



South Wonston Primary School Managing Drugs and Substance-Related Incidents Policy

Approved by: Full Governing Body

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1. Introduction and Policy Statement

South Wonston Primary School is committed to promoting the health, safety and wellbeing of every pupil and adult in our community. We recognise that drugs, alcohol, vaping products and other substances can pose significant risks to the safety and development of children, and that schools have a legal and moral duty to protect pupils from exposure to these risks. This policy outlines how we prevent, manage and respond to any substance-related incident within the school environment.

We act in accordance with statutory guidance and legislation including:

- **Misuse of Drugs Act 1971**
- **Psychoactive Substances Act 2016**
- **Health Act 2006 (smoke-free legislation)**
- **Education Act 2002 (Section 175 – duty to safeguard)**
- **COSHH Regulations 2002**
- **DfE Behaviour in Schools (2022)**
- **DfE Searching, Screening and Confiscation (2023/24)**
- **DfE Vaping in Schools (2023)**
- **Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024)**

The school does not permit the possession, use or supply of illegal or unauthorised substances at any time, either on school premises or while participating in any school activity. This prohibition applies to **pupils, staff, parents/carers, visitors, contractors and governors.**

The school's approach is centred on safeguarding, support and prevention. When a substance-related concern arises, the welfare of the pupil is our first priority, and responses are carefully considered to balance safety, pastoral needs and legal responsibilities.

2. Definition of Drugs and Related Substances

For the purpose of this policy, the term "drug" includes:

Illegal Drugs

Examples include:

- cannabis
- cocaine
- ecstasy
- MDMA
- controlled substances used without a prescription
- nitrous oxide **when used for intoxication** (2023 controls)

Legal but unauthorised substances

These include:

- alcohol
- tobacco
- **vaping devices, liquids and disposable vapes**
- psychoactive substances (“legal highs”)
- prescription medicines not belonging to the pupil
- over-the-counter medicines brought without permission

Volatile substances / hazardous products

Such as:

- aerosols
- glue and solvents
- lighter fluid

- butane gas

Drug paraphernalia

Any equipment associated with drug use, such as:

- lighters, matches
- grinders
- rolling papers
- vape chargers or pods
- syringes, needles or sharps

3. Medicines in School

The school follows DfE statutory guidance *Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions (2015)*.

Medicines may only be administered when:

- it would be detrimental to the child's health not to do so
- written parental consent has been provided
- medication is labelled and in original packaging

All medicines are:

- stored in a locked medical cupboard
- administered by trained staff
- recorded in the medical log

Controlled drugs are stored in a **double-locked cabinet** in accordance with regulations.

Pupils must not carry medicines unless authorised within an agreed care plan (e.g., inhalers, EpiPens).

3.3 Staff Personal Medication

Staff may bring personal over-the-counter medication (e.g., pain relief, hayfever medication) onto the school site for their own use. To ensure safety:

- Staff must store their personal medication **securely** at all times.
- Suitable storage includes:
 - a **locked staff only**
 - **Cupboard**
 - **Draw**
 - **Safe,**
- Personal medication must **never** be left in classrooms, communal areas, on desks, in handbags accessible to pupils, or anywhere pupils could access it.
- Staff must **never administer** personal medication to a pupil.

This ensures pupil safety and prevents accidental access.

4. Hazardous Substances (COSHH)

The school ensures that hazardous substances are stored, handled and disposed of in accordance with COSHH regulations. This includes:

- secure, locked storage for chemicals
- restricted staff-only access to cleaning and maintenance products
- appropriate PPE for staff
- supervision of children during curriculum activities involving substances (e.g., science, DT)

Pupils must not bring aerosols or solvents into school.

5. Alcohol in School

Alcohol may not be consumed during the school day or while supervising pupils. Staff must not be under the influence of alcohol or bring alcohol onto the premises when they have loco parentis.

At certain school events (e.g., PTA fundraisers), alcohol may be consumed by adults **with the explicit permission of the Headteacher** and in accordance with licensing law.

Parents arriving intoxicated

If a parent or adult collecting a child appears intoxicated, staff will:

- assess whether it is safe to release the child
- seek alternative collection arrangements if necessary
- follow safeguarding procedures if there are concerns regarding the child's welfare

6. Smoking and Vaping

South Wonston Primary School operates a **strict smoke-free and vape-free environment** in line with the Health Act 2006 and DfE guidance.

Smoking

Smoking is prohibited:

- anywhere on school premises
- at the school gates
- within sight of pupils
- during school events or activities

This applies to staff, parents, visitors and contractors.

Vaping (E-Cigarettes)

The following is in line with the Health Act 2006, Education Act 2002, COSHH 2002 and DfE Vaping in Schools (2023):

Vaping equipment and liquids must not be brought onto school premises by staff, pupils or visitors.

This includes:

- vape pens
- disposable vapes
- liquids
- pods
- chargers

Staff who choose to vape must do so **off-site and out of sight of pupils.**

The school will not store vape equipment for any individual.

Any vaping equipment found on school premises will be confiscated and safely disposed of.

7. Drug-Related Incidents

A drug-related incident may include:

- finding substances or paraphernalia on school grounds
- a pupil in possession of a banned substance
- a parent arriving intoxicated
- the misuse of prescribed or non-prescribed medication
- suspicious smells, behaviour or unexplained items
- disclosure regarding drug use by a child or adult

- evidence or suspicion relating to county lines or exploitation
- pupils reporting concerns about peers or family
- drug paraphernalia found on or near school grounds

Incidents may range from minor to serious, but **all will be taken seriously** and logged.

8. Guiding Principles in Responding to Incidents

When responding to any substance-related concern, the school will act in accordance with the following principles:

- **The safety and welfare of the pupil is our first priority.**
- The school has a duty to protect all pupils, staff and the wider community.
- Incidents are assessed **case-by-case**, taking context and individual needs into account.
- Parents/carers are informed early unless doing so would put the pupil at risk.
- Safeguarding procedures, including Early Help or referral to Children's Services, will be followed when appropriate.
- Police will be contacted where legally required or where substances are suspected to be illegal.
- Responses will be proportionate, balanced and consistent with the Behaviour and Relationships Policy.

9. Searching, Confiscation and Disposal

The school follows **DfE Searching, Screening and Confiscation (2023/24)** guidance.

Searching

The Headteacher (or authorised deputy) may approve a search where there are **reasonable grounds** to suspect possession of a prohibited item.

Searching may include:

- bags
- lockers
- desks
- outer clothing pockets (with consent)

Staff should **not** conduct strip searches or search inside clothing.

Confiscation

Staff may confiscate:

- vapes
- tobacco
- alcohol
- medication being misused
- dangerous substances
- suspected illegal drugs

Disposal

- Illegal drugs will be sealed, labelled and securely locked away until collected by the police.
- Vapes, alcohol and tobacco may be disposed of safely and are **not returned** to pupils or adults.
- Sharps or needles are placed immediately in a sharps box.

All searches and confiscations must be:

- witnessed
- recorded
- reported to parents
- logged on CPOMS

10. Responding to Specific Events

Finding a suspicious substance

- Do not touch the substance directly.
- Secure it in a sealed container.
- Inform the Headteacher immediately.
- Record on CPOMS.

Finding needles or sharps

- Do not touch.
- Inform the site manager immediately.
- Site manager places in approved sharps container.
- Safely disposed of under appropriate regulations.

Medical emergencies

If a child or adult appears intoxicated, unwell or at risk:

- call 999 immediately
- administer first aid where appropriate

- inform parents/carers
- log and follow safeguarding procedures

Suspicion of drug misuse

Behavioural or physical signs that raise concern should be logged for monitoring, including:

- sudden behavioural changes
- unexplained smells
- paraphernalia
- peer reports
- family concerns

Patterns will be monitored by the DSL.

11. Disclosure and Confidentiality

If a pupil discloses information relating to drugs—whether their own use or someone else's—staff must:

- listen calmly without judgement
- avoid leading questions
- reassure the pupil appropriately
- NEVER promise confidentiality
- record information on CPOMS
- report immediately to a DSL

Information will only be shared on a **need-to-know basis**.

12. Safeguarding and Child Protection

All drug-related concerns are treated as potential safeguarding concerns. The DSL will consider:

- whether the child is at risk within the home environment
- parental drug or alcohol misuse
- neglect
- exploitation (including county lines)
- ACEs
- mental health needs
- whether Early Help or MASH referral is required
- whether the incident meets threshold for police involvement

The school will always act in accordance with **Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024)**.

13. Education and Prevention (PSHE Curriculum)

The school teaches pupils about:

- safe use of medicines
- healthy lifestyles
- managing peer pressure
- risk and decision-making
- emotional wellbeing
- the dangers of tobacco, alcohol and drugs

- safety around unknown substances
- strategies for seeking help

This is delivered through PSHE, Science, MyHappyMind and assemblies.

14. Support for Pupils

Where substance-related concerns arise, pupils may receive support through:

- ELSA
- Thrive
- TALA
- Pastoral mentoring
- Early Help
- School Nursing
- CAMHS
- Young Carers
- Family Support Services

Support is always balanced with appropriate sanctions where school rules are broken.

15. Behavioural Responses and Sanctions

Sanctions may include:

- loss of privileges

- internal reflection time
- exclusion for serious incidents
- behaviour plans
- parental meetings

Responses will be proportionate and take the pupil's age, understanding, SEND needs and context into account.

16. Monitoring and Review

The Headteacher will:

- monitor the frequency, nature and context of drug-related incidents
- ensure appropriate follow-up
- report patterns to governors
- update this policy in line with new legislation

This policy will be reviewed every **three years**, or sooner if statutory guidance change.