



The Ursuline Academy Ilford

Drugs Policy

2024

The Ursuline Academy Ilford

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1. Vision

The School Mission Statement states clearly that at the Ursuline Academy “we strive to create an inclusive environment where everyone in our diverse community can reach their full potential in all their endeavours”. We aim to recognise the value and uniqueness of every student we teach and create a community which is inclusive, one whose basis is mutual respect and equality. We promote high standards of work and behaviour.

Drugs – Definition

‘A substance people take to change the way they feel, think, or behave’
(United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime)

A drug is a substance that affects the way in which the body functions physically, emotionally or mentally. For the purpose of this policy, by ‘drugs’ we are referring to:

- All illegal drugs (those controlled by the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971)
- All legal drugs, including alcohol, tobacco, vapes, volatile substances (those giving off a gas or vapour which can be inhaled), ketamine, khat, alkyl nitrites (known as poppers) and new psychoactive drugs (‘legal highs’)
- All over the counter and prescription medicine
- Drugs paraphernalia- items such as canisters, cannabis grinders, rolling papers, filters, matches, lighters and pipes.

At the Ursuline Academy we:

- are aware of the harm that drugs can do to individuals, families and the community.
- are developing our policy as our part in contributing to the national drug strategy and Redbridge’s corporate drug strategy.
- are committed to the health and well-being of the whole school community.

The purpose and rationale for this policy is:

- to inform all members of the school community and the individuals and organisations that support it about the school’s commitment to preventing drug misuse and our strategy for putting that into practice.
- to help create a safe and healthy environment in which students and staff can work and achieve.
- to set out the school’s response to drug related incidents.
- to set out a whole school curriculum for drug education as part of the provision for PSHCE.
- to outline the roles and responsibilities of key people in implementing the policy.

The policy covers:

- the use of medicines, tobacco, alcohol, solvents and illegal drugs.
- the physical areas where drugs may be used including school premises, school journeys and visits.

This policy has links with the:

- Behaviour Policy
- Exclusion Policy
- Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy

- The Educational Visits Policy

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2. Drug Education in the Curriculum

All students have an entitlement to receive drug education throughout the school as part of a spiral curriculum from Year 7 to Year 13.

The aims for our drugs education programme are

- to ensure that all students get accurate and up-to-date information about the risks of using drugs, the legal position concerning drugs and the help that students need to develop the skills to make informed and responsible decisions.
- to help students develop positive attitudes such as self-esteem, respect for their bodies, responsibility for themselves and others.

Drug education will be delivered through a programme which

- involves a cross-curricular approach using PSHE and Citizenship, English, Science and Religious Education.
- is taught by a team of teachers using a variety of teaching methods
- is managed by the Senior Leadership Team in conjunction with Heads of Department and Heads of Year.
- Where possible uses the skills and expertise of approved external agencies and speakers (e.g. Police School's Officer and School nurse)

A safe climate for students to learn about drugs will be established by the negotiation of ground rules about

- confidentiality
- listening to each other
- respect for diverse views within each class

Parents/Carers will be informed about drug education and drug related issues by

- information in the school Weekly newsletter
- information evenings –arranged ad hoc for interested parents.

3. Managing Drug-Related Incidents

School rules about drugs on school premises are

- all medicines should be administered according to **the Administration of Medication Policy and guidance** (available in Reception)
- No smoking is allowed in any part of the school premises or on school journeys and visits.
- Alcohol is kept on school premises for community and staff events, Altar wine is also used for Mass. Alcohol must be stored securely by staff on school premises. No student should be in school in possession of or under the influence of alcohol. No student on a school trip should be in possession of or under the influence of alcohol. There are guidelines in the code of conduct policy which refer to the use of alcohol by staff.
- solvents may be used in Science, Design Technology and Art. No other solvents should be on school premises or on school journeys and visits.
- No illegal drugs, tobacco, shisha pens/pipes, or new psychoactive substances (NPS/ legal highs) are allowed on school premises or on school journeys and visits.

General principles which the school will follow in deciding a response to a drug related incident are that

- all situations will be carefully assessed before deciding on a response.
- the needs of the individual will be balanced with the needs of the health and safety of the school as a whole.
- sanctions will be used in proportion to the nature and seriousness of the offence.
- Possession or use of substances will be dealt with according to the school's disciplinary procedures as outlined in the Behaviour Policy. ***There is Zero tolerance to the supply and use of illegal drugs in school and this will result in permanent exclusion.***
- the school will attempt to ensure that the student is referred to a suitable agency for advice and counselling.

Drug Misuse Outside the School Premises

In line with Behaviour in schools Advice for headteachers and school staff (September 2022) the school may impose sanctions on a student for misusing drugs outside schools when students are:

- taking part in any school-organised or school-related activity or
- travelling to or from school or
- in some way identifiable as a student at the school. The school may also impose sanctions on a student for misusing drugs at any time, whether or not the conditions above apply, if the misuse:
 - could have repercussions for the orderly running of the school or
 - poses a threat to another student or member of the public or
 - could adversely affect the reputation of the school.

Support for students

At our school the welfare of the student is paramount and intervention will be made if the school feels a student is showing signs which indicate particular risks of, or from, involvement with drugs, whether their own or the involvement of their parents'/carers'. We believe that early intervention, where possible, is significant. Such interventions may include:

- Support and advice in school (Counsellor, School Nurse, Year Leader or Deputy Year Leader, Tutor or a member of the school safeguarding team)
- Referral to specialist outside agencies for support, e.g. Aquarius, Early Help team
- Working with the Police

4. Responsibilities of Staff

A member of staff finding or suspecting a student to be in possession on school premises should:

- inform the Headteacher/Deputy or Designated Senior staff member immediately.

A member of staff having a suspicion that drugs are being used off the school premises should:

- Pass the information on to the Headteacher/Deputy or Designated Senior staff member.

A member of staff receiving a disclosure from a student about their involvement with drugs should:

- listen carefully
- establish whether there is any immediate risk to health or safety
- explain limits of confidentiality i.e. that all disclosure of illegal drug use will be passed on to Head of Year/SLT
- Inform the Headteacher/Deputy or Designated Senior staff member

A member of staff receiving a disclosure by a student about parental drug use and/or dealing should:

- listen carefully
- explain limits of confidentiality
- Inform the Headteacher/Deputy or Designated Senior staff member

A member of staff receiving a disclosure by a parent about their own drug use should,

- Inform the Headteacher/Deputy or Designated Senior staff member

A member of staff receiving a disclosure or discovering or having suspicion about another teacher's drug use should:

Inform the Headteacher/Deputy or Designated Senior staff member immediately

5. Responsibilities

Responsibilities of the Headteacher

- establish the facts
- decide on the sanctions to be imposed
- decide upon appropriate support for the student
- *If a student is found in possession of an illegal substance, it should be removed from the student and destroyed immediately if it is not part of an immediate Police investigation. Photographic evidence can be obtained before this.*

Responsibilities of Deputy Headteacher/Designated Senior Staff for Drug related issues

- establish the facts.
- Coordinate support for students who have issues with substances or have parents/carers who have issues with substances.
- Manage any Child Protection issues arising from substance related incidents or disclosures.
- contact the student's parents /carers.
- Work with the Headteacher in handling any substance related incidents.

Searching a student

- *This may be done at the Headteacher's discretion.* If a student is believed to be in the physical possession of an illegal substance, teachers do not have the right to search that student without his or her consent in order to recover the substance. The student can be asked to surrender it, or they can be asked to empty their pockets or bag in front of the teacher. A member of the SLT must be present as a witness to the actions and any findings made. This is so that the teacher has a defence against any suggestion that the drug might be his/her own.
- If the student refuses to be searched and the school strongly suspects that the student has an illegal substance then the police may, *at the Headteacher's discretion*, be called to the school to conduct a search under the powers to search under the Act. *This may be done by the Safer Schools Officer at the Headteacher's discretion.* All the facts should be given to the officer. The officer will then have to decide if there is enough evidence to conduct the search and whether the school is the appropriate place for the search. Other more thorough searches should only be made at a police station and with a parent or other appropriate adult present.

Confidentiality

Adults working with young people may come to possess sensitive information, some of it relating to illegal activity. All parties need to be clear about the principles of confidentiality which apply in these circumstances. Drug education or interviews with students may give rise to any of the following:

- a disclosure of personal experience of drug use
- information about other people's drug use including siblings, friends and relatives.
- requests for specific help or advice in managing a personal drug-related problem.

Principles for confidentiality

- The school is not able to offer students or their parents/carers unconditional confidentiality, because of Child Protection considerations. All substance-related incidents should be brought to the attention of the Headteacher.
- The school is not obliged by law to take any action on being told that a student or any other person has used an illegal drug. However, if the Headteacher thinks that from the information disclosed that the behaviour is likely to put the young person at risk of physical or moral harm, they must pass this information on to the appropriate person in the school, following the agreed Child Protection procedures.
- The Headteacher is not obliged to contact the police if they discover evidence of illegal drug activity by their students.
- The Headteacher will contact the parent/carer in all cases for *evidence* of the use of solvents, alcohol or any illegal drug.

To instigate formal police action

- If a student is found in possession of or dealing in an illegal substance and, *at the Headteacher's discretion*, the school wishes to formally proceed with police action, the school should phone the control room at Ilford Police Station and a uniformed officer will attend to deal with the incident. The telephone number is *101*.
- The Headteacher should also contact the parent/carer as soon as possible. This is so that they are aware of the incident and how the school proposes to deal with it. A parent or guardian must be present at the police station due to the age of the student arrested.

Dealing with the Press

- The Headteacher is responsible for liaison with the media, with support from Redbridge's press office to ensure that any reporting of incidents remains in the best interests of the young people, their families, and the school.

Recording of Drug-related incidents

- All incidents where a drug has been found, whether on a student or not, should be recorded and kept on file.

Involving other agencies

- Other agencies, which the school may wish to involve in their response to a drug-related incident, are the Education Welfare Service, the School Nurse, and any counsellors used by the school.
- The Designated Senior member of staff for Drug related incidents will maintain an up-to-date list of agencies, which can provide information, advice, counselling and treatment relating to drug problems for students, staff and parents.

The name of the Designated Senior Member of Staff for Drug related issues is **Mr. CHALLIS**

Annex A

Useful Organisations

Addaction is one of the UK's largest specialist drug and alcohol treatment charities. As well as adult services, they provide services specifically tailored to the needs of young people and their parents. The Skills for Life project supports young people with drug misusing parents. Website: www.addaction.org.uk

ADFAM offers information to families of drug and alcohol users, and the website has a database of local family support services. Tel: 020 7553 7640 Email: admin@adfam.org.uk
Website: www.adfam.org.uk

Alcohol Concern works to reduce the incidence and costs of alcohol-related harm and to increase the range and quality of services available to people with alcohol-related problems
Tel: 020 7264 0510. Email: contact@alcoholconcern.org.uk Website: www.alcoholconcern.org.uk

ASH (Action on Smoking and Health) A campaigning public health charity aiming to reduce the health problems caused by tobacco. Tel: 020 7739 5902 Email: enquiries@

Children's Legal Centre operates a free and confidential legal advice and information service covering all aspects of law and policy affecting children and young people. Tel: 01206 877910 Email: clc@essex.ac.uk Website: www.childrenslegalcentre.com

Children's Rights Alliance for England - A charity working to improve the lives and status of all children in England through the full implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Email: info@crae.org.uk Website: www.crae.org.uk

Drinkaware - An independent charity that promotes responsible drinking through innovative ways to challenge the national drinking culture, helping reduce alcohol misuse and minimise alcohol related harm. Tel: 020 7307 7450 Website: www.drinkaware.co.uk/

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 24 hours a day)

Drug Education Forum – this website contains a number of useful papers and briefing sheets for use by practitioners: Website: www.drugeducationforum.com/

DrugScope is a centre of expertise on illegal drugs, aiming to inform policy development and reduce drug-related risk. The website includes detailed drug information and access to the Information and Library Service. DrugScope also hosts the Drug Education Practitioners Forum. Tel: 020 7520 7550 Email: info@drugscope.org.uk Website: www.drugscope.org.uk

FRANK is the national drugs awareness campaign aiming to raise awareness amongst young people of the risks of illegal drugs, and to provide information and advice. It also provides support to parents/carers, helping to give them the skills and confidence to communicate with their children about drugs. 24 Hour Helpline: 0800 776600 Email: frank@talktofrank.com Website: www.talktofrank.com

Mentor UK is a non-government organisation with a focus on protecting the health and wellbeing of children and young people to reduce the damage that drugs can do to their lives. Tel: 020 7739 8494. Email admin@mentoruk.org Website: www.mentoruk.org.uk

National Children's Bureau promotes the interests and well-being of all children and young people across every aspect of their lives. Tel: 020 7843 6000 Website: www.ncb.org.uk

Family Lives - A charity offering support and information to anyone parenting a child or teenager. It runs a free-phone helpline and courses for parents and develops innovative projects. Tel: 0800 800 2222 Website: <http://familylives.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. Tel: 01785 817885 Information line: 01785 810762 Email: information@re-solv.org Website: www.re-solv.org

Smokefree - NHS Smoking Helpline: 0800 169 0 169 Website: <http://smokefree.nhs.uk>

Stars National Initiative offers support for anyone working with children, young people and families affected by parental drug and alcohol misuse. Website: www.starsnationalinitiative.org.uk

Youth Offending Teams – Local Youth Offending Teams are multi-agency teams and are the responsibility of the local authority, who have a statutory duty to [prevent offending by young people under the age of 18. Website: <https://www.gov.uk/youth-offending-team>