



Brunel
School

Drug & Substance Abuse Policy

Policy Owner:	Headteacher
Local accountable officer:	Headteacher
Queries to:	Headteacher/Assistant Headteacher
Date created:	June 2023
Date of last review:	March 2026
Date of next review:	March 2027

Important Contacts

Headteacher	Vikki Alden
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Emily Johnston safeguarding@brunelschool.org
Deputy DSLs	Ryan Distin

Drugs & Substance Abuse Policy

School's response to drug use, alcohol use and tobacco and vape use.

The aim of this policy is to acknowledge and clarify the school's role in the prevention of drug, alcohol, tobacco and vaping use and education and ensure it is appropriate to pupils' needs. The policy provides information and guidance about education, as well as procedures to respond to any drug-related incident, for pupils, teachers, support-staff and outside agencies or individuals. Teachers will need to be confident and skilled to teach drug education and pupils need to receive up to date, relevant and accurate information as well as support. This policy aims to make clear procedures for responding to and managing drug and/or alcohol-related incidents.

Statement of intent - Pupils

Brunel School is committed to keeping pupils safe from drugs, alcohol and tobacco and vaping products, both on the premises and in the wider community. This policy has been developed in conjunction with DfE guidance to ensure that everyone is aware of the risks posed by the misuse of substances.

The school maintains the view that drugs, alcohol and tobacco and vaping use on school premises is entirely unacceptable and maintains a zero-tolerance response.

Definitions

This policy uses the term, drugs, to refer to any psychotropic substance, all legal drugs, including alcohol and tobacco, all illegal drugs, volatile substances, and over-the-counter and prescription medication. The term 'drugs' will be used to describe substances which interfere with a pupil's ability to learn, are potentially harmful, or are capable of misuse, including those whose possession and use are illegal. Substances alleged or believed to be drugs, as defined here, will be treated in the same way.

This definition includes but is not limited to:

- All illegal substances
- Alcohol
- Tobacco
- Solvents
- Medicines
- Legal highs
- Vaping

Drug Taking: The consumption of any drug. All drug taking, including medicinal use, carries the potential for harm. Different interventions are appropriate to address drug taking by young people.

Drug Use: Drug use is drug taking through which harm may occur, whether through intoxication, breach of Trusts' rules or the law, or the possibility of future health problems, although such harm may not be immediately perceptible. Drug use will require

interventions such as management, education, advice and information, and prevention work to reduce the potential for harm.

Drug Misuse: Drug taking which harms health or functioning. It may take the form of physical or psychological dependence or be part of a wider spectrum of problematic or harmful behaviour. Drug misuse will require a further range of interventions, which may include treatment.

Drug Incident: Evidence or suspicion of specific event at the school involving one or more unauthorised drugs, and requiring immediate action by Trust staff

Smoking: Smoking is classed as:

- Being seen smoking (either tobacco or e-cigarette [vaping]) in the school, on the school site or outside of the school site in school uniform.
- Being seen with a lit cigarette in their possession.
- Being found to have cigarettes and / or other smoking materials openly in their possession.
- Bringing cigarettes / smoking materials onto the premises.
- Associating with others who have been caught in the act of smoking.

E-cigarettes/Vapes: Electronic cigarettes and vapes mimic the effects of real cigarettes by producing a vapor that is potentially less harmful than cigarette smoke and free of some of its damaging substances, such as tar. However, experts state that it is not yet known what harm these devices could inflict on pupils' health and their contents could be damaging to their long term health. Because they are not regulated, the contents of e-cigarettes and vapes can vary. Some have been found to contain toxic chemicals which are also found in tobacco and have been linked to cancer. Moreover, as these devices mimic the effects of real cigarettes, it is often difficult to tell from a distance whether a person is smoking a real cigarette or an e-cigarette. For these reasons, all forms of e-cigarettes and vapes are also banned from the school site. Therefore, this policy also applies to pupils or staff members found smoking any form of e-cigarette or vape.

The School is committed to:

- Providing a safe and healthy environment for the school community.
- Providing a robust policy which outlines our approach to supporting pupils struggling drugs and alcohol misuse.
- Developing and improving the policy by reviewing it after any incident.
- Educating pupils on the dangers of drug and alcohol misuse.

Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Children and Families Act 2014
- Education Act 2011
- Health Act 2006

- DfE (2022) 'Keeping children safe in education 2022'
- DfE (2018) 'Mental health and behaviour in schools'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- The Safeguarding Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- COSHH Risk Assessment
- Behaviour Policy
- Exclusion Policy
- PSHE (including Relationships, Sex and Health Education) Policy

Roles and responsibilities

The Senior Leadership Team is responsible for:

- Ensuring that effective policies and procedures are in place to make sure that pupils are kept safe from drugs, alcohol and tobacco and vaping at school.
- Ensuring that this policy is maintained and disseminated to all relevant stakeholders.
- Ensuring that pupils experiencing difficulties with drugs, alcohol and tobacco and vaping can access the support they need.
- Working with the headteacher, and in liaison with staff, parents, pupils, health and other professionals, to ensure that the relevant curricula, e.g. RSHE and PSHE, addresses the needs of pupils and the local community, and reflects current trends.
- Ensuring that the designated safeguarding lead submits an annual written report to the SLT and LGB concerning drug- and alcohol-related incidents and concerns.

The headteacher is responsible for:

- The day-to-day management of this policy.
- Headteachers have a responsibility to prevent illegal drug misuse and could be liable under Section 8 of the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 if they do not take action where illegal drug taking is knowingly permitted on the premises.
- Providing a safe environment for all members of the school community.
- Working with governors to ensure compliance with relevant legislation
- Informing the Local Governing Body (LGB), via the designated safeguarding governor, of any issues and developments concerning drugs, alcohol and tobacco and vaping.
- Acting on any concerns arising from pupils' use of drugs, alcohol and tobacco and vaping products.
- Informing parents of any drugs, alcohol and tobacco and vaping-related incidents concerning their child, where appropriate and where doing so will not place the child at risk.
- Inviting the local police and drugs team into school to raise awareness of the risks and issues associated with drugs.

- Informing the police of any drugs, alcohol and tobacco and vaping-related decision, where they deem it appropriate to do so.
- Ensuring a consistent approach to managing drug and alcohol incidents.

The DSL and PSHE Subject Leader are responsible for:

- Ensuring that staff have the skills to teach and discuss issues relating to drugs, alcohol and tobacco and vaping
- The PSHE leader is the subject leader for drug education, responsible for planning, resourcing, monitoring and evaluating the quality of programme delivery. This responsibility includes maintaining a current knowledge of locally relevant drug-related issues through liaison with the police and health professionals, and advising the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- Ensuring that pupils experiencing difficulties with drugs, alcohol and tobacco and vaping are provided with appropriate internal support and referred to external support agencies as appropriate.
- Consulting with pupils to inform provision around drugs, alcohol and tobacco and vaping education.
- Accessing appropriate training to enable them to successfully advise the school on drug and alcohol matters.
- Liaising with local services as necessary to provide support for pupils.
- Assisting with the monitoring and review of this policy.

Staff are responsible for:

- Attending scheduled training concerning drugs and alcohol, including how to spot the signs and symptoms of use and dependency, identifying paraphernalia, and how to respond to a drug related incident.
- Reporting concerns regarding pupils' use of drugs and alcohol to the DSL.

The site staff are responsible for:

- Regularly checking the school premises for signs of drug and alcohol use and reporting any concerns to the DSL.
- Handling and disposing of sharps in the appropriate manner at all times when handling needles found on school premises.

Pupils are responsible for:

- Ensuring they do not bring illegal or prohibited drugs, alcohol and tobacco and vaping products onto school premises or whilst engaged in any off-site activity representing the school.
- Ensuring they do not take drugs, consume alcohol or use tobacco or vaping products whilst travelling to or from school.

External agencies are responsible for supporting the school with drug and alcohol issues as required

Staff training

The school recognises that early intervention can prevent drug misuse. As such, all staff will receive training on an ongoing basis in identifying the signs that a pupil may be at risk.

Warning Signs of possible misuse: (guidance only)

Some signs of drug abuse can be confused with signs of other problems of quite innocent behaviour. Therefore, it is important that all staff (teaching and non-teaching) should take extreme care about not jumping to a conclusion, which might be inappropriate. However, in order to support staff in their identification of possible drug abuse amongst pupils, we have grouped signs into three categories. If a member of staff has any concerns they should liaise with relevant Senior Staff.

Equipment that may be used for drug use:

- Containers made from silver foil perhaps discoloured by heat
- Small bottles or pillboxes
- Stash cans – disguised as everyday objects e.g. deodorants or coke cans
- Twists of paper
- Straws
- Syringes or needles
- Empty solvent containers
- Cigarette lighters
- Drinks cans with extra holes and signs of scorching
- Spoons discoloured by heat
- Sugar lumps
- Spent matches
- Plastic bags or butane gas containers
- Stamps, stickers, transfers
- Grinders

Physical symptoms/signs of drug use:

- Sudden changes in mood/behaviour, unusual outbreaks of temper
- Disregard for physical appearance
- Loss of appetite or increase in consumption of set foods
- Use of deodorant to cover smell of drugs or solvents
- Drowsiness, sleepiness or slurred speech
- Unusual smell, stained or marks on clothing or body or around the mouth and nose
- Marked interest in glue or solvent based products
- Soreness or redness around the eyes or mouth
- Flushed face or neck

- Dilated pupils
- Small groups meeting in secretive places
- Unsteady on feet
- Staining on hands

Social Presentation:

- Keeping away from other pupils
- Being the subject of rumour about drugs
- Use of drug slang
- Excessive spending or borrowing of money
- Unexplained loss of money or belongings from home
- Perpetual stealing of money or goods that are then sold
- Changes in attendance patterns
- Reluctance to participate in school activities
- Loss of interest in a sport or a hobby
- Sudden changes in friendship group
- Performance at school shows a marked decline
- Strangers on or around the school premises

The curriculum

All pupils will receive regular guidance on drugs, alcohol and tobacco and vaping as part of the relationships and health education curriculum, in line with the PSHE Policy. Lessons will be delivered as appropriate to the age and phase of the pupils and will be differentiated according to individual learning styles. Information about drugs, alcohol and tobacco and vaping will feature as part of pastoral education in the form of intervention and support. Where appropriate, visitors and external speakers will lead classes on drug and alcohol misuse.

Specific types of drug

Smoking

In accordance with part 1 of the Health Act 2006, the school is a smoke-free environment. Parents, visitors and staff will not smoke on school grounds and must avoid smoking in front of pupils and/or encouraging pupils to smoke. This includes all buildings, out-buildings, playgrounds, playing fields and sheltered areas. All of the above also applies to vaping as this is considered in the same way as smoking within this policy.

Legal drugs and prescribed medicines

The school recognises that some pupils may require medications that have been prescribed by a doctor or other health professional. Parents have the primary responsibility for their

child's health and the school will request all relevant information about pupils' medical conditions from parents. Medicines will only be permitted to be brought onto the premises if it would be detrimental to the child's health if medicines were not administered during their time at the school. The school will only accept medicines which have been prescribed by a doctor, dentist, nurse or pharmacist, with the exception of over-the-counter painkillers, e.g. paracetamol, which may be taken in accordance with package instructions. The school will only accept medicines which are provided in the original container as dispensed and include the prescriber's instructions for administration and dosage. Further guidance can be found in the school's Administering Medication Policy.

Solvents

Pupils will not be permitted to bring solvent-based products onto the premises including, but not limited to, aerosol deodorants, compressed air and aerosol hairspray

The school will ensure that potentially hazardous solvents are stored safely, and pupils will be supervised if they are required to come into contact with them. More information can be found in the school's COSHH risk assessment.

School Response:

Pupils found to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol:

Non-medical emergency

Unless it is a medical emergency, or where there is aggressive or threatening behaviour, pupils found to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol whilst on school premises will be assessed by a senior leader.

The school will decide whether it is appropriate to notify the pupil's parent – parents will generally be informed unless the school feels there is a safeguarding concern which means that telling the pupil's parent may put them at risk.

Where the school determines parents should be notified, they will be contacted and asked to remove the pupil from the premises. The pupil will remain in a senior leader's office until their parent arrives. In the event the school chooses not to inform the pupil's parents, the pupil will be given water and offered pastoral support.

Summary of actions:

- Keep pupil calm and under observation
- If intoxicated, consider asking parent/carer to collect child
- Check if the pupil is legally entitled to be in possession of the drug/substance
- Check if the drug/substance is suspected to be illegal and/or in breach of the Trust's behaviour policy – seek police advice if needed
- Take possession and store securely

Medical emergencies

In drug- or alcohol-related medical emergencies, trained first aiders will be summoned and care will be provided in line with the First Aid Policy. A staff member will remain with the casualty until the trained first aider arrives. Other pupils will be removed from the immediate area as soon as is reasonably practicable.

Following assessment by the first aider, a decision will be made as to whether an ambulance will be called. The pupil's parent will be telephoned and told about the incident.

Summary of actions:

- Immediate request for an school first aider
- Call for medical help/ambulance
- Do not leave the person unattended or panic
- If unconscious, place the person in the recovery position and assist breathing by loosening clothing
- If conscious, do not induce vomiting
- Do not give chase or over-excite them if intoxicated from inhaling volatile substance
- Do not give the casualty anything to drink
- Telephone parent/carer
- Any evidence should be kept, including vomit
- Ask what has happened, to identify the drug
- When medical help arrives pass on the information and anything collected

Intoxication

- It can be difficult to talk to a person who is intoxicated or 'high'. Be prepared for a range of behaviour from depressed and very quiet to excitable, and incoherent or volatile.
- Sit the casualty down in a quiet, well-ventilated space
- Do not shout at, threaten or cross-examine the casualty
- Talk quietly and be as reassuring as you can
- Summon help, be vigilant for deterioration

Needle stick (sharps) injuries:

- In any case of needle stick injury the person must be taken to Accident & Emergency (A&E) for immediate medical attention; time delay can be the significant factor in long-term damage from blood borne infection. Care should be taken to bag the article and this should be taken with the patient and given to the medic

An incident Reporting Form will be completed.

If the pupil is felt to be at risk, the Safeguarding Policy will come into effect and social services will be contacted.

All accidents and incidents, including near misses or dangerous occurrences, will be reported to the HSE as soon as possible following the school's Health and Safety Policy.

Threatening behaviour

Aggressive and threatening behaviour by pupils under the influence of drugs or alcohol will be taken very seriously. Where aggressive and/or threatening behaviour is displayed, the school will contact the police where necessary. Any pupil displaying aggressive and/or threatening behaviour will be removed from the premises. If a pupil displays this kind of behaviour, their parents will be contacted and sanctions will be implemented in line with the school's Behaviour Policy.

Searching

Under part 2, section 2 of the Education Act 2011, teachers are authorised by the headteacher to search for any prohibited item including, but not limited to, tobacco, cigarette papers, illegal drugs and alcohol, without the consent of the pupil, if they have reasonable grounds for suspecting that the pupil is in possession of a prohibited item including vaping products. Staff members may use common law to search pupils for any item with their consent.

A staff member carrying out the search can confiscate anything they have reasonable grounds for suspecting is a prohibited item. This includes "legal highs" and other potentially harmful materials which cannot immediately be identified. Any staff member, except for security staff, may refuse to conduct a search.

All searches will be conducted in line with the Positive Handling Policy where physical contact with a pupil is required.

Staff are trained to carry out a search each morning on pupil arrival using a handheld security wand scanner before they enter the school site. These are portable metal detectors used to scan individuals and items for concealed weapons or metallic contraband.

Controlled substances

Following the identification and confiscation of a controlled substance, a staff member will seal the sample in a plastic bag and include details of the date and time of the confiscation alongside the name of any witness(es) present. The staff member will store the sample in a secure location.

The incident will be reported immediately to the police, who will collect the sample and then deal with it in line with agreed protocols. The school will consider, on a case-by-case basis, whether it is appropriate under the pupil's specific circumstances to divulge the name of the pupil from whom the drugs were taken, and names will not be given to the police where the school cannot be certain beyond reasonable doubt that the pupil in question was the one in possession of the drugs.

A full incident report will be completed and submitted to the headteacher.

Any further measures will be undertaken in line with the school's Safeguarding Policy.

Where controlled substances are found on school trips away from the school premises, the parents of the pupil, as well as local police, will be notified.

Safeguarding

The school understands that the misuse of drugs and alcohol can often be a sign of underlying issues.

All staff are aware that behaviours linked to issues such as drug and alcohol misuse put pupils in danger. Staff will be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a pupil who is misusing drugs or alcohol.

Pupils experiencing difficulties with drugs or alcohol will be provided with appropriate internal support and referred to external support agencies as appropriate. Support will be arranged and offered to pupils in line with the school's Safeguarding Policy and Mental Health and Wellbeing strategy.

Child criminal exploitation (CCE)

CCE is where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child into any criminal activity in exchange for something the victim needs or wants and/or for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or through violence or threats of violence. CCE can include children being forced to work in cannabis factories and being coerced into moving drugs across the country (known as county lines).

Staff will be made aware of the following potential indicators of CCE:

- Pupils who appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions
- Pupils who associate with other young people involved in exploitation
- Pupils who suffer from changes in emotional wellbeing
- Pupils who misuse drugs and alcohol
- Pupils who regularly miss school

Staff members will be aware that illegal drug use or possession by pupils may indicate that they are victims of exploitation, even if it appears that illegal activity regarding drugs is something to which they have consented. The DSL will use their professional judgement to ensure they can reasonably rule out CCE as an explanation for a pupil's drug-related behaviour before pursuing other support and disciplinary procedures, rather than making assumptions about the pupil's intentions.

Staff will be alert to the indicators above and all concerns relating to CCE will be managed in line with the Safeguarding Policy.

Managing incidents

Instances of pupils being involved in drugs, alcohol and tobacco and vaping incidents will be managed in line with the relevant school policies, including the Behaviour Policy, Safeguarding Policy, and the Mental Health and Wellbeing strategy.

Following an incident, the headteacher and/or senior leaders will work with key members of staff, including the DSL, to decide on the most appropriate course of action to take. This

action may include discipline being enforced in line with the Behaviour Policy, or informing the police in severe circumstances.

The headteacher, or the senior leadership team in the absence of the headteacher, will also be responsible for deciding if it would be appropriate to suspend or exclude the pupil, following the provisions outlined in the school's Exclusion Policy; however, every effort will be taken to support pupils to adopt more healthy behaviours and choices before resorting to exclusion. Exclusion will be avoided wherever possible for pupils whose parents or carers are known to the school to misuse alcohol and drugs.

Support will be arranged for pupils involved in any drugs, alcohol and tobacco and vaping-related incidents, in line with relevant school policies.

If pupils are found to be smoking on site they will receive a sanction as soon as possible from the time of transgression. This sanction will be in the form of a suspension from school or an alteration to their provision. A report of the incident will be completed by the relevant member of staff. Cigarettes, e-cigarettes, vapes, lighters and any other equipment that has been confiscated (this will not be returned to the pupil). Parents/carers of the pupil concerned will be notified by phone in the first instance.