



# IPSWICH SCHOOL

## **DRUGS POLICY PRACTICE AND PROCEDURE**

The central aim of this policy is to encourage pupils to avoid the misuse of drugs and other substances. We have extensive health education and Life Skills programmes that focus upon the potential short-term and long-term risks to health from drug and substance abuse, and emphasise the dangers of committing criminal offences. As with our related programme concerning alcohol, they concentrate on teaching the importance of young people making healthy, informed choices. However, they also include an ethical dimension, designed to instill an understanding of the importance of complying with the criminal law.

Pupils are encouraged to discuss their individual worries about drugs or substances with their Head of Year/House, Matron or any member of the Pastoral Team.

We will always investigate rumours, reports or complaints regarding involvement with drugs or substances.

### **Medicines**

Some drugs are, of course, medicines prescribed by a doctor or are over the counter medicines given to students by their parents. The use of these is covered by the School's Medicines Policy, which should be read in conjunction with this policy.

### **Illegal Drugs**

Under the Misuses of Drugs Act 1971, it is illegal to possess or supply a drug covered by the Act, unless authorised (e.g. possessing drugs prescribed for personal medical use). Solvents are dangerous substances as well. Under the Intoxicating Substances (Supply) Act 1965, it is illegal for anyone to supply or offer to supply a substance if they know or believe that the substance being supplied will be used by a person under 18 for the purpose of intoxication. Additionally, the Psychoactive Substances Act 2016 makes supplying such substances illegal and therefore we will treat the possession and use of such substances with the same degree of seriousness as would be applied to a class A, B or C controlled substance. Wherever this policy refers to illegal drugs this term includes both illegal drugs and psychoactive substances. At Ipswich School, we resolutely oppose the use of all such substances. Therefore, any student who renders themselves unfit to be in School through the consumption or use of such a substance can expect the consequences to be serious.

Any student involved in the use of illegal drugs or alcohol when he/she is under the School's authority is subject to this Policy.

Being under the School's authority means:

- Throughout the School day, whether on or off the premises;
- Whenever he/she is involved in any activity organised by the School;
- Whenever he/she is identifiable as a member of the School and is bringing the School into disrepute.

If a student brings illegal drugs onto School premises, exclusion of a temporary or permanent nature may result.

The sale or passing on of illegal drugs will almost certainly lead to permanent exclusion.

Implementation of the policy will enable students to make healthy, informed choices by increasing knowledge and challenging attitudes. It will warn of the dangerous effects of taking harmful substances, placed alongside the beneficial effects of medically prescribed drugs.

### **Drugs Education Programme**

The Life Skills programme, which is in place throughout a pupil's school career at Ipswich School will address matters such as:

- Information on drugs and their effects, including the media and advertising;
- The law and drugs;
- Peer pressure and decision making;
- Advice, guidance and support on the problems of drug abuse (internally and externally);
- Attitude and beliefs about drugs and drug users.

### **Procedure Management of Drug-related Incidents: Legal Considerations:**

**This section may be read in conjunction with the Department for Education document '[Searching, screening and confiscation](#)' dated July 2022**

1. Schools have 'in loco parentis' responsibilities to individual pupils and the whole school community.
2. The School will consider if the pupil is at risk of significant harm and if there are any Child Protection issues. If there are, further advice will be sought.
3. School staff can search a pupil for any item with their consent.
4. **Headteachers and staff authorised by them have the statutory power to search pupils or their possessions without consent where they have reasonable grounds for suspecting that the pupil may have a prohibited item.**
5. School staff can seize any prohibited item found as a result of a search. Any illegal items will be passed directly to the police in line with the Guidance.
6. When a drugs investigation takes place, the Head is informed and a decision will be made as to whether the parents are informed at this stage or later.
7. Drugs, alcohol, tobacco or solvents found in School should be taken and stored securely in a designated storage area.
8. The Head may consult the police about possible legal considerations.

### **Pastoral Considerations**

The School will decide on its response; and taking into account the circumstances, decide if a disciplinary and/or counselling approach is required in consultation with the parents/guardians.

### **Testing for Substance Misuse**

If there is a reasonable suspicion of the use or possession of drugs or substances, a pupil will be asked to take a drug test. The School also does regular random drug tests. We ask all parents to give their consent for their children to be tested if selected, as part of the annual parental consent update, or at other times as appropriate. Every effort will be made to notify parents prior to testing on the day. The School will be entitled to make such inferences as it may deem appropriate from refusal to grant permission for a test to be taken.

The School reserves the right to use a saliva, urine or hair test, or any other medically appropriate testing method. In all cases, the procedures recommended by the manufacturer of the test will be followed. Two members of the pastoral staff will always be in attendance when a sample is provided for testing in addition to any medical staff required by the procedure. One member of staff will act as the School representative and the other will be present to support the pupil.

**If parents do not wish to give their consent for its use, they should write in the first instance to the Head.**

Parents are reminded that whilst our rules state clearly that a pupil found in possession or using drugs may be asked to leave the School, this policy about drugs allows for the possibility of a pupil returning to School after a period of suspension **on condition that he/she agrees to regular testing.**

### **Tobacco and all smoking substitutes**

Smoking is the single most preventable cause of premature death and ill-health in our society. The School policy on smoking aims to give students the message that the habit creates health problems for smokers and non-smokers alike, that non-smoking represents the norm in society and that it receives support from the School and staff. It is an offence for children under 18 years to be sold tobacco products. In addition, the School will not accept the use of “vaping”.

**Ipswich School is a non-smoking site.**

#### **Aims:**

- To ensure that smoking is not tolerated at the School.
- To educate pupils as to the immediate dangers of smoking.
- To encourage those pupils who do smoke to break free from the habit.

Smoking, or being in possession of cigarettes or tobacco or vaping products, is prohibited when a pupil is under the School's authority. The School's policy on drugs above defines when a pupil is under the School's authority.

Pupils found smoking or in possession of cigarettes or tobacco or vaping products can expect their parents to be informed and an appropriate punishment administered. Subsequent offences may result in suspension. For a persistent offender the Head reserves the right to review the pupil's membership of the school community.

### **Alcohol**

Alcohol is a depressant drug, particularly when taken in large quantities. Even at low levels, the potential for serious accidents arises. The Licensing Act 2003 makes it generally illegal for alcohol to be sold to or purchased by anyone under the age of 18. Pupils found in possession, using or under the influence of alcohol whilst under the authority of the School (as outlined in the policy on drugs) can expect to be suspended.

Sixth Form pupils attending School functions on-site at which alcohol is available may consume such alcohol in accordance with the terms of the Premises Licence and under the strict supervision of staff.

The Head will write to parents from time to time with advice on alcohol and other related matters.

### **Sanctions**

Any pupil found to be supplying drugs should expect to be expelled from the School. The normal sanction for possession or involvement with drugs is also expulsion.

In very exceptional circumstances, and where there are significant mitigating factors, a suspension, alongside a support and testing agreement, may be more appropriate.

The School at all times reserves the right to inform the police of any suspected criminal activity. Following an expulsion, parents have the right to appeal, according to the 'Appeals' procedure.

Reviewed April 2025