St. John the Baptist R.C. Primary School

MANAGING DRUGS IN SCHOOL

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

'Love One Another'

St John the Baptist RC Primary School is a place of learning in which each individual is encouraged to fulfil their own unique potential. We try always to remember that everyone is special and should be treated with respect. Our Catholic faith touches every part of our school life and we try to be a community which has Jesus at the heart of all we do.

Approved by:	Mrs Kathleen McKeating	**Date:** September 2026
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1. Aims

At St John the Baptist we are committed to providing a safe, healthy environment for the whole school community.

This policy aims to:

- Set out how the school manages and responds to issues relating to drugs, alcohol, tobacco and vaping
- Clarify the roles and responsibilities of staff, parents/carers and pupils in relation to drug-related incidents
- Explain the school's approach to searching, confiscation and record-keeping where an incident occurs
- Safeguard pupils' welfare and ensure a consistent, fair response to any incident
- Give staff clear guidance so they can respond confidently and appropriately

2. Management of Drugs in School

The school does not permit the possession, use or supply of any illegal or unauthorised legal drug within the school boundaries. This applies on or near the school premises, within the school day and during term-time, on school visits, school journeys or residential visits, and at school social events. These rules apply equally to staff, pupils, parents and carers, governors and those working in and visiting the school.

3. Medicines (Prescription and Non-Prescription)

Staff will not normally administer medicines to a pupil at school, except where it would be detrimental to the pupil's health or wellbeing not to do so, and only with the written consent of a parent or carer. Full details of our arrangements for managing medicines can be found in our Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions policy.

4. Hazardous Chemicals

Arrangements for the secure and safe storage of chemicals are set out in the Health and Safety Policy.

The school will ensure that potentially hazardous substances are stored safely, and pupils will be supervised if it is necessary that they come into contact with them in the course of their work. Pupils are not permitted to be in possession of products such as solvents and aerosols the only exception being a salbutamol asthma reliever inhaler, such as Ventolin, or any other approved medicine administered in the presence of an adult and stored in the medicine cupboard.

5. Alcohol

- No alcohol will be consumed during the course of a normal school day.
- Alcohol is not permitted on the school premises except by the permission of the Headteacher.
- Any adult under the effects of alcohol will be asked to leave the premises for the safety of the whole school.
- There are occasions when alcohol is authorised at school during parish/PTA events.
- Staff accompanying pupils on school trips and journeys are not permitted to drink when responsible for pupils.

6. Smoking Policy

We are a smoke and vape free school and staff, parents and carers, pupils and visitors are not allowed to smoke anywhere on school premises. Pupils are not permitted to bring to school smoking materials, including matches and lighters. In the interests of health and safety, should a pupil be found in possession of any of these on school premises, they will be confiscated. Although e-cigarettes are not covered by smoking legislation we do not allow the use of them by staff, parents/carers, contractors or visitors on the school premises.

7. Illegal drugs

No illegal drugs are allowed to be brought on to, or used on school premises. To protect the health and safety of the school community, regular checks will be made of the site to ensure that drug paraphernalia, particularly needles and syringes, are cleared away safely and legally.

8. Managing Drug Related Incidents

A drug-related incident includes any incidents involving any drug that is unauthorised and therefore not permitted within the school boundaries.

These can involve

- A parent/carer collecting their child while under the influence of alcohol;
- Misusing another pupil's inhaler;
- Disclosing concern about a family member who is abusing drugs;
- Giving medicines to another pupil;
- A member of staff finding drugs, or related items, on school premises.

A drug related incident may also include any of the following:

- Finding used syringes in the school grounds
- Possession of drugs by an individual on school premises
- Use of drugs by an individual on school premises
- Supply of drugs on school premises
- Individuals disclosing information about their drug use
- Rumours or reports of drug possession, supply or drug use

9. Guiding principles

The school is aware of its legal responsibilities in regard to drug related incidents and in responding to them. The school's first responsibility is for the welfare of the individual, balanced with the need to protect the community as a whole.

The Headteacher will normally be responsible for coordinating the management of drug related incidents, offering sources of support and liaising with outside agencies. The school acknowledges the importance of its pastoral role and will support all concerned in ensuring the well-being of its pupils. Parents/carers are encouraged to become involved as much as possible in order to achieve a successful drugs education programme.

In all drug-related incidents the following principles will apply:

- The Headteacher and members of the Leadership Team will be informed immediately
- All situations will be carefully considered before deciding on the response
- The needs of the pupil(s) will always come first, whilst also taking into account the needs of the school as a whole

• Parents/carers will be involved at an early stage and throughout any investigation

• Support agencies, including the police, will be involved as appropriate and in keeping with legal requirements

• Any action taken will be in line with the school's Behaviour Policy

• Incidents will be reported to the Chair of Governors

10. Possible responses might be:

• Support and counselling

• 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 will be consistent with the Behaviour Policy.

11. Procedures

It is very rare for primary-aged pupils to misuse drugs in school; however, we believe it is important to be prepared should such an incident occur.

All drug related incidents are reported to the Headteacher and recorded on CPOMS. The Headteacher in consultation with key staff will decide on the responses.

- **Hearsay/Rumour**

Drug use is often discovered by hearsay. This should be passed on to the Headteacher or another DSL who should record the matter as hearsay evidence, thus enabling a record of teacher's concerns to be compiled

- **Searches**

If staff find substances which are not believed to be illegal/controlled drugs these can be confiscated where staff believe them to be harmful or detrimental to good behaviour. If staff are unable to identify the legal status of a drug, it should be treated as an illegal drug. The school will keep a record of any searches taken and inform parents/carers if a substance is found.

Teachers can search pupils' bags in circumstances where a member of staff believes drugs have been stored there; they will seek the pupil's consent and search with a senior member of staff present. If consent is refused the decision to search will be taken by the Headteacher.

The site supervisor makes regular checks of the school grounds and knows 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 suspicious materials such as needles on the school premises and know not to touch them and inform a member of staff immediately.

Storage areas within the school grounds are the property of the school, and the Headteacher, or their representative, may authorise a search of these if there is reasonable suspicion. This must be carried out in the presence of a witness and the named pupil if this applies.

Staff should always try to persuade a pupil to produce a substance voluntarily, for example by asking them to turn out pockets or bags. Where this is not possible, the Headteacher, or staff authorised by the Headteacher, has a statutory power under the Education Act 1996 (section 550ZA) to search a pupil or their possessions without consent, where there are reasonable grounds to suspect the pupil has an illegal or controlled drug. Any such search must be carried out by a member of staff of the same sex as the pupil, with another member of staff present as a witness, and must go no further than a search of outer clothing; strip searches must never be carried out by school staff and may only be conducted by the police, with an appropriate adult present. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will be informed of any search of this kind, and parents/carers will be informed as soon as possible. Any controlled drug found will be handed to the police as soon as practicable, in line with the DfE's Searching, screening and confiscation advice.

12. Suspicious Behaviour

Behaviour that could indicate involvement with drugs should also be logged on CPOMS so that patterns of behaviour can be observed and concerns acted upon where necessary.

13. Finding substances

If a substance or equipment thought to be either illegal or harmful is discovered it should be

removed to a place of safekeeping in the presence of a witness from the Leadership Team. If the substance is known or suspected to be illegal the police must be informed. If a substance is found on a

pupil, the above procedure should be followed and the incident recorded including:

- the date and time of the find or retrieval
- the size and appearance of the substance
- the names of those concerned
- the action taken

Any equipment associated with drug misuse should be handled with care, recorded and in the case of such items as needles and syringes, should be placed in a secure and rigid container for collection by the appropriate person. If these are found on a pupil, the pupil’s parents should be informed.

14. Medical emergencies

If an individual has taken a harmful toxic substance or is otherwise at risk of immediate harm (is unconscious, is having trouble breathing, is seriously confused or disorientated), medical help will be sought and first aid given if required. The priority will be the pupil's safety. Parents will be notified immediately.

15. Disclosure

When a pupil discloses to a member of staff that they have been using drugs, or is concerned about someone else's drug use, staff will be non-judgemental and caring and show concern for the pupil.

Pupils know that staff cannot promise total confidentiality. The Headteacher or a DSL should be informed as soon as possible so that appropriate support can be found.

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.

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 we are concerned that a pupil is at risk, then we will follow the school's Child Protection procedures.

We are sensitive to the needs of pupils who live within families where there is evidence of drug abuse.

Where problems are observed or suspected or if a pupil discloses, we will assess the pupil's welfare and support needs and, if needed, involve external support for the pupil and, where appropriate, for the family.

16. Confidentiality

Pupils need to be able to talk in confidence to staff without fear of being judged or told off. The welfare of children will be central to our policy and practice; however, staff cannot promise total confidentiality in order to seek specialist help if needed. This is made clear to pupils through the PSHE programme and curriculum areas. Information about a pupil in relation to drugs will follow the same procedure as for other sensitive information. If teachers have any concerns about the welfare of pupils they must inform the Headteacher or DSL.

17 Links to other policies

- Behaviour Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- PSHE Policy
- Complaints Policy