

Copthorne C.E. Junior School

Drug Policy

**Approved December 2024
To be reviewed December 2027**

Policy on Substance Use and Misuse:

Statement of Policy on Substance Use and Misuse

- The school condones neither the misuse of drugs and alcohol by members of the school, nor the illegal supply of these substances.
- The school is committed to the health and safety of its members and will take action to safeguard their well-being.
- The school acknowledges the importance of its pastoral role in the welfare of young people, and through the general ethos of the school, will seek to persuade pupils in need of support to come forward.

In response to our shared concerns at a local and national level, we wish to state that as part of its care for the welfare of its pupils, the school believes it has a duty to inform and educate young people on the consequences of drug use and misuse. The school takes a proactive stance on this matter, believing that health education is a vital part of the Personal and Social education of every pupil.

Fundamental to our school'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 successful implementation of this policy.

Whilst we acknowledge that the numbers of young people who use and misuse substances is rising, it is seen as important to recognise that the larger numbers of young people are choosing not to use or misuse substances. We will continue to support their differing needs.

We believe and support the following educational aims in respect of substance use and misuse:

- to enable pupils to make healthy, informed choices by increasing knowledge, challenging attitudes and developing and practising skills
- to provide accurate information about substances
- to increase understanding about the implications and possible consequences of use and misuse
- to encourage an understanding for those experiencing or likely to experience substance use
- to widen understanding about related health and social issues, e.g. sex and sexuality, crime, HIV and AIDS
- to seek to minimise the risks that users and potential users face
- to enable young people to identify sources of appropriate personal support.

These aims are fulfilled through aspects of the pupils' experiences in the taught curriculum, the informal curriculum and through opportunities for extra-curricular activities. We deliver in the taught curriculum mainly through RSHE, Science and English areas, but other opportunities to

reinforce learning will occur in other parts of the teaching programme. The school actively co-operates with other agencies such as Community Police, Children & Young People's Services, LA and Health and Drug Agencies, to deliver Drugs Education and to deal with incidents of substance use and misuse. Visitors who support the school will be informed of the values held within this policy.

The Roles of the Headteacher and Governing Body

The headteacher takes overall responsibility for the policy and its implementation, for liaison with the Governing Body, parents, LA and appropriate outside. The headteacher will ensure that all staff dealing with substance issues are adequately supported and trained.

In instances involving substance misuse or supply on the premises, and following discussion between staff members who know the pupil well, parents will be contacted immediately by the headteacher. Any pupil bringing illegal substances onto school property would receive a fixed term exclusion, although school governance may then decide to permanently exclude a pupil, especially if the intent was to supply to other pupils. In the event of a fixed term exclusion, the pupil would only be allowed to return to school if the parents agree to work together with school to support the young person involved through a Pastoral Support Programme. School would also expect to have the permission of parents to search their child's belongings and the child if there were any further suspicions of continued substance misuse. The school will consider very carefully the implications of any action it may take. It seeks to balance the interests of the pupil involved, the other school members and the local community. Permanent exclusion is seen as a last resort as it may only transfer the problem. The Governing Body will be involved in substance education and substance related incidents in the same manner as any other matter concerning the direction of the school.

If a young person admits to using or supplying substances off the premises, in line with safeguarding procedures, the headteacher or deputy headteacher will be informed. A decision will then be made on next steps, including informing the parents and if any other action is required such as contacting the police and making a referral to the Integrated Front Door.

There is no legal obligation to inform the police, though they may be able to give relevant support and advice. However, a school cannot knowingly allow its premises to be used for the production or supply of any controlled drug, or the preparation or smoking of cannabis or opium or allow other pupils to be endangered. Where it is suspected that substances are continuing to be sold on the premises, details regarding those involved and as much information as possible, will be passed to the Police Liaison Officer or Community Affairs Department.

Regarding the welfare of staff, the school will follow the County Council Policy on Drug and Alcohol Misuse as part of its Health and Safety Policy, which is designed to reduce to a minimum the possible effects of substance misuse on the user, other employees and the environment.

The headteacher will take responsibility for liaison with the media. As the issue of substance misuse is an emotive one, and is likely to generate interest from the local and national media, the school will take appropriate advice and guidance from the LA Press Office and Legal Department to ensure that any reporting of incidents remains in the best interests of the young people, their families and the school. Where LA schools are concerned, the LA should be informed as soon as possible. This may be done via the LA Adviser for Drugs Education, or the School Support Officer.