



FINHAM PARK  
MULTI ACADEMY TRUST

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## **DRUGS, ALCOHOL, SUBSTANCE ABUSE POLICY**

Finham Park School  
Green Lane  
Coventry  
CV3 6EA

Tel: 024 7641 8135  
Fax: 024 7684 0803  
Email: [headteacher@finhampark.co.uk](mailto:headteacher@finhampark.co.uk)  
[www.finhampark.co.uk](http://www.finhampark.co.uk)

Executive Headteacher: Mark Bailie  
Chair of Trustees: Peter Burns MBE JP





## **Drugs Education and Dealing with cases of Drugs Misuse Policy**

### **RATIONALE**

The use of substances for their physical or psychological effects is not new and has been a part of human experience for millennia. Drugs that are now illegal often have been legal in the past, and the use of legal drugs such as alcohol and tobacco still play a large part in our culture and, for many, can be an everyday experience. More recently drug taking has become an integral part of youth culture, including the use of both legal drugs, such as alcohol and tobacco, and illegal drugs. Against this background schools must offer drug education that gives accurate information which enables young people to make informed choices, and be up to date and responsive to new concerns (ie Mephedrone, Khat, Nitrous Oxide in recent years.)

The MAT Board of Directors intend that all MAT schools will be caring communities in which we believe in the need to contribute to the safety of our pupils and prepare them for their future lives. It is recognised that drug taking is prevalent in all areas of society

Finham Park MAT does not advocate illegal drug use, but recognises that many young people will experiment with and use illegal drugs. All MAT schools must acknowledge the importance of their pastoral role and offer support for young people.

For the purpose of this guidance a drug can be defined as any substance that alters the way somebody feels or behaves.

### **AIM**

Our aim is to inform pupils about drugs in a practical and realistic way that has their safety as the central focus. Pupils need to be informed about drugs, to have thought carefully about them and be encouraged to make sensible, informed and healthy decisions about their own and other people's drug use. We can only achieve this if all MAT directors, governors, staff and parents are well informed and work together, and recognise that our ultimate aim must be to reinforce a message which is against the taking of illegal drugs, and to encourage deep thought about the use of legal drugs.





## **OBJECTIVES**

- To promote pupils' self-esteem and confidence in making their own decisions free from peer pressure.
- To give accurate information about substances, using a variety of sources.
- To challenge attitudes pupils may have regarding substance use and misuse.
- To impart successful techniques to resist negative peer pressure.
- To persuade those who are experimenting with or misusing drugs to stop, in the interests of their safety, education, and long term health.
- To provide opportunities for pupils to be equipped with the skills they need to avoid the misuse of drugs.
- To enable any pupils who are misusing drugs or who have concerns about the misuse of drugs to identify sources of appropriate personal support.

## **EDUCATION**

### **CURRICULUM**

In England and Wales certain aspects of drug education are a statutory requirement as part of the National Curriculum. The PSHE framework also contains appropriate curricula for all age groups.

### **GOOD PRACTICE IN DRUG EDUCATION IS ABOUT**

- Developing supportive and consistent practices – be realistic.
- Encouraging pupils to listen to and support each other.
- Developing a positive climate in which pupils and adults feel able to talk openly and honestly about their views and experiences.





- Integration with other aspects of Health Education to reinforce messages about healthy lifestyles.
- Recognising the role the Internet and e-mail may have in spreading disinformation regarding drugs.
- Running programmes within the MAT that are relevant, flexible and develop as pupils grow older.
- Using a wide range of teaching and learning methods which provide opportunities for active participation.
- Adequate resourcing in terms of time, materials, appropriate staff and staff development and training.
- Working in a way which is relevant to the needs and experiences of all pupils – ie up to date, adaptive and accessing media events
- Involvement of other organisations to support the work where appropriate.
- Make students aware of the ‘business’ of drug use and abuse, and the links with crime and other societal concerns.
- Working with parents, Governors and all staff connected with the MAT, where appropriate.
- An awareness that Drug Education also includes an understanding of the proper use of medicinal drugs.

### **MAT GOVERNORS AND EXECUTIVE HEADTEACHER**

The MAT Board of Directors are responsible for the development and approval of its policy for drug education and drug-related incidents.

The Headteacher will assume responsibility for the implementation of this policy, for liaison with the school’s Local Governing Body, parents, other MAT and non-MAT schools and appropriate outside agencies. The Headteacher will also ensure that lead staff in this area are effectively supported and trained.





### **DRUGS EDUCATION CO-ORDINATOR**

In accordance with Coventry City Council Policy (December 1994) and following DFE Circular 4/95 "Drug Prevention and Schools", a Drugs Education Co-ordinator has been / will be identified for each MAT school. This person has general responsibility for handling the implementation of the school policy and can act as an advisor and offer advice on drug-related incidents.

Policy at school level will need to name each member of staff here for avoidance of doubt

### **TEACHERS**

It is important to recognise that drug use and misuse should be seen as a whole-school issue and that all staff within MAT schools have a part to play. Staff should be aware that their conduct in school and the attitudes or views they espouse can have a significant impact on the readiness of pupils to adopt responsible attitudes and behaviour in relation to drugs.

MAT staff must have the confidence to deliver clear and consistent messages about drugs, and need access to up to date facts about drug misuse, to new materials and successful teaching approaches. Staff also need to be aware of any students taking prescribed medication, i.e. in relation to behavioural difficulties, as this may affect attitudes and values students have towards drugs.

### **OUTSIDE SPEAKERS**

Where outside speakers are involved, their contribution must be properly planned as part of an overall programme. Their contribution should complement other teaching, the tone and substance should match the age and maturity of the pupils involved, and teachers should always be involved so they are able to deal with any follow-up questions or concerns.

### **SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS**

Drug education is just as necessary for pupils with special educational needs. Children with learning difficulties may need more help than others in understanding what sorts of behaviour are and are not acceptable, in resisting peer group pressure and in developing the confidence and skills to resist drugs.

For children and young people who have emotional and behavioural difficulties, alcohol or substance misuse may be among a number of symptoms.





## **PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT**

Finham Park MAT expects to have the support and encouragement of parents in this work. To ensure this we recognise the need to keep parents fully informed about the policy and its implementation. Parent Workshops can provide a forum for discussion and an opportunity for parents to contribute.

## **MANAGING INCIDENTS**

### **THE LAW ON DRUGS**

### **SIGNS OF DRUG MISUSE**

### **MANAGING INCIDENTS RELATING TO ILLEGAL DRUGS**

#### **Confiscating the Substance**

The law permits MAT staff to take temporary possession of a substance suspected of being a controlled drug, for the purposes of protecting a pupil from harm and committing the offence of possession – in the presence of a witness wherever possible.

In all cases a member of the MAT Leadership Team or Head of College or equivalent should be informed immediately.

A written record of the incident and action that has been taken must be made. Details should be recorded by the teacher involved.

MAT staff should not attempt to analyse or taste an unidentified substance. An unidentified substance should be treated as illegal in the first instance, unless it is clear (from the adult involved professional judgement) that this is not the case.

Where pupils are suspected of concealing illegal drugs on their person, every effort should first be made to secure the voluntary production of any unlawful substances, for example, by asking them to turn out their pockets. Intimate physical searches should never be made by a teacher.

If a pupil refuses, the Headteacher may decide to contact the parents and/or the Police.

Any substance found should be retained until investigations into the incident of which it is part are complete.





Staff understand that it is important that any suspected incidents are quickly responded to. All staff should be aware that they will not be put in a position themselves to make judgments / take action, if their expertise is not sufficient. Rather, they should:

-in the first instance ensure that the student involved is safe and well; student wellbeing (and maybe then first aid) is the main priority.

-staff should then (by email preferably) contact senior MAT staff and / or drugs co-ordinator who can then remove the student and take the appropriate action.

### **Subsequent Action**

Action to be taken is determined by the Headteacher or one of the MAT school's Leadership Team.

It should be noted it is vital that no substance should be destroyed until investigations into the incident of which it is part are complete.

In the vast majority of cases parents should then be informed that their son or daughter is involved with a drugs related incident.

However, in a small minority of cases there may be legitimate grounds for not informing parents immediately if it is clear that:

- They may seriously over-react and possibly cause physical harm to the young person.
- The parents are believed to be directly involved in the situation causing concern. In those situations, other appropriate agencies must be informed.

### **Allegations of Drug Use**

In any school, from time to time allegations may be made regarding drug use. This may be from other students notifying staff as to a students' involvement; students own conversations/claims being overheard or suspicions raised by staff, responding to unusual behaviour or mood. In such cases:

- A Head of College or member of the Leadership Team or MAT equivalent shall investigate any such incident thoroughly and respond appropriately.
- If, through these investigations, there is anything confirmed as putting a student at risk, then the appropriate MAT staff responsible for Child Protection should be immediately informed.





- If any allegations are proven correct, then the following and previous measures highlighted in this document should be adopted. If allegations were reported by students, knowing them to be untrue, in other words, deliberately fabricating allegations – then this will also be dealt with appropriately.

### **Trips and Residential**

The same procedures apply for any **school trip**. Trips abroad are a greyer area; in that staff knowledge of individual countries' drug laws will probably not be detailed. Advice should be sought from the Drugs Coordinator by any staff taking foreign trips, if they so wish. It is up to individual residential leaders as to their own risk assessments regarding legal drugs, ie whether the smoking of cigarettes will be allowed. It is not advised to allow any student, even at KS5, to drink alcohol on any visit in the UK or abroad.

### **Discipline**

The Headteacher retains the responsibility for deciding appropriate disciplinary action taking account factors such as:

- Whether the incident involved one pupil or a group of pupils.
- Any evidence of peer group pressure.
- Whether the quantity is such that it could only be for personal use by the possessor.
- Indications whether there was an intention to supply to others.
- The previous conduct of the possessor.
- The nature of the substance involved.

Fixed Term exclusions may be appropriate in some cases and Permanent exclusion may be warranted as a final sanction when all other reasonable steps have been taken.

When a pupil is permanently excluded from school for a drug-related offence the Headteacher has a professional obligation to support a pupil's transfer to another school and also direct the pupil and family to their GP and suitable counselling.

“Indications are that young people **permanently** excluded from school may find themselves in a downward spiral of victimisation and criminalisation which precludes, or, at the very least, makes rehabilitation into education difficult.”

(West Midlands Police: Policy Statement on School Liaison 1995)





### **Police referrals**

It may be appropriate to inform the Police about drugs incidents even if the school does not wish the Police to deal with any incident. It is better if schools manage incidents 'in house' but it may be helpful if the Police are informed, in order that their knowledge of drugs related activity in the local community is strengthened.

The involvement of the Police should always be at the discretion of the Headteacher.

### **MANAGING INCIDENTS RELATING TO LEGAL SUBSTANCES**

Some legal drugs or other substances when abused can produce dramatic mood or behavioural changes and in most cases a similar course of action to that relating to illegal drugs can be followed. These include:

- Alcohol.
- Solvents such as glue, aerosols, butane gas, some felt-tip pens, correction fluid etc.
- Nitrites, often called "poppers", and referring to amyl, butyl, or isobutyl nitrite. "Poppers" are sold in joke or sex shops under many brand names.
- 'legal highs' – a variety of drugs, easily found on the Internet. Nitrous Oxide use has been becoming more prevalent during 2015.

### **TOBACCO**

Pupils should be made aware of the health dangers associated with tobacco, including passive smoking, and of the legal framework around smoking in public places. Disregard for MAT school restrictions on smoking should be treated as any other breach of school discipline, and the use of the Behaviour for Learning system or equivalent, parental contact and referrals should happen.

Finham Park MAT is aware of the correlation between the smoking of tobacco and use of illegal drugs and issues such as the prevalence of female smoking and amongst KS5 students.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

Finham Park MAT will consider carefully the response of teachers approached by a pupil for individual advice on illegal drug misuse. Where a pupil discloses to a teacher that he or she is taking drugs the teacher should make clear to the pupil that he or she can offer no guarantee of confidentiality given the seriousness of drug misuse. A teacher might point to





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sources of confidential information and advice and to treatment and rehabilitation services to help those who are misusing illegal drugs to stop.

### **HELP AND GUIDANCE**

Finham Park MAT will advertise / highlight contact details for pupils and parents who may want to seek confidential advice and support on drug problems, ie local organisations, NHS, Talk to Frank.





## DRUGS POLICY

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Approved by Governors:

2 October 2012

**Updated: December 2015**

Signed:

MARK BAILIE  
Executive Headteacher

Date: 3/3/16

Signed:

FANNY ANDERSON  
Board member

Date: 3/3/16

Signed:

PETER BURNS – Chair of the Multi Academy Trust

Date: 3/3/16

