QRA

Drug Education Policy

EDUCATE. EMPOWER. INSPIRE.

Version Number	Version Description	Date of Revision
1	Original	Sept 2023
2	Rebranded & reviewed	July 2024
3	Adopted by QRA on transfer to HCAT	August 2025

QRA Drug Education & The Management of Drugs Policy

Staff responsible for drugs issues: The PD&RSE lead and curriculum lead alongside HCAT Directors of Teaching and Learning are responsible for the development, monitoring and review of the drug education curriculum, supporting and training staff and liaising with external agencies to strengthen the curriculum delivery.

The Designated Safeguarding Leads: Jon Smith/Casey Blackwell have overall responsibility for drugs issues, including managing drug-related incidents and liaising with police; developing, monitoring and reviewing the drugs policy and liaising with external agencies to provide additional support to pupils at risk of drug misuse.

Governors are also responsible for monitoring drugs related issues and liaise with school about curriculum and policy.

This Policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies: PD&RSE, Staff Code of Conduct, Health and Safety, Behaviour, Safeguarding and Child Protection, and Administration of Medicine.

It has also been developed with guidance from the following DFE guidelines. Drug Advice for Schools, DfE and ACPO, September 2012 Searching, screening and confiscation, DfE, January 2018 Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults DFE 2019, PREVENT Duty DFE 2021

Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions, DfE, December 2015 School Attendance, DfE, August 2020 statutory Exclusion Guidance 2012 Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 and should be read in conjunction with the following school policies Safeguarding Policy Behaviour Policy, Anti Bullying Policy and Administrating of Medicines in School Policy.

Definition of drugs

The definition of drugs used in this policy is the definition given by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime:

"A substance people take to change the way they feel, think or behave." This refers to all drugs:

- Illegal Psychoactive Substances/new psychoactive substances (Psychoactive Substances Act, 2016)
- Legal drugs, alcohol, tobacco, e-cigarettes, volatile substances (solvents)poppers,
- Misuse of over the counter and prescription medicines
- Illegal drugs (those controlled by the Misuse of Drugs Act, 1971) including ecstasy, cannabis, crack/cocaine, heroin and LSD
- Other drugs such as anabolic steroids

Throughout this policy, the term 'drugs' is used to refer to all the above. Definition of other key words ‘Drug use' describes any drug taking. Any drug use can potentially lead to harm, including through intoxication, breach of the law or school rules, or future health problems.

'Drug misuse' is drug taking which leads to social, psychological, physical or legal problems through intoxication, regular excessive consumptions and/or dependence. W

QRA has a key role to play in ensuring that young people understand the risks involved and have the confidence, knowledge and skills to avoid them. We have a major contribution to make in discouraging drug misuse, encouraging positive attitudes and self-esteem, and promoting healthy lifestyles. We recognise that drug misuse can have a serious effect on health, wellbeing and academic development. It is the duty of the school to help reduce the harm from drugs, deliver drug prevention and education, as well as helping those who misuse drugs, or who are at risk of drug misuse.

The Department for Education (DfE) advises all schools to have an up-to-date drugs policy, consistent with national and local guidance.

Aims of the policy

We take a positive and proactive approach to the issue of drugs and this policy aims to:

- Give a clear view on the use of drugs in school and the responsibilities of the school and legal requirements
- Provide information so that everyone is clear about the school's overall approach to drugs and its procedures should an incident occur
- Give information about drugs education

Implementation

We take a whole school approach to drugs through:

- A planned drugs education programme through PSHE, Science and the wider curriculum.
- Carefully considered responses to drug-related incidents informed and supported by the views of the whole school community
- Clear rules and sanctions related to drugs understood by the whole school community
- Access to specialist support and advice when required
- Training and support for staff
- Completing an Early Help Assessment as soon as we, the young person or their family, have a worry regarding drug-related issues

Aims of Drug Education

We aim to give young people accurate information about drugs and help them develop the skills and attitudes to make their own healthy, safe and responsible decisions about drug use.

We also aim to reduce the number of young people misusing drugs, minimise the risk of criminalisation, and to help those concerned about drugs to get help and advice.

To achieve this, our drugs education programme will help pupils to

- Gain knowledge and understanding about the effects and risks and dangers of drugs and correct myths and misconceptions
- Develop skills to make informed decisions, including communication, self-awareness, negotiation, finding information, help and advice
- Develop skills to manage situations involving drugs, including assessing and avoiding risks, assertiveness and refusal skills and helping others
- Explore their own and other people’s attitudes to drugs, drug use and drug users, including challenging stereotypes and dispelling myths and exploring media and social influences

Training and support for staff

All staff teaching drug education will have access to national protocols and guidance and will have opportunities to participate in training through a range of CPD activities including National College PSHE Association and Network days.

Remit and extent of the policy

At QRA, a drug related incident refers to any possession, usage or supply of an unauthorised drug, as defined within this policy. Incidents can include emergencies, observations and discovery, disclosure, suspicion and rumour. This school does not permit the possession, use of or supply of any illegal or legal drug (unless authorised legal drug) and will investigate and respond in line with this policy to any incident which:

- Takes place within the school boundaries
- On or near the school premises
- Whilst in school uniform
- On the journey to and from school
- Within the school day
- On school visits (supervised or not)
- Residential trips
- Work experience
- Any school social event.

These rules apply equally to staff, students, parents and carers, governors and those working in or visiting the school.

This is a smoke-free school, and pupils, staff, parents and visitors are not allowed to smoke on school premises.

Management of drugs in school

The school has a separate policy for the safe and secure management of prescription drugs, Administration of Medicines policy. There are circumstances when some legal drugs (prescribed) are authorised for use in school - any pupil requiring access to prescription drugs for medical reasons will be supported as per the Administration of Medicines policy.

Parents and pupils must inform the school where this is needed and pupils must not be responsible for the safety of their own medication, this must be handed in to school to be kept securely until needed in line with the above policy.

School responses to drug-related incidents

In all drug-related incidents the following principles will apply:

- The Headteacher and designated safeguarding lead (DSL) will be informed immediately
- All situations will be carefully considered before deciding a response
- Permanent exclusion will not be the automatic response and will only be considered in the most serious cases
- Before any decision to permanently exclude is made, the school will offer a Child and Family Early Help Assessment to ascertain if any additional support is needed
- The school will offer a referral to appropriate specialist support services.
- The health and safety needs of the pupil will always come first, whilst also taking account of the health and safety needs of the school as a whole
- Parents/carers will be involved at an early stage and throughout any investigation (unless this would not be in the pupil's best interest)

- Decisions about the sanction will depend on whether the offence is one of a series or a first event, previous support has been offered to the pupil and whether the pupil was in possession or supplying.

Any extenuating circumstances will also be taken into consideration

- The Headteacher in consultation with DSL will decide whether a disciplinary and/or counselling response should follow
- Incidents will be reported to the Chair of Governors

Possible responses might be

Support is provided for pupils who have concerns about their own or their family's drug use. We assess the welfare and support needs of the pupil and identify the most appropriate support for them. This might involve the school nurse, Early Help Assessment, Family Group Conferencing or other services providing specialist help.

Support is also provided for those who have been involved in a drug-related incident which is in breach of school rules. Pupils who have been involved in the incident will participate in a specific drug education programme and may be referred for specialist support if needed.

Sanctions where a school rule related to drug use is broken, sanctions will be given. The nature of the sanction will depend on the nature and degree of the offence. Decisions about sanctions will be made by the Headteacher and be consistent with the behaviour Policy.

Procedures for managing incidents

Reporting a drug-related incident All drug-related incidents are reported, in the first instance, to the Headteacher and DSL. Although there is no legal obligation to report an incident involving drugs to the police, every incident will be assessed individually, and appropriate steps will be taken.

The school will always inform police immediately about any incident involving the sale of drugs.

The school will contact Trading Standards about the sale of tobacco, alcohol and solvents to under-age pupils, from local shops.

Parents/carers will be informed and called to the school.

An assessment of the incident will be started, including finding out whether a substance has been taken, and evidence gathered.

Intoxication, when a student is under the influence of a drug

The pupil will be removed to a quiet room and not left alone. The first aider and DSL will be called. The pupil will be helped to calm down and medical assistance sought. Parents/carers will be informed and called to the school. In most cases, the pupil will then be taken home with the absence C coded as a special circumstance if a fixed term exclusion is not considered appropriate.

Discovery/observation

This refers to situations when a pupil is discovered using, supplying or holding a substance that is not permitted on school premises and which is described in this policy (suspected or confirmed) If the substance is suspected to be illegal, staff can take temporary possession of it. it will be confiscated, in the presence of a second member of staff as witness and will be sealed in a plastic bag with details of the date and time of the seizure/find and witness present and stored in a secure location (e.g. a safe or lockable container) with access limited to the Headteacher and DSL.

Pupil(s) will be supervised within a safe space in school and an investigation undertaken, pending advice from the police and details of the incident will be recorded, including the police incident reference number.

Pupil's parents/carers will be asked to come into school, unless it is not in the best interests of the child to inform them and the pupil(s) involved will be isolated whilst investigations are carried out. If the substance is legal (but unauthorised in school) it will be disposed of or handed to the parent/carer.

Searches

Staff are allowed to confiscate pupil's property where reasonable to do so, including substances, whether controlled or not. If a member of staff has reasonable grounds for suspecting that a pupil is carrying illegal drugs on them or in their personal property, they will ask the pupil to voluntarily produce the substance, in the presence of two members of staff. When a search is required, any staff involved must be authorised by the Headteacher to undertake it and, wherever possible, should be the same sex as the pupil. (Screening, Searching and Confiscation, DfE, 2018) The search will take place in school or where staff have lawful control of pupils. A record of the search will be kept using CPOMS and inform parent/carers if a substance is found, although there is no legal requirement to do this or to inform parents/carers before or after a search.

Staff should not assume use of drugs on the basis of rumours or behaviour alone. However, if there is a suspicion, evidence will be collected over a period of time before a decision is made to question the pupil(s) involved.

Intoxicated parents/carers

Our schools' rules for drugs apply to all people who are on the school premises and we expect that parents/carers will adhere to these rules. If a parent/carer comes to school and appears to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol, they will be asked to leave. If they have come to collect their child, we will sensitively offer to phone for someone else to collect. If we are concerned that a pupil is in imminent danger, we will contact emergency services on 999. We will also follow our Child Protection procedures if we are concerned about risk of harm. School will also involve external support for the child if needed.

Child criminal exploitation/county lines

When speaking with pupils and responding to any incidents involving drugs, staff will be vigilant to the pupil's vulnerability to criminal exploitation and particularly County Lines. Any concerns about a young person such as erratic school attendance and/or changes in their attitude and engagement with learning; unexplained or disproportionate access to money/expensive items; pupil being reported as missing; or where staff become aware that a pupil has several mobile phones could indicate the pupil is a victim of exploitation and must be shared with the DSL.

Advice from external agencies will be sought were necessity.

The governing body recognises that pupils who are not accessing school due to low levels of attendance or exclusion are at greater risk of all forms of exploitation. Any attendance issues will be addressed in line with the school's attendance policy

All drugs related incidents will be reported using CPOMS and where necessary referral to external agencies will be made and advice sought i.e. Contextual safeguarding panel.

Confidentially

Pupils need to be able to talk in confidence to staff without fear of being judged or told off. The welfare of young people will be central to our policy and practice; however, teachers cannot promise total confidentiality, and this is made clear to pupils through the PSHE programme.

If a pupil discloses to a member of staff, he/she is taking drugs or is concerned about drugs, they will refer the student to the DSL and appropriate support will be offered in line with our Safeguarding Policy and Keeping Children Safe in Education July 2025.

Parents/carers will be informed immediately if their child has been involved in a drug related incident. However, there may be some exceptional situations where involving the parents may put the young person at risk of abuse and, in these exceptional cases, the school will exercise some caution. The decision will be taken by the Headteacher in liaison with the DSL with the child's welfare a priority.

Reviewing the policy

This policy is reviewed every two years in line with school protocols. If an exceptional incident should occur, the policy is reviewed in the light of that incident.

Disseminating the policy

The policy is on the school's website and drawn to the attention of all pupils, parents/carers and staff on an annual basis. New pupils and their families are familiarised with it as part of their induction.

Links to copies of the full policy are in the staff handbook as well as on the school website. Any outside contributors involved in drug education receive a copy prior to teaching. Students are taught about the content of the policy in drug education.

Useful contacts

Addaction is one of the UK's largest specialist drug and alcohol treatment charities. As well as adult services, they provide services specifically tailored to the needs of young people and their parents. The Skills for Life project supports young people with drug misusing parents.

Website: www.addaction.org.uk ADFAM offers information to families of drug and alcohol users, and the website has a database of local family support services. Tel: 020 7553 7640 Email: admin@adfam.org.uk Website: www.adfam.org.uk

Alcohol Concern 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 7264 0510. Email: contact@alcoholconcern.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 7739 5902 Email: enquiries@ash.org.uk Website: www.ash.org.uk

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 877910 Email: clc@essex.ac.uk Website: www.childrenslegalcentre.com

Children's Rights Alliance for England - A charity working to improve the lives and status of all children in England through the fullest implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Email: info@crae.org.uk Website: www.crae.org.uk

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 7307 7450 Website: www.drinkaware.co.uk/

Drink line - A free and confidential helpline for anyone who is concerned about their own or someone else's drinking. Tel: 0800 917 8282 (lines are open 24 hours a day)

Drug Education Forum – this website contains a number of useful papers and briefing sheets for use by practitioners: Website: www.drugeducationforum.com

Drug Scope 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. Drug Scope also hosts the Drug Education Practitioners Forum. Tel: 020 7520 7550 Email: info@drugscope.org.uk Website: www.drugscope.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: 0800 776600 Email: frank@talktofrank.com Website: www.talktofrank.com

Mentor UK is a non-government organisation with a focus on protecting the health and wellbeing of children and young people to reduce the damage that drugs can do to their lives. Tel: 020 7739 8494. Email admin@mentoruk.org Website: www.mentoruk.org.uk

National Children's Bureau promotes the interests and well-being of all children and young people across every aspect of their lives. Tel: 020 7843 6000 Website: www.ncb.org.uk 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: 0800 800 2222 Website: http://familylives.org.uk/ Re-Solv

Society for the Prevention of Solvent and Volatile Substance A national charity providing information for teachers, other professionals, parents and young people. Tel: 01785 817885 Information line: 01785 810762 Email: information@re-solv.org Website: www.re-solv.org

Smoke free - NHS Smoking Helpline: 0800 169 0 169 Website: http://smokefree.nhs.uk

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