

Substance Misuse Policy

Birchwood Community Academy Trust

Policy owner (Name):	Angela Clark
Policy owner (Job Title):	
Date of adoption:	May 2020
Date of review:	September 2024

Aims of this policy

- To confirm the commitment of Birchwood Community High School and College to promote a healthy environment, free from the misuse of drugs, alcohol, tobacco and other substances.
- To reinforce and safeguard the health and safety of students and the whole school community
- To clarify the school's approach to drugs, alcohol, tobacco and other substances, for all staff, students, governors, parents/carers,
external agencies and the wider community
- To clarify the procedures for responding to and managing any substance-related incidents that may occur so that they are managed with confidence and consistency and in the best interests of those involved
- To ensure that the response to incidents involving substances complement the values and ethos of the school

Location and Dissemination

The policy will be available for parents/carers and students to read on the school website.

Both students and parents/carers will be made aware of the policy when joining the **school**.

Students will be reminded of the policy annually in assemblies by a member of SLT.

Substance misuse and the school policy will be referenced in the **PSHE curriculum**.

Policy context

As part of their statutory duty to promote students' wellbeing, schools have a clear role to play in preventing substance misuse. The Substance Misuse Policy has been developed with reference to Department for Education advice and guidance: **'DfE and ACPO drug advice for schools'** which is non-statutory advice for schools.

Other related policies and documents include

- Child Protection Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct

There is a separate First Aid Policy relating to the storing and administration of medicines.

Where and to whom the policy applies

This policy applies to all school staff, students, parents/carers, governors and other external agencies working with the school. The policy applies to the school premises, the school day, while travelling to and from school, journeys in school time, work experience, **trips and visits.**

What do we mean by a Drug or Alcohol incident?

Discovery – A student is found with any drug, drug paraphernalia or alcohol in their possession.

Suspicion – If a member of staff has reasonable grounds for believing a student is involved in substance or alcohol misuse.

Observation – If a member of staff believes a student is under the influence or witnesses the use of or supply of drugs, alcohol or other substances.

Protocol for managing an incident

The Headteacher and/or staff authorised by the Headteacher have a statutory power to search students and their possessions (**[DfE Searching, Screening and Confiscation Advice for school July 2022](#)**) where there are reasonable grounds for suspecting that a student may have a prohibited item in their possession. These items include:

- alcohol
- illegal substances
- tobacco
- **vapes/ E-cigarettes**
- **volatile substances (those giving off a gas or vapour which can be inhaled)**
- **drug paraphernalia such as cannabis grinders, rolling papers, filters, canisters, matches, lighters**
- new Psychoactive substances (NPS)
- Any item school staff suspect has been or could be used to commit an offence

School's general power to discipline, as set out in Section 91 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, enables a member of staff to confiscate, retain or dispose of a student's property as a disciplinary penalty, if considered harmful to school discipline.

The policy refers to authorised staff, at Birchwood Community High School this is the DSL's:

Ms Emma Mills – Headteacher

Mrs Sam Rigby-White – Deputy Head, DSL

Mr Chris Burrows – Associate Deputy Head,
Ms Amanda Crompton – Pastoral Manager, DSL

Parents/carers of any student involved in bringing prohibited substances onto school site will be contacted on the same day. If this action cannot be taken due to safeguarding concerns the DSL will seek advice from external agencies, for example, [Safeguarding Children in Education Team](#), Children's Social Care, Police.

The Police will be contacted in the case of illegal substances found on school site.

Any incident involving prohibited substances will be recorded on CPOMS by the staff member involved, including support offered to the family and individual, any external agency involvement, Police incident number if applicable.

Disposing of Prohibited Substances

If staff confiscate alcohol or prohibited substances, which are not illegal substances they can be disposed of by the staff member who confiscated them.

If staff confiscate illegal drugs/controlled drugs they should be stored securely on school site until they can be handed to Police for disposal.

Any drug paraphernalia will be disposed of safely.

Sanctions

The Headteacher may decide, following a full and timely investigation, that an incident involving alcohol or substance misuse warrants a [suspension](#). If the incident is deemed a serious breach of the school's Behaviour Policy this may result in a permanent exclusion from school.

Following any incident involving alcohol or substance misuse the parents/carers will be invited into a meeting at school to discuss a support plan and to agree and sign a Behaviour Contract which will be reviewed regularly.

School visitors (including parents/carers)

If any visitor to school appears to be under the influence of substances or alcohol they will be asked to leave immediately. If they refuse or become confrontational the Police should be called immediately. If a visitor who appears intoxicated becomes unwell school will implement appropriate first aid.

If school staff believe a student is being affected by parent/carer alcohol or substance misuse then the local safeguarding procedures should be instigated.

Key Contacts:

Change Grow Live Pathways to recovery Team - Call 01925 415176 (option 2) or 07919 558644 (out of hours), or visit 14-16 Bold Street, Warrington, WA1 1DE (no appointment needed between 10am and 2.30pm Monday – Friday) or visit [Pathways to Recovery - Warrington](#)

FRANK – National drug helpline 03001236600 or visit [Talk to Frank](#)

Addiction Advocates – Uk based experts in Drug and Alcohol Addiction and Rehabilitation Treatment visit [Addiction Advocates.com](#)