



READING BLUE COAT SCHOOL

Drugs and Drug Testing Policy

Introduction

All drugs have the potential to harm, but some drugs are more harmful than others. For a small number of people, drugs lead to serious and far reaching consequences not only for themselves, but their families, their communities and society in general. For young people in particular, drugs can have an impact on their education, their relationships with family and friends and prevent them from reaching their full potential.

All young people need to be able to make safe, healthy and responsible decisions about drugs, both legal and illegal. Schools play a central role in helping them make such decisions by providing education about the risk and effects of drugs; by developing their confidence and skills to manage situations involving drugs; by creating a safe and supportive learning environment; and ensuring that those for whom drugs are a concern receive appropriate support.

However schools cannot act alone. They are part of a broader prevention picture which includes parents and a range of partner agencies. By working together, we can help young people navigate their way through what is a complex social issue.

Statement of Policy

It is the policy of Reading Blue Coat School to actively discourage and, as far as possible, prevent the handling and use of controlled drugs and to treat cases of handling and misuse by pupils as serious misconduct.

Prevention through education

Drugs education is an integral part of the PSHEE curriculum throughout all stages of a pupil's time at Blue Coat.

The purpose of the School drug policy is to:

- clarify the legal requirements and responsibilities of the School
- reinforce and safeguard the health and safety of students and others who use the School
- clarify the School's approach to drugs for all staff, students, governors, parents, external agencies and the wider community and the associated sanctions that the School may take.
- give guidance on developing, implementing and monitoring the drug education programme

- 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
- ensure that the response to incidents involving drugs complements the overall approach to drug education and the values and ethos of the School
- provide a basis for evaluating the effectiveness of the School drug education programme and the management of incidents involving illegal and other unauthorised drugs
- re-enforce the role of the School in contributing to local and national strategies.

This policy applies to all staff, students, parents, governors and partner agencies working in the School. It includes journeys to and from school in school uniform, work experience, residential trips and courses. Students must not bring controlled drugs, cigarettes or alcohol onto the school site at any time.

Definition of a Drug

The definition of a drug: as 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', unless otherwise stated, is used throughout this document to 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), and alkyl nitrites (known as poppers)
- all over-the-counter and prescription medicines. (Please refer to the School's First Aid Policy for the management of prescription medicines whilst in school and on school trips).

Statement of Policy

Suspicion of misuse

If a member of staff has reason to suspect that a pupil is misusing drugs, they must report the situation to the Second Master or Headmaster who will decide if further investigation or a drugs test is warranted. Suspicion of misuse may arise from: behavioural signs, such as deterioration in a pupil's wellbeing and/or performance, or other signs or evidence such as the finding of certain items of equipment, or other information that has been gathered.

Investigation into possible misuse

Once it has been confirmed that there are reasonable grounds for suspecting that a pupil may have been misusing controlled drugs, the Headmaster or the Second Master will be responsible for any further investigations which will normally be conducted through the Head of Year. They will make every effort to ensure that they are conducted fairly and with as much openness towards the affected pupil as circumstances may reasonably allow. If required they may carry out a search of a pupil's locker and belongings.

The Headmaster or the Second Master may decide that a pupil should be asked to be tested, or that a substance should be tested. The School will contact the pupil's parents at this time to let them know of the decision to ask for testing to take place.

In-School Testing Procedure ('Field Tests')

Testing is carried out in accordance with a strict procedure. This procedure is updated from time to time as experience and/or scientific advances indicate.

In the event of a pupil being suspected of misusing controlled drugs, he or she may be asked to offer a urine sample. The request for a urine sample will be put to the pupil by the Headmaster or the Second Master, and this will be communicated to the parents of the pupil in writing. Parents and pupils may be asked to sign a consent form prior to the testing taking place.

The pupil will be asked to give a urine sample in the Medical Centre in a suitable container provided by the Nurse. The pupil's dignity and personal privacy will be respected in taking the sample, although the supervising member of staff will need to be present at the time of the test in order to ensure that the results are fair. Where a male pupil is concerned, a senior male member of staff (normally one of the Senior Management Team) should oversee the process and likewise for a female pupil, a senior female member of staff (usually a member of the Sixth Form Management Team) should oversee the process.

Outcome

A pupil will be required to leave School if he/she is found to have supplied, handled, possessed or consumed controlled drugs while under School jurisdiction. ("supplied" includes supplying for money or free-of-charge, communicating with a drug dealer on behalf of someone else, introducing fellow pupils to a drug dealer, or any other instance of procuring controlled drugs for him/herself or another pupil).

A pupil may expect to be required to leave Blue Coat if:

- a) he/she attends School whilst under the influence of controlled drugs
- b) he/she is involved outside School jurisdiction in the supply, handling, possession, consumption or incitement to the misuse of controlled drugs and in the view of the Headmaster this has or may have a negative impact on the School or on the pupil involved or other pupils

If a pupil refuses a reasonable request to be tested, he or she will almost certainly be required to withdraw from School.

Any student under the influence of controlled drugs, cigarettes or alcohol in School including journeys to and from school in school uniform, work experience, residential trips and courses may be removed from their activities in order that they can be medically assessed. Their parents may be contacted to collect them should the school staff feel that this is necessary. In extreme cases whereby the pupil presents a danger to themselves or others then the health services and/or the police may be informed. In rare cases where the pupil is showing signs of aggression then they may be appropriately restrained.

Confidentiality

The records of testing will not be used for any other purpose and they will be destroyed, unless required by the police, or where appropriate after the final conclusion of an appeal. If a pupil is required to leave the school the pupil and their parent/carer will be notified in writing when a record of testing has been destroyed again unless required by the police.

Police

Pupils and parents/ can expect that the police will be informed in any case where there is firm evidence of the supply, possession or misuse of controlled drugs.

Reminder

Staff are permanently reminded that their own expressed attitude and behaviour with regard to controlled drugs, especially insofar as it is witnessed by or known to pupils, is a matter of substantive interest to the School.

Author(s):	PDW
Date:	January 2017
Review Frequency:	Annually
Next Review Date:	January 2018
References:	•
Linked Policies	• First Aid Policy, Use of Force
Governor:	Mrs Elaine Morgan
Date of Governor Agreement:	