

Drugs Policy, Practice & Procedure

Guidelines for Students and Parents

The overall aim of this Drugs Education Policy is to present a broad drugs education programme which will raise the students' and parents' awareness of the significance and impact of taking drugs, or the abuse of otherwise legal products (e.g. lighter fuel, aerosols etc.).

Medicines

Some drugs are of course medicines prescribed by a doctor, or over the counter medicines given to students by their parents. The use of these is covered by the School's Medicines policy which should be read in conjunction with this policy.

Illegal Drugs

Under the Misuses of Drugs Act 1971, it is 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 used by a person under 18 for the purpose of intoxication. Additionally, the Psychoactive Substances Act 2016 makes supplying such substances illegal and therefore we will treat the possession and use of such substances with the same degree of seriousness as would be applied to a class A, B or C controlled substance. Wherever this policy refers to illegal drugs, this term includes both illegal drugs and psychoactive substances. At Bedford Modern School we resolutely oppose the use of all such substances. Therefore, any student who renders themselves unfit to be in School through the consumption or use of such a substance can expect the consequences to be serious.

Any student involved in the use of illegal drugs when they are under the School's authority, is subject to this Policy. Being under the School's authority means:

- Throughout the School day, whether on or off the premises
- Whenever they are involved in any activity organised by the School
- Whenever they are identifiable as a member of the School

If a student brings illegal drugs onto School premises, or is found to be responsible for any of the normal functions of the School being affected by the use of illegal drugs, exclusion of a temporary or permanent nature may result.

The sale or passing on of illegal drugs will almost certainly lead to permanent exclusion.

Implementation of the policy will enable students to make healthy, informed choices by increasing knowledge and challenging attitudes. It will warn of the dangerous effects of taking harmful substances, placed alongside the beneficial effects of medically prescribed drugs.

Drugs Education Programme

With the help of visiting speakers, videos, and our own nursing staff, the PSHE programme which is in place throughout a student's school career at Bedford Modern will address matters such as:

- Information on drugs and their effects, including the media and advertising
- The law and drugs
- Peer pressure and decision making
- Advice, guidance and support on the problems of drug abuse (internally and externally)
- Attitude and beliefs about drugs and drug users

Procedure and Legal Considerations for Management of Drug Related Incidents:

This section may be read in conjunction with the Department for Education document "Searching, screening and confiscation" dated July 2022.

1. Schools have "in loco parentis" responsibilities to individual students and the whole school community.
2. The School will consider if the student is at risk of significant harm and if there are any Child Protection issues. If there are, further advice will be sought.
3. School staff can search a student for any item with their consent.
4. **Headteachers and staff authorised by them have the statutory power to search students or their possessions without consent where they have reasonable grounds for suspecting that the student may have a prohibited item.**
5. School staff can seize any prohibited item found as a result of a search. Any illegal items will be passed directly to the police in line with the Guidance.
6. When a drugs investigation takes place, the Head is informed and a decision will be made as to whether the parents are informed at this stage or later.
7. Drugs, alcohol, tobacco or solvents found in School should be taken and stored securely in a designated storage area.
8. The Head may consult the police about possible legal considerations.

Pastoral Considerations

The School will decide on its response and taking into account the circumstances, decide if a disciplinary and/or counselling approach is required in consultation with the parents/guardians.

Testing for Substance Misuse

1. All schools must appreciate they will have a number of illegal drug users amongst their students. No school is immune;
2. Drugs testing is viewed as a useful tool in our drugs education programme;
3. It is incumbent upon the School to ensure that students feel we have an effective and easily used tool for detecting drug use;
4. Testing will be carried out only where there is cause to suspect the misuse of drugs. Bedford Modern School has introduced a rapid, one step screening test for detection of multiple drugs in urine. This is a screening device only and would be used initially if we had reason to suspect a student of drug misuse. Detection by screening would not in itself lead to disciplinary action. If a positive result were obtained, then further samples of urine may be taken from the student and sent to a laboratory for analysis.

Bedford Modern School expects that parents will approve of this measure and that we can assume their consent for its use.

If parents do not wish to give their consent for its use they should write in the first instance to the Head.

Parents are reminded that whilst our rules state clearly that a student found in possession or using drugs may be asked to leave the School, this policy about drugs allows for the possibility of a student returning to school after a period of suspension ***on condition that they agree to random testing.***

Tobacco and all smoking substitutes

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. It is an offence for children under 18 years to be sold tobacco products. In addition, the School will not accept the use of vaping or the use of other nicotine based products.

Bedford Modern School is a non-smoking site.

Aims:

- to ensure that smoking is not tolerated at the School
- to educate students as to the immediate dangers of smoking
- to encourage those students who do smoke to break free from the habit

Smoking, or being in possession of cigarettes or tobacco or vaping products, is prohibited when a student is under the School's authority. The School's policy on drugs above defines when a student is under the School's authority.

Students found smoking or in possession of cigarettes, tobacco, vaping or nicotine products can expect their parents to be informed and an appropriate punishment administered. Subsequent offences may result in suspension. For a persistent offender, the Head reserves the right to review the student's membership of the School community.

Alcohol

Alcohol is a depressant drug, particularly when taken in large quantities. Even at low levels, the potential for serious accidents rises. The Licensing Act 2003 makes it generally illegal for alcohol to be sold to or purchased by anyone under the age of 18. Students found in possession, using, or under the influence of alcohol whilst under the authority of the School (as outlined in the policy on drugs) can expect to be suspended.

Sixth form students attending School functions on-site at which alcohol is available may consume such alcohol in accordance with the terms of the Premises Licence and under the strict supervision of staff.

**Mr A Whomsley
Senior Deputy Head**

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