

Drugs and Drug Testing Policy

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This policy is endorsed by	The Governors and The Heads
This policy is owned by	Managing Head of Bedales
This policy is maintained by	Managing Head of Bedales

BEDALES SCHOOLS: DRUGS POLICY**(For implementation in September 2011)****INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE POLICY**

As a school, we want to give our students motive and support to live drug free lives, especially during term time.

This policy has been developed following extensive consultation in autumn 2010 and spring 2011: its aim is to combine the best of our previous zero tolerance policy with the potential to exercise discretion, making it more likely that students who need help will come forward and seek help.

Definition

- All illegal drugs (those compiled by the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971)
- Volatile substances (those giving off a gas or vapour which can be inhaled) for example, ketamine, khat and alkyl nitrates (known as 'poppers')
- Misuse of over-the-counter and prescription medicines and so-called 'legal highs'.

In this document, the word 'drug' applies to all of the above.

Approach and scope of policy

Our approach is based on education and a strong disciplinary framework: drugs' education (mainly through PSHE) explains the risks (to students' health and well-being) of involvement with drugs and thereby aims to create a culture that enables the individual to say no to experimentation and misuse. In addition, the disciplinary framework gives a very clear message: that drug use and membership of Bedales School are incompatible. Any student involved with the misuse of drugs on school premises or during school time, automatically loses his/her right to remain at the school. A reported offence which takes place away from the school, whether at a weekend or in the holidays, which comes to the school's attention or is in any way made public in such a way that it brings the school into disrepute, is additionally likely to have disciplinary ramifications for the students.

Authority for the policy

This policy was framed following considerable consultation, based within the school community and with current parents. It was put forward to governors for their approval at their March 2011 meeting. Agreed at that point, parents were informed in April 2011 that the change would come into force at the start of the Autumn term 2011 and that there would be a change to the standard terms and conditions in order to reflect the new drugs policy.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POLICY

The policy will be implemented as follows:

1) Prevention through education

Students' education about drugs and substances is primarily delivered through the school's PSHE programme, delivered in Block time; this is done through internally-led sessions and through using a range of visiting speakers. Staff are kept up to date on new trends within drugs' subculture.

2) Counselling, Confidentiality and Support Programmes

Students are encouraged to discuss their concerns and anxieties about drugs in confidence with members of staff or other responsible adults. Matters raised in confidential counselling in this way will not be subject to disciplinary sanctions. Likewise, any concerns brought forward by a parent on behalf of their son or daughter will be dealt with in this manner. Any student who comes forward with a drug problem to a member of staff will be offered support in working to reform his or her lifestyle; this will involve agreeing to take part in an individualised drugs testing programme. This also applies if the request for help follows disclosure by his or her parent.

3) Disciplinary Procedures

a) If a student is suspected of taking drugs or being under the influence of drugs at school, the school may exercise the right to require that student to undergo a urine test at the Health Centre. The decision to authorise a test can only be taken by the Managing Head of the Senior School or, in his absence, the Deputy Managing Head of the Senior School.

b) Suspicious of misuse may arise from the following indications

Involvement in a drugs incident; physical signs; other signs or evidence, such as finding certain items of equipment associated with drug use and information received outside the circumstances outlined in paragraph 2; other specific circumstances giving rise to suspicion, such as significant erratic behaviour.

c) Investigation

The Managing Head of the Senior School will be responsible for conducting an investigation. This investigation and any accompanying searches of rooms and personal belongings will be conducted in keeping with the school policy on investigation and searches, parents will be kept informed as far as practical. This is outlined in the school's investigation protocol.

d) Testing

If the grounds for suspicion are deemed to be sufficient, a student may be required to take a urine test or other suitable test straight away. Consent to testing is explicit in the standard terms and conditions. It is a condition of acceptance of any new student that these conditions are agreed. All returning students implicitly

accept this condition with their return to school in September 2011. Refusal to take a test therefore constitutes a refusal to obey the discipline of the school. An individualised testing regime may involve the use of a range of suitable tests. This is outlined in the school's testing protocol.

e) Discipline following misuse

- i) If a student has come forward voluntarily to a member of staff with a drug problem – or help has been sought on his or her behalf by a parent - that student will be put on an individualised drug testing regime, supported by additional pastoral care and monitoring. If an investigation is already underway, a student's coming forward or being put forward in this manner would be negated. A condition of remaining at the school is that that student must agree to be tested at times of the school's choosing throughout the rest of their Bedales career. Any positive test will cause that student to leave the school.
- ii) As a result of an ordinary investigation, based on the grounds cited above in section 3b), will lead to that student leaving the school, except where there are exceptional, mitigating circumstances.
- iii) Any student found to be supplying, or in possession of illegal drugs with the intent to supply, will be expelled.
- iv) Any student caught in possession of, or using illegal drugs should expect to lose their place at the school as a result.
- v) The Headmaster will inform the Police of details of all incidents involving illegal drugs.

Investigation and testing protocols relating to this policy are available on request from the Headmaster's office.

KJB
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