

## **HOWELL'S SCHOOL: SUBSTANCE USE AND MISUSE POLICY (DRUGS, ALCOHOL AND TOBACCO)**

**The following policy information is drawn from the GDST:**

### **1. Introduction**

Drug misuse is a threat to individuals, families and the wider community. GDST recognises the role that schools have to play in helping to prevent the misuse of drugs, including alcohol.

In our schools, we have a responsibility to provide an effective programme of drug education, and to take steps to promote the health, safety and well-being of our pupils.

Involvement with Drugs and alcohol can be so damaging that regardless of where drug-related incidents take place, it may be that a detrimental impact will be felt within the school community.

### **2. Scope**

This policy applies to pupils at all times on school premises, and in school related activities including sporting events, educational visits, and clubs. It also applies when pupils are identifiable e.g. travelling to and from school, in the vicinity of the school, and otherwise in school uniform.

This policy may also apply entirely outside of the school context, where it is likely that there will be an impact on the welfare of members of the school community, or on the ethos of the school.

### **3. School aims**

- To create an environment which engenders safety and well-being for all members of the GDST school community;
- Through education to enable our young people to make informed, healthy choices by understanding the nature of drugs, their social and legal status, the implications of committing a criminal offence, and the potential harm to both the individual and society as a whole;
- To give pupils an opportunity to debate the issues concerning their use and abuse through the curriculum and, where appropriate, visits by outside speakers;
- To provide clear procedures and guidance to support school staff in dealing with any drug-related incidents;
- To keep drugs out of GDST schools and prevent drug (including alcohol) misuse by means of education, detection of those involved with drugs, the imposition of strong disciplinary sanctions, coupled with the provision of appropriate support and pastoral care;
- To encourage an environment in which pupils feel able to discuss anxieties relating to drugs, able to make disclosures and seek help, and in which information is provided to pupils to ensure they are aware of available sources of support;
- To ensure a recognition that drug-related issues may also involve safeguarding concerns, and appropriate safeguarding procedures will be followed; and
- To work in partnership with parents, the school community and other agencies, including the police, in relation to the above aims.

#### 4. Definitions

**Drugs** are defined by the Department for Education (DfE) as:

- All illegal drugs (those controlled by the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971);
- All legal drugs, including alcohol, tobacco, volatile substances (those giving off a gas or vapour which can be inhaled), ketamine, khat and alkyl nitrites (known as poppers); and
- All over-the-counter and prescription medicines.

**Legal highs:** New psychoactive substances (NPS) or 'legal highs' are substances designed to mimic the effect of illegal drugs but are structurally different to avoid being classified as illegal substances. For the avoidance of doubt GDST recognises legal highs as drugs.

**Drug-related incident:** Any issue relating to drugs being (or potentially being) used, bought, sold, distributed, promoted, or held, either on or off school premises, including any disclosure, suspicion or allegation relating to drugs.

#### 5. Alcohol use

College students are not permitted to drink alcohol on school trips and the majority of school events with the exception of certain celebrations e.g. Prizegiving when a small drink is allowed.

#### 6. Over-the-counter and prescription medicines

Where a pupil has medicine for a legitimate medical purpose, the GDST Administration of Medicines Protocol must be followed, together with the relevant school's procedures relating to the administration of medicines.

#### 7. Disciplinary Sanctions

Drug related incidents will be dealt with by schools in accordance with the GDST exclusions policy.

Anyone involved in the **supply or distribution** of drugs on or off school grounds should expect to be permanently excluded.

Anyone **using or in possession of** drugs on or off school grounds should expect to be excluded in some form.

Any suspected criminal offence is likely to be referred to the police.

There may be exceptional circumstances in which the normal disciplinary sanctions would not be appropriate.

#### 8. Searching pupils for drugs, alcohol and tobacco

Any member of school staff can, in appropriate circumstances, search pupils for **any item with their consent**.

Heads and authorised staff are entitled to carry out searches of pupils and their property (including bags, pockets, desks and lockers) **without consent**, where there are reasonable grounds for suspecting the pupil may have a **prohibited item**.

Prohibited items are:

- knives or weapons
- alcohol
- illegal drugs
- stolen items
- tobacco and cigarette papers
- E-cigarettes/vaping equipment
- fireworks
- pornographic images
- any article that the member of staff reasonably suspects has been, or is likely to be, used to commit an offence, or to cause personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the pupil)
- any item banned by the school rules which has been identified in the rules as an item which may be searched for.

Prohibited items may be confiscated, disposed of, or handed to the police.

## **9. Drug testing**

Random drugs testing (in accordance with the GDST Drug Testing Protocol for Pupils), may be put in place in exceptional circumstances.

## **10. Linked Policies**

This policy should be read in conjunction with GDST and school policies relating to:

- Schools' own policies on drugs, alcohol and tobacco/vapes
- Behaviour and discipline
- Safeguarding
- Exclusions
- Educational visits
- Administration of medicines
- GDST drug testing protocol for pupils.

## HOWELL'S SCHOOL: SUBSTANCE USE AND MISUSE POLICY

Howell's recognises the role that it should play in helping to prevent the misuse of drugs or similar substances. We have pastoral care and support schemes in place and seek to assist parents in preventing abuse, through educating students about the physical, emotional and social dangers involved. This is delivered through the school's PSHE programme and involves a number of outside agencies to ensure that information for all students is current and explained with authority. The consequences of committing a criminal offence will be made very clear to students.

### Drug Education

- Education about illegal drugs is an integral part of the Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) programme which is given to students throughout their school career.
- Outside agencies such as our local Police Officer Liaison will also be used.
- Students will be given accurate information about drug use and its risks, and will be encouraged to develop skills and attitudes which will enable them to make informed and sensible choices about their health.
- Peer group pressure exerts a significant influence of the initiation and maintenance of drug use. Students will be encouraged to resist drugs in the context of personal values and personal responsibilities towards other people.
- The school aims to provide a strong pastoral framework with Designated Persons to afford both students and parents easy access to appropriate support, in and out of school.

### Response to incidents in school

- All incidents involving actual or suspected possession of illegal substances will be reported to the Principal.
- Students should be aware that *any information divulged to staff about illegal activity cannot be held to in confidence and will be passed to the Principal.*
- While respecting students' rights to privacy, where there are reasonable grounds, the Principal may require a pupil to show the contents of their locker, bag or other property to a senior member of staff.
- **In accordance with the policy of the GDST, any student found possessing, using or supplying illegal drugs on school property should expect to be permanently excluded from school.**
- In any incident involving possession of illegal substances, the Principal may inform the police.
- If well-supported information concerning out of school use of drugs is received by the Principal she will inform parents.
- Where there is perceived to be a need for counselling, the school will provide help and support, and advice about professional services available.

### Approaches to Tobacco, Alcohol and Drug Education

#### Tobacco

Smoking is the single greatest cause of preventable illness and premature death in our society. The school policy on smoking aims to give pupils the message that the habit creates health problems for smokers and non-smokers alike and that non-smoking represents the norm in society.

Smoking, or being in possession of cigarettes or tobacco, is prohibited when a student is at Howell's. Vaping is also prohibited. This includes throughout the school day, when at an activity organised by the school or when in school uniform.

### **Alcohol**

Alcohol is readily available and generally considered acceptable in many social groups. Given its prevalence and the vulnerability of young people to the impact of alcohol misuse and changes in drinking behaviours, educating students about the effects of alcohol and how to reduce alcohol related harm is an important priority for all schools.

Drinking, or being in possession of alcohol is prohibited when a student is under school authority (see above). There may be exceptions, such as the option to serve wine to over 18s at the Prizegiving, but such exceptions will be clearly explained to students and parents.

### **Drug Education**

Drug education should enable students to develop their knowledge, skills, attitudes and understanding about drugs and appreciate the benefits of a healthy lifestyle, relating this to their own and others' actions.

### **Aims**

The school aims to give students information about drugs and help them develop the skills and attitudes to make healthy and safe decisions about drug use. To achieve this, our drug education programme will help students:

- gain knowledge and understanding about the effects and risks and dangers of drugs and correct myths and misunderstandings
- develop skills to make informed decisions, including communication, self-awareness, negotiation, finding information, help and advice, helping others and managing situations involving drugs
- develop skills to manage situations involving drugs including assessing and avoiding risks, assertiveness and refusal skills and helping others
- explore their own and other peoples' attitudes to drugs, drug use and drug users, including challenging stereotypes and dispelling myths and exploring media and social influences

Drug education is delivered through assemblies, PSHE and science lessons. The programme is based on the Personal and Social Education Framework for 7 – 19 year olds in Wales and advice from the All Wales School Liaison Team.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) girls learn that medicines are given by an adult to help them feel better. They also learn the importance of being safe and not touching medicines.

At Key Stage 1 girls learn about the role of drugs as medicine and they also learn about healthy eating.

At Key Stage 2 girls learn about the effects on the human body of tobacco, alcohol and other drugs and how these relate to their personal health. They also learn about making choices, looking after their bodies and healthy eating.

At Key Stage 3 students learn more about the effects and risks of drugs and the laws relating to drugs. They learn the skills to recognise and manage risk and to resist pressures. They continue to develop the skills to make choices for a healthy lifestyle and learn about where to go for help and advice.

At Key Stage 4 and 5 students build on their knowledge and learn more about the effects of drug misuse on family, friends, community and society. They gain greater understanding through clarifying their opinions and attitudes in discussions and debate and considering the consequences of their decisions.

### **Methodology and Resources**

We use a variety of teaching methods to deliver drug education with the aim of making sessions as interactive as possible. These may include the following: debates, quizzes, role play, discussion, small-group activities, worksheets, visiting speakers, theatre groups, TV programmes. Visiting speakers, theatre groups and external agencies may be used to support and extend the classroom teaching. These will always complement the school's scheme of work for drugs education and a teacher will always be present and retain overall responsibility in the classroom.

**Please refer to the PSHE delivery programme for dates and times of lessons and workshops for these topics.**

**N Chyba September 2022**