

John Colet Drug Policy

This policy has been developed in consultation with staff, Governors, students and parents. It is to be published in the Staff Handbook and publicised to all parents through the School Newsletter. It links to other policies such as behaviour, health and safety, medicines, pastoral support, school visits and child protection. It has been written with reference to “Drugs: Guidance for Schools” published by DfES in February 2004.

The Purpose of the policy

- To clarify the legal requirements and responsibilities of the school
- To reinforce and safeguard the health and safety of students and others who use the school
- To clarify the school’s approach to drugs for all staff, students, governors, parents/carers, external agencies and the wider community
- To give guidance on developing, implementing and monitoring the drug education programme
- To enable staff to manage drugs on school premises, and any incidents that occur, with confidence and consistency, and in the best interests of those involved
- To ensure that the response to incidents involving drugs complements the overall approach to drug education and the values and ethos of the school.
- To provide a basis for evaluation the effectiveness of the school drug education programme and the management of incidents involving illegal and other unauthorised drugs
- To reinforce the role of the school in contributing to local and national strategies

To whom the policy applies

The policy applies to all staff, students, parents/carers, governors and partner agencies working within the school. The policy applies to all of the above when within the school boundaries, on educational visits or being educated at another provider (as arranged by the school).

Definitions and terminology

- The definition of a drug given by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime is: “A substance people take to change the way they feel, think or behave”
- The term “drugs” and “drug education” used in this document refer to all drugs:
 - All illegal drugs (those controlled by the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971)
 - All legal drugs, including alcohol, tobacco, volatile substances (those giving off a gas or vapour which can be inhaled), ketamine, khat and alkyl nitrites (known as poppers)
 - All over the counter and prescription medicines
- A drug incident is defined as the suspicion, observation, disclosure or discovery of a situation involving illegal and other unauthorised drugs.

John Colet’s stance towards drugs, health and the needs of the students

- Illegal and other unauthorised drugs have no place at John Colet.
- The school’s first concern in managing drugs is the health and safety of the school community and meeting the pastoral needs of students.
- The parent/carer of anyone with authorised drugs should inform the Headteacher in writing giving clear instructions as to their administration.
- Authorised drugs should be kept safe by the school’s Matron.

Management responsibilities

The SLT are designated responsible for management of drug incidents reporting to the Headteacher. An Assistant Headteacher is responsible for the overview of drugs education within the school.

Drugs Education

- The aim of drug education at John Colet is to provide opportunities for students to develop their knowledge, skills, attitudes and understanding about drugs and appreciate the benefits of a healthy lifestyle, relating this to their own and others' actions.
- The content for drugs education will be provided through the National Curriculum frameworks for PSHE, citizenship and Science. The content will be covered by John Colet staff, LA advisors and external agencies.
- The programme will differ for each year group so that the needs of the students are met.
- Vulnerable students will have their provision adapted according to an assessment of each individual's need.
- Lists of local services and national helplines/websites will be published to students.
- The programme will be reviewed annually by a group of staff involved in its development and delivery.
- Students will evaluate the programme annually and provide feedback.

Staff and Governor Training

General drug awareness and the first steps in managing a drugs incident will be covered through the Staff Induction Programme and staff briefings. During the annual review of the policy, the Governors will be informed on drugs issues as they affect the school. Other training will be provided where appropriate.

Management of drugs at school

Prescribed Medicines

The school follows Buckinghamshire County Council's guidance. In consultation with the parent/carer, a trained member of staff may manage the medicine or the student may self-manage. Medicines prescribed for an individual cannot be passed on to a third party. This would lead to an appropriate fixed-term exclusion.

Tobacco

The school is a non-smoking site. Any student seen smoking whilst in school uniform or during the school day will be given an appropriate detention.

Alcohol

Alcohol is banned in school (unless at an authorised event for parents/carers/public) and its discovery will lead to an appropriate fixed-term exclusion.

Illegal drugs

- On the suspicion or concern of illegal drugs, the school will undertake an investigation with student property searched if necessary. Consent will always be sought and a second adult witness present. If permission is refused, the police will be called. The law permits school staff to take temporary possession of a substance suspected of being an illegal drug for the purposes of preventing an offence from being committed or continued in relation to that drug. The school follows DfES "Drugs: Guidance for Schools" advice on search, confiscation and disposal which is attached to this document as Annex A.
- Any student involved in (or in the balance of probabilities) the use of illegal or authorised drugs in school will automatically be given an appropriate fixed term exclusion.
- The possession of associated paraphernalia will be subject to an appropriate fixed term exclusion.
- Any student found to be supplying (students sharing drugs, students being coerced to supply drugs, a group of friends taking it in turns to bring drugs in for their own use, students supplying drug paraphernalia and habitual organised supply for profit) will automatically receive a permanent exclusion in line with national guidance.
- Any person in school (including visitors) considered to be under the influence of drugs will be monitored at a distance and the police called.

Police Involvement

The school has a good working relationship with the local police. In any incident concerning illegal drugs, the school will contact the local police.

Parent/Carer Involvement

- Parents/carers are encouraged to approach the school if they are concerned about any issue related to drugs and their child.
- On the suspicion of an incident involving illegal and other unauthorised drugs, the parent/carer will be informed of the investigation where this will not compromise the student's safety.
- If the school suspects that a student is using illegal drugs outside of school, the parent/carer will be informed of the school's concerns where this will not compromise the student's safety.
- If a student's behaviour is thought to be irrational or completely out of character, it will be discussed with the parent/carer where this will not compromise the student's safety.
- Parents and Governors will be consulted every two years on the development and review of the policy.

Confidentiality

- Staff cannot and should not promise total confidentiality.
- The boundaries of confidentiality should be made clear to students.
- If a student discloses information which is sensitive, not generally known, and which the student asks not to be passed on, the request should be honoured unless this is unavoidable in order for teaching/support staff to fulfil their professional responsibilities in relation to:
 - Child protection
 - Co-operating with a police investigation
 - Referral to external agencies.
- Every effort should be made to secure the student's agreement.
- It may be necessary to invoke child protection procedures if the student's safety is at risk. This will be done by the school's nominated Child Protection Officer.

External Agencies

The school will involve or refer students to other services when needed. Where possible, where this will not compromise the student's safety, the school will seek the involvement of the student and the student's parent/carer in such a decision.

Draft Date:

Adoption date: **June 2004**

Date of next review: **June 2008**

Annex A (Extract from Drugs: Guidance for Schools)

The law permits school staff to take temporary possession of a substance suspected of being an illegal drug for the purposes of taking temporary possession of and disposal of suspected illegal drugs preventing an offence from being committed or continued in relation to that drug, providing that all reasonable steps are taken to destroy the drug or deliver it to a person lawfully entitled to take custody of it.

In taking temporary possession and disposing of suspected illegal drugs schools are advised to:

- ensure that a second adult witness is present throughout;
- seal the sample in a plastic bag and include details of the date and time of the seizure/find and witness present.
- store it in a secure location, such as the school safe or other lockable container with access limited to two senior members of staff;
- **without delay** notify the police, who will collect it and then store or dispose of it in line with locally agreed protocols. **The law does not require a school to divulge to the police the name of the pupil from whom the drugs were taken.** Where a pupil is identified the police will be required to follow set internal procedures;
- record full details of the incident, including the police incident reference number;
- inform parents/carers, unless this would jeopardise the safety of the pupil;

School staff should not attempt to analyse or taste unknown substances. Police can advise on analysis and formal identification, although this is normally carried out only if it will be required as evidence within a prosecution.

If formal action is to be taken against a pupil, the police should make arrangements for them to attend a local police station accompanied by an appropriate adult for interview. Only in exceptional circumstances should arrest or interviews take place at school. An appropriate adult should always be present during interviews, preferably a parent/carer or duty social worker.

Confiscation and Disposal of other Unauthorised Drugs

The presence of a second adult witness is advisable.

Alcohol and Tobacco

Parents/carers should normally be informed and given the opportunity to collect the alcohol or tobacco, unless this would jeopardise the safety of the child.

Volatile Substances

Given the level of danger posed by volatile substances schools may arrange for their safe disposal. Small amounts may be placed in a bin to which pupils do not have access, for example a bin within a locked cupboard.

Medicines

Disposal of medicines held at school should be covered in the school's medicines policy. Parents/carers should collect and dispose of unused or date-expired medicines.

Disposal of Drug Paraphernalia

Needles or syringes found on school premises should be placed in a sturdy, secure container (for example, a tin with lid), using gloves. Soft-drink cans or plastic bottles should not be used. Used needles and syringes should not be disposed of in domestic waste.

The school should liaise with the LA or Local Authority Environmental Health Department on the best way to dispose of the contents of a sharps container.

Detection Searches

Schools should always seek consent and ensure that a second adult of the same gender as the person being searched is present. If this is refused the school will need to consider whether to call the police. Searches should be conducted in such a way as to minimise potential embarrassment or distress.

Personal Searches

When a person is suspected of concealing illegal or other unauthorised drugs **it is not appropriate for a member of staff to carry out a personal search;** this includes the searching of outer clothing and inside pockets. Every effort should be made to persuade the person to hand over voluntarily any drugs, in the presence of a second adult witness. Where the individual refuses and the drug is believed to be illegal, and the school wishes to proceed along formal lines, then the police must be called. **The police can conduct a personal search if they believe a crime has taken place, or to prevent harm to themselves or others following an arrest.** Schools are not permitted to detain a person without their consent unless a citizen's arrest is made.

The Violent Crime Reduction Bill 2006 gives Headteachers the power to authorise staff to use reasonable force to search students if they are suspected of carrying a knife or other offensive weapon on school premises or under the authority of staff, for example on a school trip. At John Colet, we believe that **it is not appropriate for staff to carry out a search using reasonable force unless there were significant safety issues that could not be contained until the Police arrived.** Should reasonable force be used then this is covered under the school's Use of Force Policy.

Searches of School Property

Staff may search school property, for example pupils' lockers or desks if they believe drugs to be stored there. **Prior consent should always be sought.** Individuals should be made aware that if consent is refused the school may proceed with a search. However, where consent is refused, the school will need to balance the likelihood that an offence has been committed against the risk of infringing the individual's privacy without just cause.

Searches of Personal Property

Schools must not search personal property without consent. If the school wishes to search personal property, including pupils' property stored within school property, for example a bag or pencil case within a locker, they should ask for consent. Where consent is refused they will need to consider, in the case of pupils, notifying parents/carers, who may persuade their child to give consent or if they wish to proceed along formal lines calling the police.

After any search involving pupils, parents/carers should normally be contacted by the school, regardless of whether the result of the search is positive or negative unless the school suspects that to do this might put the child's safety at risk.

Reviewed: April 2008