if not present, will be contacted to explain what has been found and any subsequent sanctions that have been applied. Where appropriate, parents/carers will be invited to retrieve the offending property and asked to ensure that they are not brought to school again.
- In the event that illegal items are discovered then the Police will be informed immediately.

### Sanctions

- The school will consider each drug incident separately and consider the appropriate response, bearing in mind the circumstances of the case, and the need to balance the interests of the student, other members of the school and the wider community.
- All substance related incidents will be treated as serious breaches of the school’s stated behaviour policy and therefore either fixed term or permanent exclusions will be considered as a suitable response.
- A second offence will result is likely to result in a permanent exclusion.

### Confidentiality

- Where a student is being questioned by a member of staff regarding a suspected drug-related incident, no guarantee of confidentiality can be given. This should be made clear to the student at the outset of the conversation.
- Information regarding a student’s involvement in a drug-related incident may be pertinent to other agencies involved in the student’s care e.g. Youth Offending Team, Looked After Children Team. Such information should be shared with according sensitivity and on a need to know basis.

Policy review date	By whom	Approved ( <i>insert date</i> )
September 2025	Local Governing Committee	10 <sup>th</sup> October 2025