



**Drugs and Alcohol Policy**

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**VERSION CONTROL**

Version	Date revised	Author/reviewer	Section / page no. changed	Summary of change(s)

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**St Brendan's mission is to serve the Catholic and wider community by providing Sixth Form education of the highest quality and to act in the spirit of the Gospel believing that every person is loved by God and has a unique value.**

## **1. Background**

A drug is defined as a chemical substance which can change the way a human body works, either physiologically or psychologically. Within this definition fall the legal substances mentioned above, as well as volatile substances such as lighter fuels, adhesives, aerosol deodorants etc. when misused; and illegal substances such as spice and any other New Psychoactive Substance (NPS), nitrous oxide cannisters, ketamine, ecstasy, heroin, cocaine, methamphetamine, and Cannabis (including vapes that contain THC). This is not an exhaustive list. For the purposes of this policy, the term 'drug' also refers to prescription medicine being used in a manner other than prescribed.

'Being in possession of drugs' on the College premises refers to carrying of drugs or storing drugs for yourself or someone else.

'Supplying drugs' on the College premises refers to the passing of drugs to others, even where no money has exchanged hands.

This policy has been developed with due regard to:

- The Misuse of Drugs Act 1971
- Drugscope: Guidance for Further Education Colleges
- Drugs: Guidance for Schools (DfE and ACPO 2012)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025

The policy applies to:

- All students of St. Brendan's College.
- Students on work placement or educational trips or in any situation or time where the College is in lawful control of a student.

## **2. Statement of Purpose**

The purpose of the policy is to support members of staff to deal with a substance-related incident in an appropriate manner. Staff are reminded that drug misuse is a possible indicator of abuse or exploitation (e.g., County Lines) and the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy should be read in alongside this policy. The policy is also designed to inform students.

Under section 8 of the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971, it is an offence for the management of establishments to knowingly permit the supply or production of any illegal substances on their premises. It is also an offence to allow the premises to be used for smoking or consuming of illicit substances. Any member of College staff must inform the Designated

Safeguarding Lead, a member of the Safeguarding Team or a member of the College Leadership Team, if they are aware such activities are taking place so appropriate action can be taken.

Any student who informs a member of staff that they have a drug and/ or alcohol problem and would like help will be signposted to services supported by the College to access professional support. This does not extend to knowledge of being in possession of illegal substances or alcohol on the College premises.

### 3. Policy

The College will uphold the criminal law on drug and alcohol use in relation to students and others on College property.

The use of alcohol, drugs, and new psychoactive substances (formerly known as legal highs) on College premises, transport, activities, or at any time during the College day is **strictly forbidden\***. The safety and welfare of our students, staff and community is our primary concern and any actions taken with regards to alcohol or drug use will be implemented after the College is sure that any immediate first aid or health needs are attended to. Any learner found to be in possession of drugs or drug paraphernalia, using, or showing the effects of alcoholic drinks, drugs, or a New Psychoactive Substance (such as Spice), will be suspended as, if under the influence, they would not be fit to remain in College. If evidence substantiates that the student was under the influence or in possession of alcohol or drugs, they will be subject to the disciplinary procedures as set out in the Positive Behaviour Policy and they may face permanent exclusion. The College will contact the Police where necessary.

If the student recognises that they need support, the College may agree to the student continuing with their studies if they are actively accepting support from specialist services. Any subsequent instances of the student being under the influence or in possession of alcohol, drugs or legal highs would most probably result in exclusion. Any student found supplying drugs of any kind, will **immediately be suspended** pending an investigation, in line with the Positive Behaviour Policy. The College will inform Avon and Somerset Police and provide full co-operation in any criminal proceeding.

The College considers that any student that offers to purchase or supply drugs to another student, even if the transaction is not completed, will be in breach of the Student Code of Conduct and subject to procedures within the Positive Behavior Policy. This may also result in suspension pending investigation.

Any student suspected of being in possession of controlled drugs once inside the College premises will be subject to a non-contact search as a condition of being on and remaining on the College premises. Non-contact searches involve asking the student to empty jackets, pockets, bags etc., and do not involve any physical contact with the student. This search will

be carried out by two members of the Safeguarding Team (or one member and another member of staff as a witness) or by the police. Searches are with the consent of the student only. Should no consent be forthcoming, then the student should be asked to leave the premises and the police informed. A parent/carer must be notified for students under the age of 18 if a search has been conducted or if their young person has left the site under these circumstances, preferably before the student leaves. A parent/carer of students aged 18 or over will be contacted with student consent or if there is a concern that the student is at risk.

All incidents will be recorded on My Concern. Suspensions are also recorded on Promonitor.

Awareness raising sessions and activities to help educate students into understanding the effects of substances, both legal and illegal will be provided to students, so that they are aware of the consequences of drug and alcohol use and are also able to make informed decisions.

The College Welfare Team and appropriately trained College staff will offer full and confidential support including referrals to appropriate agencies to all students who are seeking help in resolving a drug or alcohol related problem. It may not be possible to uphold complete confidentiality if students are a danger to themselves or others.

**\*The only exception is when the use of alcohol is necessary for a particular learning outcome, such as during a scientific experiment. However, even with this exception, no alcohol must be consumed by students on College premises.**

#### **4. Objectives**

To achieve its objectives, the College will:

- Keep students informed about the effects of alcohol and drugs.
- Work in partnership with parents/carers where appropriate.
- Offer support, and referrals where appropriate, to students who disclose difficulties with substance misuse.
- Always keep in mind that substance misuse can be an indicator of abuse and exploitation.
- Work with partner agencies to ensure that students are safeguarded.
- Take all steps to prevent students from taking or misusing substances of any kind.
- Provide a process of appropriate help and treatment for students who perceive themselves, or whom the College perceives, as having a problem with substance misuse.
- Take all possible steps to prevent the supply of illegal drugs to students on the College campus.
- Respond swiftly to concerns or drug related incidents in line with this policy.

## 5. Implementation

This policy will be implemented by:

- Staff development, enabling all staff to be aware of the effects of drugs and thus to identify those students who may have a drug and/or alcohol related problem and to be confident to tackle the issue of drugs and/or alcohol with students.
- Addressing the issue of drugs and/or alcohol through the curriculum, student induction and the tutorial programme and actively working with students to listen to their lived experience and feedback.
- Linking with relevant agencies through the Head of Student Wellbeing / Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead, Welfare Team, and Progress Tutors.

This will be achieved by:

- Providing information and awareness raising training sessions for appropriate College staff.
- Providing information and awareness raising opportunities through the curriculum and tutorial system.
- Providing a support service from trained staff and signposting / referrals to partner agencies.
- Providing information through Awareness raising campaigns, themed weeks, posters, leaflets, and online sources of information, led by the College Nurse and Welfare Team.
- Working co-operatively with the Police and other appropriate agencies to reduce abuse of drugs and/or alcohol and respond to any associated safeguarding concerns.
- Working with parents/carers to increase understanding and awareness.

## 6. Procedures

- If you believe a student is under the influence of a substance, please follow the guidance in Appendix 1
- In the event of a potential overdose, please follow guidance in Appendix 2
- Staff who discover students in possession of any controlled drugs or paraphernalia on College premises (other than those prescribed by a medical practitioner), or suspect them to be in possession must follow the guidance in Appendix 3
- If you discover substances around the College, please follow guidance in Appendix 4
- Any other person i.e., non-student, who is discovered or suspected of supplying controlled drugs on College premises, will be reported immediately to the Police.

- Any member of staff who suspects a student of having a problem related to illegal or prescription drugs, alcohol, or other substances, should provide initial support and refer to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or their Deputy, or a member of the Safeguarding Team. Concerns of this nature should be logged on My Concern.
- Staff must consider the vulnerability of the student and always be vigilant for signs that the student is being exploited or potentially exploiting others.
- Please refer to Appendix 5 for list of possible indicators of substance misuse.

## **Appendix 1 - Guidance If Student Appears to be Under the Influence of Drugs or Alcohol**

### **REMEMBER: IT MAY BE APPROPRIATE TO SEEK MEDICAL ADVICE FOR THE STUDENT(S) CONCERNED**

Where a student arrives on the College site appearing under the influence of drugs or alcohol:

- The student should not be allowed to remain in the class.
- The teacher in conjunction with a relevant member of staff \*(see list at bottom of this Appendix) must decide whether to send the student home or to keep the student in College for their own safety. Please ensure the College Nurse is aware.
- If the decision is made to send the student home, follow the procedure for sending unwell students' home which includes contacting parent/carer.
- If the student is to remain on the premises for their own safety, they need to be always supervised. A member of the Safeguarding Team must be informed, and a First Aider called if needed.
- If the student appears to be aggressive or at risk of endangering themselves or others, the Police should be called, and reception informed so that they are able to direct the police when they arrive.
- The incident will be recorded on My Concern. Any illegal substance found should be logged by a member of the Safeguarding Team on the Substance Confiscation Register.
- Any confiscated drugs should be sealed in a bag (preferably an evidence bag if available). This should then be handed to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or a member of the Safeguarding Team where it will be locked away until it can be removed by Avon and Somerset Police. It is not acceptable for staff to remain in possession of these substances for any period as to do so, would constitute an offence under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971.
- The incident will be investigated using the Positive Behaviour Policy.
- If the student is allowed to remain at College, a risk assessment will be completed prior to their return.

#### **Relevant Members of Staff:**

- Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead
- College Nurse
- Director of faculty
- Assistant Principal
- Vice Principal

## Appendix 2 - A Possible Overdose of a Substance

- Dial 999 and ask for an ambulance
- Inform reception that you have called an ambulance and inform them of the location of the casualty, ask reception to contact a First Aider.
- Remain with the person:
  - (a) If they are unconscious, place them in the recovery position
  - (b) If they are conscious, talk to the person and protect her/him from further harm.  
Do not give food or drink.
- Emergency contact (parent/carer) must be informed.
- Ensure that a member of College Leadership Team (CLT) is informed, by calling the Principal's Office on Ext. 1105
- Once the emergency is resolved the member of staff should inform the appropriate member of the Leadership Team (Assistant Principal, Deputy Principal), Director of Faculty and the Designated Safeguarding Lead to ensure the incident is picked up via the Positive Behaviour Policy and /or Safeguarding procedures.
- The incident should be recorded on My Concern.
- A Risk Assessment will be completed before the student returns to College.

**Appendix 3 - Guidance for Staff who discover students in possession of any controlled drugs, paraphernalia, or alcohol on College premises and / or any activity where the College is in lawful control (other than those prescribed by a medical practitioner) or suspect them to be in possession.**

Any student suspected of being in possession of controlled drugs, paraphernalia, or alcohol once inside the College premises may be subject to a search as a condition of being on and remaining on the College premises.

This search will be carried out either by 2 members of the Safeguarding Team (or one team member and another member of staff as a witness), or by the police. No other member of staff has the authority to search a student. If you believe a search needs to be conducted, please contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead or a member of the Safeguarding Team. Searches are with the consent of the student only and are non-contact searches.

Should no consent be forthcoming, and where drugs are suspected, the student should be asked to leave the premises and the police informed. A parent/carer must be contacted to inform them of the search or to alert them to their young person being asked to leave College, and the reason.

If any item found is suspected to be a controlled / illegal drug, the following procedures should be complied with.

- A relevant member of staff needs to be in attendance (see Appendix 1)
- Considerations should be given to the nature and quantity of the suspected controlled drug seized. For example, a significant amount of cannabis, several bags (baggies) or powders or substances prepared into separate deals **may indicate that this person is involved in the supply of controlled drugs** and therefore should be detained (if feasible) and Police attendance requested. In circumstances where the student refuses to be detained, allow the student to leave the premises, and inform the police with immediate effect.
- It is appreciated that staff will not be able to positively identify some substances, particularly when in powder or liquid form. In such circumstances, the person should be detained (if safe to do so) and Police attendance requested. In circumstances where the student refuses to be detained, allow the student to leave the premises, and inform the police with immediate effect.
- If satisfied that the quantities of suspected controlled drugs are of a quantity which would appear to be for personal use then they should be seized, retained and the student should be suspended, pending a meeting as set out in the Positive Behaviour Policy.
- The incident will be recorded in My Concern and a record made on the Substance Confiscation Record if items are detained. Any illegal substance should be described in terms of appearance rather than named as a specific drug.

- Any confiscated drugs should be sealed in an evidence bag (if available). This should then be handed to the Designated Safeguarding Lead where it will be locked away until it can be removed by Avon and Somerset Police. It is not acceptable for staff to remain in possession of these substances for any period as to do so, would constitute an offence under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971.
- The incident will be investigated, and appropriate action and support provided.
- If the student is allowed to return to College, a risk assessment will be completed prior to their return.

#### **Appendix 4- Discovery of Substances or Paraphernalia**

In any proceedings for an offence in which it is proved that the accused had a controlled drug in his/her possession, it is a defense if it can be shown that, " knowing or suspecting it to be a controlled drug, the person took possession of it with the purpose of preventing another from committing, or continuing to commit an offence in conjunction with that drug, and that as soon as possible after taking possession of it the person took all such steps as were reasonably open to him/her to destroy the drug or deliver it into the custody of the police. Note that the College policy is not to destroy the substance (as a safeguard against allegations) ...."

If substances are discovered on College premises or elsewhere within the College's jurisdiction e.g., on a College visit, the member of staff should adopt the following procedure:

- If possible, remove the substance in the presence of a witness. If this is not possible the substance should be removed from the location where it is discovered.
- Having removed the substance, the member of staff should report to a relevant member of staff (See Appendix 1) and a record made on My Concern of the date and time when the substance came into his/her possession and the location.
- The substance should be taken to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy and placed in a sealed evidence bag (if available). The member of staff must not retain the substance, to do so would be illegal and may place that member of staff at risk.
- The substance will be logged on the Substance Confiscation Record.
- The Police will be contacted to collect the substance as soon as reasonably possible.
- An investigation will take place to ascertain the circumstances around the discovery. Where appropriate, the Positive Behavior Policy will be followed.
- If any equipment associated with substance misuse is found it should be handled with extreme care due to the risks of infection, particularly when equipment involves syringes and needles. Staff should not attempt to remove needles and syringes and should call for assistance from the College Nurse, Designated Safeguarding Lead or their Deputy. Equipment should be stored in a secure and rigid container. Used syringes should be disposed of in a sharps bin which will be held in the Nurses Room. The whereabouts of the sharps bin should be known to all staff including support and Premises personnel.
- If substances are discovered off site (for example on a trip) the member of staff discovering the substance should inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead or a member of the Safeguarding Team. The police should then be contacted.

## **Appendix 5- Behaviours Which May Indicate Drug Misuse (and possibly exploitation)**

- Noticeable difference in availability of money.
- Theft of money and goods.
- Parent/carer report of changes in behaviour.
- Changes in punctuality or attendance.
- Changes in willingness to participate in College activities.
- Decline in performance of College work.
- Unusual breakouts of temper and other changes in character.
- Boisterous and silly behaviour and uncontrolled giggling.
- Disregard for physical appearance.
- Inflammation of the eye and marks around the nose and mouth.
- Lack of appetite.
- Smells which may be indicative of solvent abuse (e.g., acetone) or Cannabis/Marijuana.
- Heavy use of body spray, aftershave, perfume, or other oils to disguise the smell of drugs.
- Wearing sunglasses at inappropriate times to hide dilated or constricted pupils.
- Wearing a hoody with hood up.
- Wearing long sleeves at inappropriate times to hide injection marks.
- Injection marks for which there is no known medical explanation e.g., diabetes.
- Unexplained blood marks on clothes.
- Unreliable statements.
- Secretive behaviour.
- Changes in friendship patterns.
- Use of substance-orientated language and written expression.
- Decline in standards of physical co-ordination.
- Significant changes in energy - lethargy or hyperactivity.
- Fluctuations in emotional state from elation to depression.
- Frequenting the toilets or a noticeable regularity to toilet breaks.
- Changes in behaviour after lunch or breaks.

## **Appendix 6 - Trained College staff**

Certain College staff have been trained to assess and support students who have a difficulty with substance misuse. They can provide advice and information on alcohol and/or drugs, offer interventions to support and help students identify and make changes in their use of substances and find alternatives. Importantly, they provide harm reduction advice and make referrals to more specialist services. Trained staff are:

- Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead
- College Nurse (who will lead on Health Promotion as well as assessing and supporting students).