



Drugs/Substance Policy

Policy adapted from (if applicable):

Governing Body Sub-committee

Name:

Student Matters, Equality and Community
Committee

Date approved:

11 November 2021



Introduction

Belper School is situated in a small town on the edge of the Peak District. Its semi-rural setting cannot hide the fact that a number of large cities are within easy reach. As such, Belper is part of the larger environment and like many other similar areas; the trade in illegal substances is regrettably an aspect of the town's local environment. It would be irresponsible of Belper School not to be aware of the threat and danger that the availability of illegal drugs poses to its community. Of equal concern is the impact and effect of socially acceptable drugs like tobacco, vapes and alcohol; Whilst psychoactive substances are in the public eye less frequently we will continue to include them in this policy. Within this context the school's drugs policy has been formulated.

Aims

- To support the school in the process of maintaining the safety and wellbeing of students, staff and visitors
- To clarify legal responsibilities, entitlements and obligations
- To support all members of the school community by providing clear guidance on drug and substance related issues, ensuring clarity and consistency
- To identify the school's response to an incident
- To support a whole-school approach to drugs education as part of the wider school curriculum
- To ensure that Belper School is free from illegal drugs (and solvents)
- To educate students on the effects of drugs (and solvents) on the mind and body
- To provide opportunities for students to practice the personal and social skills and the strategies needed to deal safely with situations involving drugs
- To promote the individual's self-confidence, self-esteem and self-worth
- To explain the legal situation with regard to the use and misuse of drugs
- To enable young people to identify sources of appropriate personal support
- To ensure that cigarette smoking and vaping is not tolerated at the school
- To educate students as to the immediate dangers of smoking and vaping
- To encourage those students who do smoke or vape to break free from the habit

An Inclusive Definition of 'Drugs'

Belper School defines a drug as a substance which, when taken into the body, affects the way we feel, the way we perceive things and the way our body works. This definition is inclusive of both illegal drugs and legal substances like alcohol, tobacco, vapes, solvents and medicines.

A Definition of ‘Being under the School’s Authority’

Being under the school’s authority means:

- Throughout the school day, whether on or off the school premises
- Whenever the student is involved in an activity organised by the school
- When the student is on the way to, or returning from, the school

This policy also covers the use of the school premises and grounds by students beyond the school day. It also covers the possession of illegal drugs by parents, carers and visitors to the school premises and grounds during the school day.

Drug Related Incidents:

This kind of incident will involve one of the below substances:

Illegal drugs (including solvents): 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. Paradoxically it is not actually an offence to inhale solvents for the purpose of intoxication. However, the police are normally able to deal with such persons under public order provisions. Any student involved with illegal drugs when under the school’s authority will face a suspension from school. Each case will be looked at under its individual circumstances and sanctions will be applied accordingly. It is possible that the exclusion will be permanent.

If a student is found to be supplying illegal drugs to others whilst under the school’s authority, then the incident will be thoroughly investigated and it is almost certain that the student will be permanently excluded.

Parents and visitors under the apparent effects of drugs will be asked to leave the premises and return at a later date for the safety of the whole school.

Alcohol: 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 when under the authority of the school

Students are not allowed to bring alcohol onto the school premises. Any students who bring alcohol into the school’s authority, consume alcohol or are under the influence of alcohol will face the risk of a suspension from school. In some cases, permanent exclusion will be considered.

Parents and visitors under the effects of alcohol will be asked to leave the premises and return at a later date for the safety of the whole school.

Tobacco and vaping liquid: Smoking is the single most preventable cause of premature death and ill-health in our society. The school policy on smoking aims to give students the message that the habit creates health problems for smokers and non-smokers alike, that non-smoking represents the norm in society and that it receives support from the school and staff. Recent legislation has made it an offence for children younger than 18 years to be sold tobacco products.

Smoking, or being in possession of cigarettes or tobacco, is prohibited when a student is under the school's authority. Any students who contravene this will be sanctioned against and may face time in the Reflection Room. We would also include 'vaping' paraphernalia in this category as nicotine is a drug and will be treated in the same way as smoking tobacco.

Psychoactive Substances. These are substances that can affect a person in the way a drug would. They are covered under the Psychoactive substance act 2016 where it makes it clear that it is an offence to produce, supply, offer to supply, possess with intent to supply, possess on custodial premises, import or export psychoactive substances; that is, any substance intended for human consumption that is capable of producing a psychoactive effect

The use of these substances on the school premises will be seen as prejudicial to the good order of the school. Substances that fit the above definition of a drug, but may not be illegal and have not been prescribed by a medical professional, are prohibited from the school premises and grounds when under the authority of the school. A student found to be under the influence of such substances will be seen as a health and safety risk and will be treated accordingly. It is quite likely that the student will receive a strong sanction (suspension or time in the Reflection Room) as they will knowingly have flouted this policy. A student found supplying such substances to others will be sanctioned more strongly and there is a possibility that they may be permanently excluded depending on the gravity of the circumstances.

Prescribed medication: The school has a policy/procedure for the administration of prescribed medicines that must be followed for everyone's safety. Our practice is in line with national and local guidance.

However, it is still possible that where a student does not follow the procedure for the administration of prescribed medicines, incidents may still occur; this can also be the case in relation to non-prescription painkillers e.g. paracetamol. If a student contravenes the procedure, there will be an investigation and the student may face sanctions including time in the Reflection Room and/or suspension.

The Drug Related Incident

A drug related incident may include any of the following when being under the school's authority:

- A student who is suspected of being under the influence of a drug
- Finding drugs, or related paraphernalia

- Possession of drugs by an individual
- Use of drugs by an individual
- Supply of drugs
- Individuals disclosing information about their drug use
- Rumours of drug possession supply or drug use
- Reports of drug possession supply or drug use

Guiding principles

Any incidents will be dealt with after making an assessment of the situation and will be dealt with at the appropriate level depending on the nature of the incident and the drug. Appropriate support will be offered to those with substance misuse problems. The school will always seek to respond appropriately to each individual case by selecting from a range of possible responses, that which is most appropriate.

Procedures

Medical emergencies: If an individual is unconscious, is having trouble breathing, is seriously confused or disorientated, has taken a harmful toxic substance or is otherwise at immediate risk of immediate harm medical help will be sought and first aid given if required. The priority will be the student's safety.

Individuals in possession of drugs: If any student or adult on school premises is found in possession of an unauthorised drug it will be confiscated. If the drug is suspected to be illegal, the school will contact the police and immediately hand over the drug. A member of the Senior leadership team, pastoral support team or safeguarding team may search a student's bag or locker where they have reasonable cause to believe that it may contain unlawful items, including illegal drugs. Where students are suspected of concealing drugs then they will be encouraged to produce these voluntarily, otherwise the police may be called to deal with the situation

If the substance cannot be legally destroyed or disposed of it will be handed to the police as soon as possible and not stored for any longer than is necessary. Talking with an individual about a drug related incident will have as its purpose to confirm or reject suspicions or allegations, rather than to conduct a wider investigation. Parents of students will be informed and other professionals from the LA, Multi-Agency Team, Police, School Health Service, Social Service be informed or consulted as appropriate.

A member of staff in possession of suspected illegal drugs will be dealt with under the broad outlines of this policy, and any relevant internal discipline policy and national policy. This matter will be dealt with by the Senior leadership team.

Support for students: Following actions to preserve immediate safety, the health and emotional needs of students will be considered. Support is available through the pastoral system to ensure a caring response to students in distress. Interventions will be considered if the school feels a student is showing signs which indicate particular risks of, or from, involvement with drugs, whether



their own or that of their parent or carer. Such interventions may include consultation and subsequent referral.

Recording: All incidents will be recorded. Forms will be stored securely in the student's file.

Confidentiality: Complete secrecy can never be promised to a student, though information given in confidence will only be disclosed to anyone else in the interests of child protection. If a student discloses that they are using a drug without medical authorisation, action will be taken to ensure that the student comes to no serious harm if this is considered a significant risk. Staff have a commitment to inform the student in advance of any disclosure of information to others and if possible enable the student to be involved in the process. Staff are committed to protect a young person's anonymity where their disclosure may implicate others. Regarding disclosures, staff need to carefully define and communicate the boundaries of confidentiality offered.

Staff training and support

We recognise the need for staff to receive appropriate training to support their work in delivering the school programme of drug education and dealing appropriately with incidents should they arise. The CPD Co-ordinator, will organise training related to the identified needs of staff as required. This training also includes an understanding of County Lines and child exploitation.

Drug Education

Context: We will provide all students with drug education as an integral part of our Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) and programme.

Ethos: Drug education in our school aims to enable students to make healthy informed choices by increasing their knowledge, exploring a range of attitudes towards drug use and developing and practising decision making skills. The programme we follow will be based on national and local guidelines for good practice and will be appropriate to the age and experience of our students. It will outline the school stance on drugs. The programme will include the risks associated with becoming involved with County Lines activity.

Content and delivery: Teaching will be based on an understanding that a variety of approaches should be used in order to meet the differing needs of our students whilst still containing appropriate age-related content.

Use of visitors and outside speakers: We use visitors to support our planned teacher lead programme of education, in line with national and local guidance. The class teacher is always present when visitors are working with our students.



Links to other policies

See also the school's Behaviour policy, Anti-Bullying policy, PSHE policy, Health & Safety policy, Child Protection and Safeguarding policy, Self-Harm policy and Supporting Students with Medical Conditions and Administration of Medicine Policy.