

Prohibited Substances Policy

Primary person responsible for updates to this policy: Senior Vice Principal (Pastoral)

Last review date: July 2026

Next review date: July 2027

Circulation: This policy has been adopted by the governors and is available to parents on request. It is addressed to all members of staff and volunteers and applies wherever they are working with children. 'Parents' refers to parents, guardians and carers.

Aims

This policy discusses the College's approach to drugs and forbidden substances in more detail.

The Principal's aim is to combine a necessary firmness of discipline with compassion for human error and an understanding of the temptations among which young people have to live.

The College recognises that substance misuse may indicate safeguarding concerns, including exploitation, mental health needs, or coercion. All cases will be considered in line with the Safeguarding Policy

Introduction

The statistics for the use of drugs amongst the young make it unlikely that any College is 'drug-free' and the shifting legal and social evaluation of cannabis adds further complexity. Drugs can still ruin lives. The allure of experimentation can be a snare and even limited use can be damaging. As in any College, we need to be particularly on guard for those, whether within or from outside, who seek to profit by the supply of illegal and forbidden substances.

'Parents' refers to parents, guardians and carers.

Definitions

For the purpose of this policy, the word 'drug' will be taken to mean drugs, forbidden substances and any substance that produces an intoxicating or hallucinating effect. The following substances are included:

- all illegal drugs (those identified within the [UK Government Drug misuse and dependency policy](#))
- poppers, nitrous oxide and all other volatile substances (those giving off a gas or vapour which can be inhaled).
- misuse of over-the-counter and prescription medicines and Psychoactive Substances ([Psychoactive Substances Act 2016](#)), which have psychoactive (mind-altering) effects, including, but not limited to, 'spice' or 'salvia', fortified tobacco products such as Dokha and products that contain cannabinoids. All are treated with the same degree of seriousness as illegal substances in this policy.
- drugs misused to enhance performance i.e. steroids
- any substance the College considers forbidden.

Tobacco is covered separately in the college's Non-Smoking Policy.

Medication

Prescribed medication is normally controlled and administered by the Matron or relevant Houseparent(s). Students should not self-medicate unless risk assessed and agreed by the College Matron. In the case of boarders' analgesics, cough remedies and indigestion remedies can be obtained from the College Matron.

Education

The College employs a three-pronged approach to drugs:

- We provide students with clear information on the dangers of drug use;
- We encourage students to develop the common sense and self-confidence needed to resist peer pressure to take drugs;
- We have clear sanctions for those who are suspected of, or found to be, using drugs. Involvement in drugs has far reaching consequences for the young person.

A criminal conviction, even a caution, can significantly affect a student's future education, career prospects, and ability to enter certain professions such as medicine, engineering, or veterinary science. The College educates and provides information to students on the dangers and risk of drugs in a variety of ways, which may include assemblies; tutor group periods; the PSHE programme; external speakers; external visits; one-to-one support; science lessons; student handbook; presentations from the College Matron.

Sanctions

The College community extends beyond the campus. Students of DLD College may not use, possess or supply these substances at any time; either at College, away from College or during the holiday periods. Offences traced back to the holidays will be treated in the same way as offences that occur during term time. The College's policy on drugs is that use, possession or supply of a drug may lead to permanent exclusion, following a full investigation and consideration of all safeguarding factors, pending the conclusions of a disciplinary meeting with the Principal, or in the absence of the Principal, the Senior Vice Principal (Pastoral).

Testing

Due to the College's location, the age ranges and our commitment for a high level of safeguarding, the College reserves the right to carry out random testing of students to ensure that that we are protecting both the students and the community as a whole.

Where reasonable grounds for suspicion exist, the College may carry out a drugs test without notice. Such grounds may include (but are not limited to) long periods of lethargy, unusual signs of aggression, aggravated failure to cooperate, mood swings, inability to sustain concentration in lessons, as well as intelligence or reports which give rise to suspicion. In addition, should joining the College with a previous history of abuse of prohibited substances may well be asked to undertake regular testing.

When the Principal decides that a Student will be tested, the Senior Vice Principal (Pastoral) will notify a student's parents that a drugs test is scheduled by email or phone call before accompanying the student; a sample will be taken in accordance with College guidelines. The test result will be returned to the Principal, or in the Principal's absence, the Senior Vice Principal (Pastoral).

If the test result is non-negative then the Student will be asked to attend a disciplinary meeting with the Principal or Senior Vice Principal (Pastoral), in line with the Behaviour Policy. The Student would be at risk of dismissal from the College with immediate effect. If a student refuses a drugs test, this will be treated as returning a non-negative result, a serious disciplinary matter and may be taken into account when determining outcomes, and they would also be at risk of dismissal from the College with immediate effect.

If a student voluntarily comes forward or if his/her friends/parents give information that the student may be involved in drug abuse the student may be tested as outlined in the points above.

All charges associated with tests that require to be sent to outside provider laboratories will be recharged to the parents/guardians of the student involved.

If there is a non-negative test and the sanctioning leads to a period of temporary exclusion, after the student returns, they should expect to be tested in the future without prior notice. The purpose is to determine whether they are continuing their use. Any future positive test results will be dealt with according to the behaviour policy and is a decision for the Principal regarding the student's future at the College. Where prospective students are looking to join the College with a previous history of abusing prohibited substances, a condition of their offer of a place is likely to include the agreement to regular testing.

Discovery of illegal drugs

When illegal drugs are discovered, the Senior Vice Principal (Pastoral) must be immediately informed. In their absence this should go to the Assistant Principal (Pastoral). The sample will be sealed and stored in a secure location together with details of the date and time of the seizure and witnesses present. The Senior Vice Principal (Pastoral) or Assistant Principal (Pastoral) will keep a record of the incident and consult with the Principal regarding further action. Where there is any uncertainty about what the substance is, they should be treated as a controlled drug and reported to the Police.

Parents will usually be informed unless this is not in the best interests of the Student to do so. The College will also consider whether the incident raises any safeguarding concerns and develop a support and disciplinary response.

The possession, distribution, and use of any devices which may be used to consume or prepare drugs on college premises are expressly forbidden at all times. Such devices include, but are not limited to, specialised smoking equipment such as pipes, water pipes, large cigarette papers and specialised cutting devices.

For search guidance, please see the Searching Students and their Possessions Policy

Alcohol related incidents

No alcohol may be brought onto the College premises, or consumed within the College premises, by any student. Additionally, students are not permitted to be under the influence of alcohol during the College day.

Where possible, two members of staff will be present to deal with any alcohol-related incidents; this includes a medical assessment of a student suspected to be under the influence of alcohol (inebriation, slurring of words, unable to stand or support oneself, quieter than normal, unable to respond coherently), the questioning and/or searching of a student believed to be in possession of alcohol, and the confiscation and/or disposal of confiscated items.

The Matron, or a first aider, will be called to assess the student, when appropriate and the student may be breathalysed. If a student refuses a breathalyser test, this will be taken as a refusal to comply with staff wishes and a serious breach of school rules and will be liable to disciplinary action from the Principal, or in the Principal's absence the Senior Vice Principal (Pastoral).

Any breathalyser recording should be recorded with the name of the student, date, time and the breathalyser reading. The Matron or a first aider will assess the student and if necessary, will contact the emergency services either by calling 999 for an ambulance or by consulting NHS 111. Details will be sent to the Principal, the Senior Vice Principal (Pastoral) and the student's Housemaster/Housemistress, and the Director of Boarding, where the student is a boarder. The student's parents and/or guardian will be contacted.

Staff may search a student or a student's room and/or possessions if they believe that that student may be concealing alcohol or other prohibited items; staff may search the students outer clothing, bags, and their rooms in order to confiscate any dangerous or prohibited substances. Any search of a student or a boarder's room will be conducted by two members of staff. It is preferable for any search to be conducted by a person of the same sex as that of the student, and, where practicable, witnessed by a person of the same sex. Where possible a member of the ELT / SLT team will be present. For search guidance, please see the [Searching Students and their Possessions Policy](#).

Staff will follow the Behaviour Policy for any students found to be involved with prohibited substances, consequences can include temporary or permanent exclusion from DLD College and / or the boarding house.

Alcohol consumption at College events

Alcohol may be served at events such as the Prom, staff parties and other social events at the discretion of the Principal and only to those who are legally permitted to consume alcohol. In such cases alcohol will be restricted to wine, beer and cider as decided by the Principal. The quantity of alcohol available will be authorised by the Principal as will procedures for its storage (before and after the event), availability and management of its consumption. When alcohol is served there will always be non-alcoholic alternatives available. When alcohol is served this will always be with food appropriate to the college event e.g. a full meal at the Prom.

Staff training

Any staff carrying out the collection or administration of the above testing will be given any necessary training. This will include, where relevant, training from external providers, such as Alpha Biolabs for prohibited substances.

External sources information and support

ADFAM

Adfam offers information to families of drug and alcohol users, and the website has a database of local family support services.

Waterbridge House, 32-36 Loman Street, London SE1 0EE

Tel: 020 7928 8898 Email: admin@adfam.org.uk

Website: www.adfam.org.uk

Alcohol Education Resource Directory

Directory of resources and contacts for teaching about alcohol, funded by the Portman Group (an organisation funded by the UK's leading drinks producers).

Tel: 020 7907 3700 Email: info@portmangroup.org.uk

Website: www.portmangroup.org.uk

ASH (Action on Smoking and Health)

A campaigning public health charity aiming to reduce the health problems caused by tobacco.

102-108 Clifton Street, London EC2A 4HW Tel: 020 7739 5902

Email: enquiries@ash.org.uk Website: www.ash.org.uk

Children's Legal Centre

The Centre operates a free and confidential legal advice and information service covering all aspects of law and policy affecting children and young people.

University of Essex, Wivenhoe Park, Colchester, Essex CO4 3SQ

Tel: 01206 873820 Email: clc@essex.ac.uk

Website: www.childrenslegalcentre.com

Drinkline

A free and confidential helpline for anyone who is concerned about their own or someone else's drinking.

Tel: 0800 917 8282

(lines are open between 9 am and 11 pm on Tuesdays to Thursdays and from 9 am on Friday mornings to 11 pm on Monday evenings)

Drug Concern

This organisation provides a helpline, support groups and training for parents and carers concerned about their child's drug use.

Tel: 0845 120 3745

National Association for Children of Alcoholics

NACOA provides information, advice and support to children of alcoholics through its free, confidential helpline.

Tel: 0800 358 3456 Website: www.nacoa.org.uk

National Children's Bureau

NCB promotes the interests and well-being of all children and young people across every aspect of their lives.

8 Wakley Street, London EC1V 7QE Tel: 020 7843 6000

Website: www.ncb.org.uk

National Tobacco Campaign (Department of Health)

NHS Smoking Helpline: 0800 169 0 169

Website: www.givingupsmoking.co.uk

Parents Against Drug Abuse (PADA)

An organisation set up to support parents of drug users. A large

percentage of helpline workers have experienced drug use within their own families.

Tel: 08457 023 867 Website: www.btinternet.com/~padahelp/

QUIT

An independent charity that aims to reduce tobacco-related harm by helping smokers to stop.

Tel: 0800 00 22 00 Email: info@quit.org.uk Website: www.quit.org.uk

RELEASE

Provides advice and referral on drug-related legal problems.

388 Old Street, London EC1V 9LT

Tel: 020 7729 9904 Email: info@release.org.uk

Website: www.release.org.uk

Re-Solv (Society for the Prevention of Solvent and Volatile Substance Abuse)

A national charity providing information for teachers, other professionals, parents and young people.

30A High Street, Staffordshire ST15 8AW Tel: 01785 817885

Helpline: 0808 8002345 Email: information@re-solv.org

Website: www.re-solv.org