

St Benedict's Catholic College



Drugs and Substance Abuse Policy

Date Reviewed	Feb 2022
Ratified by Governors	March 2022
Date of next Review	Spring 2025

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Background

This policy follows the guidelines outlined in the **DfE and Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) drug advice for schools**

“Advice for local authorities, headteachers, school staff and governing bodies” (Sept12)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/drugs-advice-for-schools>

These guidelines suggest that “all school policies on behaviour and discipline should include a clear statement of the school’s attitude to illegal drugs and other substances open to misuse and of the disciplinary measures which will be applied to drug related incidents”.

The Purpose of the policy

The aim of this policy is to acknowledge and clarify the college’s role in drug and substance abuse prevention and education and ensure it is appropriate to students’ needs.

Principles of the policy

The principles that inform the drugs policy and internal procedures are based on concern about the health, wellbeing and safety of the college community as whole as well as individual students

The Governing Body believes that the possession and or use of such drugs or substances in college, during the day or while travelling to or from college is very serious and will be dealt with accordingly. The drugs/substances covered by this policy are not to be bought, sold or otherwise exchanged or brought onto the college premises, school transport , or while students are on college visits.

The College is aware that different groups of people may have some involvement in reacting to a drug-related incident. These could include the Principal, students, staff, governors, parents, police and drug counsellors. Each may require particular information before deciding on how to respond and may have varying concerns, rights and responsibilities.

Our aims are:

- To raise awareness of and recognition of the dangers of drug and substance abuse
- To help students manage personal, social and emotional development and change.
- To develop personal and social skills
- To encourage students to adopt healthy lifestyles

Statutory duty of the College

The Principal takes overall responsibility for the policy and its implementation, for liaison with the governing body, parents, LA and appropriate outside agencies. The Principal will ensure that all staff dealing with substance issues are adequately supported and trained.

St Benedict's Catholic College

Drugs and substance abuse policy



Legal obligations

There is no legal obligation for the Principal to inform the police regarding a drug related incident although the Department for Education recommends that calling the police would be appropriate. We can also liaise with the Children and Young Persons Police officer allocated to our college.

Where it is suspected that substances are being brought onto, exchanged, bought or sold on the premises, details regarding those involved, and as much information as possible, may be passed to the police.

The Principal will make an informed decision relating to the nature and circumstance of any incident and act appropriately with the interest of the student, the college and the student's family/carers of paramount importance. Where deemed appropriate the college may make referrals to external agencies such as the Children's Society who deliver the Essex alcohol and drug support for young people. The Principal may issue a consequence which could include a fixed term or permanent exclusion.

Identifying a situation

The staff at St Benedict's Catholic College will become familiar with the following warning signs of possible illegal drug and/or substance abuse use. The list is not exhaustive:

- changes in attendance
- decline in performance in college and homework
- mood swings, restlessness or irritability
- reports from parents/carers that unusual amount of time is spent away from home
- excessive spending or borrowing of money
- stealing money or goods
- excessive tiredness, without obvious cause
- no interest in physical appearance
- sores or rashes especially on the mouth or nose
- lack of appetite
- over-use of perfume, after-shave, etc, to disguise the smell of drugs.

Drugs education

Drugs education in St Benedict's Catholic College is delivered both through cross-curricular themes and within the PSHE programme. Drugs education in the College is co-ordinated by the PSHE co-ordinator and will:

- Help students to gain an understanding of drug and substance abuse
- Dispel myths
- Provide accurate information
- Clarify values and attitudes

Trained staff will teach drug education but, where appropriate, outside visitors may make a contribution. Such visitors are used in a planned way and their contributions are evaluated. Staff have access to on-going advice, support and training as part of their own professional development. The College cooperates with agencies such as the LA, police, health and drug prevention and support agencies.

St Benedict's Catholic College Drugs and substance abuse policy



Staff development

The policy aims to ensure that the approach taken on the issue of drugs is a whole-college one and is part of our commitment to and concern for the health and well-being of the whole college community. Staff will need to be confident and skilled to teach drug education and students need to receive up to date, relevant and accurate information as well as support. All staff will have access to information about drugs and drug issues through in-house training events. Where relevant to the role of a member of staff more detailed and specific training will be accessed and provided.

Parents and carers

The St Benedict's College community consists of caring and cooperative parents and carers and the Governing Body hope that parents who are concerned about their child and drugs will feel they can contact the college for support. The college will wish to ensure that no student is hindered from achieving their potential because of drug misuse. However, if specific counselling or specialist help is needed the parent/carer will be informed of appropriate agencies and services.

Review & monitoring

The implementation of this policy will be monitored by the college reviewed by the Governing Body in accordance with the policy and procedures schedule.