



Drugs, Tobacco, Alcohol and Controlled Substances

Date of issue: May 2018 (updated Oct 2020, Jan 2022, Oct 2022, Jan 2023, Aug 2023)

Date of next review: December 2024

Responsible person: Deputy Head (Pastoral)

References: [DfE and APCO Drug Advice for Schools \(2012\)](#)
[DfE Searching, Screening and Confiscation, Advice for Schools \(2022\)](#)
[DfE Behaviour in schools, Advice for headteachers and school staff \(2022\)](#)

Appendix A: Drug screening procedure

Policy number: 9c

To be read in conjunction with these other School policies:

Behaviour Rewards and Sanctions (9a)
Permanent Exclusion Policy and Procedure (9b)
PSHE and Wellbeing Curriculum Policy (2d 5a)
Safeguarding and Protecting Children Policy and Procedure (7a 8a)
Searching and Confiscation Policy and Procedure (9d)

1. Definitions

Drugs/alcohol	Where this policy refers to “drugs/alcohol” this includes alcohol, tobacco (including vapes and e-cigarettes), illegal drugs ¹ , medicines, new psychoactive substances ² (“legal highs”) and other volatile substances, unless otherwise specified. For the avoidance of doubt so-called ‘performance enhancing’ drugs, anabolic steroids and other substances held for the purpose of misuse, such as solvents, lighter fluid, glue and laughing gas/nitrous oxide are also included in this category, whether legally acquired or not.
Drug/alcohol Use	Drug taking, consumption of alcohol, tobacco or other substances which breaches School rules and this Policy and requires intervention.
Substance Misuse	When a person experiences social, psychological, physical or legal problems related to intoxication or through regular consumption or dependence on drugs or alcohol.

2. Scope

This policy is for pupils, parents, staff, governors and partner agencies working with the School; it sets out the School's policy in relation to drugs/alcohol, (see definition above) and procedures to be followed should drug testing be required.

¹ Including but not limited to cannabis, cocaine, ecstasy and heroin (Misuse of Drugs Act 1971)

² Psychoactive Substance Act 2016

This policy applies to pupils when they are at School, travelling to or from School, taking part in any activity organised by the School and when they are outside School if this has an adverse impact within the School or on its reputation.

The School has statutory power³ to discipline pupils for breach of this policy and other misbehaviour 'beyond the school gates' to such extent as is reasonable. All parents/carers should be aware that the School may apply disciplinary sanctions if incidents involving drugs/alcohol occur off-site, outside of school hours.

The policy will be reviewed annually or more frequently, should events dictate.

3. Aims

St John's School is committed to the health and safety of its pupils and this policy is an important pillar in safeguarding their wellbeing. Our primary aim is to keep our School community safe and well. St John's School is determined to encourage all pupils to develop responsible, healthy lifestyles, through the provision of pastoral care and the School's PSHE and Wellbeing curriculum.

Young people face significant pressures to experiment with illegal and legal drugs/alcohol and other controlled substances. The School aims to educate pupils about the risks involved and to maintain an environment that is free from drugs/alcohol and the culture of drug/alcohol and substance misuse. We aim to support the majority of St John's pupils who will never use illegal drugs. Many will try tobacco (including e-cigarettes / "vapes") or alcohol and our PSHE and Wellbeing curriculum provides information that encourages pupils to make healthy, informed choices, helps challenge attitudes and develop decision-making skills. It covers the legal implications and the support available to those involved in substance misuse. Through PSHE lessons, assemblies and awareness days the curriculum helps them understand the impact to their health, independence, opportunities, integrity, and careers should problematic relationships arise with drugs/alcohol.

Beyond this, the school has a duty not to allow its premises to be used for illegal activities. The School is clear that breaches of the rules surrounding drugs/alcohol (including all other substances falling under the definition above) is a serious disciplinary matter.

The adverse effects of drugs/alcohol on the neurodevelopment of the maturing, and thus vulnerable, adolescent brain are well-documented; in addition to compromising decision-making leading to potentially risky behaviour, use and abuse of illicit substances may also increase the possibilities for adolescents to develop long-term substance use or mental health disorders later in their lives.

All pupils, parents, staff and governors should be familiar with this policy. Suitable training programmes will be made available for staff. Individuals should know how to identify and respond to critical situations. The policy will be referred to in the parent and pupil handbooks and will be available on the School website. There are formal evenings and parents' workshops to discuss issues of concern. The Governing Council is properly informed of the school's practice and will monitor implementation of this policy.

4. Pastoral Care

The School encourages pupils to discuss their individual worries or anxieties they may have about use of drugs/alcohol with their housemaster/housemistress or tutor. Pupils can also refer themselves to the School Counsellor, Mental Health Lead or the Health Centre's staff for guidance, help and support without fearing sanctions or report. Individuals with genuine concerns about misuse will be offered appropriate support to assist them to manage misuse. Parents are also able to report any concerns for their children to the Deputy Head (Pastoral) or the Director of Safeguarding for appropriate advice and support and referral to external agencies. The School may need to take the

³ Education and Inspections Act 2006

decision to refer matters to Children's Social Care or the Police in order to ensure appropriate safeguarding is in place for individuals.

5. School Rules in Relation to Smoking/Vaping

St John's School operates a no smoking policy and is a smoke-free school, it is subject to the same smoke-free legislation as other premises⁴. It is against the law for under 18s to buy cigarettes or vapes in the UK.

This policy aims to discourage pupils from smoking or vaping because it is harmful to health, it is addictive, it promotes (in a school context) secretive and unsafe behaviour, it presents health and safety risks. The school educates pupils about the dangers and consequences of smoking and vaping through the PSHE and Wellbeing Curriculum.

No pupil may bring tobacco products, e-cigarettes, vapes or other smoking-associated materials onto the school site, or have them in their possession whilst travelling to or from school or whilst involved in any activity or trip organised by the School. Any pupil found with smoking-associated materials will be sent to the Deputy Head (Pastoral). Pupils found smoking/vaping or in possession of smoking-associated materials can expect to be subject to an appropriate sanction in line with the seriousness of their misconduct.

6. School Rules in Relation to Alcohol Possession and Consumption

It is against the law for someone under 18 to buy alcohol, attempt to buy alcohol, or to be sold alcohol.

It is unacceptable for any pupil to be involved in possessing or consuming alcohol whilst at School, whilst travelling to or from School, taking part in an activity or trip organised by the School. It is unacceptable for any pupil either to be at School showing the effects of alcohol consumption or to miss School or any School activity for the same reason. Pupils should not return to School having consumed alcohol elsewhere.

Whilst boarding, pupils who are 18 are not allowed to visit local pubs or licensed premises.

Any contravention of this policy will result in a pupil facing disciplinary action in accordance with the School's Behaviour, Rewards and Sanctions Policy.

7. The School's Response to Suspected Misuse of Drugs/Alcohol

If a member of staff has reason to suspect that a pupil has contravened this policy by the illicit or excessive consumption of drugs including alcohol, he/she/they must report the situation to the Head and/or the Director of Safeguarding, who will decide whether further investigation is warranted. Any drugs/alcohol related incidents will be viewed through a safeguarding lens to ensure the safety of the pupil(s) involved. An investigation is likely to involve searching the pupil(s) possessions, in accordance with the School policy and Department for Education advice.

Pupils found to have broken the rules on drugs/alcohol can expect to be subject to an appropriate sanction in line with the seriousness of their misconduct, including possible exclusion from School.

A pupil may be referred to counselling (at the parent's expense) where the School has reason to believe the pupil has issues with drugs/alcohol, for example, where there are repeated infringements of this policy.

⁴ The Smoke Free (Premises and Enforcement) Regulations 2006

8. The School's Response to Incidents of Intoxication

If a pupil is suspected of being under the influence of drugs/alcohol on School premises, the School will prioritise the safety of the pupil and those around them. If necessary, it will be dealt with as a medical emergency, administering First Aid and summoning appropriate support. Parents will be contacted, and the Police may be contacted, depending on the circumstances. If the pupil is felt to be at risk, other agencies may need to be contacted, in accordance with the School's *Safeguarding and Protecting Children Policy and Procedures*.

Pupils can speak to Health Centre staff or the School Counsellor without fear of sanction. Parents themselves are encouraged to inform the Head, Director of Safeguarding or Deputy Head (Pastoral) if they have any reason to believe that their son or daughter may have been involved with drugs, so that suitable support and assistance can be given.

If a pupil is suspected to have been drinking alcohol or is suspected to be under the influence of drugs in School:

- The medical needs of the pupil will be assessed by Health Centre staff.
- Pupil's parents will be informed and required to collect the pupil
- The pupil's parents will be informed verbally and in writing (copy of letter placed on pupil file).
- He/she/they will be interviewed by the Director of Safeguarding or a member of the Pastoral or Safeguarding Team.
- He/she/they will receive a suitable sanction in accordance with the School's Behaviour, Rewards and Sanctions Policy.
- Parents will be invited to an interview with the Head.
- The School may notify key agencies such as Police, Children's Social Care etc.

9. Drug Use and Misuse, Drug Testing

The possession, use or supply of drugs is forbidden.

Some pupils may require medicines that have been prescribed for their medical condition during the School day, this will be managed in accordance with the *Protocol for the Administration of Prescribed and Non-Prescribed Medication by School Staff*. Pupils should never share their medication with other pupils.

Where the School has concerns about suspected drug use by a pupil outside the school, parents will be invited to discuss those concerns with the Head, Director of Safeguarding or Deputy Head (Pastoral) and a test may be requested on the basis that, whatever the outcome of the test, the response would be pastoral in the first instance.

The Head reserves the right to ask any pupil to undertake a drug test where there are reasonable grounds for suspicion. These would include being found in possession of drugs, association with others involved in drug use, anti-social or erratic behaviour, a marked change in attitude or parental, staff or pupil concern. The aim of drug testing is to support pupils by enabling them to disprove unfounded suspicions, establish trust in cases of previously admitted drug use and act as a general deterrent. The testing procedure is outlined in Appendix A.

A previous record of drug use/misuse, possession or supply at another school may make a place at St John's conditional on compliance with random drug testing at the expense of parents.

Pupils who supply drugs or encourage others to take them can expect to be permanently excluded from the School. Pupils found to be in possession of drugs on the School site for personal use can expect to be permanently excluded from the school.

At the discretion of the Head, a pupil may be allowed to return to the School if there are relevant mitigating circumstances and where the pupil agrees to comply with a supportive regime of ongoing

testing. A further positive test would result in permanent exclusion. Pupils on a random testing regime will be offered support and counselling.

10. Independent Sources of Information and Support

Talk to Frank - <http://www.talktofrank.com/>

NHS - <https://www.nhs.uk/livewell/Pages/Livewellhub.aspx> The Live Well section has information about help with drugs, alcohol and smoking.

Adfam - <https://www.adfam.org.uk/> Gives support for families dealing with drug and alcohol misuse.

Catch 22 - <https://www.catch-22.org.uk/services/surrey-young-peoples-substance-misuse-service/>
Works with young people involved in substance misuse and their families.

Drinkaware - <http://www.drinkaware.co.uk> resources for anyone concerned about themselves or someone else with a problematic relationship with alcohol.

Smokefree: NHS stop smoking support: www.nhs.uk/smokefree

Appendix A.

Drug Screening Procedure

National guidelines clarify that it is important for all head teachers to have at their disposal a full range of actions to deal with drugs in their schools.

Definitions:

Negative test: indicates that drug use is not evident within the test sample.

Non-Negative test: indicates that drug use is evident within the test sample.

Positive test: where the evidence of drug use found in the non-negative test is confirmed by a laboratory test.

Testing procedure

The testing procedure follows two stages:

- 1) Screening using point-of-contact testing kits whereby urine is collected in a single-use container which will allow a drug-testing result within minutes.
- 2) In the event of a non-negative result the sample may then be sent to a specific laboratory for further testing and analysis.

Testing procedures will be in accordance with standard good practice.

The test will be carried out under the supervision of the Deputy Head (Pastoral) or a senior member of staff, who will be present during the testing procedure and who has been appropriately trained by the company providing the testing kits. The testing will take place in the Health Centre.

If a pupil refuses to give consent to be tested, s/he will be asked to say why s/he has refused. The School will be entitled to draw inferences from his/her response and general demeanour and the Police may be informed.

Any samples collected for the purposes of drug testing will be collected using recognised chain-of-custody procedures to ensure that samples are genuine and not interfered with in any way.

The Head will normally consult the Police about the possession, consumption or supply of an illegal drug, since it carries the possibility of being a criminal offence.

The School will regularly review and update the range of tests used.

Initial testing will be undertaken at the School's expense. If further tests are required, either at parents' request or if the school deems it appropriate, then costs must be met by parents.

Notifying parents

Reasonable endeavours will be made, before a drugs test is conducted, to notify a parent of the requirement for a drugs test and the reasons for that requirement.

Confidentiality and records

Records of the testing will be kept in accordance with the School's *Data Protection Policy and Compliance Procedures for Staff* and may include joint disclosure of results to relevant partner agencies.

After the test

The School will treat a non-negative test as evidence that the pupil has been using drugs. A meeting will be arranged at which:

- The pupil will be asked to meet with the Head (or, in her absence, the Deputy Head (Pastoral) or Director of Safeguarding with his/her parents and/or his/her Housemaster/mistress to assist him/her.
- The evidence of the non-negative sample and all other relevant evidence will be put to the pupil and s/he will be invited to respond.
- His/her response will be heard and considered and further enquiries, including further laboratory testing, will be made if necessary.
- The Head will make a finding of fact based on the evidence and supported by reasons.

The Head or Deputy Head (Pastoral) will judge the seriousness of the case and reserve the right to inform the Police. Any sanctions will be issued according to the *Behaviour, Rewards and Policy*.

Pupils who supply drugs or encourage others to take them can expect to be permanently excluded from the School. Pupils found to be in possession of drugs on the School site for personal use can expect to be permanently excluded from the school.

At the discretion of the Head, a pupil may be allowed to return to the School if there are relevant mitigating circumstances and where the pupil agrees to comply with a supportive regime of ongoing testing. A further positive test would result in permanent exclusion. Pupils on the regime of ongoing testing will be offered support and counselling.

If the pupil is permanently excluded, s/he and his/her parents will be offered a Governors' Appeal, as outlined in the *Permanent Exclusion Policy and Procedure*. His/her exclusion may be continued in the interim.

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 her (which may be immediate). Significant amendments to the procedure will be published as soon as is practical.