



# Drug Education and Drug Related Incidents Policy

Date Policy due to be reviewed: September 2026

Committee Responsible for Policy: Full Academy Trust

**WORK HARD     |     BE KIND     |     AIM HIGH**

## **Section 1 - Context of Policy**

The Drugs Education and Drugs Related Incidents Policy forms part of our wider safeguarding provision designed to protect pupils and their families. It links specifically to our whole school behaviour, health and safety, safeguarding, school visits and healthy school policies.

This policy applies to all students, parents/carers, volunteers, partner agencies, visitors, governors, staff members and trainee teachers attending the school (including buildings, outbuildings, playground, field, car park), whilst on school business including off-site visits and trips, work experience placements and interviews and online activity.

In line with 'Behaviour in Schools' (February 2024), the policy also applies to pupils travelling to and from school and taking part in any school organised or school-related activity off-site. It also affects the use of school premises after normal school hours. Organisers of any after school events will be made aware of the policy and their responsibility to implement it.

This policy will outline for staff, trainee teachers, governors, partner agencies, visitors, volunteers and parents/carers how Hillcrest School will deal with the issue of substance and alcohol use. This includes the pastoral support and education students will receive relating to this, also the response to specific drug or alcohol related incidents should they arise. The school recognises its statutory responsibility to safeguarding students, and as such the health and well-being of students is the driving force behind both this policy, and practice in school. Hillcrest School will promote responsible attitudes towards drug and alcohol use, as well as raising awareness of the increasing links between drugs and radicalisation, child-on-child abuse, criminal/sexual exploitation, knife crime, gang affiliation and county lines activities.

In addition to the circumstances outlined above, the school will impose sanctions on a pupil for misusing drugs at any time if the misuse could have repercussions for the orderly running of the school, poses a threat to another student or member of public or could adversely affect the reputation of the school. The school may also impose sanctions on students seeking to influence or glamorise drug use (legal and illegal) either in person on the school site/off-site visits or via social media (including in school and out of school hours).

Hillcrest School will implement the procedures set out in:

- Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 and 2010
- DfE and ACPO Drug Advice for Schools (2012)
- Bill on New Psychoactive Substances (2016)
- QCA Drug, alcohol and tobacco education curriculum guidance for academies (2018)
- DFE 'Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education' (2020 - updated July 2025).
- DFE 'Behaviour in Schools' (July 2022 - updated February 2024)
- DFE 'Searching, Screening and Confiscation' (July 2022)
- DFE 'Suspension and Permanent Exclusion guidance for school' (July 2022)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2025)

The school acknowledges its legal duties under the Equalities Act 2010 in relation to protected groups including SEND and will always take their circumstances into account when applying the policy.

## **Section 2 - Purpose of the Policy**

The purpose of the policy is:

- To clarify the legal requirements and responsibilities of the school.
- To reinforce and safeguard the health and safety of students and others who use the school.
- To clarify the school's approach to drugs for all the staff, students, governors, parents/carers, external agencies and the wider community.
- To give guidance on developing, implementing and monitoring the drug education programme.
- To 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.
- To ensure that the response to incidents involving drugs complements the overall approach to drug education and the values and ethos of the school.

## **Section 3 - Definitions**

A drug is a substance that affects the way in which the body functions physically, emotionally and mentally.

Drugs are placed into three categories depending on what effect they have on the body:

- Depressants (alcohol, heroin, solvents, methadone, GHB, nitrous oxide, tranquilisers, pain killers)
- Stimulant (crack, cocaine, poppers, ecstasy, speed, crystal meth, khat, nicotine)
- Hallucinogenic (cannabis, magic mushrooms, LSD, ketamine)

For the purpose of this policy, by 'drugs' we are referring to illegal substances (i.e. - cannabis, ecstasy, amphetamines, heroin, crack/cocaine, LSD) and also legal substances such as tobacco, vapes, e-cigarettes, alcohol, volatile substances (ie - aerosols, butane gas), solvents/hazardous substances, over the counter prescription medicines and new psychoactive substances (NPS) often referred to as 'Legal Highs'. In addition, the definition also covers Cannabidiol (Cannabis infused products).

This policy does not generally apply to everyday over-the counter medications (ie - paracetamol, ibuprofen, aspirin and antihistamines) when used with authorisation from the school. However, misuse of these medications without authorisation falls under this policy.

'Drugs Paraphernalia' is also included in this definition in terms of items such as cannabis grinders, cigarette/rolling papers, filters, matches, lighters, pipes, vape devices, cutting equipment, tablet containers. Pupils wishing to assert their right to smoke, particularly in Years 12 and 13, will be made aware of this policy.

'Drug misuse' is defined as:

- The use or supply of drugs in illegal or inappropriate ways (ie - taking medical drugs prescribed for another person)
- The use of substances in excess, even if legal (ie - alcohol)
- The possession, use or supply of a controlled substance)

The acquisition of knowledge and understanding which enable young people to consider the effects of drugs on themselves and others is of vital importance.

## **Section 4 - The school's stance towards drugs, health and needs of students**

Hillcrest School operates a zero-tolerance policy towards drugs misuse to ensure the safety and well-being of all members of the school community. It is inappropriate and unacceptable for young people to bring substances into school, have them on their person, consume them before, during and after school and on the way to or from school, including all school visits. Hillcrest School has a strict no smoking / vaping policy.

The drugs/substances covered by this policy are not to be bought, sold or otherwise distributed / exchanged or brought onto school premises during the school day, or while pupils are on school visits. Individual exceptions may be made for pupils who require prescription medicines where appropriate.

Hillcrest School is committed to the Health and Safety of all its staff and pupils, and we believe that we have a duty to support and safeguard the well-being of such. As a school we are clear our view that illegal and all other unauthorised drugs are not acceptable, under any circumstances, on the school site or on occasions when students and staff engage in off-site or online activities.

The school values the importance of its pastoral role in the welfare of its pupils, and through the general ethos of the school, we seek to encourage and develop young people's learning and ensure support appropriate to their needs is provided.

Education about drugs is not concerned merely with substance, but with people in their social settings and therefore should involve the development of attitudes, values and the development of skills, as much as the acquisition of appropriate knowledge.

Students affected by their own or other's drugs misuse have early access to support through the school and other local services. The school will endeavour to provide appropriate support through the Pastoral Support Worker in school, the School Nurse Service and referral to appropriate external agencies, i.e. - Aquarius. Families have an important role to play in supporting the provision of drug education, especially in helping a young person examine their attitude to drugs. Our approach and rationale is explained to parents/carers to gain their understanding and support.

Drug issues and concerns extend across socio-economic and ethnic boundaries, and pupils of all ages and abilities will encounter both the positive and negative effects of drugs, as used legally in medicine to aid recovery, or illegal use. Many pupils/students have some knowledge about illegal drugs through the media, "street talk", online interaction and personal experience. The school welcomes and encourages parent/carer and community involvement in the development of school policy and curriculum delivery.

Furthermore, staff members, parents/carers, volunteers, visitors or people representing external contractors, providers or those hiring the school facilities must not be under the influence of alcohol or other substances on the school site.

### **Objectives of Drugs Education:**

- To provide opportunities for students to acquire knowledge and identify the distinction between authorised and unauthorised drugs.
- To support students to make positive health choices by sharing updated information on the risks associated with drugs and alcohol consumption, as well as smoking / vaping.
- To develop and equip students with the knowledge, attitudes and skills necessary to build their resilience and avoid peer group pressure or unwanted drug offers from others.
- To build students' decision-making skills and increased self-esteem.
- To engage parents/carers in the school community and learning process.
- To enable students and staff to access support if they have concerns about their own or others' drug use.

### **Section 5 - Roles and responsibilities**

This policy relates to all member of the school community. All staff have a responsibility to know how they should respond to any possible drugs related incidents, recognising their responsibility to safeguard the welfare of students and the wider community. Staff have a responsibility to be understand the importance of drugs education and must be aware of this policy and its implications for themselves and for others.

Key responsibilities beyond this are as follows:

### **Governors**

As part of their general responsibilities for the management of the school, the governors play a key role in the development of the school's policies for drug education and prevention of misuse of drugs. They will continue their involvement through annual evaluation. The Governing Body has a responsibility to ensure all safeguarding policies are updated with current guidance and that all members of the school staff fully implement all aspects of key policies.

### **Headteacher**

The Headteacher takes overall responsibility for providing a safe place of work for all staff, students and visitors and as such takes responsibility for this Policy. Implementation of the policy, and liaison with the Governing Body, Parents, and appropriate outside agencies in the event of a drug-related incident will be overseen by senior staff. Students who are suspected of being at risk from drugs, and in particular truanting students will be supported and monitored with assistance from relevant agencies such as EWOs, Early Help, Children's services and the Police.

### **The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)**

In accordance with government guidance (ACPO Drugs Advice for Schools - 2012), the DSL is responsible for co-ordinating the whole school drugs awareness programme.

The DSL will ensure that:

- The Drug Education policy is disseminated to all members of the school community and is thoroughly discussed and understood by all stakeholders
- Clear roles and responsibilities for policy implementation are identified
- Equality of opportunity is promoted
- Provision is made for continued professional development within the field of drugs awareness and drug education
- Liaising with Early Help, Children's Services and/or Community Police / Youth Offending Team to agree a shared approach to dealing with drugs-related incidents and wider safeguarding risks linked to criminal/sexual exploitation, gang affiliation, county lines activity and radicalisation
- Reporting children missing from education to the Birmingham CME Team and Attendance Support Services
- Updating the Governing Body on drugs-related incidents in the Annual Safeguarding report.
- Provision for drug education, including the personal development of pupils, is monitored, evaluated and reviewed. This will be achieved by checking whole school drug education objectives are met, standards of teaching and learning expected are achieved, there are adequate resources and lesson plans have been developed and taught appropriately.
- Co-ordinating appropriate support in school through the School Nurse Service and our Pastoral Support worker, and signposting parents/carers to appropriate support in the community.

### **Life Skills Co-ordinator**

The co-ordinator is responsible for embedding drugs education into the Life Skills curriculum and engaging with external agencies in the delivery of effective drugs education. In addition, the co-ordinator is responsible for evaluating the impact of curriculum provision, particularly regarding SEND and EAL students, and updating schemes of work to reflect changes to national drugs education guidance and student outcomes.

### **Parents/Carers**

Parents/carers are encouraged to support the school's drug education programme and have access to this policy. Parents are responsible for ensuring that guidelines relating to medication in school are followed. Parents have the right to be informed of any incident that could result in potential harm to their child unless the school deems it inappropriate for the parent to be informed for safeguarding reasons. This can be a sensitive issue for parents, and therefore, it will be handled with care and consideration. The school hopes that any parent who is concerned about their child and drugs will contact the school for support. If specific counselling or specialist help is needed, the parent will be informed of appropriate agencies and services. We recognise our responsibility

to inform our parents about the best practice known with regards to drug education so they can support the key messages being given to their children in school, particularly in relation to risks around criminal/sexual exploitation, gang affiliation, knife crime, county lines activity and radicalisation.

Parents/carers should not visit the school premises under the influence of any form of alcohol or drugs. Parents who fail to adhere to this guidance will be asked to leave the school premises and the school reserves the right to ban the parent from the school premises in the future and contact the police as required. The school also reserves the right to contact appropriate external agencies, including Birmingham Children's Trust, if the school feels it is appropriate to do so to protect the interests of a student(s) in school.

### **All Staff**

Drug prevention is a whole school issue. All staff, including support staff and volunteers, need access to professional development and support that relates to the drug education curriculum and its style of delivery. As a result, staff will be fully aware of this policy and how it relates to them should they be called upon to deal with a drug-related incident. Any substances or drug paraphernalia found will be recorded and reported to the SLT and dealt with in accordance with this Policy.

The Hillcrest School's policy in relation to staff drinking, smoking and drug use is outlined in the staff code of conduct - all of which staff are required to have read. All members of staff have a duty of care to students in school and on school trips. Staff must, therefore, not be under the influence of alcohol, illegal or unauthorised substances during the school day or when taking groups of students off-site.

### **Confidentiality and Handling disclosures**

In managing drugs, schools must have regard to issues confidentiality. If a student discloses information relating to a drugs-related incident involving themselves or other students, the boundary of confidentiality should be made clear to the student(s), especially if the student asks for the information not to be shared. Every effort should be made to secure the student's agreement to the way the disclosure will be shared with the safeguarding team.

## **Section 6 - Teaching and Learning**

Drugs Education at Hillcrest School is delivered via:

- Life Skills curriculum, particularly through the 'Health' strand
- Planned elements of National Curriculum subjects, including Science
- Form programme and assemblies, including the Character Education programme
- Planned visits from external services and other appropriate organisations, including plays and workshops

Hillcrest School believe that by delivering effective education, increasing knowledge and understanding with respect to drug and substance use, we will help equip our pupils to make sensible lifestyle choices. The programme is developed within a positive climate in which pupils and adults feel able to talk openly and honestly.

The Life Skills curriculum at Hillcrest has been reviewed and updated to meet the requirements outlined in the DFE - 'Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education' guidance (July 2025).

Drugs Education is part of our Health Education provision in school. It will:

- Help pupils to gain an understanding of drugs and appropriate drug use;
- Dispel myths;
- Provide accurate information to allow pupils to make informed choices;
- Provide information on the legality of drugs use;
- Allow pupils time to ask questions and seek further information;
- Raise awareness of risks associated with drugs-related online challenges; and
- Signpost students to relevant support offered in school (i.e. - Pastoral Support Worker/Foundations for the Future) and externally.

As a result, students at Hillcrest are taught:

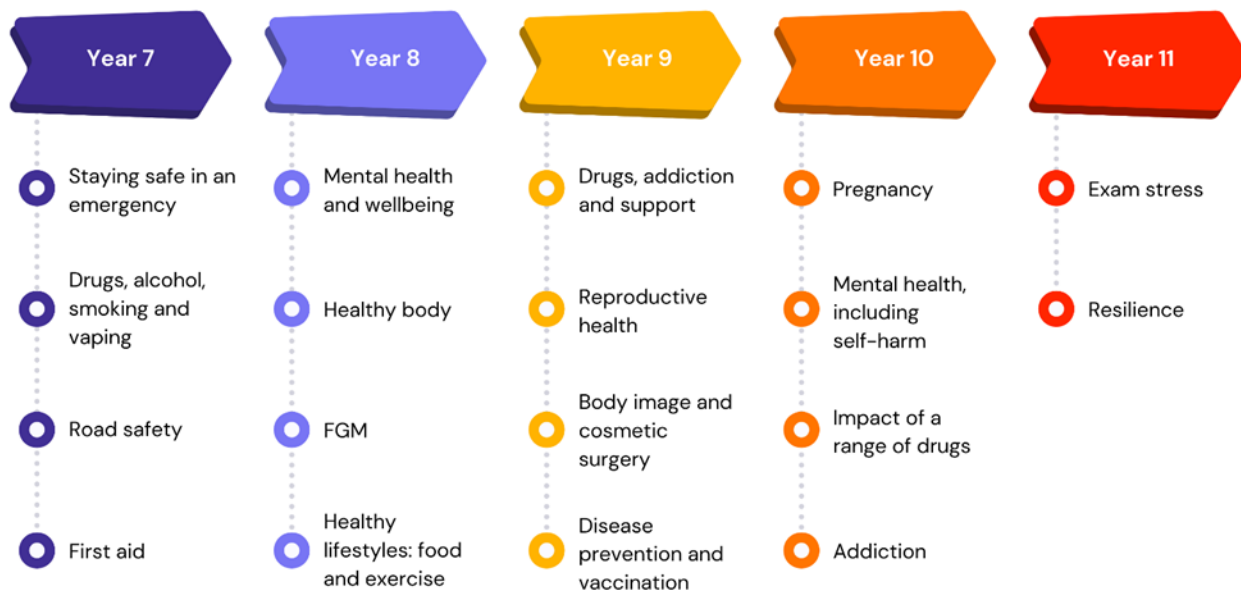
- To value and trust in their own learning through positive reflections and development of assertiveness and coping skills
- Confidence building and communication skills
- To recognise risky behaviour and risk taking within different situations and be able to respond appropriately
- That pressure to behave inappropriately or to take risks can come from a variety of sources, including people they know, TV, media and online interactions
- How to seek/ask for help and use basic techniques for resisting peer (child-on-child abuse) or unwanted pressure in order to minimise harm to themselves or others
- That their actions affect themselves and others, to respect and care about other people's feelings, trying to see things from their point of view
- That communication and problem-solving skills are central to bringing about a positive change in attitudes and actions
- To address personal well-being and emotional health by providing opportunities for pupils to learn how to manage their own personal, social and emotional development during the period of adolescent change.

In teaching drug education, teachers use a range of teaching strategies, including role-play, discussion group work, draw and write, debate and self-evaluation.

Pupils are taught in the Life Skills and wider curriculum:

- The facts about the harms from smoking tobacco (particularly the link to lung cancer), the benefits of quitting and how to access support to do so (including vaping and e-cigarettes)
- To recognise personal responsibility for decisions about substance use.
- The law relating to the possession, use and supply of illegal substances.
- The facts about legal and illegal drugs and their associated risks, including the link between drug use, and the associated risks, including the link to serious mental health conditions.
- Awareness of the dangers of drugs which are prescribed but still present serious health risks.
- To address myths, misconceptions and stereotypes linked with substance use.
- How to develop techniques for coping with situations in which substance use occurs.
- The historical, cultural, political, social and economic factors relating to the production, distribution and use of drugs worldwide.
- To understand that Britain is a drug using society and recognise the different patterns of use and their effects, such as the transmission of HIV infection through shared needles, and the detrimental effect on the foetus of all types of drug use.
- To recognise that individuals are responsible for choices they make about drug use.
- The physical and psychological risks associated with alcohol consumption and what constitutes low risk alcohol consumption in adulthood.
- The physical and psychological consequences of addiction, including alcohol dependency.
- How the media influences attitudes towards drugs, smoking, vaping and alcohol.
- The local and national links between drugs cultivation, possession and supplying with child-on-child abuse, County Lines, sexual exploitation, gang culture, knife crime, human trafficking and radicalisation.

# Health education



## Assessment and Recording

- The assessment, recording and reporting of drug education will take place in accordance with whole school policy.
- Understanding in drug education will be assessed through Life Skills evaluations set against learning outcomes, which will be built into curriculum planning.
- A variety of assessment techniques will be used, including discussion, scrutiny of work, pupil self-assessment, peer assessment and feedback through college prefect meetings.

## Staff training

As part of the staff CPD programme, specific training is delivered to staff on up-to-date guidance on drugs-related issues and the types of drugs pupils may refer to in Life Skills lessons and the wider curriculum, and the increasing links between drugs and other safeguarding risks, i.e. - child-on-child abuse, county lines activity, criminal/sexual exploitation, gang affiliation and knife crime. The training is delivered by the Community Police Team and School Nurse Services. In addition, staff with a responsibility for first aid in school are trained to spot and to deal with drug / alcohol related incidents.

## Cross-curricular links

Drug education has many cross-curricular links, with science making a particular contribution. However, the development of life skills is a theme throughout the curriculum, within the programme for Life Skills, and enshrined in the values, which are embodied in the schools' ethos. There are links to other subjects, such as geography and physical education, and aspects of school life, notably the spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects of the curriculum.

## External agency input into Drugs Education

The school values and encourages the involvement of external agencies and services in the delivery of this area of the curriculum. Drugs Education is a shared responsibility, and we work closely with external agencies in providing effective and relevant drugs education for our young people. Visitors from a range of statutory and voluntary agencies support and enhance our drug education provision as part of the Life Skills programme. However, we recognise that they cannot be relied upon solely to deliver drugs education at Hillcrest. The use of visitors is part of a planned, coherent and integrated approach and is appropriate to the age and maturity of the pupils involved. All visitors are aware of relevant school safeguarding policies and procedures, particularly confidentiality and sharing relevant information with the safeguarding team.



## Section 7 - Vulnerable pupils and Additional Educational Needs (SEND)

The school is aware that some students are more vulnerable to drug misuse and other social problems. Whilst some students may have a broad knowledge and insight into the world of drugs, there are those who have little or no knowledge at all. The table below illustrates the range of risk and protective factors associated with drug misuse:

Vulnerable groups	Risk Factors	Protective Factors
Homeless	Chaotic home environment	Strong family bonds
Looked After Child	Parents who misuse drugs suffer from mental illnesses	Experience of strong parental monitoring with clear family rules
Truants	Behaviour disorders	Family involvement in the lives of children
Pupils excluded from school	Lack of parental nurturing	Successful school experiences
Sexually abused	Inappropriate and aggressive behaviour	Strong bonds with local community activities
In contact with mental health and criminal justice system	Poor coping skills	A caring relationship with at least one adult
Children of parents with drug problem	Low commitment to school	Early intervention and preventative education
	Involvement in gangs, CSE, County Lines	
	Early age of first drug use	
	Social media	

In accordance with school and LA policy, a commitment to Equal Opportunities will be built into all aspects of drug education. We recognise that some students with learning difficulties may need more help than others in understanding what sorts of behaviour are/art not acceptable. Teachers will be sensitive to this issue and ensure lessons are planned to take account of pupils' age, culture, experience and maturity. The needs of students with SEND will be considered by the teacher who may need to provide different resources, different activities or specific support to some pupils. Where students' Individual Education Plans (IEP) identify targets relating to their personal development, the teacher will ensure that opportunities are planned to support pupils in achieving these.

Therefore, the school will endeavour to reduce the impact of risk factors and strength protective factors by promoting:

- Supportive and secure relationships
- Regular school attendance
- The ability to cope with the academic and social demands of school
- Good listening skills
- Realistic self-awareness and self-esteem
- A good knowledge of general health and how it can ensure good mental health
- A good knowledge of how to access help and information
- Work with parents/carers, particularly around communication and boundary settings
- Participation in extra-curricular activities
- Counselling, mentoring and other support mechanisms.

## **Support and guidance for students**

As a school we ensure that students have access to and knowledge of up-to-date information on sources of help and support. This includes local and national helplines, youth community and drugs services. Information is displayed in the Zone, Pastoral Support Room and Student Reception.

Staff have a key role in identifying students who have drug related needs. The process of identifying needs aims to distinguish between those who require additional information and education, those who could benefit from targeted prevention, and those who require a more detailed assessment of their needs. Students may require additional support if, for example:

- Their knowledge about drugs is low
- They demonstrate an inappropriate level of knowledge of drugs for their age
- They feel under pressure to use drugs
- Drugs are commonly used in the family or social environment
- Their drug use (or someone else's) is impacting on their behaviour, attendance, progress, mental health.

In addition to the drug education, they receive through the curriculum, early intervention and support may involve any or all of the following:

- Providing targeted information and advice in relation to specific drugs, in small groups or on a one-to-one basis
- Facilitating access to activities of interest to them
- Extra-curricular activities and external provision

Further support can all be accessed through referrals to the Safeguarding and Well-Being Co-ordinator, School Nurse Service and Aquarius. It is the right of a student to complete a self-referral if they feel they need support for drugs education/rehabilitation.

Should a student require additional support with substance misuse, a referral will be made to the local treatment agency through our safeguarding procedures. Every effort will be sought to gain parental consent for the referral, however, in some cases a referral may be made without consent and without parental knowledge in accordance with treatment procedures.

## **Section 8: Managing a drugs-related incident**

A drug-related incident may be one of the following:

- Finding drugs, or related paraphernalia, on school premise or off-site activities
- Possession of unauthorised drugs by an individual on school premises or off-site (i.e. - visit, work experience, interview, on the way to and from school)
- Student arriving to school and/or being in school under the influence of an illegal substance during the school day
- Use of drugs by an individual or group on school premises or off-site (see above)
- Students supplying and/ or distributing (or attempting to) drugs on school premises and off-site (see above)
- Evidence to suggest a student is planning to bring drugs-related items into school or is attempting to encourage other students to become involved (ie - online conversations, text messages, social media)
- Individuals disclosing information about their drugs use
- Student reports of parents, staff or students using drugs on school premises and off-site
- Hiding drugs in or around the school premises for later collection (by themselves or by third parties)
- Glamorising or encouraging the use of drugs and other substances, including online.
- Involvement in County Lines or gang-related drugs issues

If staff have reason to believe that a student has brought a prohibited substance into school and/or is under the influence of this substance, this information will be shared with the Headteacher or another member of the Senior Leadership Team immediately. Staff will not personally search a student or attempt to analyse or taste an unidentified drug. They will take temporary possession of any drug suspected of being a controlled drug for the purpose of protecting the pupil from harm or committing the offence of possession.

Although we are not legally required to inform parents/carers before a search takes place or to seek their consent to search their child, parents/carers will be called unless it is considered that doing so will put the pupil at potential risk. Student(s) will be questioned searched and any suspicious or prohibited substances confiscated. All incidents will be handled immediately in a discrete, confidential and professional manner.

The 2006 Education and Inspections Act enables the Headteacher to search a student, without their consent, if the school has 'reasonable grounds' (DFE - Searching, screening and confiscating' July 2022) to suspect they are carrying, using or supplying any form of illegal substance on the school site or to and from school. At Hillcrest school we will initially encourage the student to surrender any suspected drugs voluntarily. If necessary, searches will normally be carried out with the consent of the student and after the parent/carer has been informed unless there are immediate concerns for safety of the student or other members of the school community.

In accordance with updated DFE guidance on 'Searching, Screening and Confiscation' (July 2022), when carrying out the investigation, it is important to note that:

- A student will be reminded of the importance of co-operation with the school, informed of the reasons why staff are required to search them and how the search will be conducted.
- Students will be given the opportunity to ask questions at any stage of the process.
- Staff undertaking the search will consider the age and needs of the student at this stage, including those with specific individual needs and/or special education needs.
- Two staff, authorised by the Headteacher, will be present (except for preliminary investigations) and careful written records kept and signed. Records will include the reason for the search, the time and place, who was present and note the outcomes and any follow up action.
- The law states the member of staff conducting the search must be of the same sex as the student being searched. The second member of staff will present as a witness to the search.
- Under no circumstances will a member of staff undertake an intimate physical search.
- The student will be asked whether they are in possession of drugs. If they say 'no' they will be invited to co-operate by turning out their pockets and handing over their bag to be searched. Staff may search a student's outer clothing, pockets, possessions or bags. Outer clothing means any item of clothing that is not worn wholly next to the skin or immediately over a garment that is being worn as underwear, as well as hats, shoes, boots or scarves. The possessions will only be searched in the presence of the student.
- Students may also be asked to unlock their locker and a search will be completed in their presence.
- If the student refuses to co-operate, they will remain supervised and isolated from other students. Parents will be contacted to secure their support for the search and will be invited into school to observe or participate in the searching process. We do reserve the right to not contact parents at this stage if we feel this may place the pupil at greater risk of significant harm.
- The Headteacher will consider whether it is appropriate to use reasonable force to conduct the search, particularly if the search would prevent the student from harming themselves or others, damaging property or from causing disorder. The 2006 Education and Inspections Act enables a member of staff to confiscate, retain or dispose of a student's property, where reasonable to do so.
- If a student fails to co-operate with the search, sanctions will be implemented in line with the school behaviour policy and an initial fixed term suspension will be issued pending a decision on a possible permanent exclusion from school.
- If the student fails to co-operate and a personal search is unavoidable, the Headteacher will contact the police to request support. We will always inform parents if the police are called to an incident unless we feel that doing so may put the pupil at risk of significant harm.
- Under these circumstances, the police may be required to initiate a strip search of the student.

- Strip searches on the school premise are allowed but can only be carried out by police officers. Before calling the police into school, the Headteacher and DSL will assess the risk of a potential strip search on the student's mental and physical well-being and the risk of not recovering the suspected item. Once on the school site the decision on whether to conduct a strip search lies with the police and the school will act as an advocate for the safety and well-being of the student. Parents will be informed by the DSL once the strip search has taken place.
- After the strip search has been completed, the student will receive appropriate support, irrespective of whether the suspected item is found, to help them to deal with the experience of being searched. A referral to Birmingham Children's Trust or Early Help will be considered by the DSL.
- If an item is found, the police will take relevant action and confiscate the prohibited substance(s), and the school will follow the procedures outlined in the Behaviour policy for a permanent exclusion.
- All school searches for prohibited items and all searches conducted by police officers will be recorded on CPOMS, including whether or not an item is found.
- Parents will be informed of any search for a prohibited item that has taken place, and the outcome of the search, including any items confiscated.
- If a pupil is found in possession of, distributing or using a banned substance / item in school (any form of drugs or paraphernalia), the Headteacher reserves the right to permanently exclude the student. Any pupil found in the presence of another student using a banned substance will be suspended from school, even if they were not directly using the banned substance themselves.

### **Students under the influence of a banned substance**

If a pupil appears to be under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs or solvents this may constitute a medical emergency. Staff must adhere to the following procedures:

- Summon a School First Aider immediately and a member of SLT who will take any appropriate action.
- An ambulance will be called, if appropriate, and parents informed.
- The incident will be fully documented in the First Aid book.

Whether or not drugs are found, parents/carers will be informed of the outcome of the school's investigation. If parents are unhappy that their child has been searched without their consent, they should register their concern through the school's complaints procedures.

If a student is under the influence of an illegal substance, parents will be required to collect their child from school as quickly as possible. However, if the student is thought to be at 'risk' or in 'harm' by handing them over to the parent, the school can, in extreme circumstances, refuse to hand the student over to their parents. For example, if the parent is deemed to be in no fit state to take care of the student. The appropriate services will be contacted immediately.

Students found under the influence of an illegal substance, even if no drugs-related items are found in their possession, may be permanently excluded from school or face a lengthy fixed term suspension at the discretion of the Headteacher and Chair of Governors. The school will consider the wider implications and taken personal circumstances into account before making a final disciplinary decision.

To support a child where drug awareness, rehabilitation or medical guidance is needed, we will refer pupils to the Safeguarding and Well-Being Co-ordinator, School Nurse or Aquarius. Any responses to drug related incidents will seek to balance the needs of the individual student concerned with the wider school community.

### **Confiscation of Drugs**

After searching and confiscating an illegal substance, staff will take the following precautions if the substance is a suspected controlled drug:

- Ensure that a second adult witness is present throughout the search
- Seal the sample in a plastic bag and include details of the date and time of the seizure
- Store it in a secure location with limited access other members of staff

- Needles/syringes should be stored in a sturdy container with gloves
- Staff must not attempt to identify the exact nature of possible illegal substances themselves. Clarification of substances must be carried out by the police.
- Notify the police without delay and as advised, provide the police with the name of the pupil(s) and relevant information on how it was seized
- Record full details of the incident, including the police reference number
- Remind students that complete confidentiality can never be promised
- Inform parents / carers, unless it is not in the best interests of the pupil and seek their permission to share information with any agency that may support the pupil, if necessary.
- Refer to other appropriate external services, i.e. - Early Help or CASS if the pupil is Looked After or classed as a 'Child in Need' or subject to a Child Protection Plan.

Any drugs confiscated from students will be given to the police for disposal as soon as possible

## **Section 9 - CBD Infused Products (Cannabidiol)**

There has been a significant increase in CBD infused products in the last two years, with a 40% continued growth predicted for the next three years. CBD is one of the active ingredients found in cannabis. It is generally referred to as 'non psychoactive', whereas THC (tetrahydrocannabinol) is referred to as a 'psychoactive' ingredient. There has been an increase in the use of CBD and THC oils in vapes.

If a student is found in possession or under the influence of a product containing CBD, on site and during off-site visits or placements, the school has the right to seize the product and request that parents provide medical evidence to confirm the reason the pupil needs to use it. Parents must inform the school in advance, in writing with clear medical evidence, if their child is to use a CBD infused product. The Headteacher will seek further clarification from the Local Authority and School Nurse Service before authorising the use of such products in school.

If a student is found in possession or under the influence of an infused product containing more than 0.2% THC (tetrahydrocannabinol), the school will follow the procedures outlined in section 5 as it is a criminal offence to possess or supply a product with more than 0.2% THC.

## **Section 10 - Legal Drugs**

Although schools are not required to contact the police regarding incidents of legal drugs (i.e. - tobacco, vaping and alcohol), we will contact the police about the inappropriate sale or supply of tobacco, vapes, alcohol and volatile substances to pupils in the local area.

The school recognises that the minimum age for smoking is 18 and we adhere to smoke free legislation, including vaping and e-cigarettes. For example, the school is smoke free site (including vapes and e-cigarettes) and guidance is provided for all member of the school community in helping them to quit smoking.

Young people are becoming aware of, and in some cases using, new psychoactive substances. These are designed to mimic the effect of legal drugs. Despite being labelled as legal these substances are not always safe to use and often contain controlled drugs making them illegal to possess. Such drugs are classed as 'unauthorised substances' and will be treated by the school as a controlled drug.

Students will receive a fixed term suspension if they are seen using, distributing or caught in the possession of cigarettes, vapes, e-cigarettes or alcohol on the school site or while wearing their school uniform in the community. Students will also receive a fixed term suspension if they are seen in the presence of other pupils seen using or distributing these items. The Headteacher reserves the right to issue a permanent exclusion for the persistent failure to adhere to school policy regarding smoking, vaping or possession/consumption of alcohol on the school site or in the community. This may also apply in the case of a one-off incident depending on the nature and severity of the incident

## **Section 11- Students whose parents/carers or family members misuse drugs**

If a student discloses or we suspect that illegal substances are used in the family home, we may contact Early Help or Birmingham Children's Trust to take advice on the most appropriate course of action to support their child and the family. If we feel the child is at risk of significant harm from circumstances in the family, we will follow standard safeguarding practices and make a direct referral to Early Help and/or BCT. Support will be offered in school through the Safeguarding and Well-Being Co-ordinator and/or School Nurse Service.

Confidentiality: Standard protocols relating to confidentiality will apply if a student makes a disclosure based around any form of drugs-related issue.

As a school we will work with pupils and their families to access appropriate support in the local community in any drugs-related incident, i.e. - Aquarius.

## **Section 12 - Managing Medicines**

Some students require medicines that have been prescribed for their medical condition during the school day. These may be over the counter or prescribed medicines. This information is stored and updated on our 'School Medical List' and circulated to staff as it is amended throughout the year.

Parents are required to notify the school of any medical conditions requiring medication during the school day. Written permission and details of how to administer the medication must be provided by parents. This must be in line with the prescription details, as displayed on the container/packaging. Parent agreement for administering medicines should be completed and signed by the parent. Medication is to be brought into school by parents and stored safely in the safe in student reception.

Students can then access medication throughout the day in a secure and safe manner from a trained first aider. Medicines prescribed for an individual pupil must only be used on them. A written record of the dose and time the medication was administered will be kept. This will also include if a student refuses to take their medication. If this happens, the student will not be forced to take it and the parent/carer will be informed.

Under no circumstances should students carry any form of medication, during the school day, that the school is not previously aware of. This poses a serious threat to the student in question and any other students that may either intentionally or accidentally share the medication. For example, students should not share aspirin with as they are unaware of the potential side effects.

Students found sharing such medication may face the possibility of a permanent exclusion or fixed-term suspension from school for breaching health and safety guidance and potentially putting other pupils at risk.

If a student requires medication goes on a school trip or visit, parents are responsible for ensuring the school has the appropriate medication required prior to the trip. Staff supervising the trip are made aware of the frequency and amount of medication needed and administer, as necessary. The school will make work experience or alternative providers aware of relevant medical conditions and administering information.

Staff should never give a non-prescribed medicine to a student under any circumstances or without seeking prior permission from parents/carers.

## **Section 13 - External Support**

**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.

Website: [www.addaction.org.uk](http://www.addaction.org.uk)

**ADFAM** offers information to families of drug and alcohol users, and the website has a database of local family support services.

Tel: 020 3817 9410 Email: [admin@adfam.org.uk](mailto:admin@adfam.org.uk)

Website: [www.adfam.org.uk](http://www.adfam.org.uk)

**Alcohol Concern** works to reduce the incidence and costs of alcohol-related harm to increase the range and quality of services available to people with alcohol-related problems.

Tel 0203 907 8480 Email: [contact@alcoholconcern.org.uk](mailto:contact@alcoholconcern.org.uk)

Website: [www.alcoholconcern.org.uk](http://www.alcoholconcern.org.uk)

**ASH (Action on Smoking and Health)** is a campaigning public health charity aiming to reduce the health problems caused by tobacco.

Tel: 0207 404 0242 Email: [enquiries@ash.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@ash.org.uk)

Website: [www.ash.org.uk](http://www.ash.org.uk)

**Children's Legal Centre** operates a free and confidential legal advice and information service covering all aspects of law and policy affecting children and young people.

Tel: 01206 714650 Email: [info@coramclc.org.uk](mailto:info@coramclc.org.uk)

Website: [www.childrenslegalcentre.com](http://www.childrenslegalcentre.com)

**Children's Rights Alliance for England** is 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 the Child.

Tel: 020 3174 2279 Email: [info@crae.org.uk](mailto:info@crae.org.uk)

Website: [www.crae.org.uk](http://www.crae.org.uk)

**Drinkaware** is 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.

Tel: 020 7766 9900

Website: [www.drinkaware.co.uk](http://www.drinkaware.co.uk)

**Drinkline** - a free and confidential helpline for anyone who is concerned about their own or someone else's drinking.

Tel: 0800 917 8285 (lines are open 24 hours)

**Drug Education Forum** is a website that contains a number of useful papers and briefing sheets for use by practitioners.

Website: <https://drugeducationforum.wordpress.com>

**DrugScope** is 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 host the Drug Education Practitioners Forum.

Tel: 0202 7520 7550 Email: [info@drugscope.org.uk](mailto:info@drugscope.org.uk) Website: [www.drugscope.org.uk](http://www.drugscope.org.uk)

**FRANK** is 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. 24 Hour Helpline: 0300 123 6600

Email: [frank@talktofrank.com](mailto:frank@talktofrank.com)

Website: [www.talktofrank.com](http://www.talktofrank.com)

**Mentor UK** is 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.

Tel: 0203 963 2715 Email: [admin@mentoruk.org](mailto:admin@mentoruk.org)

Website: [www.mentoruk.org.uk](http://www.mentoruk.org.uk) 12

**National Children's Bureau** promotes the interests and well-being of all children and young people across every aspect of their lives.

Tel: 020 7843 6000

Website: [www.ncb.org.uk](http://www.ncb.org.uk)

**Family Lives** is 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.

Tel: 0808 800 2222

Website: <http://familylives.org.uk>

**Re-Solv** (Society for the Prevention of Solvent and Volatile Substance Abuse) is a national charity providing information for teachers, other professionals, parents and young people.

Tel: 01785 817885 Information Line: 01785 810762 Email: [information@re-solv.org](mailto:information@re-solv.org)

Website: [www.re-solv.org](http://www.re-solv.org)

**Smokefree** is the NHS Smoking Helping.

Website: <http://smokefree.nhs.uk>

**Stars National Initiative** offers support for anyone working with children, young people and families affected by parental drug and alcohol misuse.

Website: <https://www.addiction-ssa.org/resources/stars-national-initiative>

**Youth Offending Teams** - 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 19

Website: [www.gov.uk/youthoffending-team](http://www.gov.uk/youthoffending-team)

## **Section 14 - Monitoring**

- The Deputy Headteacher (Pastoral) is the named co-ordinator and works with the link Governor for safeguarding to develop this policy.
- Senior managers are involved in monitoring and evaluation.
- Students, staff, parents/carers and governors are consulted and the programme and policy is modified where appropriate.
- There is ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the programme, teaching methodologies and learning outcomes to ensure that needs are met.
- Drug education is reviewed in line with current LA and DFE guidelines.

Policy Reviewed - September 2025

Review Date - September 2026