



PARMITER'S DRUGS POLICY

This policy should be read in conjunction with the School Behaviour Policy.

It is recognised that a variety of substances, both legal and illegal, are available to young people of school age in society beyond Parmiter's School. Consequently, a pro-active approach is taken in addressing this problem. The dangers of substance use and misuse are drawn to our students' attention through the curriculum, particularly in the Life Skills Programme, Liberal Studies and through the School's pastoral system. In addition, Drugs Awareness Sessions may be organised to provide information to parents and carers.

We believe that the purpose of drug education should be to give students knowledge, skills and outlook to appreciate the benefits of a healthy life-style and to relate these to their own actions, both now and in the future.

Through the curriculum we aim to:

- Enable young people to make healthy, informed choices through helping them to increase their knowledge, challenging and exploring attitudes and developing awareness of key issues including drugs.
- To help young people to develop further a sense of self-worth and self esteem.
- To increase understanding about the implications and possible consequences of drug use and misuse.
- To help young people to distinguish between different substances, consider their use, misuse, benefit and harm.
- To listen to young people's thoughts, feelings and concerns and to ensure that drug education responds to their needs.
- To counter any inaccurate messages and myths which young people may receive about drugs with accurate information.
- To widen understanding about health, social and legal issues.

The aim of all those responsible for the welfare of our students is to maintain Parmiter's as a school free from drug abuse. If students have any suspicion that someone is in possession of *drugs or that they are present on, or in the periphery of, the school site, they are strongly encouraged to give this information immediately, in total confidence, to a member of staff. The Headmaster and the senior staff of the school will be informed as soon as possible and the matter will then be investigated promptly. In all proven instances parents will be contacted. Medical assistance will be offered, where needed.

Matron must be aware of any student in school who requires medication during the school day and it is recommended that any such medication should be lodged with Matron for safekeeping.

A student of the School would be committing an offence if he/she were in unlawful possession of a †controlled substance or supplying such a substance on the school site or whilst involved in any school activity (including school trips, visits and expeditions). In all instances the police would be informed and would be asked to remove and test the substance. If there were conclusive evidence that a student had committed such an offence, then the Headmaster would take appropriate action; this would, in almost all instances, be the permanent exclusion of the student from the school.

Possession of alcohol, tobacco, solvents and vaping paraphernalia is not illegal, but it is considered an offence at Parmiter's for students (including those in Years 12 and 13) to be in possession of these substances or to be under the influence of one or more of them whilst on the premises, or on school trips, visits and expeditions. The trip leader must ensure that parents are informed of the rule of no drinking or smoking, either at the Parents' Evening prior to the trip or by information provided. They should also be aware that students are not allowed to purchase tobacco or alcohol whilst on an educational visit. Parents should also be reminded of the role they play in supporting the school's policy.

The school reserves the right to search school property at any time. Should a personal search be required, consent would be sought, parents invited to attend and a second appropriate adult would be present. If consent is refused, the police may be involved.

Any student who brings alcohol on to the school premises will be removed from lessons and parents will be contacted. This may result in a period of exclusion from School.

Any student found to be in possession with intent to supply controlled substances runs the risk of permanent exclusion from the School.

The Academy Trustees have a legal responsibility, which they will not hesitate to implement, to take appropriate action where drugs are concerned.

Definitions:

* drugs – substances which people take to change the way they feel, think or behave

These include:

- all illegal drugs, referred to as controlled substances. (Those controlled by the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971, and subsequent amendments) e.g. cannabis, ecstasy, LSD, heroin.
- all legal drugs, including alcohol, tobacco, volatile substances (those giving off a gas or vapour which can be inhaled) caffeine, khat and alkyl nitrites (known as poppers), psychoactive drugs (legal highs).
- all over-the-counter and prescription medicines e.g. paracetamol, cough medicines.

† *Controlled Drugs*: those drugs controlled under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971, and subsequent amendments (also known as illegal drugs)

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Guidance for Staff

Signs and symptoms of possible drug misuse

It is important for staff to be vigilant, particularly when they are in charge of activities which take groups of young people away from the school premises. Research has shown that first experiments with drugs by young people almost always involve a substance provided by a friend. The signs listed below may indicate that individuals (Table1) or groups (Table 2) of young people are misusing drugs. **Their presence alone is not conclusive proof of drug misuse; many of them are a normal part of adolescence**, but the presence of several signs together may indicate a need for concern.

Table 1: Warning Signs in individuals

- *Changes in attendance, and being unwilling to take part in school activities
- *Change in attitude towards school work
- *Unusual outbreaks of temper, marked swings of mood, restlessness or irritability
- *Reports from parents that more time is being spent away from home, possibly with new friends or with friends in an older age group
- *Excessive spending or borrowing of money
- *Stealing money or goods
- *Excessive tiredness without obvious cause
- *No interest in physical appearance
- *Sores or rashes especially on the mouth or nose
- *Lack of appetite
- *Heavy use of perfume etc. to disguise smell of drugs
- *Wearing sunglasses at inappropriate times to hide dilated or constricted pupils
- *Slurred speech
- *Glazed eyes
- *Unsteady on feet

Table 2: Warning signs in groups

- *Regular absence on certain days
- *Keeping away from other students and avoiding supervised areas, eg. groups who often gather near the school gate or at the perimeter of the playground or sports field.
- *Being the subject of rumours about drug taking
- *Talking to strangers near the premises
- *Stealing in organised groups
- *Using drug takers' slang
- *Exchanging money or objects in the playground
- *Associating sporadically with one person who is much older and not normally part of the peer group.

Table 3: Objects that may indicate Drug Misuse

- *Foil containers or cup shapes made from silver foil, perhaps discoloured by heat
- *Metal tins
- *Spoons discoloured by heat
- *Pill boxes
- *Plastic, cellophane or metal foil wrappers
- *Small plastic or glass phials or bottles
- *Twists of paper
- *Straws
- *Sugar lumps
- *Syringes and needles
- *Cigarette papers and lighters/Rizla packets with torn off corners
- *Spent matches
- *Plastic bags or used butane gas containers (solvent abuse)
- *Shredded cigarettes, home rolled cigarettes and pipes (cannabis).

Procedures if substance misuse is discovered on the School premises

If staff discover substances which are suspected to be drugs, the following procedure should be followed:

- a) Summon assistance from a member of SLT who will, in the presence of a witness remove the substance in a bag from the place where it was discovered. Medical help should also be sought if necessary. Under no circumstances, promise total confidentiality. Should a personal search be required, consent would be sought, parents invited to attend and a second appropriate adult would be present. If consent is refused, the police may be involved.
- b) If this is not possible, do not leave the substance unattended or in the possession of a student while you enlist the support of a colleague or a student as a witness. If this cannot be done, accompany the student (or students) with the substance to the School office.
- c) Record the time, place and circumstances in which the substance came into your possession.
- d) Do not investigate the nature of the substance yourself, but record its approximate size and appearance.
- e) Where possible, have the recordings countersigned by a witness.
- f) Hand the substance immediately to the Headmaster or other member of SLT. Do not keep the substance on your person or in a place of safe keeping; to do so may place you at risk.
- g) The Headmaster or his representative will place the substance in a clear sealing bag and lock it in a safe.
He will sign and date the package and you will be asked to sign as well as any witness who was present. The substance will be passed to the Police to be tested.
- h) The Headmaster or his representative will contact the parent(s) of the student(s) involved.
- i) If any substance found on/with a student is thought to be a controlled drug, the police

will be contacted to determine an appropriate strategy.

- j) Where drugs are handed on to another authority, including the police, this should also be witnessed.

POLICE PROCEDURES

POSSESSION WITH INTENT TO SUPPLY CONTROLLED DRUGS

If investigations prove that a student has possession with intent to supply a controlled drug, then the information will be passed to the Police and the Youth Offending Team will be notified. Appropriate action will then be taken.

School Journeys Abroad

The use or possession of controlled substances on a school journey abroad may have serious consequences for the students concerned and they may be dealt with by the local police in accordance with the laws of the country in question. After a written statement has been produced stating the nature and details of the offence, the Headmaster will be informed of the situation and the student will be sent home at the parents' expense

School Journeys in the United Kingdom

If a member of staff suspects that a student is in possession of a controlled drug he/she should contact the local police and inform the Headmaster of the situation. Arrangements will then be made for the student to be removed from the trip and collected by their parents. The Headmaster may decide to exclude the student from the School as a result of his investigation.