

Alcohol, Smoking and Drug Abuse Policy

Definition

Alcohol, prescription medicines, over-the-counter pharmaceuticals, tobacco, various herbal preparations and the full range of illegal drugs all produce a mind-altering effect likely to be detrimental to the health and safety of an individual.

Principles of our policy

The policy will be implemented as follows:

- The School will provide clear information on the dangers of alcohol, tobacco and drug abuse.
- The School will encourage pupils to develop the common sense and self-confidence needed to resist peer pressure to drink alcohol, smoke tobacco or take drugs.
- The School will help anyone genuinely seeking help. Anyone with a drug-related problem must expect to be tested regularly.
- The School has clear sanctions for those suspected of, or found to be, using alcohol, tobacco or drugs.

Alcohol

Alcohol is a depressant drug, particularly when taken in large quantities. Even at low levels, the potential for serious accidents arises. The Licensing Act of 1964 makes it generally illegal for alcohol to be sold to anyone under the age of 18, or for a person under 18 to buy alcohol. At Rossall we work hard to teach pupils that it is possible to drink in moderation, and that it is entirely acceptable not to drink alcohol at all.

Aims:

- to develop knowledge and understanding about alcohol as a drug and its effects on the body through PSHE
- to encourage sensible, appropriate and safe drinking
- to practice personal and social skills and the strategies needed to deal with situations where alcohol is present
- to educate the pupils as to the place of alcohol in the political, social and economic environment in which it exists.

Drinking, or being in possession of alcohol is prohibited:

- in School buildings or grounds (exception formal occasions sanctioned by the Deputy Head)
- when under the authority of the School, in public houses and other licenced premises and whenever prohibited by law
- whilst on School outings and trips (exception formal occasions sanctioned by the Deputy Head)

Members of the School may visit Mondo, the School's restaurant, when it is open, and may purchase alcohol only if they order a plated meal. Members of the boarding community in Year 13 may visit public houses and other licensed premises with the permission of their houseparents, but may consume alcohol only if they have reached the legal age (18 years).

Sanctions

Pupils must be aware that they can escalate through the disciplinary sanctions quite quickly if they persistently break the rules with regard to alcohol. Any unsupervised drinking is viewed seriously and the pupil/s can expect to be suspended or excluded depending on the circumstances. Seniors who have turned 18 must realise the consequences of their actions if they abuse their status and make alcohol available to any pupils under the age of 18.

Pupils found in possession of alcohol or using it, whilst under the authority of the School (as outlined in the policy on drugs) can expect to be suspended. Pupils found in possession of spirits, or under the influence of spirits will be suspended immediately. If the offence is serious enough and is repeated, such behaviour can be met with exclusion.

Use of Breathalyzers

Rossall uses breathalyzers in all of its Boarding Houses if and when necessary. Breathalyzers serve as a useful deterrent.

Smoking

Under the Health Act 2006 it is illegal for anyone to smoke in any School building or substantially enclosed area, with exception of private dwellings inc. private accommodation in a Boarding House, or, in any school or private vehicle being used on school related business.

Smoking is the single most preventable cause of premature death and ill-health in our society. The school policy on smoking aims to give pupils the message that the habit creates health problems for smokers and non-smokers alike, that non-smoking represents the norm in society and that it receives support from the School and staff. Recent legislation has made it an offence for children under 18 years to be sold tobacco products. Smoking is a major Health and Safety issue in a residential community. Pupils are suspended if caught smoking in the House or with a junior (Not in the sixth form).

Aims:

- to ensure that cigarette smoking is not tolerated at the school
- to educate pupils as to the immediate dangers of smoking
- to encourage those pupils who do smoke to break free from the habit

Smoking, or being in possession of cigarettes or tobacco, is prohibited when a pupil is under the School's authority. The School's policy on drugs defines when a pupil is under the School's authority.

Pupils found smoking in buildings will be suspended from the School as this constitutes a direct threat to the health and safety of other individuals. All smoking-related incidents are reported to the Deputy Headmaster. Pupils found in possession of cigarettes or tobacco can expect their parents to be informed and an appropriate punishment administered. Subsequent offences may result in suspension. For a persistent offender the Headmaster reserves the right to review the pupil's membership of the School community.

Educational Aspects

This is dealt with through the school's PSHE programme, and all smokers who see the Deputy head are reminded of the dangers of this habit, are placed in detention to study a short reading on smoking and are expected to perform a communal task as directed by the Deputy Head. On the third offence smokers are compelled to attend a smoking cessation course. Parents are kept informed at all times. Pupils are encouraged to try to give up smoking and the Medical Centre will always see pupils who want support in achieving this.

Further guidance for parents

1. "Alcohol Concern" (www.alcoholandfamilies.org.uk)
2. "Drug Education: An Entitlement for All. A Report to the government by the Advisory Group on Drug and Alcohol Education" (www.teachernet.gov.uk)
3. "Intervention in Schools to prevent and reduce alcohol use among children and young people" National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (www.nice.org.uk)

Drugs and Harmful Substances

Under the Misuses of Drugs Act 1971, it is generally illegal to possess or supply a drug covered by the Act, unless authorised (e.g. possessing drugs prescribed for personal medical use). Solvents are dangerous substances as well. Under the Intoxicating Substances (Supply) Act 1965, it is illegal for anyone to supply or offer to supply a substance if they know or believe that the substance being supplied will be inhaled by a person under 18 for the purpose of intoxication.

Terminology used in this policy

“Drugs” means controlled drugs including cannabis, Temazepam, LSD, cocaine, amphetamines, ecstasy and heroin; over the counter drugs such as tranquilisers and pain killers; legal drugs such as solvents and ‘poppers’ and any other substances that fall into this category.

“ Involvement with drugs” includes possession, use, supplying and dealing with controlled drugs or substances resembling controlled drugs, or the paraphernalia of drugs.

“ Substances” means controlled drugs and, in the appropriate context, alcohol, tobacco, cigarettes, smoking paraphernalia, anabolic steroids, “legal drugs obtainable on or off prescription, and every other substance that, when abused, may damage the health, safety and welfare of a pupil.

“reasonable suspicion” means a suspicion based on a cogent reason stated by the Headmaster or Deputy Headmaster.

Illegal drugs and drug abuse have no place at Rossall School and we shall actively discourage the use of drugs and will treat all cases of use by pupils as serious misconduct.

Aims:

- to ensure that Rossall School is free from illegal drugs (and solvents)
- to educate pupils on the effects of drugs (and solvents) on the mind and body
- to provide opportunities for pupils to practice the personal and social skills and the strategies needed to deal with situations involving drugs
- to promote the individual’s self-confidence, self-esteem and self-worth
- to explain the legal situation with regard to the use and misuse of drugs
- to enable young people to identify sources of appropriate personal support
- to enable parents to acquire knowledge and support

Sanctions

Any pupil involved in illegal drugs when he/she is under the School’s authority can expect to be excluded from school. Being under the School’s authority means:

- throughout the School day, whether on or off the premises
- whenever he/she is involved in any activity organised by the School
- whenever he/she is identifiable as a member of the School
- for a boarder, whenever he/she is under the direct responsibility of his/her Houseparent

We will always investigate a rumour or complaint about involvement in illegal drugs and substances, including questioning a pupil, searching his/her room and personal possessions. We will inform parents and guardians as a matter of urgency and invite them into the school to discuss the matter.

Parents are asked to inform Houseparents if they have any cause for concern about their son or daughter.

In addition, where it has been brought to the attention of the Headmaster that a pupil has been formally cautioned by the police for the possession of an illegal drug the school reserves the right to exclude him/her.

Information gathering and Investigation

The information gathering and investigation stages may involve segregating a pupil but this would be for no longer than is necessary; asking him/her questions; asking him/her to give a written account of a particular circumstance if necessary; searching his/her room or personal belongings; taking possession of property for analysis; and/or asking the pupil to provide a urine sample under appropriate supervision. Having informed the pupil of the nature of the rumour or allegation the houseparent will bring the matter to the attention of the Deputy Headmaster. The investigation will be conducted fairly and in accordance with natural justice. "Police station" procedures will not be used. The pupil will have reasonable access to a telephone, toilet, food and drink and will not be left unaccompanied for long periods of time. Formal interviews will normally be conducted by the Deputy Head. The pupil may be accompanied at interview by their houseparent. Sources of information will not normally be disclosed. Parent will be kept informed by the houseparent, so far as is practicable.

Search

Under Section 395) of the Children Act 1989

'A person who...does not have parental responsibility...but has care of the child, may...do what is reasonable in all the circumstances of a case for the purpose of safeguarding or promoting the child's welfare.'

The school considers that a search of personal property falls into the category of search for the purpose of 'safekeeping or promoting a child's welfare'. A search of a pupil's electronic property as stored on the School network may also fall into this category. Searches will always be carried out in a proper manner which respects the pupil's dignity at all times. The adult carrying out the search will be accompanied by another adult and the pupil will be invited to be present throughout.

Testing for Drugs

If there is reason to suspect that a pupil has been using illegal drugs the Headmaster or Deputy Head may decide that a pupil should take a urine test in the School Medical Centre. The test will be carried out in accordance with strict procedure. (See Drug Testing Procedure Appendix 1) Parents will be informed before the test is taken. It is a condition of acceptance into the school that a signed consent form is returned. Failure to provide a sample will be taken as an admission of guilt.

If the urine test is positive the pupil will be allowed to remain at the School and will be given further guidance and support on condition that the pupil submits to further testing. A positive test will lead to exclusion.

Support for parents:

From time to time the school will arrange sessions in which information about illegal drugs and their use will be presented, as well as on tobacco and alcohol. There are a number of websites online which parents will find informative and helpful.

Educational programme:

The School has a pro-active policy concerning the use of illegal drugs and substances, alcohol and tobacco. This is expressed in assemblies, Tutor periods, science lessons and Personal Social and Health Education (PSHE) lessons.

In science lessons the School follows the National Curriculum Science Order concerning Drug Education. This is as follows:

Key Stage 3

- How smoking affects lung structure and gas exchange
- How abuse of alcohol, solvents and other drugs affect health

Key Stage 4

- The effects of solvents, alcohol and tobacco on the body and functions

In PSHE, the following issues are addressed:

Key Stage 3

- Recognising personal responsibility for decisions about substance use
- Knowledge about the basic facts concerning substances including their effects and relevant legislation
- Awareness of myths, misconceptions and stereotypes linked with substance abuse
- The development of appropriate techniques for coping with situations in which substance abuse occurs

Key Stage 4

- Understanding that Britain is a drug-using society and recognising different patterns of use and their effect
- Recognising the impact of peer-group pressure on drug habits
- Individuals are responsible for the choices they make about drug use
- Being able to analyse safe levels of intake; e.g. tobacco is never safe, limited use of alcohol may be safe
- Discussing the role of the media in influencing attitudes towards drugs, particularly smoking and alcohol.

Related Policies

- Behaviour Policy (Including the Discipline and Exclusions Policy)

Further guidance for parents

1. MOSA "Testing for Substance Misuse in Schools" September 2006 (www.mosa.org.uk)
2. DCFS publication "Drugs Guidance for Schools" (DfES/0092/2004)
3. "School Drug Policy Review Process" (www.drugeducationforum.com)
4. "Drug Education: An Entitlement for All. A Report to the government by the Advisory Group on Drug and Alcohol Education" (www.teachernet.gov.uk)
5. "Drugs Guidance for Schools" (www.drugeducationforum.com)

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