



ALTRINCHAM GRAMMAR SCHOOL FOR BOYS

DRUGS POLICY

Nominated Lead Member of Staff:	JW
Last Review Date:	October 2024
Next Review Date:	September 2026

This Policy contains information on drugs education, particularly in the context of PSHE and the management of drugs related incidents.

The School acknowledges the importance of its pastoral role in safeguarding students and the welfare of young people and the importance of substance abuse education. As part of this, Drug education is provided within science classes, and as appropriate within other subject areas, and as part of the broader health education programme in PSE lessons. Tutorial time may also be devoted to this subject on occasions.

1. Drug Education in the Curriculum

Drug education at AGSB is taught as part of compulsory "Health Education" within PSHE lessons and also through the wider curriculum in Biology and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE). Pupils learn about the physiological and psychological effects of drugs and the impact of drug misuse on individuals, families and society. They are encouraged to develop a personal belief in rejecting drugs, make informed decisions, and build the confidence to lead a drug-free life.

2. Drug Misuse – Definition (cf. Appendix 1)

In writing this Policy, the Governors have been mindful of two key acts:

1) Drug misuse refers to the non-medical use of drugs intended for medical treatment or drugs with no accepted medical purpose. These substances are regulated under the *Misuse of Drugs Act 1971*.

Commonly misused drugs include:

- Opiates (e.g., heroin)
- Stimulants (e.g., cocaine, amphetamines, Ecstasy)
- Tranquillisers (e.g., temazepam)
- Hallucinogens (e.g., LSD)
- Cannabinoids (e.g., cannabis)

Solvent misuse, tobacco, nitrous oxide, alcohol and other non-controlled drugs are not covered by the Act but are part of this policy.

2) *The Psychoactive Substances Act 2016* defines a 'psychoactive substance' and makes it illegal to produce, supply, offer to supply, or possess with intent to supply such substances.

New Psychoactive Substances (NPS) mimic the effects of drugs controlled under the *Misuse of Drugs Act 1971* and are often referred to as 'legal highs.' These substances, including others like nitrous oxide, are typically neither legal nor safe for human consumption and are covered by this policy.

3. Management of drug-related incidents

See Appendix 3 for a quick checklist of priorities

Possession, use, or supply of illegal drugs, or being under the influence of drugs, is strictly forbidden in the following circumstances:

- On the journey to or from school
- On any school visit, including residential trips
- While in school uniform
- During the School day
- On school premises

The School reserves the right to take action against any pupil cautioned or convicted for drug-related offences, even if the incident occurs outside these circumstances.

The School reserves the right to take action in respect of any pupil who is cautioned or convicted of an offence relating to the possession etc of illegal drugs, even where this has not occurred in the circumstances described above.

4. Defining a drug-related incident:

Drug-related incidents include, but are not limited to:

- Drugs or drug paraphernalia found on school premises
- Students in possession of illegal or unauthorised drugs
- Students supplying unauthorised or illegal drugs
- Students under the influence of drugs or exhibiting signs of intoxication or illness
- Disclosure of drug use
- Information suggesting students are involved in substance misuse
- Illegitimate sale or supply of drugs in the School vicinity
- Incidents involving prescription drugs not used as intended
- Attempts to procure drugs within school premises or during school activities

If there are any suspicions, observations, disclosures, or discoveries involving illegal or unauthorised drugs (possession, supply, or use):

I. The utmost priority will be given to safety. Any medical emergencies will be addressed with first aid, and appropriate help will be summoned before tackling further issues. If there is any doubt, medical assistance will be sought immediately.

II. The Head Master or Deputy Head Master will be informed of the situation immediately.

III. The Deputy Head Master will engage with the student(s) as soon as possible to ascertain the facts. The focus will be on listening and asking open questions. Consideration will be given to separating involved students and ensuring a second adult witness is present.

IV. The Deputy Head Master (or Head Master) will inform, consult, and involve others as necessary while ensuring confidentiality for those involved.

V. If there are reasonable grounds to suspect a student may possess an illegal or unauthorised drug, they will be escorted to the Deputy Head Master or a senior member of staff. Efforts will be made to encourage the student to voluntarily hand over the item(s) in the presence of a second member of staff. If the student refuses, the Deputy Head Master or an authorised staff member may exercise their statutory power to search the student or their possessions without consent, per the Education and Inspections Act 2006 (s93). All searches must occur in the presence of a second adult, and intimate searches are strictly prohibited.

VI. Staff may search school property, such as lockers, if they believe drugs are stored there. Prior consent will always be sought, and individuals will be informed that a refusal may lead to a search.

VII. After any search involving students, parents or carers will be contacted by the School, regardless of whether the search result was positive or negative, unless it is not in the best interests of the student.

VIII. Any substance suspected of being a drug will be confiscated. In taking temporary possession of a suspected substance, a second adult witness will be present, and the sample will be sealed in a plastic bag with details of the date, time, and witness before being locked in a security cupboard. If the substance is suspected to be an illegal drug, the police will be notified immediately for collection and identification, and/or stored or disposed of per local protocols. Parents will be informed immediately unless it is not in the best interests of the student.

IX. The Deputy Head Master will maintain a detailed record of the incident, with a copy kept by the Head Master. No additional copies will be made. References to the incident will be noted on CPOMS, though full details will remain confidential.

X. The School will remain vigilant regarding drug-related incidents in the local community through communication with police and other relevant agencies.

5. Responses to drug-related incidents

The School will consider each incident individually and will employ a range of responses to deal with each incident. Any response will balance the needs of the individual with those of the wider community and will aim to provide students with the opportunity to learn from their mistakes and develop as individuals. It must be stated, however, that the bringing of drugs (of the type identified in the Misuse of Drugs Act and The Psychoactive Substances Act) to supply others within the community is most likely to end in permanent exclusion for those students involved.

I. While there is no legal obligation to inform the police, if an offence against the Misuse of Drugs Act/ The Psychoactive Substances Act is suspected, or substantiated, it will be appropriate to

consider contacting the police dependent upon the particular circumstances. If so, the Head Master, or member of staff authorised by them, will make the call.

- II. Students may be directed by the Head Master to remain at home while the drugs related incident is under investigation, and until such time as the Head is in such a position as to determine the outcome.
- III. An urgent meeting will take place on the same day as the incident, or as soon as possible (between the Head Master and appropriate member of SLT) in order to decide whether others outside the School should be informed. These may include parents/carers, the appropriate personnel in the LA, Childrens' Social Care and police.
- IV. Responses to/sanctions against students who commit drug offences will be decided following dialogue between the Head Master, appropriate member(s) of staff, and other appropriate colleagues.

Possible responses include:

- Targeted intervention
- Referral – counselling
- Behaviour support plans
- Inter-agency programmes
- Fixed-term exclusion - pastoral support programme
- A managed move
- Permanent exclusion

Responses and sanctions will take into account:

- The seriousness of the incident
- The short and long-term welfare of the student(s) concerned
- The short and long-term welfare of other students
- Guidance from the DfE and ACPO drug advice for schools, ensuring alignment with the School's published rules, codes and expectations
- Consistency with disciplinary action for other drug-related incidents
- Consistency with disciplinary action for other misdemeanours.

The Head Master will take responsibility for liaison with the media if required.

The School reserves the right to take action in respect of any pupil who is cautioned or convicted of an offence relating to the possession etc of illegal drugs, even where this has not occurred in the circumstances described above.

6. The Role of the Staff

I. If a member of staff suspects the possession, use, or supply of illegal drugs on school premises or in any of the specified circumstances, they must inform the Head Master (or, in their absence, a Deputy Head Master) immediately, and in any case, within one hour, so that appropriate action can be taken.

II. If a pupil discloses drug use to a teacher, the teacher should inform the pupil that confidentiality cannot be guaranteed due to the seriousness of drug misuse (Drug Prevention and Schools, Circular 4/95). The teacher must inform the Head Master, who will communicate with the parents unless it is

not in the best interests of the pupil to do so. The Head Master may also direct the parents and pupil to sources of confidential advice.

III. Any member of staff who suspects illegal drug possession, use, or supply near the School premises must report the matter to the Head Master (or a Deputy in their absence), who will determine whether to report it to the police, if deemed appropriate.

IV. Staff may take temporary possession of drugs for safety but must not attempt to analyse or test them. The substance should be secured in a safe location until police instructions are received.

V. Teachers should always have another senior member of staff present as a witness (usually the Head Master or a Deputy) during any related actions.

VI. Staff may search pupils' desks, lockers, or bags if they believe illegal substances are present. Pupils may be asked to empty their pockets, but intimate searches of pupils should never be conducted by teachers.

VII. Any pupil suspected of possession will be supervised until the situation is clarified.

VIII. A pupil taking public examinations will be allowed to sit for the exam that day; however, alternative arrangements for subsequent exams may need to be made by parents, such as home invigilation or referral to an external agency.

IX. Signed, dated, written statements must be provided by all individuals (both pupils and staff) involved in any incident without delay.

X. Staff supervising students on trips, visits, or residentials must be fully aware of the School's Drugs Policy and the appropriate actions to take in the event of a drug-related incident

7. Involvement of the Police

Although there is no statutory requirement to do so, the Secretary of State expects the police to be informed when illegal drugs are found on a pupil or on school premises (Drug Prevention and Schools Circular 4/95).

If this occurs at the School, the Head Master, or in their absence, a Deputy, will notify the local police. Pupils involved may be interviewed by the police on school premises once their parents have been informed. Every effort will be made to ensure that parents are present. If this is not possible, a senior member of staff will be present during the interview.

8. Substance use and Prohibited Items

Tobacco (including electronic cigarettes/vapes)

Smoking is strictly forbidden in all of the following circumstances:

- I. On the journey to or from school.
- II. On any school visit, including residential visits.
- III. At any time while in school uniform.
- IV. During the School day.
- V. On the School premises.

Alcohol

Alcohol consumption or possession are not allowed:

- I. On the journey to or from school
- II. On any school visit, including residential visits
- III. At any time while in school uniform
- IV. During the School day
- V. On the School premises

Drugs

Possession and/or intent to supply drugs is considered a serious violation, likely leading to permanent exclusion due to the severe impact on the School community's health and safety.

Sanctions

Sanctions for all infractions are at the discretion of the Head Master.

9. Care of Drug Misusers

The School will ensure that any pupil violating this policy receives appropriate counselling, advice, and support. Parents hold the primary responsibility in this matter and will be supported by the School.

Staff should direct all external enquiries to the Head Master and refrain from making public comments.

10. Role of Governors

The Governors of the School do not condone the possession or use of drugs, as outlined above, by members of the School, nor the supply of these substances. They require that firm, but appropriate, action shall be taken against any individual or group possessing, using or trading these drugs.

As part of their general responsibilities for the strategic direction of the School, Governors have a key role to play in reviewing and monitoring this policy.

Appendix 1

(a) The Misuse of Drugs Act 1971

“It is an offence under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971:

- I. To supply or offer to supply a controlled drug to another in contravention of the Act.
- II. To be in possession of a controlled drug or to possess it with the intent to supply to another in contravention of the Act. It is a defence against the offense of possession if the accused, knowing or suspecting it to be a controlled drug, took possession for the purpose of preventing another person from committing or continuing to commit an offense. The accused must also have taken reasonable steps to destroy the drugs or deliver them to someone lawfully entitled to take custody of them as soon as possible after taking possession.
- III. For the occupier or someone concerned in the management of any premises knowingly to permit or suffer on those premises the smoking of cannabis; or the production, attempted production, supply, attempted supply; or offering to supply of any controlled drug.”

(b) The Law in Relation to Tobacco and Alcohol

- I. It is an offence to sell alcohol to anyone under the age of 18.
Under Section 6 of the Children and Young Persons Act 1933, it is also an offense to give intoxicating liquor to any child under the age of 5.
- II. The Children and Young Persons (Protection from Tobacco) Act 1991 strengthened the existing law on illegal sale of tobacco products to children under the age of 16.

Appendix 2: Useful Organisations

Addaction: A specialist drug and alcohol treatment charity supporting young people and their families.

Website: [Addaction](#)

ADFAM: Provides information and support to families of drug and alcohol users.

Website: [ADFAM](#)

ASH (Action on Smoking and Health): A charity focused on reducing health issues caused by tobacco.

Website: [ASH](#)

Drinkaware: Promotes responsible drinking and reduces alcohol misuse.

Website: [Drinkaware](#)

FRANK: National campaign for drug awareness among young people.

Website: [FRANK](#)

Family Lives: Offers support to parents and families.

Website: [Family Lives](#)

Re-Solv: Provides information on solvent and volatile substance abuse.

Website: [Re-Solv](#)

Smokefree: NHS helpline for smoking cessation.

Website: [Smokefree](#)

Youth Offending Teams: Multi-agency teams aiming to prevent youth offending.

Website: [Youth Offending Teams](#)

Appendix 3 Checklist for dealing with a Drugs Incident

- I. Check that the student(s) are safe.
- II. Remove the suspected drugs from their possession and store them in a safe place (e.g., school safe). Do so in the presence of another member of staff/adult.
- III. If more than one student is involved, keep them separate.
- IV. If there are witnesses, separate them and obtain written statements.
- V. Inform the Head Master as soon as possible.
- VI. Interview each student in the presence of another member of staff.
- VII. Have each student write a statement and ensure they sign and date it.
- VIII. Consider whether the incident is serious enough to contact the police (if in doubt, seek their advice).
- IX. Inform the parents/carers unless it is not in the best interests of the student to do so (e.g., if there are safeguarding concerns).
- X. The police will advise on the collection or disposal of the drugs (the latter should only ever be done in the presence of another member of staff).