



# READING BLUE COAT SCHOOL

## Drugs and Drug Testing Policy

### Introduction

The Reading Blue Coat School's Drugs Policy is born out of our duty to safeguard the pupils within our care. It is also important for the maintenance of good order and discipline within the community, and for the protection of the School's reputation. Our policy also seeks to encourage respect for the rule of law.

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, of course, their futures. Sadly there is also a clear relationship between drugs and organised crime.

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 police and a range of partner agencies. Parents are asked to give their wholehearted support to the implementation of this policy. By working together, we can help young people navigate their way through what is a complex social issue and safeguard everyone within the community.

As a school we are aware that young people face pressure to use or experiment with controlled drugs, and we aim to do all that we can to reduce those pressures.

### 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. The School treats 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. These lessons are further supplemented through regular visiting speakers.

The purpose of this 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, e-cigarettes, legal highs or alcohol onto the school site at any time.

This policy also applies to conduct outside of school that may have an adverse effect within the school community or on the reputation of the School. For example, action could be taken where one Blue Coat pupil is known to be involved in supply or possession of drugs outside school jurisdiction.

## 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 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).
- Novel or new psychoactive substances, commonly known as 'legal highs', including volatile substances (those giving off a gas or vapour which can be inhaled), alkyl nitrites (known as poppers). (*The Psychoactive Substances Act 2016* makes it an offence to supply, offer to supply, or possess such substances.)
- all legal drugs, including alcohol and tobacco. Note that the School has a separate approach to dealing with alcohol and tobacco, as outlined in the 'Behaviour, Rewards and Sanctions' 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 any belongings. See "Property Search Protocols."

The Headmaster or the Second Master may decide that a pupil and their belongings should be searched and / or tested. A second member of staff will always be present when a search is conducted. The School is not required to inform parents before a search is conducted. The grounds for the search and all actions taken will form part of a written record.

Schools' general power to discipline, as set out in Section 91 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, enables a member of staff to confiscate, retain or dispose of a pupil's property as a disciplinary penalty, where reasonable to do so.

Where the member of staff finds other substances that are not believed to be controlled drugs, these can be confiscated where a teacher believes them to be harmful or detrimental to good order and discipline. This would include new psychoactive substances or 'legal highs'. If school staff are unable to identify the legal status of a drug, it should be treated as a controlled drug.

## 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.

Where priority medical treatment is necessary this takes precedence over any testing requirements. If a pupil is under the influence of a drug and needs medical treatment, they must tell staff what they have taken, if they are in a fit state to do so, in order to receive the best help possible.

In the event of a pupil being suspected of misusing controlled drugs, he or she may be asked to offer a sample of blood, urine, hair, saliva and/or perspiration. Parental consent of any pupil under the age of 18 years will be sought for this to happen, prior to the test being carried out. If the School is unable to contact the parents, a test may still be carried out, and parents will be informed as soon as possible. If the pupil is not in a fit state on a given day to undergo a drug test, the School may require them to do so at a later stage.

Without good reason, refusal to provide a sample may be viewed as a 'positive test result'. If parents or pupils refuse to agree to the drug testing procedure, either on the phone or in person or in writing, then the School will suspend the pupil indefinitely. The pupil may potentially be permanently excluded from the School.

In the case of a urine sample being provided, the pupil will be asked to give a sample in the Medical Centre using 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 Leadership Team) should oversee the process and likewise for a female pupil, a senior female member of staff (usually a member of the Sixth Form Leadership Team) should oversee the process. In all cases, consent from parents of pupils under the age of 18 will be sought, and if the parent is unable to be contacted, they will be informed as soon as possible that a test took place. If requested, a parent of the pupil may also be present for the test.

## Outcome of Testing

The School will always assist pupils who have been affected by drugs so they can find support from agencies who are specialists in assisting with addiction and drug problems.

It is recognised that there are significant differences between 'drugs', be they illegal or legal, and other prohibited substances such as tobacco or alcohol, but whilst the sanctions given following their use might be different, they are all considered here.

Any student under the influence of controlled drugs, cigarettes, e-cigarettes, legal highs 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. If an acute situation occurs, appropriate restraint may be used, in keeping with the School's policy on use of reasonable force, to ensure the child is protected from hurting themselves or others.

## Sanctions

Parents are reminded that under the terms of the contract signed by all parents, a pupil may be removed from the School without notice if it is proved on the balance of probabilities that a pupil has committed a very grave breach of discipline or serious criminal offence (see Terms and Conditions 8.11). Both supply and possession of controlled drugs are criminal offences, and examples of gross misconduct for which a pupil would normally be removed from the School without notice (see Exclusion Policy).

Furthermore, parents and pupils are reminded that conduct outside of school that adversely affects the School's reputation is grounds for permanent exclusion without notice (see Exclusion Policy). Pupils at Reading Blue Coat School are therefore expected to avoid any association with drugs both inside and outside of school, both during term time and during the school holidays.

To be clear, a pupil may expect to be required to leave Reading Blue Coat if:

1. He/she has been involved with selling, distributing or otherwise actively encouraging possession or consumption of drugs, wherever and whenever that conduct takes place.

2. 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 another pupil, or from another pupil).
3. He/she attends School whilst under the influence of controlled drugs
4. 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 on other pupils.
5. He/she refuses to undergo a drug test if it is requested by the Headmaster or another member of the SLT.

The School may determine whether a pupil's conduct falls in line with the above points 1-5 on the balance of probabilities having regard to the information known to the School, whether or not such information would be legally admissible as evidence.

As outlined in the School's Terms and Conditions (section 8), the Headmaster is entitled to exercise a wide discretion in relation to the School's policies and rules. Each case will be considered in a reasonable and lawful manner, with procedural fairness. In some cases there may be mitigating circumstances; if so they will be carefully considered.

The parents accept the authority of the Headmaster to take all reasonable disciplinary or preventative action necessary to safeguard and promote the welfare of the Pupil and the School community as a whole.

## Advice and Assistance

Pupils are encouraged to discuss any anxieties about drugs with a member of staff or other responsible adult. Pupils also have access to information about outside agencies able to provide advice and assistance. Accredited counselling services can be recommended by the School in appropriate circumstances.

Matters brought to light by a pupil or their parents, in circumstances which are genuine, will be 'ring-fenced' from the above disciplinary sanctions. In such cases, advice and support will be given to the pupil and their parents. The pupil may remain in the School if both the pupil and parents agree to a supportive regime in which the pupil promises:

1. Not to breach the School's Drugs Policy, and
2. Agrees to regular testing at the parent's expense, for the remainder of his/her school career.

Such a circumstance would require cooperation from parents and the pupil with the School in every respect. And failure to cooperate with reasonable request of management, or a failed drug test, would result in the pupil being required to leave the School. See Appendix 1, 'Supportive regime'.

A pupil who is involved with drugs outside of this context will face full disciplinary consequences.

## 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, unless required by the police.

## Police

It is a criminal offence to possess, consume, or supply certain drugs. In such cases parents and pupils can expect that the police will be informed. The School seeks to uphold the rule of law and support the work of police in fighting drugs in the local area. Police are therefore informed not with a vindictive aim towards the pupil(s) involved, but rather to provide police with intelligence that might help protect other pupils and the wider community.

## Reminder

Staff are 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.

## Advice to Parents

Below is general advice to parents to minimise the likelihood of their sons or daughters experimenting with drugs.

Avoid giving your sons/daughters too much money.

Firmly discourage your son or daughter from smoking or vaping, which is often the gateway to more serious drug abuse.

Do not allow sons or daughters to go to unsupervised parties or stay out overnight unless parents have checked with the people with whom he/she is staying.

Arrange a drugs test if parents suspect their son/daughter is taking drugs. While many of the manifestations of drugs use are identical to the typical features of adolescence, be rigorous and be certain.

Watch out for signs of drug use:

- loss of appetite;
- being either unusually sleepy or unable to sleep at night;
- bouts of talkative, excitable and overactive behaviour;
- being unusually irritable, aggressive and even violent;
- changing moods, from happy and bright to moody and confused, for no apparent reason;
- telling lies or acting secretively;
- losing interest in schoolwork and truanting; changing friendship patterns;
- losing interest in hobbies and sport;
- money or valuables disappearing from the home;

- coming to the notice of police for unruly, disorderly behaviour or dishonesty;
- unusual spots, sores and marks on body, arms or around the mouth and nose; and
- stains and chemical smells on clothing and about the body.

## NATIONAL HELP LINES AND LOCAL SERVICES

Organisation	Contact
<p><b>Addaction</b> Addaction is one of the UK's largest specialist drug and alcohol treatment charities. As well as adult services, they provide services specifically tailored to the needs of young people and their parents. The Skills for Life project supports young people with drug misusing parents.</p>	<p><a href="http://www.addaction.org.uk">www.addaction.org.uk</a></p>
<p><b>ADFAM</b> ADFAM offers information to families of drug and alcohol users, and the website has a database of local family support services.</p>	<p><a href="http://www.adfam.org.uk">www.adfam.org.uk</a> Tel: 020 7533 7640 Email: <a href="mailto:admin@adfam.org.uk">admin@adfam.org.uk</a></p>
<p><b>Alcohol Concern</b> Works to reduce the incidence and costs of alcohol-related harm and to increase the range and quality of services available to people with alcohol-related problems.</p>	<p><a href="http://www.alcoholconcern.org.uk">www.alcoholconcern.org.uk</a> Tel: 020 7264 0510 Email: <a href="mailto:contact@alcoholconcern.org.uk">contact@alcoholconcern.org.uk</a></p>
<p><b>ASH (Action on Smoking and Health)</b> A campaigning public health charity aiming to reduce the health problems caused by tobacco.</p>	<p><a href="http://www.ash.org.uk">www.ash.org.uk</a> Tel: 020 7739 5902 Email: <a href="mailto:enquiries@ash.org.uk">enquiries@ash.org.uk</a></p>
<p><b>Children's Legal Centre</b> Operates a free and confidential legal advice and information service covering all aspects of law and policy affecting children and young people.</p>	<p><a href="http://www.childrenslegalcentre.com">www.childrenslegalcentre.com</a> Tel: 01206 877910 Email: <a href="mailto:clc@essex.ac.uk">clc@essex.ac.uk</a></p>
<p><b>Children's Rights Alliance for England</b> A charity working to improve the lives and status of all children in England through the fullest implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of a Child.</p>	<p><a href="http://www.crae.org.uk">www.crae.org.uk</a> Email: <a href="mailto:info@crae.org.uk">info@crae.org.uk</a></p>
<p><b>Drinkaware</b> An independent charity that promotes responsible drinking through innovative ways to challenge the national drinking culture, helping reduce alcohol misuse and minimise alcohol related harm.</p>	<p><a href="http://www.drinkaware.co.uk">www.drinkaware.co.uk</a> Tel: 020 7307 7450</p>
<p><b>Drinkline</b> A free and confidential helpline for anyone who is concerned about their own or someone else's drinking.</p>	<p>Tel: 0800 917 8282 (lines are open 24 hours a day)</p>
<p><b>Drug Education Forum</b> This website contains a number of useful papers and briefing sheets for use by practitioners.</p>	<p><a href="http://www.drugeducationforum.com">www.drugeducationforum.com</a></p>
<p><b>DrugScope</b> A centre of expertise on illegal drugs, aiming to inform policy development and reduce drug-related risk. The website includes detailed drug information and access to the Information and Library Service. DrugScope also hosts the Drug</p>	<p><a href="http://www.drugscope.org.uk">www.drugscope.org.uk</a> Tel: 020 7520 7550 Email: <a href="mailto:info@drugscope.org.uk">info@drugscope.org.uk</a></p>

Education Practitioners Forum.	
<p><b>Family Lives</b> A charity offering support and information to anyone parenting a child or teenager. It runs a free-phone helpline and courses for parents, and develops innovative projects.</p>	<p><a href="http://familylives.org.uk">http://familylives.org.uk</a> Tel: 0800 800 2222</p>
<p><b>FRANK</b> The national drugs awareness campaign aiming to raise awareness amongst young people of the risks of illegal drugs, and to provide information and advice. It also provides support to parents/carers, helping to give them the skills and confidence to communicate with their children about drugs.</p>	<p><a href="http://www.talktofrank.com">www.talktofrank.com</a> Tel: 0800 776600 (24 hour helpline) Email: <a href="mailto:frank@talktofrank.com">frank@talktofrank.com</a></p>
<p><b>Mentor UK</b> A non-government organisation with a focus on protecting the health and wellbeing of children and young people to reduce the damage that drugs can do to their lives.</p>	<p><a href="http://www.mentoruk.org.uk">www.mentoruk.org.uk</a> Tel: 020 7739 8494 Email: <a href="mailto:admin@mentoruk.org">admin@mentoruk.org</a></p>
<p><b>National Children's Bureau</b> Promotes the interests and well-being of all children and young people across every aspect of their lives.</p>	<p><a href="http://www.ncb.org.uk">www.ncb.org.uk</a> Tel: 020 7843 6000</p>
<p><b>Re-Solv</b> (Society for the Prevention of Solvent and Volatile Substance Abuse) A national charity providing information for teachers, other professionals, parents and young people.</p>	<p><a href="http://www.re-solv.org">www.re-solv.org</a> Tel: 01785 817885 Information line: 01785 810762 Email: <a href="mailto:information@re-solv.org">information@re-solv.org</a></p>
<p><b>Smokefree</b> NHS Smoking Helpline</p>	<p><a href="http://smokefree.nhs.uk">http://smokefree.nhs.uk</a> Tel: 0800 169 0169</p>
<p><b>Stars National Initiative</b> Offers support for anyone working with children, young people and families affected by parental drug and alcohol misuse.</p>	<p><a href="http://www.starsnationalinitiative.org.uk">www.starsnationalinitiative.org.uk</a></p>
<p><b>Youth Offending Teams</b> Local Youth Offending Teams are multi-agency teams and are the responsibility of the local authority, who have a statutory duty to prevent offending by young people under the age of 18.</p>	<p><a href="https://www.gov.uk/youth-offending-team">https://www.gov.uk/youth-offending-team</a></p>

Appendix 1

Supportive regime

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Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Full name of pupil: \_\_\_\_\_

Pupil's date of birth: \_\_\_\_\_

1. I have made a voluntary admission that I have violated the terms of the School's Drug Policy.
2. As an alternative to permanent exclusion, the Headmaster has offered me a supportive regime under which:
  - I agree to abide by the terms of the School's Drug Policy, which I have read and understood. I hereby pledge that I will not violate the terms of this policy again whilst at Blue Coat.
  - For the remainder of my school career, without obligation on the part of the School, I may at any time be asked to provide a hair, blood, saliva or urine sample under medical supervision for analysis in accordance with the procedures described in the policy.
  - I understand that I may be asked to provide a hair, blood, saliva or urine sample at any reasonable time even though no grounds exist at that time to suspect that I have been involved with drugs or substances.
  - I agree to be subject to this regime and to co-operate with the School in every respect. I understand that the School will take all reasonable care to preserve my confidentiality and human rights in the operation of this regime.
3. I also understand that, if without good reason, I fail to co-operate with this regime or if a test proves positive, I would be required to leave Reading Blue Coat School.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

**Declaration of parents/guardian/education guardian**

I/We, the undersigned, have read and agreed to the Reading Blue Coat School's Drugs Policy and this Appendix. For my/our part, I/we accept the Headmaster's offer of a supportive regime for the above-named pupil.

I/We undertake to co-operate with the screening procedure in all respects and to pay any associated charges.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to Pupil: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship to Pupil: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Author(s):	The Headmaster
Date:	April 2018
Review Frequency:	Annually
Next Review Date:	April 2019
References:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 / Education and Inspections Act</li> </ul>
Linked Policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exclusion Policy; First Aid Policy; Use of Force; Property Search Protocols; Safeguarding Policy; Behaviour, Rewards and Sanctions. Also the 'Terms and Conditions' of the School.</li> </ul>
Governor:	Mrs Laura Hyde
Date of Governor Agreement:	10 September 2018