



FARLINGTON

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DRUGS AND ALCOHOL POLICY

The Drugs and Alcohol Policy applies to the whole school including the Early Years Foundation Stage.

This is a Governing Body policy, which takes into account the Governors' legal responsibilities as employers and occupants of the school premises, and the guidance in the Department for Education's "**Drugs: Guidance for Schools**".

It should be read in conjunction with the School's:

- Behaviour Policy;
- Treatment and Medication Policy;
- Health and Safety Policy;
- Life Skills (PSHE) Policy.

The Governors are committed to ensuring that Farlington is a healthy school, free from the misuse of drugs and other substances. Illegal drugs should never be in School. Legal drugs are only allowed when they are medicines agreed by the Headmistress for use in school under the Treatment and Medication Policy.

THIS POLICY IS AVAILABLE TO ALL STAFF AND PARENTS OF PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL

1 STATEMENT OF POLICY

Farlington is committed to the health and welfare of the pupils and will take action to promote and safeguard their well-being.

Farlington accepts the responsibility of educating pupils about the effects of drugs and alcohol and about the threats posed by them, to present and future health and happiness.

Through its general ethos, Farlington will educate pupils to act and speak in the best interests of others who might need help, and will work to encourage those in need of support to come forward.

2 POLICY AIMS

The policy aims to make clear the School's approach to the problem of drugs. It sets out the Governing Body's policy on drugs education and makes clear the procedures that should be followed in responding to drug-related incidents.

We believe that our Drugs and Alcohol Policy should be based on an educational programme which is rooted in values, which does not rely on simple prohibition, but is balanced and informative and which emphasises the need and responsibility of young people to make informed decisions for their own lives.

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To this end we will -

- provide accurate information, from the Prep School onwards, about substances which may be misused, this information being relevant and appropriate to the age group concerned;
- promote understanding about the implications and possible consequences of use and misuse;
- through Life Skills, foster and encourage skills and strategies helpful to young people in handling difficult situations and resisting harmful influences;
- help young people to identify sources of appropriate personal support;
- ensure that the disciplinary rules of the School reflect the seriousness with which the School approaches potential problems in this area.

How these aims are fulfilled

- a. We fulfil these aims through the development of a positive ethos in the School, through the care, concern, teaching and leadership of our staff, through the provision of information via the Life Skills (PSHE) curriculum and through a clear and effective disciplinary code
- b. We believe that it is essential to inculcate in each individual pupil an awareness of the importance of individual values
- c. We believe that we should make it a priority to promote and encourage the self-esteem of every individual pupil
- d. We communicate effectively with parents; we attach great importance to this
- e. The School Rules will emphasise the firm commitment of the School to the sustenance of an environment free from abuse of drugs or alcohol

3 ACCOUNTABILITY

The Headmistress has overall responsibility for the preparation, presentation and implementation of policy.

The Headmistress will ensure that the Governing Council is kept informed of all relevant developments and issues, that its members are alerted to any problems with, or defects of, existing policies and that the Governing Council will receive regular reports from her concerning the effectiveness of the Farlington Drugs and Alcohol Policy.

The Headmistress will ensure that all staff dealing with issues of drugs or alcohol abuse are adequately supported and that appropriate training is provided when desirable.

Nominated Governor

This will be the same Governor as the nominated Governor for Safeguarding. He/she will liaise with the Headmistress as appropriate and advise the Chair on any urgent action that needs to be taken with regard to drugs education or the misuse of drugs, and will advise the Governing Council on any action that needs to be taken.

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The Nominated Governor will also support the Headmistress's liaison with parents.

Governing Council

The full Council will receive termly / regular reports from the Nominated Governor and/or the Headmistress on the progress of the education programme, and any sanctions that have had to be applied since the last meeting.

All Staff

All members of staff must know the School's policy and seek to obtain the relevant skills and knowledge to support the policy.

4 LIFE SKILLS (PSHE)

The Life Skills (PSHE) curriculum is necessarily broad and fundamentally positive. That said, we accept that it has to equip pupils to confront potential dangers to their health - and in different ways at different stages of their personal development. In this sense, a good Life Skills (PSHE) curriculum is like a spiral staircase, returning to the same issues at more advanced levels.

The programme relating to drugs education will:

- inform pupils about drugs and their effects;
- promote a positive attitude towards a healthy lifestyle;
- increase pupils' understanding of the health and social implications of the use and misuse of drugs;
- inform pupils about the course of action open to them if they or people they know become, or might become, involved in drugs activity; and
- inform pupils about support and resources available in school and outside school.

The detailed programme will be co-ordinated by the Head of Life Skills (PSHE) in consultation with the Headmistress and relevant staff.

In every aspect of school life - curricular and extra-curricular - we promote personal values. We encourage our pupils to take responsibility for their own health as individuals and as members of their families, the school community and society as a whole.

5 PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS

We feel it is important to achieve an effective partnership with parents. We see it as essential that our parents feel that they are fully informed and involved in the School's Policy about alcohol and drugs. It is important that our parents are able and willing to support this policy.

The Headmistress will, at least annually, remind parents as well as pupils of the disciplinary rules relating to the involvement of pupils with drugs.

The vast majority of teenage involvement with alcohol and drugs occurs out of school in time and place - i.e., when children are the responsibility solely of their parents. If the school can provide support and reinforcement for the parents then we will do so.

6 WORKING WITH THE POLICE AND LOCAL ADVISORY GROUPS

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The School benefits from close links with the Police Community Education Unit. Representatives make regular visits to the school, talking to pupils in individual year groups and to their parents.

The School will always inform the police of any breach of the law [under the Misuse of Drugs Act, 1971] which comes to our attention. The School will notify the Police if pupils are found to be in possession of, or involved in the supply, cultivation or any form of distribution of, illegal drugs in school. The School will also inform the Police if pupils are **required to leave** or are **temporarily excluded** on account of known use of illegal drugs.

The School will always seek to be aware of local health initiatives by community action groups. The School will not commit itself to support such initiatives unless we are convinced that they are soundly based.

7 SCHOOL RULES

Any pupil who is found to be in possession of, or involved in the supply, cultivation or subsequent distribution of, illegal drugs at any time to another pupil **will be required to leave**. Any other involvement in drugs, in or out of school, will bring into question the continued membership of the School by the pupil and will almost certainly lead to temporary exclusion from School. Any reinstatement after such a temporary exclusion will be subject to acceptance of drugs testing and (where appropriate) of undertakings by parents to monitor and restrict the social activities of the pupil.

Pupils should also be aware that bringing into school any paraphernalia that can be reasonably linked to the use or supply of drugs will result in confiscation and may lead to a temporary exclusion.

The bringing of alcohol into school or the selling of alcohol to other pupils is likely to result in temporary exclusion. The School may well seek reassurances concerning the future control and monitoring of the social activities of the pupil.

The term 'into school' covers any incidents related to drugs or alcohol at a time when the School is responsible for the pupil. This includes travel between school and home; it includes sports fixtures, educational visits and other school-based excursions away from the School; and it includes sports tours, educational activities, activity holidays, etc.. organised by the School in holiday time for pupils.

The only circumstance likely to cause the School to consider greater flexibility in areas of "zero tolerance" would be when the information concerning the offence derived primarily from information volunteered by the pupil involved or by her parents.

8. INVESTIGATIONS INTO DRUGS ALLEGATIONS

It is the responsibility of all pupils and teachers to report **at once** to the Senior Leadership Team allegations or suspicions of any breach of the school rules with regard to drugs and alcohol. These will be investigated urgently, normally by the Headmistress and/or an Assistant Head, and certainly by a member of the Senior Leadership Team. Interviews will always be conducted in the presence of a second member of staff. Statements will be taken from those suspected of a breach of the rules and a report will be made to the Headmistress and Chairman of Governors as soon as possible.

Parents of those being investigated will also be informed as soon as possible.

If possible, after initial investigation, parents should be present when pupils are confronted with evidence that they have been involved in the taking of drugs. This is not always possible, given the

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need to establish rapidly the truth or otherwise of allegations. The Headmistress or, in her absence, the Assistant Head has the responsibility for making such judgements and should place on record his or her reasons for such judgements.

At all times when questioning pupils about their alleged or suspected involvement with drugs, or suspected knowledge of the involvement of others, care should be taken to behave in a way which respects the dignity of the individual. It is right and proper that pupils should be confronted with contradictions within their own statements or with the statements of others, but such points must always be put in a calm and measured manner. There should always be a witness to such questioning and this witness should make and keep a detailed record of the interview which will go on file. Any written material such as statements obtained during any investigation will also be retained on file.

It is the professional responsibility of those conducting investigations to take all reasonable steps to establish the truth. To this end, it is normally necessary that investigations should be begun and completed within a single day and that pupils being questioned should be isolated from one another. For this reason, pupils may be withdrawn from classes after the beginning of an investigation but before actual questioning is feasible. That said, it is the responsibility of those conducting the investigation to ensure, as far as possible, that each pupil is placed in comfortable surroundings, that human needs are easily met and that absence from class is no longer than is actually necessary.

If, for any reason, it has not been possible or feasible for parents to be in attendance when their daughter has been questioned, they should be given the opportunity subsequently to hear the evidence against their daughter and to make representations on her behalf.

9 GUIDANCE FOR STAFF

Staff Training

The Headmistress will ensure that staff (teaching and support) will receive appropriate training in drug education and the handling of incidents that they might come across.

All staff should know this School Policy and be informed of any changes to it.

When a young person discloses substance misuse or possession, staff will inform the Headmistress and, when appropriate, participate in the planning of subsequent action.

When staff discover substances, or any associated paraphernalia, which are suspected to be harmful or deserving of investigation, they should always seek to inform the Headmistress, the Assistant Head or a member of the Senior Leadership Team. The Headmistress has a supply of tamper proof evidence bags and surgical gloves in the Safeguarding Filing Cabinet in her study.

Should the incident take place in a location where none of these is available, the teacher should take action. All staff, therefore, should note the procedures whereby substances and or associated paraphernalia may be removed from either a place or a person:

- **Place** - if possible remove the substance from where it was discovered in the presence of a witness. The use of latex gloves is recommended. **Do not touch the substance with your bare hands.** If this is not possible, do not leave the substance there while you enlist the support of a colleague (or, in exceptional circumstances, a pupil) as a witness. **If possible take a photograph (mobile phone or camera) of the substance or paraphernalia in situ.**
- **Person** - every effort should first be made to secure the voluntary production of any suspicious substance. When receiving or retrieving substances from a pupil, do so, if possible in the

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presence of a witness. In the absence of a witness, do not put off receiving substances or, within bounds of your professional discretion, removing a suspicious substance from a pupil's possession. If the pupil refuses point blank to hand over suspicious substances, the police may be called in to deal with the situation. **Do not attempt forcibly to remove a substance.**

- **Right to search** - staff are entitled to search pupils' bags, lockers, dormitory furniture or clothes, if they have reasonable cause to believe they contain suspicious items such as drugs. Gloves should be worn. **Items of clothing should not be searched while they are being worn. Wherever possible, there should be a witness present throughout the search. All staff should familiarise themselves with the searching protocols laid out in DfE guidelines. These can be found in the Staff Handbook and Policies folder.**

The following guidelines should be observed at all times:

- The substance, or associated paraphernalia, should be placed (using gloves or a tissue) into a tamper proof evidence bag and sealed. If the item being seized has any 'sharp edges' or is likely to puncture the bag, then look for an alternative container to place the item in. The details on the outer bag should be completed. Record the time, place and circumstance when the substance came into your possession. ***Always ensure the witness signs and dates the exhibit bag after sealing.**
- Do not investigate the nature of the substance, but do record its approximate size and appearance.
- When possible, have the recordings countersigned by a witness.
- Take the substance immediately to the Headmistress or the Assistant Head. Do not keep the substance on your person or in a place of safe keeping; **to do so may place you at risk.**
- An official report should be completed, recording the time, date and circumstances of the findings. If the substance/paraphernalia has been placed in a tamper proof evidence bag – do please cross reference the **unique serial number** on each bag within the report you are compiling.
- The Headmistress has a number of options available to her in respect of the subsequent disposal/destruction of the substances/paraphernalia one of which may be to contact the police to arrange collection.

In the event of a discovery of any paraphernalia associated with substance abuse, especially needles and syringes, pupils should not be allowed to handle such items. All equipment found must be handled by adults with utmost care. The Headmistress must ensure that materials are placed in the 'sharps bin' in the Medical Centre to await collection by the appropriate service. **Staff are to inform the Headmistress immediately if any 'sharps' are discovered on site.**

10 ACTION TO BE TAKEN IN INCIDENTS INVOLVING MISUSE OF DRUGS

It is vitally important that staff, pupils and parents should be clear about the action that will be taken in any drug related incident.

1. Staff should ensure that all cases of misuse of drugs, or suspected misuse, are reported to the Headmistress (or another member of the Senior Leadership Team as normal in the School's Procedures).

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2. In all instances involving substance misuse, or supply on the School's premises, parents will be informed, and their co-operation sought. In all instances involving 'supply' offences (or concerned in the supply) the Police will be notified.
3. The School will consider each drug incident separately and consider the appropriate response, bearing in mind the circumstances of the case, and the need to balance the interests of the pupil, other members of the School and the wider community.
4. However, the Governors believe that it is essential that parents and pupils are clear about the normal sanction that will be applied in particular instances, as follows:

- a) a pupil who supplies any drugs or other substances including solvents (whether legal or illegal, and regardless of the seriousness of the use) on the school premises will normally be permanently excluded **for a first offence**.

'Supply' (or concerned in the supply) includes retailing drugs on the premises, communicating with a drug dealer on behalf of another pupil of the school, introducing fellow pupils to a drug dealer, and any other instance of procuring legal or illegal drugs for herself or other pupils.

'Supply' includes supplying for money or free-of-charge or being involved directly or indirectly in the whole supply chain.

In the case of the supply of a drug which is legal (including over-the-counter drugs) the Headmistress will assess the seriousness of the incident before deciding whether to exclude permanently or for a fixed period.

Before making a decision on exclusion the Headmistress will ensure that a satisfactory investigation has been carried out.

- b) a pupil who has any legal or illegal drug in her possession will normally be excluded for a fixed period **for a first offence**, to be determined by the Headmistress after considering all the circumstances of the case.

The Headmistress will also determine what counselling needs to be provided and/or other action needs to be taken during or after the exclusion.

For a **second offence** the Headmistress will determine whether a further fixed term exclusion is appropriate, or whether it is appropriate to exclude permanently. In coming to a decision the Headmistress will take into account any medical/police/social service/ drug adviser reports that may be available, and consider whether further counselling is appropriate.

Should the Headmistress judge that **it is appropriate for the pupil to be required to leave**, she will present the case to the Chairman of Governors (or, in their absence, the Deputy Chairman) and request **approval for this action to be taken**. If such approval is given, she will at once convey this decision to parents.

Parents have the option of appealing against this decision. Such appeal should be made within a given period to the Chairman of the Governing Council and reasons for the appeal should be stated in a letter. The letter should be addressed to the Chairman and be sent care of the Clerk to the Governors. Details can be found in the Complaints Procedure.

Offences outside the School

If a pupil is involved in a drug-related incident outside the school the Headmistress will assess the implications for the pupil and the School and determine the best course of action bearing in mind the interests of the pupil and the

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interests of the School and wider community. Exclusion would not normally be appropriate for a first outside-school offence.

The Headmistress will consult as appropriate the Police Liaison Officer or other agency before making a decision.

Involvement of the Police

Although there is no legal duty to inform the police of any drug incident in the school, the Governors' policy is that the Headmistress will determine whether to inform the Police Liaison Officer and will seek any relevant support and advice.

Where the School suspects that any student is involved in the 'supply, cultivation or production' of drugs (or concerned in any of these activities) whilst on or off the premises all relevant information will be passed to the police. If the suspicions are off the premises the Headmistress will make a decision as to whether or not to inform the parents immediately.

11 DRUGS TESTING

The Headmistress may, in certain circumstances, be prepared to admit evidence from a drugs test conducted by a reputable, independent testing agency in any investigation into alleged abuse of drugs.

If a pupil has, through known and/or admitted abuse of drugs, placed at risk her future in the School, to the extent that the Headmistress, or the Assistant Head, judges that firm and credible undertakings are a pre-requisite for continued membership of the School, the School may offer to the pupil the option of signing a contract empowering the School to test her, at any time and on a random basis, during her continued membership of the School. In addition to reassuring the School, such tests would be seen as a guarantee to parents, peers and the parents of peers of continued good conduct, thereby facilitating the full rehabilitation of the student within the School community.

The cost of such testing will be borne by the parents of the pupil.

12 TESTING PROCEDURES

If required, the Assistant Head will have at her disposal a drug testing kit from a reputable, recognised supplier. She will inform the pupil that she is to be tested for a given drug, as agreed, in advance, with her parents. The test is extremely straightforward to administer and is not personally intrusive. A swab is wiped across a piece of skin, a drop of water is applied and an instant readout is available. There should be a witness to oversee the taking of the test. The pupil will be shown the readout and, in the event of a positive result, the parents will be informed as soon as practical. The pupil will then be at liberty to take an independent laboratory test as further evidence, but this must be done within 24 hours of the positive result of the first test.

13 THE MEDIA

The Headmistress will take responsibility for liaison with the media. As the issue of substance misuse is an emotive one, and is likely to generate interest from the local and national media, the School will endeavour to ensure that any reporting of incidents is not contrary to the interests of the individual pupils and their families or to the reputation of the School. The Chairman of Governors will always be informed by the Headmistress when an incident involving drugs occurs. Pupils' names must not be divulged to the Press, nor to other parents.

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14 REVIEW AND EVALUATION

Monitoring and Review

The Governing Body will review the policy annually and will assess its effectiveness and whether any changes are necessary.

Any changes will be notified to the staff and parents.

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