



DEVONPORT HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

Drugs Policy

Named person: Mr A Thomas

Category: School

Review: Every 2 years, or when there are significant changes

Date to be reviewed: Spring 2026

This policy has been reviewed with regard to the work/life balance of staff.

Ratified at the Board of Trustees' meeting on: 21/10/2024

Policy on School drugs

Rationale

The school recognises that most of the young people of school age will never use an illegal drug, and a small minority may experiment with illegal drugs. Most, however, will at some point occasionally use drugs for medicinal purposes and a number will try tobacco, e-cigarettes and alcohol. We therefore have a responsibility to educate students about drugs accordingly and ensure that the school provides a safe and supportive environment for all members of the school community. The school subscribes to the DfE and ACPO Drug Advice for Schools January 2012.

Description of the school

Devonport High School for Girls is a non-denominational, 11-18 selective grammar school (a few boys are on roll in the sixth form and a number of others study with us from local schools within a consortium). We are situated in an urban location in the city of Plymouth. Our students come to study with us from a very large and diverse geographical area, both urban and rural, spanning Plymouth, Devon and Cornwall. All members of the school community recognise their responsibility to maintain high standards of behaviour and it is our aim to help students safely take their place in a society where a wide-range of drugs exist.

Definition of a drug

For this policy statement, the word drug refers to any substance that affects how the body functions physically, emotionally or mentally. The term 'drugs' and 'drug education', unless otherwise stated, used throughout this document, refers to all drugs:

- All illegal drugs (those controlled by the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971).
- All legal drugs, including alcohol, volatile substances (which can be inhaled), and alkyl nitrites (also known as poppers).
- All over-the-counter and prescription medicines (including controlled drugs).

Aims

- To provide a safe and supportive environment for all members of our school community.
- To consider the differing needs of members of the school community.
- To set clear boundaries known by students, which parents/carers and staff act upon consistently.
- To ensure that the response to drug incidents is both appropriate and consistent with the rationale and aims of our drug education programme.

Objectives

- To ensure that members of our school community understand the school rules and procedures relating to drugs.
- To equip members of the SLT with skills and knowledge to oversee the management of drug related situations, adhering to the policy and ensuring that staff are adequately trained and resourced.
- To deal with drug related incidents promptly, ensuring a full investigation takes place with a fair and consistent response which considers the differing needs of students, staff and parents/carers.
- To review this policy, in light of any incidents that take place.

This policy links to the following policies: Behaviour for Learning Policy
 Safeguarding Policy
 First Aid Policy

Roles and responsibilities

- Drawing up and/or reviewing the policy – Deputy Head Teacher, Mr A Thomas.
- Planning and co-ordinating the drug education curriculum – Senior Head of House Dr D Parry and Assistant Head Teacher / Head of Sixth Form, Mr E Lamb.
- Managing drug related incidents – The Senior Leadership Team.

The Boundaries of the Policy

Devonport High School for Girls defines its boundaries in relation to applying this policy as the school grounds, journeys to and from school, all occasions in the school day where a student may be off site during scheduled breaks, use of the Life Centre, work experience and all organised trips including expeditions and residential visits. Prior to school trips, staff, parents/carers and students will be reminded of the rules and sanctions that will apply in relation to drugs. The policy applies to all staff, students and visitors/partner agencies working in the school.

Drug Education

Aims and key learning objectives

- To develop a drug education programme appropriate for each year group that builds on what has already been delivered. It will enable students to make informed decisions and choices whilst fostering self-esteem, assertiveness, empowerment and self-worth.
- The delivery of the drug education programme will take place through the pastoral programme led by Form Tutors and overseen by the Senior Head of House and Head of Sixth Form. The programme will aim to increase students' knowledge about drugs considering the short- and long-term effects and social consequences of substance misuse. We will encourage students to develop the ability to assess

- and reduce risk to themselves and others and give / access help in age-appropriate situations.
- The parent/carer forum, workshops and the school website will encourage parent/carer involvement in drug education.
 - Heads of House will identify resources to support the pastoral programme reviewing them annually as part of a curriculum review. External agencies will contribute to pastoral sessions
 - We will undertake needs assessment from time to time to inform the content of the teaching and learning outcomes, evaluating feedback responses from students both formally and informally.

Confidentiality/disclosure

Honest and unbiased information will be given according to the policy. Staff should know that individual advice about a student's personal use of substances is not appropriate, but that the provision of access to and knowledge of up-to-date information is. These include local and national helplines *e.g. FRANK for drugs, NHS Smoking Services for tobacco, DRINKLINE for alcohol*, local youth and community services and drug services. See 'Sources of Further Information' below.

We remind staff to follow the school's policy on confidentiality issues. We also make students aware of the boundaries of confidentiality should they choose to make a disclosure to a member of staff (see section 4.3 Drugs: Guidance for Schools DfES 0092/2004).

Management of drug related incidents

Rationale

The first concern of Devonport High School for Girls is to safeguard the health and safety of all members of our school community. We recognise the need to provide a safe environment at school and to offer appropriate guidance and support to staff, students and parents/carers when the need arises. While we acknowledge that use of drugs is a behaviour prevalent to differing extents in wider society, Devonport High School for Girls will not permit or tolerate the possession, consumption or supply of controlled drugs on the school premises. Staff or students who bring drugs to school or use drugs in school may be subject to a range of sanctions or school disciplinary action made under the Behaviour for Learning Policy. We may inform external agencies including the police. The health and well-being of students must be of primary concern.

Searching and confiscation

The school's 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 where it is reasonable to do so. Where the person finds other substances which are not believed to be controlled drugs, they can be confiscated where a teacher believes them to be harmful or detrimental to good order and discipline. This would include novel psychoactive substances so called 'legal highs'. When a substance cannot be identified as a legal drug, we will treat it as a controlled substance. All drug related incidents should be reported to a member of the SLT who will liaise with the police to agree what action/approach is to be taken to deal with illegal drug-related incidents. The law does not require a school to divulge to the police the name of the student from whom the drugs were taken, but it is advisable to do so. The police will not normally be informed of incidents involving legal drugs unless there are concerns relating to the supply or sale of such substances to other students in the local area.

Controlled Drugs

When taking possession of a suspected controlled drug it is important that:

- A second adult is present.
- The substance is sealed in a bag with written details of the date and time of the seizure and signatures of the witnesses present.
- The bag is placed in a secure location such as a safe or lockable container with access limited to SLT only.
- The police are immediately notified sharing details of the name of the student from whom we have confiscated the drugs, *this is advised but not a requirement in law*, and arrange for collection of the drug/s.
- Keep a record of the police incident reference number together with full details of the incident.
- Inform parents/carers; unless this is not in the student's best interest.
- Identify any safeguarding concerns and forward all information to the Designated Safeguarding Lead Mrs R Morgan.
- Record the incident in the Controlled Drugs Recording Book held in the Deputy Head Teacher's office.

<https://www.devon-cornwall.police.uk/prevention-and-advice/parenting/drugs-young-people/>

Tobacco, Electronic Cigarettes and Alcohol

New legislation in relation to the Smoke Free Premises Act came into force on 1st July 2007 and smoking became illegal in certain wholly or substantially enclosed public places. It became an offence to smoke in no-smoking premises or to knowingly permit smoking in no-smoking premises. We are committed to creating a smoke free environment and developing pupil's knowledge, attitudes and skills in decision making around smoking as part of our work on keeping children and young people safe around drugs and managing risk. Devonport High School for Girls therefore operates a "no-smoking policy" throughout the school and grounds. This includes the use of electronic cigarettes (also known as e-cigs, vapes or vaporisers) as concerns have been raised about the health risks

associated with their use and it is still debated whether they draw people into or away from smoking. The NHS does not recommend that young people use E-cigarettes. Further safeguarding measures exist in the UK via prohibitions on the sale of e-cigarettes to under-18s and purchase by adults on behalf of under-18s, and restrictions on advertising. In addition, the Department for Education Circular 2014/25 encourages schools and youth organisations to extend the ban on smoking in school and youth premises to include a ban on the use of electronic-cigarettes (e-cigarettes). Students are forbidden to smoke, vape or consume alcohol on the school premises, school visits and at any occasion when they are representing the school. We ask for parent/carer support in discouraging students from smoking, vaping or drinking alcohol whilst in school uniform out of school.

Where students are known to be smoking, vaping or under the influence of alcohol, their parent/carer will be informed. If the student is in possession of tobacco, e-cigarettes/vaporisers or alcohol it will be confiscated and disposed of. Sanctions against students caught smoking or drinking will be in line with the School's Behaviour for Learning policy. Parents/carers will be asked to make arrangements to collect any student under the influence of alcohol unless they require hospital treatment or are violent, at which time the appropriate emergency service will be contacted. We will also inform the police of any breach of the law, e.g. under the influence in a public place is a criminal offence for a juvenile as is the sale of alcohol to a young person under the age of 18 years.

<https://www.devon-cornwall.police.uk/prevention-and-advice/parenting/alcohol-young-people/>

Overdose

Where a student is suspected or known to have taken an overdose of any drug, whether controlled or otherwise, an ambulance must be called immediately. A member of staff will accompany them until parent/carer is present. The parent/carer must be informed as soon as possible of the incident and of the action taken.

Persons covered by the policy

All students, employees and governors. Consideration will be given to guidance and support for staff and parents/carers and students.

Staff support and Training

We will make training available to all school staff via CPD; coordinated by Heads of House, Head and Assistant Head of Sixth Form as part of the preparation provided for delivering the pastoral programme and also through whole school awareness sessions.

County Lines (drugs and gangs)

"County lines" refers to a crime where drugs gangs exploit vulnerable children and young people to courier drugs and money across the country, from the gang's base usually in large urban areas to customers in suburban / rural locations across Devon and Cornwall.

Typically, gangs use mobile phone lines, “county lines”, to facilitate drug orders and supply to users. Many of our students commute from towns and villages from across West Devon and East Cornwall, whilst others live in Plymouth and we train our staff to recognise the signs that they might mix someone up in this type of criminality.

Children can be vulnerable to manipulation and exploitation for a wide range of factors. Sometimes drug dealers will befriend a vulnerable person who lives on their own or with a vulnerable adult and use their home, often using force and coercion, as a base to store drugs and sell drugs. This is called “cuckooing”.

The County Lines process is now understood as a driving causal factor in youth violence and, sometimes, includes elements of child trafficking. An updated report by the National Crime Agency (NCA) has found that the use of ‘county lines’ by gangs is a growing issue, and is exploiting very young victims.

Potential signs of county lines exploitation are:

- Going missing from school or home
- Significant changes in their emotional well-being
- Meeting unfamiliar people
- Changes in their behaviour (for example, using sexual, drug-related or violent language you wouldn’t expect them to know)
- Using drugs and alcohol
- Acquiring money or expensive gifts they can’t account for
- Relationships with controlling or older individuals or associated with gangs
- Suspicion of self-harm, physical assault, or unexplained injuries
- People with multiple mobile phones or tablets or ‘SIM cards’ (often a second older mobile that is not a smart phone)
- Young people with money, expensive clothing, or accessories that they can’t account for
- Having hotel cards or keys to unknown places.

Reporting to the police

Staff should report any suspicious behaviour to the Designated Safeguard Lead or Head Teacher in their absence, who will consider whether the police need to be involved. Parents/carers should raise concerns with the relevant Head of House who can take advice on what next steps to take. Members of the public should report ‘County Lines’ or related matters to the police.

Appendix

Sources of further information / support

Alcohol Concern

Address: Waterbridge House 32-36 Loman Street London SE1 0EE

Website: www.alcoholconcern.org.uk

Mentor ADEPIS

Contains an extensive list of teaching materials/resources with details of cost, publishers address etc, and some independent reviews/evaluations of the resources.

Website: <http://mentor-adepis.org/>

DrugWise

DrugWise is a centre of expertise on illegal drugs, aiming to inform policy development and reduce drug-related risk. The website includes detailed drug information and access to the Information and Library Service.

Website: <https://www.drugwise.org.uk/>

Schools can receive free FRANK resource materials, updates and newsletters by registering at <http://ddshl.broadsystem.com/freeleaflets.aspx>

National Drugs Helpline

Confidential and accurate information and advice about drugs, open 24 hours a day

Telephone: 0800 77 66 00 Website: www.ndh.org.uk

Talk to FRANK

FRANK is the national drugs awareness campaign aiming to raise awareness amongst young people of the risks of illegal drugs, and to provide details of sources of information and advice. It also provides support to parents/carers, helping to give them the skills and confidence to communicate with their children about drugs.

24 Hour Helpline: 0800 77 66 00 Email: frank@talktofrank.com Website:

www.talktofrank.com

Drugs – Medical emergencies

The procedures for an emergency apply when a person is at immediate risk of harm, e.g. having trouble breathing, confused or disorientated or having taken a toxic substance. Your primary responsibility is for the student at immediate risk, but you also need to ensure the wellbeing and safety of others. If in any doubt, call medical help immediately 999 – always let the school reception know if you have done this and contact the member of SLT on duty.

Always:

- Assess the situation
- Contact main reception and request a First Aider or send for medical help and ambulance.

Before help arrives If the person is conscious:

- Ask them what has happened and to identify any drug they have used
- Collect/protect any drug sample or packaging and vomit for medical analysis
- Do not induce vomiting if they have not already vomited
- Do not chase or over-excite them if intoxicated from inhaling a volatile substance
- Keep them under observation, warm and quiet if possible
- Contact parent/carer if under 18

If the person is unconscious:

- Ensure that they can breathe and place in the recovery position
- Do not move them if a fall is likely to have led to an injury which may not be obvious
- Do not give them anything by mouth
- Do not make them sit or stand
- Do not leave them unattended or in the charge of another student
- Contact parent/carer immediately if under 18.

For needle injuries:

- Encourage wound to bleed. Do not allow them to suck wound. Wash with soap and water. Dry and apply waterproof dressing
- If injury from a used/dirty needle seek immediate advice from a doctor
- Keep needle if available and give to emergency services when medical help arrives
- Pass on any information available, including vomit and any drug samples, as soon as you have dealt with the emergency write up the incident.