

Review Date April 2026

Belmont CP School **Drugs Policy**

Staff Responsible for Drugs Issues – The PSE lead is responsible for the development, monitoring and review of the drugs education curriculum, supporting and training staff and liaising with external agencies to strengthen the curriculum delivery. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) has overall responsibility for drugs issues including:

- Developing, monitoring and reviewing the drugs policy
- Ensuring robust multi-agency Early Help Assessments and plans are in place in order to provide additional support for children and young people at risk of drugs misuse.

Links to Other Policies – The policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- PSHE
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Health and Safety
- Behaviour
- Educational Visits
- Safeguarding and Child Protection
- Handling Medicines in School
- Prohibited Items

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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:

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

Throughout this policy, the term ‘drugs’ is used to refer to all of 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.

Why a Policy is Needed – We recognise that drug misuse can have a serious effect on health, wellbeing and academic progress. It is the responsibility of the school to play a role in drug prevention and education and help reduce the harm from drugs; as well as help those who misuse drugs, or who are at risk of drug misuse. The DfE advises all schools to have an up to date drugs policy, consistent with national and local guidance.

Aims of the Policy – We have a positive and proactive approach to the issue of safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of children and young people and this policy aims to:

- Give a clear view of the responsibilities of the school and legal requirements with regard to drugs issues
- Give guidance to teachers, support staff and visitors about drugs education
- Give clear direction regarding safeguarding children and young people at risk from drugs
- Provide information so that everyone is clear about the school's overall approach to drugs and its procedures should an incident occur

How the Policy was Developed and the Consultation Process – The policy is based on consultations with staff, school council, parents/carers and governors. It is also informed by a consultation at Lincolnshire County Council involving the LCSP, school senior leaders, We are With You and the Pupil Reintegration Team (PRT)

National guidance including the DfE and ACPO Drug Advice for School (2012) and statutory Exclusion Guidance (2012) has been taken into account, as well as Lincolnshire's School Administration Handbook.

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Approach to Tackling Drugs – We take a whole school approach to drugs through:

- A planned drugs education programme within PSHE
- Clear rules and sanctions related to drugs which are understood by the whole school community
- Training and support for staff
- An Early Help response as soon as we, or the young person or their family, have a worry regarding drug-related issues
- Carefully considered responses to drug related incidents, both on an individual and whole school basis
- Access to specialist support and advice when required

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 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, refusal skills and helping others
- Explore their own and other people' attitudes to drugs, drug use and drug users, including challenging stereotypes, dispelling myths and exploring media and social influences

Training and Support for Staff – All staff that deliver drugs education have opportunities to participate in training through a range of CPD activities, including INSET, team teaching, observing other teachers, trialling new resources and carrying out action research. We take advantage of the support, advice and training provided by Lincolnshire's Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP) and the local We are With You team

All staff are made aware of the drugs policy and have access to drugs awareness training.

Management of Drugs in School – This school does not permit the possession, use of or supply of any illegal drug, nor the misuse of any legal drug which takes place within the school boundaries. This covers on or near the school premises, within the school day, on school visits (supervised or not), residential, work experience and at school social events.

There are circumstances when some legal drugs are authorised for a specific pupil's use in school and these are covered elsewhere in the Administration of Medicines Policy.

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

In accordance with Safer Working Practice Guidance (2015), this is a smoke-free school and pupils, staff, parents/carers and visitors are not allowed to smoke on school premises, this includes the use of vaping equipment. Alcohol is not an authorised drug for any pupil. Staff and other adults in a supporting role accompanying pupils on educational visits are not permitted to consume alcohol. There are occasions when alcohol may be authorised for staff, such as for some school functions and staff social events.

Management of Drug-Related Incidents – In this school, a drug-related incident refers to any possession, usage or supply of an authorised drug, as defined within this policy. Incidents can include emergencies, observations and discovery, disclosure and concerns that need to be investigated further.

School Responses to Drug-Related Incidents – In all drug-related incidents the following principles will apply:

- The Headteacher/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, an Early Help Assessment will be completed to ascertain support needs for the child and family; and advice will be sought from the Pupil Reintegration Team (PRT)
- 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)
- When appropriate, a referral will be made for the pupil to We are With You (01522 305768)
- Decisions about the sanction will depend on whether the offence is one of a series, or a first time and whether the pupil was in possession or supplying
- The Headteacher/DSL will decide whether a disciplinary and/or counselling consequence should follow

Possible responses might be:

- Support – Support is provided for pupils who have concerns about their own or their family's drug use. We will assess the needs of the pupil and the agencies required to meet these by undertaking an Early Help Assessment. This form of support will also be provided to 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 to We are With You if needed.
- Sanctions – Where a school rule related to drug use is broken, sanctions will be given. The type of 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. The school uses a range of sanctions including withdrawal from activities, internal exclusion, fixed term exclusion, suspended permanent exclusion, permanent exclusion. The latter will be considered only in exceptional cases, such as dealing illegal drugs where the risk to others cannot be managed in any other way. Safeguarding the young person and ensuring their entitlement to a full time education is paramount; and therefore permanent exclusion will be used as a last resort after all other approaches have been considered.

Procedures for Managing Incidents -

Reporting a drug-related incident – All drug-related incidents are reported in the first instance to the Headteacher/DSL. Although there is no legal obligation to report an incident involving drugs to the police, we will inform police immediately about any incident involving a suspected illegal drug. Incidents involving legal drugs will remain school matters, although we will contact tradingstandard@lincolnshire.gcsx.gov.uk about the sale of tobacco, vapes, alcohol, legal highs and solvents to under age pupils by local shops.

Recording the drug-related incident – In all drug-related incidents, the Headteacher/DSL will record the responses, including the use of sanctions and/or counselling and support.

Medical emergencies when a student is unconscious as a result of drugs use – The pupil will be placed in the recovery position and an ambulance called. Staff with first aid qualifications should be called immediately but the pupil must not be left alone. 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.

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 Headteacher/DSL will be called. The pupil will be helped to calm down and medical assistance sought if necessary. Parents/carers will be informed and called to the school. In most cases, the pupil will then be taken home with the absence coded 'C' as a special circumstance.

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:

- The substance will be confiscated, in the presence of a second member of staff as witness
- The sample 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 (eg safe or lockable container) with access limited to the Headteacher/DSL.
- The pupil(s) will be supervised within a safe space in school and an investigation undertaken, pending advice from the police
- Details of the incident will be recorded, including the police incident reference number
- The 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

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 2 members of staff
- When a search is required, any staff involved must be authorised by the Headteacher to undertake it and, the staff member conducting the search should be the same sex as the pupil and should carry out the search in the presence of another member of staff, who should also be of the same sex as the pupil being searched if at all possible.
- An authorised member of staff may carry out a search of a pupil of the opposite sex and without a witness only where he/she believes there is a risk of serious harm to another person if the search is not carried out immediately and it is not reasonably practicable to summon another member of staff
- The power to search on suspicion and without consent enables a personal search, involving removal of outer clothing only and search pockets, but not an intimate search, which only a person with more extensive powers such as a police officer may carry out. Outer clothing means clothing that is not worn next to the skin or worn immediately over underwear, but would also include hats, shoes, boots, gloves and scarves.

- If, during the search an object is observed in eg a trouser pocket, the pupil can be asked to bring it out and show it. If the pupil refuses, or alleges assault, the search should stop and the police be called (Screening, Searching and Confiscation, DfE 2014)

The search will take place in school or where staff have lawful control of pupils.

We will keep a record of the search and inform parents/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.

Teachers can search pupils' lockers or possessions without consent where they have reasonable grounds to suspect that drugs have been stored there. The decision to search must be authorised by the Headteacher. The search should be witnessed by another member of staff; unless there is a risk of serious harm to another person if the search isn't carried out immediately and it is not reasonably practicable to call another member of staff. The search and/or the witness need not be the same sex and the pupil. The pupil must be present.

Dealing with Drug-taking Materials – School site staff make regular checks of the school grounds and know how to deal with drug-taking materials, including needles, in line with health and safety advice. Pupils are taught what to do if they come across needles on the school premises and know not to touch needles and to inform a member of staff immediately.

Disclosure – Disclosure refers to when a pupil discloses to a member of staff that he/she has been using drugs, or is concerned about someone else's drug use. In these situations, staff will be non-judgemental and caring and will show concern for the pupil's welfare. An Early Help Assessment will be undertaken. Pupils know that teachers cannot promise total confidentiality if further support is to be considered such as referral to a drug service or counselling service. Information about the pupil will only be given to key staff and no one else, unless the pupil gives their consent. The Headteacher/DSL will co-ordinate the most appropriate support including referral to specialist services.

Suspicion/Rumour – 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 Parent/Carers – Our school 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.

Needs of Pupils – We are sensitive to the needs of pupils whose parents/carers or family members have problems with drugs. Where problems are observed or suspected or a pupil discloses problems, we will assess the pupils' welfare and support needs, and if needed, involve external support for the child and, where appropriate for the family. This will be done via an Early Help Assessment.

Confidentiality – 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 pupil to the Headteacher/DSL and appropriate support will be offered eg referral to a specialist agency. This information is given only to the Headteacher/DSL.

If staff are concerned that a child's safety is at risk, they will follow the school's Child Protection procedures.

The school displays information about local drug and alcohol services that offer confidential information, advice and treatment.

Working with Parents/Carers – We believe that parents/carers have an important role in supporting their child's drug education. We involve parents/carers through a range of activities such as:

- Giving information about what is taught
- Involving them in reviewing the drugs policy
- Giving information about drugs and local sources of help
- Providing parents workshops about drug education and talking to their child about drugs

A copy of this policy is on the school website with hard copies available on request.

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/DSL with the child's welfare a priority.

Involving Police – In most cases a legal drug related incident will be a school, rather than a police matter. However, we work closely with community police and will contact them immediately if an illegal (or suspected illegal) drug has been found or illegal drug dealing is taking place. We will only call 999 in an emergency.

Reviewing the Policy – This policy is reviewed every 2 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 staff, pupils and their families are familiarised with it as part of their induction.

Ratified by governors at their meeting on	26 April 2023
Signed	
Review Date	April 2026

