

Owner/Reviewer: Deputy Principal

Approved by: Principal

Review period: 3 years

Last reviewed: March 2025

Due for review: March 2028

**Birkenhead Sixth Form College Drugs Procedure**

**Aims:**

* To ensure the safety and well-being of all students and staff;
* To ensure young people understand and are informed of the dangers of drug use;
* To clarify legal responsibilities, entitlements and obligations
* To support all the members of the school community by providing clear guidance and procedures on drug related issues to ensure clarity and consistency

**Key roles and responsibilities**

The Deputy Principal is responsible for drug related incidents in college. All members of SMT have the authority to carry out searches on students. See section on Search procedures.

**Definition of Drugs**

For the purposes of this procedure drugs include medicines, volatile substances, alcohol, illegal drugs, new psychoactive substances and other unauthorised substances.

**Drug related incidents**

* **Medicines –** students are permitted to possess drugs that have been prescribed to them by their doctor. If they are found to have prescription drugs and no proof that they have been prescribed by their GP they will be confiscated and parents informed.
* **Alcohol –** if a student is believed to be under the influence of alcohol they will be required to be collected by their parents and possibly be subject to a search at the discretion of a senior member of staff. This would be deemed as gross misconduct and student will be suspended.
* **Drugs** (Illegal drugs, psychoactive substances and any other unauthorised substances) **–** if a student is:
  + found to be in possession of a drug;
  + found to be in possession of drug paraphernalia;
  + suspected to be under the influence of any drug;
  + smelling strongly of drugs;

They will immediately be suspended. The college adopts a zero tolerance policy to drugs and therefore permanent exclusion is the most likely course of action however in certain cases students may return to college with certain conditions placed upon their return.

**Examples of conditions**

* **Consent to random drug testing –** student will agree to being subject to random drug tests and the cost of any test be covered by the student or their parents;
* **Consent to random drug searches –** student will be required to agree to random searches.
* **Agree to seek support from external agencies –** student agrees to attend support sessions. Student may be required to provide proof to their tutor that they are attending external support.
* **Student Development tutors –** pastoral guidance and support with be provided by the tutor.
* **Parental involvement –** the college will support parents and direct them to external agencies that can help.

Other drug related incidents include the following:

* Individuals disclosing information about their drug use
* Rumours of drug possession supply or drug use.
* Reports of drug possession supply or drug use
* Finding drugs, or related paraphernalia on college premises

All staff must report any of the above incidents as a safeguarding concern using the safeguarding referral process.

A student who discloses a drug habit will be supported and signposted to agencies that can assist them in addressing this.

**Procedures**

**Searching**

Members of SMT have the authority to search. The college will only carry drug searches on students who consent. If students do not consent they will be immediately permanently excluded.

The member of staff carrying the search will be the same sex as the student and there will be another member of staff present.

Following the search a record of it will be made. See Appendix 1.

If a controlled drug is found the college will confiscate the item and the following steps will be taken:-

• seal the sample in a plastic bag and include details of the date and time of the seizure/find and witness present;

• store it in a secure location, such as a safe or other lockable container with access limited to senior members of staff;

• we may notify the police, who will collect it and then store or dispose of it in line with locally agreed protocols.

• record full details of the incident, including the police incident reference number if applicable;

• inform parents/carers,;

• identify any safeguarding concerns and develop a support and disciplinary response.

**Confiscation**

Colleges’ general power to discipline, as circumscribed by 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.

Under this procedure any items that are found in possession of a student that are in breach of our drug procedure and any other prohibited items will be confiscated and retained.

This includes the following prohibited items:

* Alcohol
* Controlled drugs
* Other substances
* Stolen items
* Fireworks
* Pornographic Images
* Weapons
* Vape/Tobacco if used in breach of the college rules on smoking.

The member of staff conducting the search in consultation with the Principal will decide on what action is taken with the seized item following the DfE guidance as laid out in Searching, Screening and Confiscation advice document.

Items will either be disposed of or passed over to the police. In the case of Vape and Tobacco the students parent will be required to collect within 4 weeks of the search. If uncollected the items will be disposed of.

**Support for Students**

* **Referral to Response counselling service -**  is an agency for young people aged 13 to 19. It offers a wide range of general support and has specialist substance misuse workers who can help young people experiencing problems with drug or alcohol use.
* **Student Development tutors –** pastoral guidance and support with be provided by the tutor.
* **Parental involvement –** the college will support parents and direct them to external agencies that can help.
* **Listening Service**
* **Drug awareness training –** Students are made aware of drugs through external drug awareness training as well as the tutorial programme.

**Staff training and support**

We recognise the need for staff to receive appropriate training to support their work in raising awareness in the college and dealing appropriately with incidents should they arise. The college will organise training related to the identified needs of staff as required.

Appendix A

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| Record of Search | |
| Date |  |
| Name of student |  |
| Reason for the search |  |
| Time and place of search |  |
| Staff present during the search |  |
| Outcome |  |
| Action taken |  |