

Introduction

Wellington School recognises its pastoral and educational responsibilities and is committed to a programme of education that will make pupils aware of the harmful effects and risks associated with substance abuse through the PSE programme and the appropriate training of pastoral staff. The school's response to substance misuse will always prioritise pupil safety and wellbeing, together with the needs of the wider school community. Substance-related incidents may involve the police or other external agencies on some occasions.

For the purposes of this policy, the terms 'drug' or 'substance' refer to all types of drugs including:

- legal drugs e.g. alcohol, tobacco
- illegal drugs
- new psychoactive substances (NPS)
- medicines (prescription and over the counter medicines)
- volatile substances

Substance abuse refers to the harmful or hazardous use of substances, including alcohol and other illicit drugs.

Aims

The aims of this policy are:

- To ensure that pupils at the school can work and grow up in a drug-free environment.
- To ensure pupils have an understanding of substance misuse issues in terms of both health and the law.
- To ensure that the school does its best to protect members of the school community from the dangers associated with the use and abuse of substances.

This policy applies to all staff, pupils, parents/carers, governors and external agencies and individuals working at the school or visiting the school. It applies to any possession, use or supply of drugs "in school" defined as: anywhere on the school premises or grounds at all times, including school related activities afterschool and at the weekend, as well as during the school day; when in school uniform or in any situation, in or out of school, that involves other Wellington pupils or when the reputation of the school may be adversely affected.

This policy deals with substance misuse in two distinct forms:

- Prohibited substances in school as per the school's Behaviour and Discipline Policy, available in the [Policies & Procedures section of our website](#).
- Illegal Drugs

Prohibited Substances

The school's Behaviour and Discipline Policy and the Wellington School Rules state: 'The possession and/or use of illegal drugs, legal highs, new psychoactive substances (NPS), alcohol, tobacco (in any form), vapes, e-cigarettes, nicotine related substances is not permitted in any part of the school grounds,

buildings or school transport. This applies to all pupils, staff and visitors to the school.' Possession of and/or using these substances is a Category 3 offence and considered a serious breach of discipline.

If it is suspected that a pupil has consumed a prohibited substance of any nature, medical advice will be sought if necessary. Any incident involving the use of prohibited substances will be investigated without unreasonable delay. Incidents involving prohibited substances will be dealt with by the Deputy Head, working closely with the appropriate Year Head and the Assistant Head (Pastoral), and in conjunction with the Head. Parents will be contacted. Sanctions for Category 3 offences include suspension and exclusion, but not every category 3 incident will result in one of these outcomes.

Legal Drugs

Alcohol

Educating pupils about the effects of alcohol and how to reduce alcohol-related harm is a significant part of the school's PSE programme. Alcohol is ever present in society and as a result young people are vulnerable to the impact of alcohol misuse and other increased risks, for example to personal safety.

The possession/and or use of alcohol is prohibited in school or any school related activity.

This policy acknowledges that the social acceptability and status of alcohol is very different from the attitude to many other drugs. Alcohol use is more common amongst young people outside of school and for some young people drinking alcohol is permitted within the home. Alcohol has a different legal, cultural and social status to that of most other drugs. Consequently, the response to incidents involving alcohol is distinct from the response to those involving drugs of other kinds.

The school's response to incidents involving alcohol will always prioritise the welfare needs of the pupil or pupils involved, and medical advice will always be sought where necessary. Incidents involving alcohol misuse will be subject to disciplinary actions as per Category 3 offences, as deemed appropriate by the Deputy Head in consultation with the Headmaster.

Smoking including the use of E-cigarettes, Vapes, Nicotine related substances

Smoking remains the largest single risk factor for death and years of life lived in ill-health. Wellington recognises the importance of education in raising awareness of the health risks associated with the use of e-cigarettes, vapes and nicotine related substances. The PSE programme provides information and discussion points for pupils to increase awareness and to support pupils in saying no to such products. Wellington school premises and grounds are a smoke free and vape free site. Vape detectors are installed at critical sites, to monitor any infringement of this rule.

Any pupils found to have brought e-cigarettes, vapes or nicotine products into school or who is caught using these items will be subject to disciplinary actions as per Category 3 offences, as deemed appropriate by the Deputy Head in consultation with the Headmaster.

Illegal Drugs

Drug use is a matter that concerns the whole school community and the possession, use and supply of illegal drugs is unacceptable. This policy ensures compliance with the criminal law, under which it is an offence for anyone to possess, use, supply or sell controlled drugs.

If it is suspected that a pupil has consumed drugs of any nature, medical advice should be sought. If in addition the pupil presents as unwell, then a member of staff should call 999 for advice. The wellbeing of pupils is paramount at all times.

The policy will be followed if a pupil:

- Is in possession of an illegal substance.
- Is suspected of being in possession of an illegal substance.
- Is suspected of being under the influence of an illegal substance in school or whilst participating in any school activity.
- Is suspected of buying or selling illegal drugs.
- Is suspected of being involved in the supply of illegal drugs.
- Is in possession of any articles associated with the use or misuse of drugs.

Investigating Incidents

Any incident involving drugs or the suspicion of drug-related activity should be investigated without unreasonable delay. Parents will generally be contacted prior to any interview and asked to attend immediately. Whilst pupils aged 16 and over may request that parents are not contacted immediately, the school has a contract with parents and is obliged to inform them of a serious disciplinary breach resulting in suspension or exclusion. In addition, for pupils of ages 16 - 18 parents are there for guidance.

Pending interview, the pupil should be supervised at all times, where possible. His or her belongings and jacket/coat should be kept securely, and the use of a mobile phone, tablet, laptop or other communication device should not be permitted.

In any interview that does not involve the police, the interviewer should have the support of a colleague, who is present for corroboration purposes and in order to write notes of the proceedings.

In the case of incidents that may involve more than one pupil, reasonable efforts should be taken to reduce the chance of collusion. Pupils may be asked to provide evidence to demonstrate that they have not communicated with any other person in such a way as to hinder an investigation.

If necessary, a pupil may be detained after the end of the school day.

Contacting the Police

The school will not conclude any investigation into the possession or supply of illegal substances without contacting the police and informing them of the incident. Any instruction, advice or support offered by the police will be followed.

If illegal drugs are found on the school premises, the police will be informed immediately and asked to attend. Thereafter, the school will act in accordance with the advice given by the police. The police, however, should be dissuaded from questioning the pupil until his or her parents have arrived, except in the situation where a pupil aged 16 or above has not consented to his or her parents being contacted.

If parents are not available, a member of the Senior Management Team or the relevant Head of Year should be in attendance if the police wish to interview a pupil.

Considering a Possible Exclusion

The school may exclude any pupil found to be involved in the possession, misuse or supply of illegal drugs. Each case, however, will be judged on its merits. Before arriving at a decision, the school will take into account the information listed below. For sufficiently serious disciplinary breaches, however, these factors may not apply and it will be appropriate to exclude a pupil for a single offence.

Support for Pupils and Parents

The factors listed below may be taken into account when considering exclusion.

- The nature of the offence.
- Details of the incident that has given rise to an investigation, together with any related incidents, past or present.
- The previous disciplinary record of the pupil.
- The age and educational stage of the pupil.
- The pupil's honesty, willingness to cooperate with investigations, remorse and commitment to reform.
- Parental support of the school's approach.

Support for Pupils and Parents

Any case involving the misuse of substances and/or illegal drugs is likely to be very traumatic for the whole family. The appropriate school staff should aim to be helpful in directing the family to relevant support agencies, or in providing direct help.

The police generally offer help and support both to those involved in incidents involving illegal drugs and to their parents. Pupils and parents should be encouraged to accept this support. This may be a requirement in the case of a pupil who is permitted to remain at the school.

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