

Lathom High School
Drugs & Alcohol Policy

We believe that all students and their parents/carers together with all staff, for their own welfare and/or the welfare of those in their care, will be aware of The Lathom High School policy on drugs and alcohol and also will be aware of the appropriate procedures to be adopted as necessary.

Purposes

To provide all students, their parents/carers and staff with a clear framework within which to work when dealing with matters relating to drugs and alcohol in schools.

To inform all students, their parents/carers, staff and other interested bodies that this policy exists.

To act as a resource for students with drug or alcohol related problems.

It is designed to be supportive of all parties by:

- Giving information about substance misuse and how help can be sought and students and the parents or carers supported
- Being clear about the consequences of substance misuse in the context of being enrolled in school.

Principles

The general principles used to construct this policy to tackle drug abuse:

- Children should be equipped to make their own decisions.
- Drugs should be discussed in the context of Government guidelines on PHSE, Science and RSE guidance.
- The pastoral system should support students and their parents.
- Lathom High School need to balance the need for decisive action with the need to dispense natural justice. The school investigates thoroughly an incident and only acts on the balance of probability.
- The school should work with parents and the community.
- Incidents on site should be monitored.

We are most concerned that students should be aware that this policy is similar to that in most places of employment. Staff are bound by the same rules. [There is a separate policy for staff]

The outcomes of the policy follow a similar pattern to other policies:

- The giving of information
- How it affects me
- How my behaviour affects others
- What choices can I make?
- What are the consequences of these choices?
- Who is there to help me?

The Policy

No drug, psychoactive substance, volatile substance, alcohol, e-cigarettes or cigarettes may be brought into school without its knowledge or approval by the Headteacher.

The possession, use and/or dealing of drug, psychoactive substance or volatile substance on school premises or whilst a student is representing school, in school uniform or purporting to be a member of school on any social media platforms is against the law and the ethos and its Behaviour Policy and, as such, will be treated as a most serious matter. Following thorough investigation the Headteacher will exclude from school permanently any student who is found in possession of an illegal drug, psychoactive or volatile substance, sells, provides or purchases the illegal drug, psychoactive or volatile substance, or uses it, and will involve the Police.

The possession and/passing or selling of alcohol on school premises is against the ethos and its Behaviour Policy and, as such, will be treated as a most serious matter. Following thorough investigation of the incident the Headteacher *may* exclude from school permanently any student who is found in possession of under the influence of alcohol or who sells, provides, purchases it or uses it.

Staff who know of students dealing in illegal drugs, psychoactive or volatile substances, or prescription drugs in schools have a legal obligation to take action and should, in the first instance, inform the Head teacher, DSL or any member of the Senior Leadership Team. A log on CPOMS should be completed as soon as possible after discussion with a DSL via CPOMS and discussions with DSL's. The Headteacher will also be informed of such cases as soon as possible. Staff should not attempt to involve themselves in discussions with students who are known to be dealing/using drugs and, under no circumstances should staff assure such a student of confidentiality as there may be Child Protection issues involved.

Should any member of staff become aware of or concerned about students being involved in dealing/possession of illegal drugs, prescription drugs or volatile substances/alcohol abuse outside school they have an obligation to bring the matter to the attention of the Senior Leadership team who are DSL trained. This needs to be in person and then via CPOMS.

If a student is found to be in possession of or under the influence of an illegal drug, prescription drug, psychoactive or volatile substance in school, then a member of the Senior leadership team should be alerted as soon as possible and the substance should be handed to them. A CPOMS log should be completed immediately by the member of staff.

If a student is found to be in possession of, dealing or using illegal drugs, alcohol, prescription drugs, psychoactive or volatile substances whilst on a school trip, the Headteacher should be contacted, or whoever the emergency contact is, and advice sought. *See Note (1)*¹

For any illegal drug, prescription drug, psychoactive or volatile substance or other drug paraphernalia found on site, the member of staff who discovered the item should immediately inform a member of the school Senior Leadership Team who will arrange for their safe disposal and the area is kept clear of all staff/students.

Students who bring tobacco, lighters and matches and those who smoke on school premises will be referred to their Head of Year who will report the matter to a senior member of staff who will take the appropriate action.

Students or their parents who seek help with a drug-related or alcohol problem which does not involve the possession/dealing or using of drugs or alcohol in school will be given every assistance and put in contact with the appropriate agency. Education, counselling and prevention will continue to be an integral part of the drugs/alcohol awareness programme.

¹ *Note (1) Parents sign forms before students go on trips or visits in which they agree to pay for the students*

immediate return should there be any serious incidents of bad behaviour or breach of Studio code of conduct.

There is a separate “medicine” policy.

Conclusion

It is important that as an organisation involved with children we accept the responsibility of dealing with drug-related and alcohol-related issues according to a clearly defined course of action as outlined above.

Zero Tolerance

There is a policy of ‘zero tolerance’ of illegal drugs, psychoactive or volatile substances being brought onto the school premises, or elsewhere where a student is notifiable as a Lathom High School student i.e. (but not limited to) school trips and visits.

This will be tempered by the need for justice and fairness. Lathom High School will thoroughly investigate any incident – the students are fixed term excluded in the first instance until information is gathered and the findings presented to the Headteacher to ensure that the correct decision is made.

Handling Drug-Related Incidents in School

- Students, teachers and support staff should be aware of the law on drugs and alert to the warning signs that may indicate drug misuse.
- Procedures for dealing with drug-related medical emergencies are in place.
- If a student is found with any quantity of drugs the police will be involved.
- Pastoral care will be available for students and Lathom High School will co-operate with local agencies in providing help for students who need it.
- It may be necessary for site staff to check school grounds for discarded needles.
- The Governing Body recognise their legal responsibilities relating to what happens on premises for which they are responsible. This includes responsibility for health and safety, including the safe storage of potentially sniffable chemicals such as cleaning agents, and how visitors to the school behave.
- The Governors recognise the school’s role in informing parents about illegal drugs or psychoactive substances and enlisting their support in effective prevention strategies.
- Lathom High School is part of the community and recognize that effective networking is particularly valuable in drug prevention strategies.
- Students found to be dependent on illegal drugs, psychoactive substance, volatile substance, alcohol, e-cigarettes or cigarettes will be referred to local drug addiction services for counselling and support.

Drugs Education in the Curriculum

Drug education is a vital part of the way we can help young people make health choices and is thus part of drugs prevention. This policy and its contents are regularly made known to students via the NST school assembly programme.

We have a coherent programme of drug education across the curriculum, and we teach about drugs as part of an integrated programme of health education spanning KS 3, 4 and 5. To single out drug education for separate treatment may risk glamorising the subject or losing opportunities to reinforce wider messages about healthy lifestyles. It emphasises three principles:

- To give students the facts
- To emphasise the benefits of a healthy lifestyle
- To give young people the knowledge and skills to make informed and responsible

- choices now and in later life.
- Make clear the consequences of breaching the schools code of conduct.

School Trips

This policy, alongside the Behaviour Policy is agreed on the understanding it extends to both school site events, and those whilst on a trip.

Prior to departing for a trip students may be screened, and any illegal or unauthorized substances will be confiscated.

Adherence to rules relating to illegal and other unauthorized substances is made explicit in the consent forms signed by students and/or parents/carers prior to the trip.

For all trips outside of a 5-mile radius from the school it will be made clear to parents/carers that should a student breach the rules relating to illegal and other unauthorized substances and is returned home, parents/carers will be required to meet the cost of these arrangements.

We will ensure, for all international trips, all students and staff attending are fully aware of the specific drugs and policing arrangements for that country or region. For in country advice staff will contact British embassy or consulate staff.

Student Searches

Section 5550ZA (3) of the Education Act 1996 outlines the power to search without consent for “prohibited items” including:

- knives or weapons
- illegal drugs
- psychoactive substances
- alcohol
- tobacco and cigarette papers

Searches without consent will always be carried out on the school premises or, if elsewhere, where the member of staff has lawful control of the student, for example on school trips.

Searches without consent will only be carried out by the Senior Leadership Team or any person authorised by him/her, and where there is reasonable belief that a student has in their possession one of the above prohibited items.

School staff can search students for any item with consent. They are not required to have formal written consent from the student for this sort of search. The searcher, where it is practicable to do so, will be the same sex as the student and a witness will be present. The staff member will decide in each case what constitutes reasonable grounds for a search.

CCTV footage can be used in order to make a decision as to whether to search for an item.

Students who refuse to cooperate with a search where he or she is suspected of having a banned item in his or her possession, will face an appropriate disciplinary penalty.

The extent of the search will not require any student to remove clothing except outer clothing, which is defined as anything not worn directly next to the skin or immediately over a garment being worn as underwear.

When the search includes the discovery of an electronic device the staff member conducting the

search may examine any data or files on the device if they believe there is good reason to do so. If inappropriate material is found on the device the staff member must decide whether to delete that material, retain it as evidence (of a criminal offence or a breach of school discipline) or whether the material is of such seriousness that it requires the involvement of the police.

Taking temporary possession of and disposal of suspected illegal drugs

The law permits staff to take temporary possession of a substance suspected of being an illegal drug or psychoactive substance for the purposes of preventing an offence from being committed or continued in relation to that drug providing that all reasonable steps are taken to destroy the drug or deliver it to a person lawfully entitled to take custody of it. In taking temporary possession and disposing of suspected illegal drugs or psychoactive substance you are advised to:

- ensure that a second adult witness is present throughout
- seal the sample in a plastic bag and include details of the date and time of the seizure/find and witness present
- store it in a secure location, such as a safe or other lockable container with access limited to two senior members of staff
- Without delay notify the police, who will collect it and then store or dispose of it in line with locally agreed protocols
- Record full details of the incident, including the police incident reference number, inform parents/carers, unless this would jeopardise the safety of the student.

Anti-Smoking Policy

School premises are 'no smoking sites' and this ban on smoking applies to all staff and students whether they are inside or outside the buildings. If students break this rule then they are punished and their parents are informed.