



## DRUGS, ALCOHOL AND TOBACCO MISUSE POLICY

### General statement of Policy

Argyle House School does not tolerate smoking (including the use of e-cigarettes or vapes) nor the supply, possession or use of illegal drugs or substances nor the misuse of alcohol by members of the school.

Argyle House is committed to the health and safety of all members of the school and will take action to safeguard their well-being.

Argyle House acknowledges the importance of its pastoral role in the welfare of young people through formal education and the school's general ethos; it will seek to provide the support pupils need to avoid the problems of substance abuse.

### Policy Aims

Argyle House believes and supports the following educational aims in respect of drugs and substance use and misuse:

1. To enable pupils to make healthy and informed choices by increasing knowledge, challenging attitudes and developing and practicing decision-making skills.
2. To provide accurate information about drugs and substances, alcohol and smoking.
3. To increase understanding about the implications and possible consequences of use and misuse.
4. To widen understanding about related health and social issues.
5. To enable young people to identify sources of appropriate personal support.

These aims are fulfilled through a programme of education arranged through the established curriculum, through the PSHE syllabus and through specially invited external speakers. The programme involves pupils of all ages and continues throughout their time at the school. Our medical staff also play an active role in promoting greater awareness about the risks involved and will offer informed medical advice.

Pupils can discuss their individual worries with any teacher in our community. They can also refer themselves the School Pastoral Team for individual guidance, without fearing sanctions or adverse report. We also invite groups of parents and guardians to Information Evenings and are very conscious of the importance of working together in order to promote the well-being of pupils.



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The school actively co-operates with other agencies such as the local Police, Social Services, and the Health Promotion Unit to deliver its commitment to drugs education and to deal with incidents of substance use and misuse.

The policy will be reviewed annually and in the light of any drug-related incident. Sanctions are always at the discretion of the Head or the Deputy Head. A review of a sanction, or the manner in which a matter will be handled, are outlined in the School's *Complaints Procedure for Parents and Behaviour* and *Exclusions Policy* as applicable.

### **Specific policy and the management of incidents:**

This policy applies to all pupils of the school when on the school premises, or in the care of the school, or wearing school uniform or otherwise representing or associated with the school. All parents are strongly advised that the school may invoke on-site sanctions if incidents involving tobacco, alcohol or drugs occur off-site. Careful management and supervision of parties is especially important.

School trips are considered to be on-site activities.

#### **1. Tobacco (including the use of e-cigarettes or vapes)**



It is the school's policy that smoking and the possession of smoking materials or the paraphernalia of smoking or e-cigarettes are forbidden on school premises. (This includes any paraphernalia, or items, connected with 'vaping').

All incidents are reported to a pupil's Class/Form Teacher and will normally be informed at the earliest opportunity. A first offence will lead to a mandatory two-day exclusion (suspension) from school, following a disciplinary meeting with the Head and the pupil's parents.

Thereafter the whole question becomes more one of consultation with parents in conjunction with restriction of privileges. A pupil may be referred for a session of counselling where the school has reason to believe that he or she has issues with tobacco/vaping, for example, when there are repeated infringements. Continued abuse of the smoking rule may well result in further temporary exclusions (suspensions) from school or a similar sanction.

The school will always contact the manager of any establishment found to be active in selling tobacco, tobacco products or vaping products to under-age pupils and the Police may also be informed.

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## 2. Alcohol

In this policy references to alcohol include intoxicating liquor of all descriptions (including beer, cider, wine and spirits) and this policy covers obtaining, consuming, and supplying alcohol.

The school rule states: alcoholic drinks may be consumed only at authorised school occasions. Alcoholic drinks may not be brought onto the school premises without the prior permission of the Headteacher. Drinking to excess under any circumstances is unacceptable.

The school is clearly bound by the law of the land and those laws guide our policy. Pupils are encouraged to adopt a sensible attitude towards alcohol. Alcohol should not be served to any pupils.

All alcohol offences will be reported to the Headteacher and to parents. Evidence of alcohol consumption, or excessive alcohol consumption in the instances of permitted availability above, will be enough to attract a disciplinary reaction. Minor alcohol offences would be considered to be possession of beer or wine, for example, or being in a pub underage.

A first offence will lead to a Head's Detention. A second offence will lead to a Head's Detention, or similar, which will also include a meeting with the Head. However, a pupil may be referred for a session of counselling with the School Pastoral Team, where the school have reason to believe that he or she has issues with alcohol, for example, when there are repeated infringements. Suspension and permanent exclusion are ultimate possibilities. If an older pupil is found to have provided or purchased alcohol for a younger pupil, this is almost certain to result in an automatic suspension, in the first instance.

Offences involving spirits will tend to attract a greater disciplinary reaction. Persuading other pupils to partake of spirits is regarded as a particularly serious light. Should somebody be incapacitated, end up being sick, admitted to hospital, it is likely that a period of suspension would follow. For alcohol offences, the school reserves the right to telephone parents and ask them to collect their child immediately.

In the case of any incident involving the sale of alcohol to under-age pupils, the school will personally contact the manager of the establishment involved and the Police will be informed.

## 3. Drugs and Substances

It is the school's policy that possession, use or supply of drugs is forbidden.



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In this policy, the definition of a 'drug' includes: controlled drugs and the paraphernalia of drugs, psychoactive substances or substances intended to resemble drugs, or "legal" drugs which can be obtained from a chemist shop, performance enhancing drugs, anabolic steroids, glue and other substances held or supplied in each case for the purposes of misuse.

*The Head reserves the right to react to the emergence of new substances and changing circumstances as they occur.*

A firm stand is taken against drug and substance misuse, and the school aims to educate all about the danger of drugs, identify those at risk, deal appropriately with those who breach our rules and help pupils to resist the temptation to experiment. The school is committed to promoting a healthy, safe environment at Argyle House School, in which good citizenship and respect for the law can flourish. The school believes that it is important to deliver a clear, consistent moral framework that promotes the integrity of the school community, and gives all of the pupils the understanding and self-confidence to reject illegal drugs and substances. Any member of staff or parent concerned that a pupil might be involved in drug abuse should inform the pupil's Class Teacher or Form Teacher

The school will always investigate rumours about involvements in illegal drugs and substances, including questioning a pupil or searching a pupil's possessions.

**Searches with consent:** School staff can search pupils for tobacco, alcohol, drugs or substances with their consent. The member of staff will consider the pupil's age and other factors when determining whether the pupil is capable of giving his / her consent.

**Searches without consent:** The Head and staff authorised by the Head may search a pupil or a pupil's possessions without their consent where they have reasonable grounds for suspecting that a pupil has drugs or substances in their possession. Any pupil who is suspected of using drugs or substances may be required to submit a biological sample (usually urine) for testing.

The reasons for suspicion would include being found in possession of drugs, a marked change of attitude to school life, persistent poor work or discipline, association with others involved with drugs, anti-social or erratic behaviour, parental, staff or other pupil concern, or anything which the Head deems to give a prima facie reason for suspicion.





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A test will only be required following consultation between a pupil's Class/Form Teacher and the Head. Reasonable endeavours will be made, before a drugs test is conducted, to notify a parent, guardian or education guardian of the requirement for a drugs test and the reasons for that requirement. Parents, a guardian or educational guardian have the right to attend when the biological sample is collected provided they can attend within a reasonable time frame.

The Drugs Testing Policy is designed to be constructive, where possible, and to support those pupils most at risk of drug taking, to dispel ill-founded suspicion of drug taking and to act as a general and efficient deterrent.

The school follows the below guidance:

- i. Those who supply drugs, or encourage others to use them, can expect to be expelled from the school. The Head may consult the Police about the possession, consumption or supply of an illegal drug, since it carries the possibility of being a criminal offence.
- ii. Those who are found to be in possession of drugs for personal use or have used drugs can also be expect to be expelled.
- iii. Those who tested positively to drugs can also expect to be expelled from the school. However, at the sole discretion of the Head, a pupil may be allowed to remain at the school if the Head is satisfied that there are relevant mitigating circumstances and where the pupil agrees to submit to a supportive regime of regular random testing for the remainder of their career in the school.
- iv. Pupils who test positive a second time can expect to be expelled.
- v. Refusal to take a test will allow the school to draw certain inferences from that refusal.
- vi. Those who refuse to submit to a test or refuse to take part in a supportive regime may expect to be removed from the school.
- vii. The cost of the test will be borne by the school. If this is positive, the cost of subsequent tests will be met by the parents.
- viii. No distinction will be made if use is in or out of the school.
- ix. In the event of the school's reputation being brought into disrepute it will be the school's qualified right to invoke its full disciplinary procedures.
- x. All those on a random testing regime will be offered counselling.

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**a) Drug Testing Procedure (urine sample)**

- i. The Class/Form Teacher will inform the pupil that a urine test is required immediately before the test appointment.
- ii. If the pupil refuses to agree to the test, he or she will be required to explain the reason to the Head.
- iii. The testing laboratory will have been warned that the sample will be arriving on that day.
- iv. At the agreed time of collection, the pupil will accompany the collecting officer to the Medical Room, where the staff will have been previously informed, and a collecting area prepared. The collecting area will be a room with no access to water but, when the pupil is female, it may necessitate the use of a commode or, if not available, a toilet where the water has been dyed to prevent use as a dilutant.
- v. The pupil will be asked to undress to his/her underwear and will be provided with a clean dressing gown. He/she will be escorted to the collecting area and allowed to choose one from a number of sterile sealed collecting containers (supplied by the laboratory). The collecting container will have a thermometric specimen inside. This will be recorded on the consent form.
- vi. The sample will be given to the collecting officer straight away and, with the pupil still present, a small quantity of the sample will be transferred into two tamperproof collecting bottles. They will also be informed that the results will take 24-48 hours and will be sent directly to the school.
- vii. The collecting officer will complete two copies of the urine sample form. These forms will be signed both by the collecting officer and by the pupil to signify that he or she has been satisfied with the collection procedure and giving consent for the result of the test to be made available to the Head.
- viii. Both the urine samples and the forms will then be sent immediately and securely to the laboratory. One sample will be tested and the other will be stored in a locked refrigerator, available for independent testing if required.

If another form of biological sample (e.g. saliva or hair) is to be tested the school will inform the pupil of the procedure to be followed at the time.



**b) Communication of results**

- i. The school will normally see written notification of the result within three days.
- ii. The Head will then notify the Class/Form Teacher and the pupil's parents as soon as possible. This is done so that the parents can decide whether they would like an independent analysis done on the second sample. The pupil will also be told the test result as soon as possible. Finally, the Head will send written confirmation of the test result to the pupil's parents.

**c) The records of tests of biological samples**

When it becomes clear that both the school and the parents are satisfied with the outcome of the urine test for drugs, any remaining biological sample will be destroyed, together with the remaining record card. There will be no reference to a test for drugs on a pupil's permanent medical record. However, permission will be sought from the pupil for the results of the test to be sent to his/her GP.

**d) Subsequent action**

The school will treat a positive test as evidence that the pupil has been using drugs. At this point the Behaviour & Exclusions Policy will be followed.

**e) Changes in the procedure**

It may be necessary to change the testing procedure from time to time. Any changes shall be authorised only by the Head and shall come into force on the date designated by him (which may be immediate). Significant amendments to the procedure will be published as soon as is practical.



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