



George Stephenson
High School

Drugs Policy

Governance	Governing Body	
Policy Officer	Deputy Headteacher	
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Version History Log

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1. Introduction

This policy outlines George Stephenson High School's approach to drug education, prevention, and response. It is designed to safeguard students' health and well-being, create a safe learning environment, and ensure compliance with legal requirements. The policy applies to all students, staff, and visitors on school premises, during school hours, or at school-organised events.

2. Aims and Objectives

To provide students with accurate, age-appropriate information about drugs, their risks, and their consequences.

To equip students with the skills to make informed choices and resist peer pressure.

To promote a safe and drug-free environment.

To ensure appropriate and consistent responses to drug-related incidents.

3. Definition of Drugs

For the purposes of this policy, 'drugs' include but are not limited to:

- Illegal substances (e.g., cannabis, cocaine, ecstasy).
- Alcohol and tobacco.
- Prescription drugs used improperly.
- Volatile substances (e.g., solvents).
- New psychoactive substances ('legal highs').

4. Education and Prevention

Drug education will be delivered through the PSHE (Personal, Social, Health, and Economic) curriculum and science lessons.

External organisations and professionals may support delivery to ensure specialist knowledge and engagement.

Staff will be trained to deliver drug education confidently and sensitively.

The school will foster a culture of openness where students feel safe discussing concerns.

The school will tailor drug education to be culturally inclusive and respectful of students' diverse backgrounds.

5. Prohibited Actions

The following are strictly prohibited on school premises or during school activities:

- Possession, use, or distribution of drugs.
- Being under the influence of drugs.
- Supplying drugs to others.

6. Responding to Drug-Related Incidents

Suspicion of drug use: Staff will monitor and report concerns to the designated safeguarding lead (DSL).

Possession or use: Any student found in possession of drugs will have the items confiscated and securely stored. Parents/carers and the police will be informed where appropriate. Depending on the severity of the incident and any aggravating factors (e.g., repeated offenses, endangering others), possession of drugs may result in disciplinary actions, up to and including permanent exclusion.

Supply of drugs: Incidents involving the supply of drugs will be treated as serious breaches of school policy and are likely to lead to permanent exclusion.

Support and education: The school will prioritise the well-being of students, offering support through counselling and referrals to external agencies where necessary. First-time or minor offenses may involve restorative approaches and additional education about drug misuse. This is at the discretion of the headteacher.

7. Searching, Confiscation, and Testing

The school reserves the right to conduct searches of students and their belongings where there is reasonable suspicion of possession.

Searches will be conducted by two members of staff, one of whom will be the same sex as the student being searched, following the Department for Education's guidance on searching, screening, and confiscation.

Confiscated drugs will be handed over to the police.

Drug testing will not routinely be used but may be considered in exceptional circumstances.

8. Staff Responsibilities

All staff are responsible for promoting a drug-free environment and acting on any suspicions or incidents promptly.

The DSL will oversee drug-related incidents and ensure safeguarding protocols are followed.

The DSL will liaise with external agencies (e.g., police, social services.)

Staff will promote student input, such as through surveys or student councils, to refine drug education programs.

9. Involvement of Parents and Carers

Parents and carers will be informed of drug-related incidents involving their child unless it is deemed to compromise the student's safety.

The school will provide resources, advice, and workshops to parents to support drug education at home.

10. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the governing body, ensuring it reflects current legislation, guidance, and local community needs.

11. Legal Framework

This policy aligns with the following:

- The Education Act 1996
- The Misuse of Drugs Act 1971
- Searching, Screening, and Confiscation: Advice for Schools (DfE, 2022)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2024)

12. Contact Information

For queries or concerns about this policy, please contact Louise Dunn, Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Headteacher.

Linked Policies

GSBS Behaviour Policy

GSBS Safeguarding Policy