

## SUBSTANCE ABUSE EDUCATION AND MANAGEMENT POLICY

<b>Contents</b>		
Section 1	Purpose of this policy	Page 2
Section 2	Specific Aims of the School's Substance Abuse Education Programmes and Policy	Page 3
Section 3	Delivering Substance Abuse Education	Page 4
Section 4	Answering Difficult Questions	Page 4
Section 5	Confidentiality	Page 5
Section 6	Pastoral Support for Pupils and Parents	Page 5/6
Section 7	Our Pastoral and Disciplinary Approach <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When is involvement with substance abuse regarded as a pastoral matter?</li> <li>• What will happen if a pupil admits to or is known to be abusing substances ?</li> <li>• When will the School regard involvement with substance abuse as a disciplinary matter?</li> </ul>	Page 6/7
Section 8	Alcohol	Page 8
Section 9	Smoking	Page 8
<b>Appendices</b>		
Appendix 1	Drug Testing of Pupils	Page 9
Appendix 2	Procedures for searches of persons and property	Page 10
Appendix 3	Useful Contacts	Page 11
Appendix 4	Advice from Parental Discussion Groups	Page 12

## **SUBSTANCE ABUSE EDUCATION AND MANAGEMENT POLICY**

### **I. Purpose of this policy**

This policy is aimed at Governors, teachers, parents, carers and guardians ('parents'), and pupils. It is designed to give all parties a clear statement of the School's approach to education about substance abuse, its stance on the use of harmful substances by pupils at Highgate School ('Highgate'), the relationship between the School and parents and the obligations attendant on both the School and parents as a consequence.

We seek to be realistic, not alarmist; there is no assumption that children will use harmful or illegal substances, but a well-founded belief that they will meet plenty of opportunity. Avoidance of drugs in adolescent or university circles is difficult to secure; a decision to steer clear of substance abuse, based on good knowledge of dangers and oneself and high self-esteem, can be forged in the context of a strong home-school partnership.

The policy will also be read by inspectors as part of the statutory process of inspection to ensure that the School meets its obligations in law. The policy will be freely available to any interested party and may be downloaded from the School's website. It will be reviewed annually by the Responsible Officer and audited annually by a member of the Governing Body. Parents will receive notification of the policy on joining the School and annually thereafter. The Responsible Officer is the Principal Deputy Head, Mr T J Lindsay.

### **Our Aims and Ethos**

The following statements, from our Statement of Ethos and Aims (the full statement is available on the School's website), underpin our policy:

#### **Our Ethos**

- [We seek to] secure the welfare and safety of our pupils as individuals and as members of a community
- [We seek to] advance the education and intellectual and moral development of our pupils, whatever their capabilities, attributes and interests

#### **Our Aims**

- pupils leaving school will be intellectually and emotionally prepared for higher education and the world of work
- [pupils] develop a moral code and practise living it out in readiness for their adult lives
- [pupils] care for others and learn to see service to others as a way of life
- [pupils] are supported in developing strength and resourcefulness to meet the challenges of day-to-day life
- [pupils] develop healthy, transferable interests and pursuits in a coeducational setting
- [pupils] grasp the value of the community, and its price

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In sum, the individual's rights have to be balanced against the entitlement of others to welfare, safety and good health; our pupils should be prepared for the world beyond school and be encouraged to develop behaviours which will keep them safe and fulfilled in the long term; pupils need to develop a sense of the obligations towards a community and the repercussions of pursuing their own interests without regard to the shared discipline of his or her chosen community. The School should approach issues of indiscipline in the knowledge of the realities facing young people and their parents, while working to secure a safe and healthy environment for all its members.

### **Definition of drugs**

The School defines the term 'drug' as any substance which affects the way in which the body functions physically, emotionally or mentally and includes tobacco, alcohol, solvents, over-the-counter and prescribed medicines as well as illegal substances.

### **Jurisdiction of this policy**

This policy will apply to pupils, staff and Governors on the School premises and beyond, and this includes occasions when pupils are within the care of school staff (eg school trips and educational visits). The School also has an interest in the health and well being of our pupils beyond these school boundaries.

## **2. Specific Aims of the School's Substance Abuse Education Programmes and Policy**

- To ensure that the School complies with the criminal law and promotes high standards of exemplary behaviour among staff
- To communicate unequivocally the School's stance on substance abuse
- To explain the law to pupils and to nurture respect for the law amongst pupils generally and specifically with regard to the use and misuse of drugs and alcohol.
- To ensure that School site is a safe environment, free of illegal drugs
- To actively discourage the use of illegal drugs and the abuse of alcohol and other harmful substances.
- To educate pupils about the effects (on the mind and body) and the risks associated with drugs, alcohol, cigarettes and solvents and the ingestion of any substance without knowledge of its ingredients, provenance and effect.
- To help pupils develop the critical tools, analytical faculties and knowledge-base to deal with situations involving drugs and alcohol and to make informed choices.
- To help pupils to develop the moral courage to reject anything that is potentially harmful to their health, integrity, independence and future prospects.
- To help pupils to combat unhealthy peer group pressure (eg which may lead to experimentation) by promoting the individual's self-esteem and self-confidence.
- To help pupils to confide in their parents, teachers or in support agencies if they have any concerns about drug or substance abuse related matters.
- To provide advice for parents, carers and guardians that will help them to deal effectively with drugs and substance abuse related issues affecting their children
- To aid parents in sourcing reliable and up-to-date information about adolescent behaviour and
- To give guidance to parents about their obligations to the School and about the School's approach to use of harmful or illegal substances by its pupils

## FOUNDATION

- To explain the use the School will make of information about its pupils' substance abuse, suspected or corroborated

### **3. Delivering Substance Abuse Education**

We believe that the purpose of substance abuse education should be to give pupils the knowledge, skills and attitudes to appreciate the benefits of a healthy life-style and to relate these to their own actions now and in the future.

Many members of our Pastoral Staff have a good understanding and knowledge of the types of substance abuse that our pupils are most likely to encounter and their physiological effects. The Principal Deputy Head, Assistant Heads, the School Chaplain and the School Counsellor offer support and guidance to Housemasters and Form Tutors (across the Foundation) where further information is required. The School has further substance abuse education supporting material and contact details, available on our Intranet, for pupils or staff needing additional information or confidential help-lines (see also Appendix 3). As a School we should recognise that a pupil or member of staff wanting help may need this not for themselves, but for a colleague, friend or member of their family.

Substance Abuse education takes place in the following activities:

- PSHE lessons, delivered by experienced staff members and addressing the cognitive, social and emotional factors associated with drug use.
- Specialist lectures and presentations.
- The Biology Department's curriculum.
- The Physical Education Department curriculum.
- Other lessons, both within and outside the formal curriculum, in extra-curricular activities and through the School's pastoral system (e.g. tutorials and assemblies).
- Information booklet handouts.

All teaching staff are issued with guidance on the procedures for the management of incidents involving substance abuse. This includes being alert to the signs that suggest possible involvement, the procedures to follow when conducting searches (see Appendix 2) and how to respond appropriately to pupils seeking advice and help. Periodic training is provided for all staff by means of briefings at staff in-service training at least every other year.

### **4. Answering difficult questions**

Sometimes a pupil will ask a difficult or personal question in the classroom. Questions do not have to be answered directly, and if a teacher is uncomfortable with the nature of a question, they should decline to answer it. A child should never be made to feel uncomfortable for having asked a question. At the beginning of a lesson it should be made clear that a teacher will usually try to answer all questions, but that it may not always be appropriate for some questions to be answered in that situation. All members of staff receive regular safeguarding and welfare training and are provided with instructions on handling disclosures. Further questions may, at the teacher's discretion, be referred to the relevant Assistant Head or the Principal Deputy Head.

### **5. Confidentiality**

In accordance with the School's Safeguarding and Welfare policy, the School regards all members of the pupil body as a "child" regardless of their age. As a general rule a child's confidentiality will be maintained by the Tutor or other member of staff concerned; however, unconditional confidentiality cannot be promised to a pupil. If a teacher feels that a pupil is going to tell them something significant, or if a pupil requests in advance that nobody else be told, the member of staff will stress to the child that this may not be possible. The School Chaplain and the School Counsellor are both trained to treat any matter raised by a pupil in a confidential manner, unless they have immediate and serious concerns about a pupil's health or safety that would prompt them to be mindful of the School Safeguarding and Welfare policy. If any member of staff feels that a pupil is at risk or in danger, he or she will talk to the relevant the Principal Deputy Head (the lead Designated Teacher for Safeguarding and Welfare) or another teacher with designated child protection responsibilities who may confer with the Head Master before any decision and further action is taken in line with the School's Safeguarding and Welfare policy.

Pupils who volunteer information about their own or others' substance abuse will be reassured that severe disciplinary sanctions (ie permanent exclusion) will result only (and then not necessarily) where it is the School's conclusion that the pupil's behaviour must be investigated by the police as a crime or where the School judges that the pupil has been sourcing and supplying drugs for other members of the School. Clarity about and a managed response (involving counselling and on-going monitoring by health professionals) to a pupil's substance abuse is so important that the School will strive to achieve an agreed outcome with parents and pupil.

### **6. Pastoral Support for Pupils and Parents**

#### **Who can help?**

Responsibility for dealing with general pastoral issues lies first with a pupil's Housemaster (Yrs 9-13) or Head of Year (Yrs 7 & 8), supported by the Tutor. These teachers should be the first point of contact for any parent or pupil with any concerns. The School's pastoral teams have considerable experience of dealing with young people and are always prepared to listen and offer appropriate assistance.

They are not, of course, professionally equipped to provide confidential counselling or specialist advice on matters such as drug addiction or the medical consequences of substance abuse. However, Housemasters, Assistant Heads and the Principal Deputy Head do have a list of contact numbers of help-lines that can refer parents to specialist and confidential help. The School Counsellor and the School Chaplain are also available to provide confidential advice to pupils, if required. The School's Nurses can also offer support and the School strongly recommends that family GPs are contacted at the earliest opportunity when substance abuse by a pupil is revealed or suspected.

#### **A shared responsibility**

The School is active in monitoring the health and well-being of pupils and all staff are encouraged to raise any concerns about a pupil with the appropriate pastoral team

## FOUNDATION

or the School Nurse. In order to monitor the safety and security of the School site, a team of Porters are on call throughout the school day and all staff are allocated additional supervisory and patrolling duties at key times of the day in communal spaces, routes between sites and Highgate Village. The movement of Year 7 & 8 around the School site is monitored by dedicated Chaperones. All staff are made aware of the protocols to follow in an emergency by the School's Critical Incident Procedure. The Principal Deputy Head liaises regularly with the Police and other agencies to promote the safety of all members of the Highgate community.

In addition to these daily practical measures, the School's pastoral approach assumes excellent communication between parents and the School, and a high quality of parental confidence in the School. Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare is a responsibility which parents and schools share and this process of sharing the responsibility needs introduction, explanation and practice. To this end, parents will be invited to attend information evenings and briefings covering: substance abuse education; ways for parents to prevent, monitor and, where necessary, manage their children's experimentation with drugs; adolescent health; current trends in substance abuse among young people. We hope that attending such meetings, for parents of pupils in Year 7 onwards, will be seen (and welcomed) as similar to routine check-ups at the dentist.

### 7. Our Pastoral and Disciplinary Approach

Highgate School has a two-strand approach to drug related incidents: **pastoral** and **disciplinary**. The approach will always involve a pastoral dimension, and may involve disciplinary measures.

#### **When will the School regard involvement with harmful or illegal drugs solely as a pastoral matter?**

Drug possession for personal use (and not involving the supply of drugs to others) when a pupil is not under the responsibility of the School will usually be regarded as a pastoral matter, but will still trigger a response from the School. We would hope and expect parents to share their concerns about, suspicions of or knowledge of any child's experimentation or substance abuse, particularly where this is accompanied by adverse changes in their child's behaviour or motivation. We will offer advice and support to any pupil or parent who approaches us for help. The School will also contact parents directly if a pupil's conduct or performance at School suggests that, in our experience, substance abuse or other inappropriate lifestyle choices may be undermining their prospects of remaining safe, healthy and achieving their potential, or that of other members of the Highgate School community. The fact of contacting parents should be seen as one among many usual, monitoring actions which are at the heart of effective pastoral care. We will strive to deal with each case on an individual basis, seeking to provide support, encourage parental involvement and, where appropriate, the intervention by specialist medical health workers.

If a pupil comes to us seeking help then we will consider each situation individually, recognising that a variety of responses may be necessary; perceived disciplinary responses (eg drugs testing) are part of the School's and parents' armoury and are best used on an agreed basis, but will not be imposed upon parents except in the context of a pupil sourcing and supplying drugs for others' use.

### **What will happen if a pupil admits to or is known to be abusing substances?**

The following gives guidance to the way the School will approach suspected or known drug use by a pupil. It is assumed that the pupil has not been involved in sourcing or supplying drugs to pupils in the School.

The principal consideration will be the current and future health, safety and welfare of the pupil. The Principal Deputy Head (or his equivalent) will contact parents to give them the information which he has received or established. This might be via another pupil, the pupil's own admissions or concern expressed by teachers (or possibly other parents) relating to the pupil's behaviour. Anonymous information related to substance abuse is of very limited value in prompting any obligation on the School because of the lack of certainty over its provenance and potentially malicious intent. Depending on the security of the information, the School's advice will vary. Where it is agreed that the pupil has used harmful or illegal drugs (eg cannabis), parents will be strongly encouraged to sign up their child to the random drug testing procedures (see Appendix 4) as a way of giving the pupil a reason to say no. This measure will be implemented once the pupil has had a chance to abstain from any substance abuse. The pupil will be encouraged to attend counselling, either at the School or elsewhere. His or her academic and behavioural progress will be monitored closely. Parents will be encouraged to keep an open and frank dialogue with the School.

If the pupil's behaviour and performance deteriorates, he or she will be subject to the disciplinary measures which apply usually, but the knowledge of and discussion about any past or continuing substance abuse and parents' willingness and ability to support and reinforce these, will inform the School's view on how best and how realistically to manage the pupil's progress.

### **The Disciplinary Strand**

#### **When will the School regard involvement with substance abuse as a disciplinary matter?**

Any pupil who is found to be bringing harmful or illegal drugs to or having harmful or illegal drugs in their possession at School, abusing substances while at School or on the journey to and from School (when they are identifiable as a member of Highgate School) or if a pupil is found to be supplying drugs at School would be subject to disciplinary measures which could extend to permanent exclusion.

Thus, any incident in School where a pupil is suspected of involvement with harmful or illegal drugs, possession of harmful or illegal drugs or carrying materials used in substance or alcohol abuse, will be immediately investigated and the parents or guardians contacted straight away. In the interests of clarity, 'drugs' include cannabis, amphetamines, ecstasy, LSD, cocaine and all other substances identified in the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971.

Any pupil who is found to be dealing drugs will be referred to the police. Criminal law treats supplying (or intending to supply) illegal drugs extremely seriously, and

## FOUNDATION

“dealing” includes giving drugs to friends, even if it is for free. Looking after drugs for someone and then giving them back can also lead to a charge of “supplying” drugs.

Drug-driving is as illegal as drink-driving and carries the same penalties. In addition, at Highgate, we do not permit other substances likely to be injurious to health (e.g. solvents, alcohol and tobacco) to be brought to School.

The School will continue to work with the pupil and his or her family to support them pastorally even if the disciplinary strand to the policy has had to be followed.

All cases suspected to involve substance abuse will be dealt with as a matter of urgency and will be immediately reported to the relevant Assistant Head and the Principal Deputy Head. The School will consider each case individually. Further deliberations will, at all times, seek to balance the interests of the pupils involved and those of the other members of the School community.

The parents of a pupil alleged to be involved with substance abuse can expect to be informed at an early stage by the relevant Housemaster, Assistant Head or the Principal Deputy Head. When the facts of the situation are established, the parents will be given a clear indication whether the School expects to treat the case as a pastoral and disciplinary matter or a pastoral matter, and to understand whether permanent exclusion is one of the disciplinary measures contemplated.

### **8. Alcohol**

We recognise that alcohol is not an illegal substance in itself (unless purchased by a child under the age of 18), and that it is considered to be socially acceptable when used in moderation; however, we also know that alcohol poses real dangers for young people when it is abused. As such, we seek to educate young people so that they can distinguish between acceptable and irresponsible drinking. The PSHE programme concerned specifically with alcohol recognises that alcohol is a drug and that young people are particularly vulnerable to its effects.

*Specific aims of alcohol education at Highgate:*

- To educate pupils about the effects that alcohol has on the mind and body
- To help pupils to understand the relationship between alcohol consumption and risks to health (including accidents and long term damage)
- To understand the various reasons (social, cultural and religious) why people may choose to drink or not to drink
- To identify strategies for safer drinking

Further guidance on the School’s policy on alcohol in specific settings can be found in the Educational Visits policy and the consent forms for major social events.

### **9. Smoking**

A pupil found smoking at School, travelling to or from School in uniform, or on School trips (even if he or she is a member of the Sixth Form) will receive at least a Detention; repeat offences will be treated more seriously. The School recognises that smoking is, at the moment, legal for those aged 18 or over, but it will not condone or permit an activity which is so harmful to a pupil’s health.

## Appendix I

### Drug Testing of Pupils in accordance with aims of School Drug Policy

- As stated in the School's Terms and Conditions for pupils attending Pre-Prep, Junior School or Senior School, the Head may require any pupil to submit to testing for drugs to ensure compliance with the School Rules on illegal substances. Refusal (on the part of parents / guardians or the pupil) to consent to such testing may exceptionally be treated as a serious disciplinary matter; however, it is our usual practice to seek to persuade parents to agree to random testing for the reasons outlined above.
- These tests will be carried out according to suitably approved procedures by the School's medical contact:

Dr. Paul Simpkin  
2 Upper Wimpole Street  
London, W1 7TD

Tel: 0207 935 5614. Fax: 0207 7935 6322

- In the first instance, pupils will be required to be tested on a minimum of three occasions within a twelve month period.
- The School will provide pupils and parents with forty-eight hours notice of the appointment for the test.
- The test will take place at the above address and will be arranged at a time that does not interfere with normal lessons (appointments will not be arranged during any period of external examinations).
- The School will provide Dr Simpkin with photographic identification of the pupil.
- The cost of each individual test and the subsequent feedback report is currently £100.00. This is payable by parents directly to Dr. Simpkin.
- Full details on the nature of the test and reporting of results are available from Dr. Simpkin. Parents are encouraged to make contact with Dr. Simpkin at the beginning of the twelve month period to discuss any matters of concern.
- A review meeting with pastoral staff will be arranged near the conclusion of the twelve month period. A record of tests that are clear of illegal substances and a satisfactory academic and extra-curricular performance from the pupil will mean that the requirement to be subject to the pastoral support of the School's substance abuse policy will be removed.

## Appendix 2

### Personal Searches

The School's Behaviour Policy (Appendix 2) details the statutory guidance and appropriate procedures for staff undertaking personal searches of pupils.

### Taking temporary possession of suspected illegal substances

- The law permits school staff to take temporary possession of a substance suspected of being an illegal drug
- In taking temporary possession ensure a second adult witness is present
- Seal sample in a plastic bag (include date and time of seizure and witness present)
- Store in secure location (access limited to two senior members of staff)

Without delay, notify the police (the law does not require the school to divulge the name of the pupil from whom the illegal substances were taken). **Appendix 3**

### Useful Contacts:

#### **Frank About Drugs**

**0800 77 66 00**

**[www.talktofrank.com](http://www.talktofrank.com)**

This support agency provides confidential advice 24 hours a day to parents as well as pupils. They can give information on services in the local area including counselling and specialist clinics.

#### **ADFAM**

**020 7553 7640**

**[www.adfam.org.uk](http://www.adfam.org.uk)**

**[admin@adfam.org.uk](mailto:admin@adfam.org.uk)**

This is a charity aimed at supporting the families and friends of drug users.

#### **Childline**

**0800 11 11 11**

Free 24-hour helpline for children or young people in trouble or in danger

#### **Parents Against Drug Abuse (PADA)**

**08457 023 867**

**[www.pada.org.uk](http://www.pada.org.uk)**

**[admin@pada.org.uk](mailto:admin@pada.org.uk)**

Supports parents of drug users.

#### **Families Anonymous**

**0845 1200 660**

**[www.famanon.org.uk](http://www.famanon.org.uk)**

This is a support group for parents of drug users.

#### **Young Minds**

**0800 018 2138**

## FOUNDATION

Free confidential helpline providing information and advice for any adult with concerns about the mental health of a young person

### Useful Websites:

[www.drugscope.org.uk](http://www.drugscope.org.uk)

[www.familyandparenting.org](http://www.familyandparenting.org)

[www.familyrapp.com](http://www.familyrapp.com)

[www.thesite.org](http://www.thesite.org)

### Local Support Agencies:

#### **In-volve Haringey - Young People's Drug & Alcohol Treatment Service**

**020 8493 8525**

[www.in-voke.org.uk](http://www.in-voke.org.uk)

**In-volve Haringey** works with young people who are resident, or usually resident, within the Borough, under the age of 21 and using drugs or alcohol themselves, or being affected by someone else's drug or alcohol use. The services they offer are free to young people living in Haringey and include confidential information and advice, one-to-one support / key-working, complementary therapies, assessment and access to medical interventions, advocacy (help resolving situations with others) and access to education and training.

#### **FWD - Drug & Alcohol Service for Young People in Camden**

**020 7974 4701**

**FWD** is the Drug & Alcohol Service for Young People in Camden aged 10 - 17 years. It offers one-to-one support; Group work; Advice & Education; Family & Parenting Work; Counselling and access to CAMHS; Psychiatric Assessments; Substitute Prescribing.

#### **Barnet IMPACT drug service for young people**

**0800 783 9762**

Email: [barnet.impact@barnet.gov.uk](mailto:barnet.impact@barnet.gov.uk)

**The Barnet IMPACT** service offers information, advice and support for young people up to 18 years of age with drug and alcohol issues. It is a friendly service which aims to offer support to all young people who need help with drugs and alcohol. Young people will see a worker on a one-to-one basis. The worker is able to provide support for the young person to get the help they need. There are also opportunities for parents and carers to receive support and/or information about drug and alcohol issues in their families.

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### Appendix 4

Parents' Pastoral Discussion Group – November 2009

Advice and observations from parents of older pupils to parents of younger pupils

#### 1. Warning signs to look out for:

##### **Social life**

- Urgency of need to be out at parties, the houses of friends or staying out much later than agreed or expected.
- New friends or guarded communication about new friends
- Unusual need for money or additional money
- Increased secrecy about actions and whereabouts

##### **Appearance and Conduct**

- A lack of appetite, lethargy, depression, mood swings
- Nosebleeds, sores around mouth or nose, neglected appearance
- Unusual equipment or items in pockets or around house, for instance sealable bags or aerosols

#### 2. Some lessons learned from the development of recent pupils:

- You can't lock them up! Just be clear on boundaries and expectations.
- Always insist that you know where they are at all times (mobile phone communication is not a guarantee of this!)
- Parties: be aware of guest list, ensure there is a responsible adult present, inform other parents of arrangements and timings.
- Monitor and, if necessary, restrict sleepovers
- Monitor and, if necessary, restrict money
- Talk with your children – maintain communication and offer support
- Emphasise personal responsibility and safety – ensure they understand units & strengths of alcohol; importance of eating; importance of drinking lots of water; effects of impairment of judgement; probable impurity of illegal substances; danger of drug chain; criminal record; what to do if.....
- A consistent message from home is important – if parents drink to excess, or take illegal drugs then this gives a green light to teenagers.
- Remember that the strength of alcohol and the nature of some drugs has changed enormously since parents were at school and university: do not apply your own experiences to condone any risks taken by your children.
- Importance of other pursuits and positive peer groups, eg encourage sports, drama and other active hobbies and interests inside and outside of school, in order to avoid hanging around on street corners or in shopping malls.