Upton-by-Chester High School

Drugs Policy

Policy Link	
SLT	Mrs K McCarthy
Governor	Mrs R Bryson
Statutory	No

To	Date
Committee	Pastoral- October 2026
Full Governing Body	
Next Review	October 2027
Make available on:	**Yes/ No**
School website	Yes
Staff shared area	Yes

'Learning to shape the future'

Contents **Page**

Aims	3
Education and prevention	3
Definition of a drug	3
Drugs on school premises	4
Responses to drug related incidents	5
Drug misuse outside the school premises	5
Individuals in possession of drugs	6
Confidentiality	6
Support for learners	6
Right to search	6
Record keeping	7
Useful organisations	7
Appendix 1 – Management of a drug related issue	9

The policy is informed by DfE and ACPO non-statutory drugs advice for schools September 2012. It also takes into account the DfE Guidance on Searching, Screening and Confiscation.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/270169/drug_advice_for_schools.pdf

Upton-by-Chester High School promote the rules of Prepared, Respectful and Safe and actively seeks to provide an environment where all members of the community are safe from harm. As such, the school takes a robust approach to any individual or group that violates our behaviour, drugs or anti-bullying policies.

This is a school where human rights are respected; as such the responsibility to maintain high standards of behaviour lies with all members of the Upton-by-Chester High School community. The school acknowledges its legal duties under the Equalities Act 2010 in relation to all protected groups including SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) and will always take their circumstances into account. It is our aim to help all learners to be able to take their place safely in a world where a wide range of drugs exist.

1. Aims

- To provide drugs education which helps individuals to make health choices about their lifestyles by increasing their understanding of the implications of drug use and misuse. Examples of how this is done – PSHE, talks from speakers.
- To enable individuals to identify sources of appropriate personal support when confronted by issues involving drugs – Form Tutor, Pastoral Support Manager, Head of Year, Designated Safeguarding Lead, School Nurse, GP.
- To keep the school free from drugs.
- To work collaboratively with parents/carers and outside agencies in the implementation of this policy.
- To ensure that the school's practices meet legal requirements and take account of DFE and LA guidance about drugs.

2. Education and Prevention

We believe that knowledge is power and so we ensure that age appropriate education and support is provided through the PSHE curriculum, science lessons as well as during PLaN time and through assemblies.

Learners say that they find input from external education agencies particularly useful. In response we aim to ensure that this is provided by approved agencies at regular intervals throughout their time at Upton-by-Chester High School. We also recognise the importance of training of staff and will make sure this is regular, up to date and context specific.

The school's drugs education programme will be reviewed annually. This review will be led by the teacher responsible for PSHE.

3. Definition of a drug

A drug is a substance that affects the way in which the body functions physically, emotionally or mentally. For purposes of this policy, by 'drugs' we are referring to illegal substances and also legal substances such as: alcohol, tobacco, volatile substances, over the counter or prescription medicines and new psychoactive substances. By Drugs Paraphernalia we mean items such as cannabis grinders, rolling papers, filters, matches, lighters and pipes etc.

Drugs on school premises

The legal definition of school premises includes everything within the property boundaries including buildings, outbuildings, playgrounds, fields and also extends to include other settings such as vehicles, boats, marquees or any venue managed by the school at the time e.g. premises of a school trip or visit.

The split site nature of Upton-by-Chester High School means that our policy also applies to the PE facilities over the footbridge/ A41.

- **Medicines**

The school has a policy/procedure for the administration of medicines that must be followed for everyone's safety. Please refer to our Medical Conditions Policy

- **Alcohol**

No alcohol may be brought on to school premises or consumed during the course of a school day. Any adult (or staff, learner, parents, carers and visitors) under the effects of alcohol will be asked to leave the premises and return at a later date for the safety of the whole school. Parents/ carers will be asked to collect their children from the school and will be encouraged to seek immediate medical support.

- **Smoking**

School premises are a no smoking site at all times. Learners are not permitted to bring to school smoking materials, including matches and lighters. In the interests of health and safety, should a learner be found in possession of any of these on school premises, they will be confiscated and parents informed. This also applies to" vaping" and the use of electronic cigarettes.

- **Illegal drugs and "psychoactive substances"**

No illegal drugs, new psychoactive substances or Drugs Paraphernalia are allowed to be brought on to or used on school premises. Bringing any such items onto school premises is considered a serious breach of this drugs policy. Seeking to influence or glamorise illegal drug use or the use of psychoactive substances either in person on school premises or via social networking sites is also considered a serious breach of this drugs policy.

- **Solvents**

The school will ensure that potentially hazardous substances it authorises are stored safely, and learners will be supervised if it is necessary that they come into contact with them in the course of their work. Learners are not permitted to be in possession of solvents. Bringing solvents or hazardous substances onto school premises is considered a serious breach of this drugs policy

4. Responses to drug related incidents

A drug incident may be any of the following:

- Finding drugs, or related paraphernalia, on school premises
- Possession of drugs by an individual on school premises
- Use of drugs by an individual on school premises
- Supply of drugs on school premises
- Individuals disclosing information about their drug use
- Learner reports of other learners using drugs
- Hiding drugs in or around the school premises for later collection (by themselves or by third parties)
- Glamorising or encouraging the use of drugs and other substances

Any response to drug related incidents needs to balance the needs of the individual learner concerned with the wider school community.

Exclusion from school is not an automatic response to a drug incident but permanent exclusion is considered in serious cases where:

There is a serious breach or persistent breaches of our Drugs and/or Behaviour Policies and allowing a learner to remain in Upton-by-Chester High School would seriously harm the education, safety or welfare of the learner or other learners in the school

A member of the SLT will be responsible for co-ordinating the management of drug-related incidents, offering sources of support and liaising with outside agencies. Incidents will be dealt with after making an assessment of the situation and will be reported to the Headteacher. All incidents and responses will be recorded within 24 hours.

All incidents where drugs have been found will be reported to the police and the Chair of Governors will be informed.

5. Drug Misuse outside the school premises

In line with Behaviour in Schools, February 2024, Upton-by-Chester High School may impose sanctions on a learner or misusing drugs outside schools when learners are:

- taking part in any school-organised or school-related activity or
- travelling to or from school or
- in some way identifiable as a learner at the school.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65ce3721e1bdec001a3221fe/Behaviour_in_schools_-_advice_for_headteachers_and_school_staff_Feb_2024.pdf

The school may also impose sanctions on a learner 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 learner or member of the public or
- could adversely affect the reputation of the school.

6. Individuals in possession of drugs

If a learner is found in possession of any legal drug or banned substance, it will be confiscated and permanently disposed of, regardless of who the equipment/drugs belong to. Parents and carers will not be able to retrieve these items on behalf of their child. The disposal of these items will be recorded and kept in a central register**.**

7. Confidentiality

Upton-by-Chester High School will always seek to work with parents and carers when information or allegations of drug use are made. There may be occasions when, for safeguarding reasons, this may not be appropriate (please refer to our Child Protection and Confidentiality policies for more information on this).

Complete confidentiality can never be promised to a learner though information given in confidence will not generally be disclosed to anyone else. In particular, if a learner chooses to disclose that they are using a drug without medical authorisation, this information will not be used against them. However, action will be taken to try to ensure the learner comes to no serious harm if this is considered a risk. Regarding disclosures staff will follow the advice given in the Child Protection policy, and at the annual safeguarding training.

8. Support for learners

At Upton-by-Chester High School the welfare of the learner is paramount and intervention will be made if the school feels a learner 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, Head of Year, Pastoral Support Manger)
- Referral to specialist outside agencies for support
- Working with the police

9. Right to Search

In line with recent legislation (Searching, screening and confiscation guidance July 2022) the staff at Upton-by-Chester High School reserve the right to search learners if they have reason to believe that they are carrying offensive weapons, illegal substances or anything that is illegal or dangerous.

Searches will be carried out by Heads of Year/ Pastoral Support Managers and a member of the Senior Leadership Team, one of whom will be the same gender. Parents and Carers will always be informed when this has happened.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1091132/Searching__Screening_and_Confiscation_guidance_July_2022.pdf

Upton-by-Chester High School works closely with its Police Liaison Officers.

Links to other policies

- Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding Policy

10. Record Keeping

All drug related incidents and searches are kept on the learner's file on CPOMS. Records of numbers of incidents are kept centrally in school for information and analysis of trends and reported to governors annually within the Headteacher's Report. This policy will be included in school Code of Conduct and parents/carers will be expected to sign to show their acceptance of the policy.

11. Useful Organisations

ADFAM offers information to families of drug and alcohol users, and the website has a database of local family support services.
Tel: 020 3817 9410 Email: admin@adfam.org.uk

Website: www.adfam.org.uk

Alcohol Change uk 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 3907 8480 Email: contact@alcoholchange.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 7404 0242 Email: enquiries@ash.org.uk

Website: Action on Smoking and Health (ASH)

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 714 650 (general queries only) Email: info@coramclc.org.uk

Website: www.childrenslegalcentre.com

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 7766 9900 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: 0300 123 1110 (lines are open 24 hours a day)

Drugwise 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.drugwise.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: 0300 123 6600 Email: frank@talktofrank.com; Website:

www.talktofrank.com

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: 0808 800 2222 Website: www.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. Text: 07496 959930 Information line: 01785 810762. Email: info@re-solv.org Website: www.re-solv.org

Smokefree - NHS Smoking Helpline: 0300 123 1044;

Website: https://www.nhs.uk/smokefree

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

Appendix 1 – Management of a Drug Related Issue

(The following part of the policy covers illegal drugs as defined by the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971).

- These incidents are defined as the possession, use, or supply of drugs by learners in school or on educational visits. This includes paraphernalia relating to drug taking;
- All such incidents will be carefully investigated and written statements will be taken from learners involved. The investigation will be led by the Deputy Headteacher or another senior member of staff;
- Any drugs that are found in school will be secured on the school site and the police will be alerted to their existence immediately;
- A trained first-aider will be involved wherever there is a direct danger to the health of a learner;
- Parents/ carers will be informed at the earliest opportunity if their child is involved in an investigation;
- **All incidents** where drugs have been found will be reported to the police and action appropriate to the particular circumstances will be requested;
- The learner's parents/ carers will be informed that a search has taken place;
- The sanction imposed against learners involved in drug-related incidents will be determined in the light of the particular situation but all incidents carry the risk of permanent exclusion, even if it is a first offence;
- The Chair of Governors will be informed;
- Learners involved in drug-related incidents will be referred to external agencies (this may include the school's police liaison officer) who can offer specialist assistance;
- All members of staff will be vigilant for signs of drug misuse and will report any suspicions to a Head of Year, Assistant Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher or Headteacher. If a young person appears to be under the influence of drugs then they should be referred to the First Aider as "unwell". Staff should not say to the young person that they suspect they have been taking drugs since they do not have the medical training to make informed judgements;
- Any media involvement will be handled in the normal way with the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher taking charge of the incident and liaising with the press officer in the Local Authority;
- The Senior Leadership Team and other staff involved will review the management of drug related incidents when appropriate.