



Shebbear College

SUBSTANCE ABUSE POLICY

Whole School Policy from EYFS to Sixth Form

Reviewed and ratified by the Governing Body on 9th November 2017

Next Review by November 2018

1. Introduction

This policy applies to pupils when in school and on school trips, educational visits or any school activity.

Shebbear College is a caring community, founded on Christian principles. The College, therefore, gives a high priority to the education of pupils in all aspects of healthy living in order that they may be as well informed as possible about the potential hazards they may face and the healthy practices they may adopt.

This document refers to the use and abuse of alcohol, tobacco, solvents and legal or illegal drugs, or other substances which alter the mood or character of an individual. In the latter case, illegal drugs are those, whether defined as recreational, soft or hard drugs, the purchase, selling or abuse of which would constitute an offence in law.

Fundamental to our College's values and practice is the principle of sharing the responsibility for education of young people with parents, by keeping them informed and involved at all times. Effective communication and co-operation is essential to the implementation of this policy.

The College believes that it has a duty to inform and educate its pupils on the consequences of substance abuse. The College will provide a programme of education, mainly through its Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) programme, designed to inform pupils of the dangers of abuse of the substances defined above and to help them to make informed decisions, which will help them avoid those dangers.

2. Alcohol, Tobacco and Solvents

Whilst the College recognises that alcohol, tobacco and solvents are legal substances in certain circumstances, **it has, nevertheless an established policy that prohibits smoking and the misuse of alcohol and solvents by pupils on the premises or in the school grounds at all times.**

The College will also seek to discourage pupils from smoking because of the widely accepted medical evidence that the practice is profoundly damaging to health.

The College will seek to make pupils aware of the dangers of the misuse of alcohol.

The College has a clear policy that pupils knowingly in the presence of those using or intending to use tobacco and alcohol are punished with fines of increasing magnitude to reflect continued defiance of a school rule. This policy applies to all pupils across the whole school, including the boarding community.

Any Pupils caught abusing these substances will be offered assistance in identifying sources of appropriate personal support.

3. Misuse of Legal Drugs

The College accepts that pupils may require to take prescription drugs during the course of the school day. Any pupil who needs to receive such medication should bring a note from parents detailing the medication and dosage and pass this to their Form Tutor. This information should be shared with the Medical Centre staff as soon as possible and, in Senior School, it may be required that pupils should go to the Medical Centre to take this kind of medication. Medication required by boarding pupils will be kept in the Medical Centre unless the staff feel that it is appropriate for the pupil to keep their own medication.

It is strictly against school rules to share prescription drugs with other members of the College community or to try to sell such drugs to others within the College premises, including the grounds.

There are a number of other substances which are available legally (for example, ibuprofen, caffeine tablets and caffeine stimulant drinks). Due to the potential for misuse, these products should only be consumed within the College community under staff supervision. The supply or sharing these with others within the College community in an inappropriate manner will constitute a breach of school rules and disciplinary sanctions may be imposed.

Paracetamol should not be shared with other members of the College community. Pupils may go to the Medical Centre if they require this type of medication.

The College is aware that a number of substances (known as psychoactive substances*) are available on the market for purchase by pupils over the age of 18.

Within the College community these substances are not permitted, for example, Salvia, MDAI, and Fly Agaric Mushrooms. The use, sharing or selling of such substances will be treated seriously and disciplinary sanctions will be imposed.

(*Psychoactive substances are designed to mimic the effect of illegal drugs but are structurally different enough to avoid being classified as illegal substances under the Misuse of Drugs Act).

4. Illegal Drugs

Illegal drugs are drugs which have controls on them by a government and are illegal in certain situations (a person is not allowed to have them).

It is strictly against College rules to:

- Bring illegal drugs onto the College premises, including the grounds;
- Handle illegal drugs on the College premises, including the grounds;
- Use illegal drugs whilst on College premises, including the grounds;
- Give or sell illegal drugs to other members of the College community, whether on or off the College premises.

These rules apply on any occasion when a pupil is a recognisable member of the school community, such as during all school trips, outings and expeditions. However if the College become aware that a member of the school community is bringing the College into disrepute by their involvement with drugs outside of school then it will act.

In view of the policies set out by the College regarding the use and abuse of any illegal drugs, on its premises or within its grounds, it follows that the use or abuse of these substances by pupils will lead to disciplinary sanctions being imposed which, in the case of a pupil who contravenes these clear rules, will forfeit their right to be at the College and could lead to him or her being suspended and/or expelled from school.

5. College Response to Illegal Drugs

Because the College takes a strong view about the importance of upholding the law in respect of the use and abuse of illegal drugs, all those associated with the College should be aware that the following approaches will be adopted.

The priority of the College must be the health and well-being of ALL its pupils. Any incident will therefore be treated with the utmost seriousness.

Any member of staff who suspects or knows of a pupil who is involved in possession or in seeking to sell or pass on to others any illegal substances must report his or her suspicions to the Headmaster, one of the Deputy Heads or the respective Heads of School. In no circumstances must any member of staff seek to deal with such matters without reference to one of these senior colleagues.

If any pupil is found under the influence of drugs on the College premises, the College will prioritise their immediate safety by providing first aid and subsequently calling for further medical assistance if this is necessary.

Any pupil who is found in possession of, or seeking to sell or pass on to others, any illegal substance(s) will be liable to immediate suspension and, particularly if seeking to sell or otherwise pass on to others such substances, expulsion from the school. Any mitigation of

their position (in the case of possession for personal use) is at the discretion of the Headmaster, dependent on the circumstances of the case.

While these are the principles by which the College stands, in order to protect the majority, there is an appreciation of the needs of a pupil who may be proven to have experimented with illegal drugs. The Headmaster may consider an alternative punishment to expulsion to be appropriate provided that:

- There is no evidence or even suspicion of encouraging others into drug use;
- The use of drugs is an isolated incident or well in the past;
- The pupil is prepared to sign a written agreement that they be required to undergo a medical test at such times (with or without notice) as the school requests, to investigate for the presence of drugs in the body.

In all cases of such activity by pupils, parents will be immediately informed and the matter may also be reported to the Police.

If a Pupil is shown to be involved in the supply of or in possession with intent to supply, illegal drugs or to sell illegal drugs the consequences will always be expulsion.

Any Pupils experimenting with, encouraging or communicating openly of drug use may be considered to be bringing the name of the College into disrepute. This is even true if the offence takes place out of school hours or off College premises.

In the event of any incident involving illegal drugs within the College we will be prepared to give advice even if implementing the severe disciplinary sanctions described above.

The Headmaster will keep the Chairman of the Board of Governors informed at all times about incidents involving drugs on school premises.

6. Investigations into Drug Allegations

The College will thoroughly investigate suspicions of drug possession and use in school. The Deputy Head (Pastoral) will oversee the investigation which is likely to involve other key pastoral staff.

Investigations may include the interviewing of a number of pupils, the scrutiny of CCTV footage, the searching of pupils' lockers, bags and clothing with their consent (in extraordinary circumstances without their consent), screening and testing. Any drugs or drug paraphernalia which are found as a result of investigations will be immediately confiscated and held securely by the Headmaster or the Deputy Head (Pastoral) before they are destroyed. If it is clear that the law has been broken and the matter is referred to the Police, then the evidence will be handed directly to them.

If a search of Pupil's belongings is required then this will be undertaken in line with the advice given to schools by the Association of Police Officers (ACPO) and the Department for Education (DfE).

Parents will be informed if their child has been involved in an investigation and will be contacted prior to the school contacting the Police.

7. Drugs Education

The College's firm stance against the abuse of drugs is underpinned by a consistent policy of education for Pupils as part of the Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) programme at all ages, including the Prep School. Whenever it is appropriate, the school will provide up-to-date information and advice on drug related issues to pupils, parents and staff, including non-teaching staff.

As part of the PSHE provision in Years 7 – 11, substance abuse education forms a regular part of the programmes designed by the Heads of School in consultation with the Deputy Head (Pastoral) and the Headmaster.

In the Sixth Form PSHE provision in this area is covered by visiting speakers with further discussion sessions within lessons.

The PSHE programme gives information to pupils which enable them to develop their own moral framework. It aims to allow pupils to make considered, informed decisions when confronted with drugs. The programme is designed in the belief that it is not sufficient simply to tell pupils all drugs are wrong; young people need to develop strategies to deal with situations in which they may be vulnerable to pressure from their peers and others, for example, at parties.

The PSHE programme will include discussion on the College's policy on substance abuse so that Pupils are aware of the College's position and likely response.

All parents and staff are invited to presentations given by outside organisations on a regular basis.

8. Parents, Carers or other Adults under the influence of Drugs

The College will ask parents, carers or other adults to leave College premises if their behaviour gives cause for concern and/or if they are clearly under the influence of drugs.

The College's safeguarding procedures may also come into use in these circumstances.

9. Conclusion

At Shebbear College our aim is academic, cultural and social excellence. The use of illegal drugs constitutes a threat to each of these and with the co-operation of pupils and parents the school will never tolerate it.

This Policy will be reviewed in the light of any changes in the law