



St. Joseph's Catholic Academy

In our School, may there be prayer,
learning and humour, hard work,
faith and friendship.



Drug & Alcohol Policy

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Bishop Chadwick
Catholic Education Trust

Policy details

Approved by:	Local Governing Committee
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Next review due by:	September 2026

Purpose of the policy

This policy document is aimed at all staff, pupils, parents/carers, governors and agencies working with the Academy, and has been drawn up in consultation with all relevant parties. St Josephs will not tolerate the misuse of drugs within its grounds and by pupils either representing the school out of school hours or on any school organised trips or visits. This applies also to any adult or persons who may come onto the Academy site and may be intoxicated and/or in possession of illegal drugs. Our Academy is a no-smoking or vaping area and we request that all adults refrain from smoking on or around the premises. This has been extended to include use of the premises by groups out of normal school hours.

At St Joseph's Academy we recognised that some of our pupils and parents need a variety of medicines and appropriate arrangements are made to enable the correct distribution of these. St Joseph's Academy Drug Policy is part of our overall approach to health and well-being.

Drugs education plays a key role in equipping children with the necessary skills, understanding and knowledge to move confidently into adult life. We have a responsibility to inform our students of the facts in a sensitive style that will engage and support them, using recognised and evidence-based teaching strategies. This is carried out through our Personal development curriculum including PSHE, RE, Science, assemblies and through our school ethos.

We aim to ensure that pupils recognise the importance of what they eat and drink and the effect that this can have. Self-respect and a healthy lifestyle are all part of an approach which will enable our pupils to make the right choices for themselves and their families now and in the future. It is important to note that the Academy sees inappropriate drug use by pupils as something to be challenged and changes in behaviour sought through support and counselling wherever possible. Any pupil found to have been distributing and/or using illegal drugs, whether or not in return for payment, will be excluded from school and the police contacted.

Definition of “Drugs”

- All illegal drugs i.e. those drugs controlled by the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971
- All legal drugs, including alcohol and tobacco, which have a particular significance in relation to pupils, volatile substances (those giving off gas or vapour which can be inhaled), GHB (dangerous sedative and anaesthetic effects), e-cigarettes, MCAT (Mephedrone (sometimes called ‘meow meow’) is a powerful stimulant) Ketamine and alkyl nitrites (poppers)
- All over the counter and prescribed drugs

Aims of the policy

This Drugs and Alcohol Policy is part of the overall approach to health and well-being and aims to:

- Increase students' knowledge and understanding about drugs, the dangers associated with the misuse of drugs and to clarify their misconceptions
- Develop students' personal and social skills to enable them to make informed decisions and keep themselves safe and healthy
- Enable students to explore their own and other people's attitude towards drugs, drug use and drug users

- Ensure the safety of staff and students when on school site or when on any school trip or visit, residential or otherwise
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- Develop pupils' understanding of rules and laws
- Raise pupils' self-esteem and self-awareness
- Take a firm stance against illegal drugs
- Provide an agreed approach to issues of healthy lifestyle
- Alert children and young people to the ways of seeking additional help and support where necessary
- To enhance young people's decision-making skills more generally, using drug education as a vehicle
- To minimise the number of young people who ever engage in drug misuse

Parents/carers should be aware that any concerns or information gathered that their child is using, supplying or bringing any form of illegal substance or any form of drugs paraphernalia onto the school premises/site, will be shared with the police in the interest of protecting not only the pupil involved, but every member of the Academy community.

The Role of Schools As part of the statutory duty on schools to promote pupils' wellbeing, schools have a clear role to play in preventing drug misuse as part of their pastoral responsibilities. To support this, the Government's Drug Strategy 2010 ensures that school staff have the information, advice and power to:

- Provide accurate information on drugs and alcohol through education and targeted information
- Tackle problem behaviour in schools, with wider powers of search and confiscation
- Work with local voluntary organisations, health partners, the police, and others to prevent drug or alcohol misuse

Management of Drugs Related Incidents on Academy Premises

The Academy believes that as part of the care and welfare of its pupils it has a duty to:

- Try to maintain a health promoting drug-free environment
- Try to minimise the effects of drugs and alcohol on pupils' learning
- Act on suspected drug or alcohol use
- Provide a co-ordinated and consistent response to any drug or alcohol related incidents
- Use suitable sanctions where appropriate
- Provide support to any pupil with problems

Drug Related Incidents may involve

- Possession of known/unknown substance(s)
- Suspected/evidence of supplying substance(s)
- Use of drugs at school
- Use of a drug outside of school which is affecting learning/progress
- Discovery of drugs in a place on the school premises

- Retrieval of drugs from such a place
- Suspicion of drug abuse (where information may have come from other pupils, parents, the police or other sources)
- Self-referral by pupil

Each case should be treated in accordance with the principles above and the procedures below. A drug incident record should be recorded on CPOMs.

Drugs on Academy Premises

St Joseph's Academy makes it clear that drug use on the school premises is not acceptable, except in the case of prescribed medication. In such cases, parents MUST ensure that they have contacted Head of House and completed a form accessed with school first aider.

Incidents would include:

- Smoking/vaping on or around the Academy premises either during the school day or during evening/weekend events
- Alcohol on the Academy site during the school day
- Alcohol consumed by adults on the premises at a time other than may be authorised by the Governors and/or Headteacher in conjunction with an approved and/or appropriate licensed event
- Adults or pupils on the Academy premises who are evidently under the influence of alcohol or substances which impair their judgement.
- Adults or pupils who are in known possession of alcohol or illegal substances around the Academy premises

Where school staff suspect any one of the incidents may have occurred they should inform the Leadership Team who will make a judgement as to whether they should:

- Approach the individual
- Call the police
- Make arrangements to isolate the individual to ensure the safety of all other pupils on the Academy site
- Illegal drugs – These should be confiscated by a member of the Leadership Team in the presence of another adult. The drugs should be sealed in a plastic bag with details of the date and time they were found or confiscated. The police should then be notified. The drugs should be kept in the safe in the main office until such time they can be collected.

NB – The person seizing the substances should wear rubber gloves and should wash their hands thoroughly after the incident.

Alcohol, Vape and Tobacco use or Possession by Pupils

- Items will be confiscated under the School Confiscation Policy. Parents will be informed, and the items will be disposed of or destroyed
- All drug related incidents should be referred immediately to the Headteacher or Leadership Team

The following actions may result:

- Exclusion of the pupil
- Confiscation where possible of the substance following the search and seizure procedure set out by the Local Authority and outlined in the Behaviour Policy
- Where there are safeguarding concerns, these should be referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately, Mrs Tubman
- A meeting with the pupil, parents, pastoral staff and any relevant agencies must occur

The meeting should provide an opportunity to:

- Exchange information and opinion on the nature of the pupil's involvement with drugs
- To hear the pupil's view
- To agree a detailed plan covering support from the school and outside agencies as well as monitoring review. Where appropriate, a PSP (pupil support plan) may be established following any drug related incident in school.

Drugs on School Visits and Trips

Where drugs or drug related paraphernalia are discovered on a school trip, procedures will generally follow those for drugs found on Academy premises.

The Academy reserve the right to require a parent/carer to attend and collect the pupil immediately or as soon after as practicably possible.

In the event of:

- Suspicion of a pupil under the influence of drugs/alcohol/solvents
- Pupil in possession of drugs/alcohol/solvents
- Pupil discloses that they are misusing drugs/alcohol/solvents. Pupil discloses that parents or friends are misusing or selling drugs/alcohol/solvents
- School becomes aware of the availability of drugs/alcohol/solvents in the school vicinity
- Pupil or parent asks for advice on illegal drug misuse

Teachers/visit leaders should contact the Headteacher immediately who will decide on appropriate action in line with the Behaviour Policy. All disclosures and other incidents should be fully documented and passed to the relevant Designated Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible. Staff must ensure that on no account should they promise confidentiality

Emergency Procedures – Advice to Staff

In the event of a pupil appearing to suffer from drugs/alcohol/solvent misuse, then staff should follow these procedures:

- Do not panic – YOU CAN HELP
- If they are semi-conscious or in a coma, make sure the pupil is lying in the recovery position on their side. An ambulance must be called immediately.
- If they are hyperactive, try to find a calm, dark area where they can sit with someone to reassure them
- Inform reception or pupil support who will summon a First Aider
- Keep any containers or pills that are at the scene to show the Doctor or Paramedic. Ask friends, if present, if they know what and how much the pupil may have taken
- Stay with the pupil until assistance arrives.

Confidentiality and Advice

Pupils should be made aware that information will be shared with appropriate persons. However, they should be offered sensitive and appropriate support

Parent/Carer

Parents/Carers have an important role to play in supporting their child's drug education. Young people are more likely to delay or avoid drug misuse when

- Family bonds are strong
- There is strong parental monitoring and clear family values
- There is open dialogue between parent and child

Parent/Carers should be:

- Made aware of the school's approach and rationale for drug education
- Given information about their child's drug education and rules in relation to drugs
- Made aware of help available to them through local and national sources

Relevant Legislation

- Misuse of Drugs Act 1971
- Children and Young Person (Protection from Tobacco) Act 1991
- Supporting pupils with Medical Needs (gov.co.uk 2014)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025



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