

Drugs, Alcohol and Smoking Policy

**This policy should be read in conjunction with the Behaviour, Rewards and Sanctions Policy,
the Fixed Period & Exclusions Policy,
the GDST Drugs, Tobacco & Alcohol Policy and the School Administration of Medication Policy.**

UPDATED BY	DATE OF ISSUE	NEXT REVIEW DATE
Deputy Head, Pastoral	August 2023	August 2024

The Oxford High School Drugs, Alcohol and Smoking Policy is borne out of our duty to safeguard pupils within our care. Drugs, alcohol and cigarettes (including e-cigarettes/vapes) all have the potential to harm young people, either directly due to their effects on the developing teenage body and brain or indirectly through the behaviour they may lead to or the company they may lead a young person to keep. For a small number of people, drugs and alcohol can lead to serious and far-reaching consequences not only for themselves but for their families, their communities and society in general. For young people in particular, these substances can have an impact on their mental health, their education, their relationships with family and friends and their futures.

All young people need to be empowered to make safe, healthy and responsible decisions about drugs, legal and illegal, and schools play a central role in helping them make such decisions. This is through a combination of education, pastoral care, and clear sanctions for breaches of the school's rules on these substances. As a school, we are aware that some young people face pressure to use or experiment with controlled drugs and we aim to do all that we can to reduce those pressures and empower students to resist them.

In accordance with The Girls' Day Schools Trust's policy, OHS aims to:

- 1) have a clear programme of education about the dangers of drugs, alcohol and cigarettes (including e-cigarettes) as well as helping pupils to understand the mechanisms by which they can find themselves drawn into their use and the ways in which they can avoid the pressure to do so
- 2) have in place clear disciplinary procedures for dealing with any substance-related incidents;
- 3) provide pastoral care and support for all pupils within the context of a whole school community;
- 4) assist parents through education, in the prevention of drug or other substance abuse

Drug, Alcohol and Smoking Education at OHS

- Education about drugs, alcohol and smoking is an integral part of the Personal, Social, Health, Citizenship and Economic Education (PSHCE) programme which is given to every pupil throughout their school career. We operate a spiral curriculum where each year group has a series of age appropriate lessons under the Online and Offline Choices module.
- Outside agencies such as DRED and Brook will also be used to help get a clear and realistic message across to pupils. Pupils are also signposted to external sources of information such as the Talk to Frank website via PSHCE lessons.
- Students will be given accurate information about substance use and its risks and will be encouraged to develop skills and attitudes which will enable them to make informed and sensible choices about their health. This is delivered in an age-appropriate way through the Online and Offline Choices PSHCE module.
- Peer group pressure exerts a significant influence on the initiation and maintenance of drug use. Students will be encouraged to resist drugs in the context of personal values and personal responsibilities towards other people. This is delivered through the Online and Offline Choices PSHCE module
- The school aims to provide a strong pastoral framework to afford both students and parents easy access to appropriate support, in and out of school.
- The school aims to support parents in their efforts to prevent substance use or abuse, through education and dissemination of helpful information when it is relevant.

Illegal drugs and novel or new psychoactive substances, commonly known as 'legal highs'

Oxford High School aims to actively discourage and, as far as possible, prevent the handling and use of controlled drugs and harmful substances within the OHS community. This policy applies to all pupils, staff, governors, volunteers, parents and agencies working with the school.

The GDST's view is that the possession, use or supply of drugs in schools or in school-related contexts **will not be condoned under any circumstances**, and will be treated as a very serious disciplinary offence. It will usually result in the offending pupil's permanent exclusion from the school.

For clarity, 'school-related contexts' includes any time that the pupil is in school uniform, work experience, day and residential trips and other activities outside of school, organised by or representing Oxford High School.

The disciplinary actions are clearly set out in the School's Fixed Term and Exclusions Policy, a copy of which is available on the school website. The police may also need to be involved. In the very rare event that exclusion is not permanent, there may be a requirement to comply with subsequent random drugs testing at the parents' expense.

The GDST also recognises the role that schools have to play in helping to prevent the misuse of drugs or similar substances. All schools have pastoral care and support schemes and seek to assist parents in preventing abuse, through educating pupils about the physical, emotional and social dangers involved. This is primarily delivered through the school's PSHE programme. The consequences of committing a criminal offence will be made very clear to pupils.

Response to incidents in school or school context:

- All incidents involving actual or suspected use or possession of illegal substances will be reported to the Headmistress. Suspicion may arise from behavioural signs, such as a deterioration in a pupil's wellbeing or performance or from unusual behaviour witnessed. It may also come from the finding of certain items, drugs or equipment or other information that has been gathered.
- While staff are always willing to offer sensitive advice and support to pupils, girls should be aware that *any information divulged to staff about illegal activity cannot be held to in confidence and will be passed to the Head.*
- While respecting pupils' rights to privacy, where there are reasonable grounds, the Headmistress may require a pupil to show the contents of her desk, locker, bag or other property to a senior member of staff (for additional information about the searching of pupils' possessions, please see Appendix 1)
- In accordance with the policy of the GDST, any student found possessing, supplying or being under the influence of illegal drugs on school property or within the school context should expect to be permanently excluded from school.
- In any incident involving possession of illegal substances, the Headmistress may inform the police.
- In certain circumstances, the Head may agree with the pupil and their family, that, as alternative to permanent exclusion, a supportive contract is agreed by all parties within which specific requirements are set out that will govern the pupil's continued attendance at the school, including being tested for drugs regularly and without warning. The details of such a contract will be drawn up in the best interests of the pupil and signed by all parties. The most likely circumstance under which this option would be considered would be if the pupil and parents were to quickly and responsibly 'come clean' about the full extent of their involvement with drugs. An example of such a contract is attached as an appendix to this policy but each contract is written to best suit the individual and her circumstances.

Response to incidents outside of the school context:

- If well-supported information concerning out-of-school use of drugs is received by the Head, they will inform parents.
- Out-of-school use of drugs will be treated primarily as a pastoral matter, however, in certain circumstances it could still be seen as happening within the school context if the Head deems that it has brought the school into disrepute or it involves a number of Oxford High pupils (eg. drugs featuring at party hosted by an OHS pupil, attended by many other OHS pupils.)
- Pupils known to have taken drugs outside of school may be required to sign up to a supportive contract governing their attendance at the school. Such a contract could include unannounced bag searches and / or drugs testing to ensure that drugs are not being introduced into the school context through the pupil being under the influence whilst in school. The details of such a contract will be drawn up in the best interests of the pupil and signed by all parties. An example of such a contract is attached as an appendix to this policy but each contract is written to best suit the individual and her circumstances.
- Pastoral support for pupils known to have taken drugs outside school could include counsellor support, referral to support organisations, a strict, structured regime in school, a supportive contract or any other strategy deemed helpful for that individual student.

The School may determine whether a pupil's conduct has breached the drugs policy on the balance of probabilities, having regard to the information known to the School, whether or not that information would be legally admissible as evidence or would result in a conviction in a court of law. The Headmistress is entitled to exercise wide discretion in relation to the School's policies and rules. Each case will be considered in a reasonable manner with procedural fairness. In some cases, there may be mitigating circumstances and, if so, they will be carefully considered.

The School must maintain a very firm line on substance use within the school context; controlled drugs are illegal. However, the school wishes to be as helpful as possible to girls for whom substance use may present a problem outside of the school context. These pupils need to have trusted adults they can turn to for help and guidance as their welfare is of paramount importance. Students in this position are encouraged to seek help from the school counsellor, the school nurse, their Head of Year or the Deputy Head, Pastoral, whether they wish to discuss their own experiences or those of a peer about whom they are concerned.

Confidentiality

The records of testing will not be used for any other purpose and they will be destroyed, unless required by the police, or where appropriate after the final conclusion of an appeal. If a pupil is required to leave the School, the pupil and their parent/carer will be notified in writing when a record of testing has been destroyed, unless required by the police.

Police

It is a criminal offence to possess, consume, or supply certain drugs. In such cases parents and pupils can expect that the police will be informed. The School seeks to uphold the rule of law and support the work of police in fighting drugs in the local area. Police are therefore informed not with a vindictive aim towards the pupil(s) involved, but rather to provide police with intelligence that might help protect other pupils and the wider community.

Reminder

Staff are reminded that their own expressed attitude and behaviour with regard to controlled drugs, especially insofar as it is witnessed by or known to pupils, is a matter of substantive interest to the School.

Alcohol

The school's policy is that the consumption of alcohol by pupils, on or in the vicinity of the school premises, is prohibited (the only exception to this is at special evening events, such as the Leavers' Ball, for which specific arrangements are made for students in Year 13.)

The school's view is that the possession, use or supply of alcohol in school-related contexts will not be condoned and will be treated as a serious disciplinary offence. It may result in the offending pupil's temporary or permanent exclusion from the school.

Response to incidents involving alcohol:

All incidents involving actual or suspected consumption of alcohol in school, in close proximity to school or whilst participating in school activities, will be reported to the Headmistress.

- While staff are always willing to offer sensitive advice and support to pupils, girls should be aware that any information divulged to staff about illegal activity cannot be held in confidence and will be passed to the Headmistress.
- While respecting pupils' rights to privacy, where there are reasonable grounds, the Headmistress may require a pupil to show the contents of her locker, her bag or other property to a senior member of staff.
- Pastoral support for pupils known to have an unhealthy relationship with alcohol could include counsellor support, referral to support organisations, a strict, structured regime in school, a supportive contract or any other strategy deemed helpful for that individual student.

Sanctions:

- A student who consumes alcohol on the school premises or within the context of any school event (including trips, work experience, theatre visits, Duke of Edinburgh, etc) will be externally excluded and given a warning about the possibility of permanent exclusion should the offence occur again. She may also be asked to sign a supportive contract.
- A student who consumes alcohol near the school premises, within school hours, will be externally excluded.
- A student who consumes alcohol near the school premises or whilst in school uniform, out of school hours, will be externally excluded.
- Repeated offences could result in permanent exclusion from the school.

Smoking (including e-cigarettes)

Smoking poses a serious hazard to the health of young people and, because of its addictive nature, can have long term consequences. Whilst some consider e-cigarettes to be a safer option, they still pose a threat, particularly because of their largely unregulated nature (therefore contents can be variable in potency) and because they can act as a gateway into other substance abuse.

The school's policy is that pupils must not smoke cigarettes or e-cigarettes/vapes on or in the vicinity of the school premises. The use of cigarettes and e-cigarettes/vapes is also forbidden in any school context, including trips, evening activities, Duke of Edinburgh expeditions, etc. The school's view is that the possession, use or supply of cigarettes (including e-cigarettes/vapes) in school-related contexts will not be condoned and will be treated as a serious disciplinary offence. It may result in the offending pupil's exclusion from the school.

We aim to assist parents and girls through education in the prevention of substance abuse. We provide pastoral care and support for all pupils within the context of a whole school community. Students are taught about the dangers and effects of smoking (including e-cigarettes/vapes) in PSHCE lessons.

Response to incidents in school involving cigarette smoking (including e-cigarettes/vapes):

All incidents involving actual or suspected smoking in school, in close proximity to school or in a school context will be reported to the Headmistress.

- While staff are always willing to offer sensitive advice and support to pupils, student should be aware that any information divulged to staff about illegal activity cannot be held in confidence and will be passed to the Headmistress.
- While respecting pupils' rights to privacy, where there are reasonable grounds, the Headmistress may require a pupil to show the contents of her locker or other property to a senior member of staff
- Where there is perceived to be a need for counselling, the school will provide help and support and advice about professional services available.

Sanctions:

- A student who is found smoking on the school premises will be externally excluded for one day in the first instance.
- A student who is found smoking near the school premises in school uniform (Years 7-11) or not in school uniform (Sixth Form) within school hours will be externally excluded for one day in the first instance.
- A student who is found smoking near the school premises in school uniform out of school hours will be internally excluded for one day in the first instance. A repeat offence would result in external exclusion.
- Repeated offences could result in permanent exclusion from the school.

Appendix 1 – The Searching of Pupils

The DfE guidance searching, screening and confiscation (July 2022) states:

Searching can play a critical role in ensuring that schools are safe environments for all pupils and staff. It is a vital measure to safeguard and promote staff and pupil welfare, and to maintain high standards of behaviour through which pupils can learn and thrive.

Headteachers and staff they authorise have a statutory power to search a pupil or their possessions where they have reasonable grounds to suspect that the pupil may have a prohibited item listed in paragraph 31 or any other item that the school rules identify as an item which may be searched for.

The list of prohibited items is:

- *knives and weapons;*
- *alcohol;*
- *illegal drugs;*
- *stolen items;*
- *any article that the member of staff reasonably suspects has been, or is likely to be used: to commit an offence, or to cause personal injury to, or damage to property of; any person (including the pupil).*
- *tobacco and cigarette papers;*
- *fireworks; and*
- *pornographic images.*

Under common law, school staff have the power to search a pupil for any item if the pupil agrees. The member of staff should ensure the pupil understands the reason for the search and how it will be conducted so that their agreement is informed.

Only the headteacher, or a member of staff authorised by the headteacher, can carry out a search. When conducting a search the member of staff authorised by the Headteacher needs to following the DfE guidance:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1091132/Searching_Screening_and_Confiscation_guidance_July_2022.pdf

Appendix 2

OHS Supportive Contract in support of the School's Drugs, Alcohol & Smoking Policy

Date: _____

Full name of pupil: _____

Pupil's date of birth: _____

I have made a voluntary admission that I have violated the terms of the School's Drugs, Alcohol and Smoking Policy.

As an alternative to permanent exclusion, the Head has offered me a supportive regime under which:

- I agree to abide by the terms of the School's Drugs, Alcohol and Smoking Policy, which I have read and understood. I hereby pledge that I will not violate the terms of this policy again whilst at Oxford High.
- For the remainder of my school career, without obligation on the part of the School, I may at any time be asked to be subject to a drugs test or have my bag / belongings / locker searched, even if no specific grounds exist at that time to suggest that I have been involved with drugs or substances.
- I agree to be subject to this regime and to co-operate with the School in every respect. I understand that the School will take all reasonable care to preserve my confidentiality and human rights in the operation of this regime.

I also understand that, if without good reason, I fail to adhere to the terms of this contract or if a test proves positive, I would be required to leave Oxford High School.

Signed (pupil): _____

Declaration of parents/guardian/education guardian:

I/We, the undersigned, have read and agreed to the Oxford High School Drugs, Alcohol and Smoking Policy and this Appendix. For my/our part, I/we accept the Head's offer of a supportive contract for the above-named pupil.

I/We undertake to co-operate with the screening procedure in all respects and to pay any associated charges.

Signed:	_____	Signed:	_____
Full Name:	_____	Full Name:	_____
Relationship to Pupil:	_____	Relationship to Pupil:	_____
Date:	_____		