



Pupil Alcohol, Drug Misuse & Smoking Policy

Title of Policy	Alcohol, Drug Misuse & Smoking Policy
Applies to	Whole School
Endorsed by	Head Master
Responsibility	Deputy Head (Pastoral)
Date reviewed	Michaelmas 2023
Next review	Michaelmas 2024

Purpose

The School seeks to protect both individuals and the community as a whole by establishing clear rules about drinking, smoking, illegal drugs and abuse of legal substances and by education about such matters.

Wells Cathedral School is committed to the health, safety and wellbeing of all members of its community. We encourage pupils to make healthy and informed choices by increasing their knowledge, as well as developing and practising their decision-making skills. We seek to encourage this culture by open education, guidance, warning and disciplinary sanctions. Welfare issues are as important as issues of School discipline and involve the good of others in the community as well as of an individual member of it.

The School is committed to working with those who make mistakes and, whenever possible, to keep them within the community unless: mistakes are repeated; if the first mistake is so serious that proper punishment leaves no possibility other than leaving the School; if the mistake is so damaging to the individual concerned or to others that continued membership of the community poses an unacceptable risk; or if a mistake is part of a series of other serious disciplinary misdemeanours. In such cases, the most caring support that can be offered is requiring that they leave the School.

1) Alcohol	3
Alcohol in context	3
Education	3
The Law	3
School Rules	4
Welfare	4
Suspicion of Alcohol Consumption	5
Disciplinary Sanctions	5
2) Drugs Misuse	6
Prevention through education	6
Suspicion of possession, supply or misuse and recognising the signs	7
Ascertaining 'at risk' pupils	7
Investigation into misuse	7
Authority to carry out testing	8
Action following misuse	8
Investigation into suspicion of supply or possession	8
Categories of controlled drugs	9
Confidentiality	9
3) Smoking	9
Rules	9

Education and Prevention	10
Sanctions	10
The Law	10

1) Alcohol

The School's intentions in respect of the consumption of alcohol are to educate pupils about the sensible use of alcohol, the dangers of its abuse both personally, and in a broad understanding of related health and social issues.

Drunkenness and unsupervised underage drinking at any time is incompatible with membership of the community of Wells Cathedral School. The laws of the land must be observed regarding these matters, and any form of law-breaking, whenever or wherever committed, may endanger a pupil's place in the School.

Alcohol in context

Alcohol is a depressant drug, particularly when taken in large quantities and there is a medical consensus that drinking alcohol has an adverse effect on the adolescent brain. Excessive consumption of alcohol can be fatal and will almost certainly lead to health problems later in life. The disinhibiting effects of alcohol can lead to other problems such as unwanted / unprotected sexual activity. Underage drinking remains a challenging social problem. We are mindful that alcohol consumption by young people is accepted within many areas of society today and that there are increasing pressures on young people to experiment with alcohol; even at low levels, the potential for serious accidents increases.

Education

At Wells Cathedral School, we seek to educate pupils concerning the consumption of alcohol, aiming to encourage a socially-aware, healthy approach and respect for those who choose not to drink. Education in the use and abuse of alcohol is an essential part of the School's PSHE programme and includes dedicated talks by specialist speakers, in a manner appropriate to the pupil's level of understanding. Education and expectation with regard to healthy alcohol consumption is reinforced by Tutors, Heads of Year and Houseparents and aims to:

- Enable pupils to make healthy, informed decisions by increasing knowledge, understanding, challenging attitudes and developing communication and social skills.
- Provide accurate and appropriate information.
- Help pupils develop an understanding for those experiencing or likely to experience alcohol misuse.
- Encourage pupils to discuss in confidence any anxieties they may have about use of alcohol with a member of staff or a school counsellor.
- Provide social events for Sixth Form so that older pupils may be introduced to alcohol in a structured and risk-managed social setting.

The risks of alcohol consumption are age related and there are different legal positions, so this policy also makes a clear distinction between alcohol consumption by sixth-form pupils and by pupils in lower years. We expect all staff, parents and visitors to support the policy.

The Law

It is against the law:

- To sell alcohol to someone under 18 anywhere.
- For an adult to buy or attempt to buy alcohol on behalf of someone under 18. (Retailers can reserve the right to refuse the sale of alcohol to an adult if they are accompanied by a child and think the alcohol is being bought for the child.)
- For someone under 18 to buy alcohol, attempt to buy alcohol or to be sold alcohol.
- For someone under 18 to drink alcohol in licensed premises, except where the child is 16 or 17 years old and accompanied by an adult. In this case it is legal for them to drink, but not buy, beer, wine and cider with a table meal.
- For an adult to buy alcohol for someone under 18 for consumption on licensed premises, except as above.

It is not illegal:

- For someone over 18 to buy a child over 16 beer, wine or cider if they are eating a table meal together in licensed premises.
- For a child aged five to 16 to drink alcohol at home or on other private premises. The risks of alcohol consumption vary according to age and the legal position effectively makes a distinction between those aged 18, children aged 16-17 and under-16s.

School Rules

In addition to legal requirements, the following School rules apply:

No alcoholic drinks may be consumed, purchased or possessed by any pupil under School responsibility except in the circumstances given below.

- Organised social events - alcoholic drinks may be provided for Sixth Form pupils under strictly controlled arrangements at designated organised social events. The rules for the quantities and types of drink for different year groups will be made clear by organising staff. Food must also be provided for consumption at such events. When off the School site, staff should only purchase alcoholic drinks for Sixth Form pupils in exceptional circumstances and in quantities aligned to that permitted for on-site events.
- Visits to public houses in Wells by Upper Sixth boarders - Upper Sixth boarders over the age of 18 are permitted to visit public houses as specified by their house staff on Saturday evenings only during the period 8.00-10.00 pm. Additional concessions may be allowed at the discretion of house staff. Boarders returning from a pub visit must be fully in control having consumed alcohol sensibly. Any signs to the contrary will be investigated and follow up action taken as necessary.
- Permitted drinks: beer, wine or cider. No spirits or cocktails should be consumed by pupils under any circumstances.
- Rules on alcohol apply to pupils on and off the School premises during term time, including day pupils and boarders on School outings and expeditions. They also apply on journeys to and from School, on exeat, at the beginning and end of term and at half term.
- Evidence of alcohol consumption will be followed up accordingly. This includes the discovery of bottles or cans which will be interpreted as evidence of drinking. Pupils must not bring the School into disrepute for any reason associated with alcohol, whether or not the pupil is in the care of the School at the time.

Welfare

- If a pupil is found under the influence of alcohol the initial priority is the well-being of the individual.

- If the pupil appears to be adversely affected by alcohol consumption (e.g. vomiting, stupor, coma) St Andrew's Lodge, the School Medical Centre, should be contacted immediately or equivalent medical provision if on a school trip.
- Help should be sought from the Medical Centre and the pupil's Houseparent or parent should be informed.
- Subsequent action will be determined and agreed by St Andrew's Lodge and the House staff. It may be necessary to monitor the pupil until the effects of the alcohol wear off and in severe cases the pupil will be admitted to St Andrew's Lodge and supervision provided by nursing staff.
- If a pupil is seriously ill then House Staff should inform parents as soon as possible and the pupil will need to be escorted to A&E. The pupil will only be allowed to return to his/her house on the advice and direction of medical staff.
- The incident will be reported to the Deputy Head (Pastoral) for further action, appropriate sanction and pastoral support as necessary.

Suspicion of Alcohol Consumption

- If a member of staff considers it likely that a pupil has consumed alcohol in breach of the rules the pupil will be challenged.
- If the pupil denies consuming alcohol, but there is reasonable cause to suspect otherwise (smell, behaviour, intelligence etc.) then a breath test will be conducted. Consent is given by the pupil.
- A written record will be kept when a pupil is asked to take a test and its outcome will also be recorded.
- The School will treat a positive test, although not infallible, as evidence that the pupil has consumed alcohol. Breathalysers are issued to all House parents.
- If a pupil refuses to comply with a breath test: they will be asked to say why they have refused. The School will be entitled to draw inferences from the response and general demeanour; the pupil's parents will be informed and a meeting will be arranged with the Deputy Head (Pastoral).
- If a pupil is suspected of being in possession of alcohol a search may be conducted according to our guidance on searches. Please see the [Search & Confiscation Policy](#) for further details.

Disciplinary Sanctions

Sanctions will be actioned in line with the School's [Behaviour Management Policy](#).

Pupils who break the rules on alcohol as set out above or who are found to be aiding and abetting the consumption of alcohol will be interviewed by their Houseparent and referred to the Deputy Head (Pastoral). In considering the appropriate punishment the following may be taken into account:

- The level of consumption as indicated by evidence of consumption, visible intoxication and/or breath test.
- The Year group of the pupil involved (Y7-11 pupils will typically receive a tougher sanction than Sixth Formers for low level consumption).
- Whether the pupil has purchased or supplied drink to other pupils.
- Whether the pupil has overindulged with alcohol at a School function.
- The record of the pupil – particularly with regard to alcohol.

At each stage, parents will be contacted, outlining the offence and the likely outcome of any further transgressions.

2) Drugs Misuse

The purpose of this policy is to deter pupils from using illegal drugs or substances at any time and to prevent the abuse of legal substances. This policy reflects a clear understanding that drugs and substances can be widely available and the School therefore strives to achieve a culture which is opposed to the misuse of drugs; in order to do this, we need a partnership between home and School which requires trust, openness and communication.

For the purpose of this policy, *substance misuse* refers to any misuse of legal and illegal substances including:

- controlled drugs
- substances intended to resemble drugs
- legal drugs which can be purchased such as medication
- psychoactive substances such as 'legal highs'
- performance enhancing drugs and anabolic steroids
- products that are marketed for other uses which can be misused e.g., volatile substances

Substance misuse at any time is incompatible with membership of the community of Wells Cathedral School. The laws of the land must be observed regarding these matters, and any form of law-breaking, whenever or wherever committed, may endanger a pupil's place in the School. Any substance that is legal and misused, as well as any illegal substance, may be dealt with in a similar fashion. We believe that misuse of illegal and legal substances is incompatible with the working requirements of School life for all its members.

School life and our School community extends beyond the campus. pupils of Wells Cathedral School may not use, possess or supply these substances at any time; either at School or away from School or during holiday periods when in the care of the School or otherwise representing or being associated with the School. To maintain the welfare of our School community, action will be taken with any individual who misuses substances. We seek to encourage a culture, opposed to the misuse of substances, by open education, guidance, warning and disciplinary sanctions. Welfare issues are as important as issues of School discipline and involve the good of others in the community as well as of an individual member of it.

Prevention through education

Specific education for pupils in alcohol and drug-related issues comes via School resources, PSHE and Biology curriculum. Staff receive specific training as appropriate. Wherever possible, the School will provide general information for parents through online resources and/or the parental engagement programme. Staff will be regularly updated on developments in substance misuse to ensure that informed observations and discussions can take place. Professional support for pupils can be sourced through the GP, nurses, and counsellors at St Andrew's Lodge. General guidance comes via Houseparents, Assistant houseparents, Matrons, Heads of Year, Tutors, Heads of Department and all pastoral contacts.

Support of those involved in substance misuse who remain within the School may take place in School, but there may be referrals outside of School also following the School's commitment to collaborate with appropriate outside agencies.

Suspicion of possession, supply or misuse and recognising the signs

If a pupil is suspected of being under the influence of drugs on School premises, the pupil's safety and that of other people around them is the School's first priority. First aid will be administered if needed and any appropriate support summoned. Parents, an ambulance, or the police may need to be contacted. If the pupil is at risk, the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy will come into effect and social services may need to be contacted.

Concern may originate from anybody, but would usually go via the Houseparent, who would always make it known to the Deputy Head (Pastoral) or to the Head Master. Such concern may, where appropriate, involve parents and will result in a thorough and open-minded investigation.

If demeanour or changed patterns of work or behaviour result in reasonable concern about substance misuse which the pupil denies then sample tests may be carried out under appropriate conditions. Beyond changes in patterns of work or behaviour, other concerns may result in suspicion of substance misuse such as: finding certain items of equipment, unusual behaviour on a particular occasion, or information received from concerned individuals. A more detailed guidance document is available to teaching and house staff to support their understanding of the signs of substance misuse.

Ascertaining 'at risk' pupils

Wells Cathedral School prioritises the welfare of all pupils and staff will be familiar with how to identify 'at risk' pupils in order to safeguard their welfare. Symptoms signifying drug association could include: mood swings; bodily changes such as weight loss; regularly going off site; changes in mental wellbeing; significant changes in academic or social behaviour patterns. A pupil may be at risk if a combination of the following issues is present:

- lack of allegiance to School;
- peer influence and acquaintances who use drugs;
- challenging classroom conduct;
- social or academic difficulties;
- difficulties in the School or home environment;
- an approving outlook towards drug use.

Investigation into misuse

Once it has been established that there are reasonable grounds to suspect that a pupil is misusing substances, the Deputy Head (Pastoral) will be responsible for further investigation and it may be decided that the pupil is required to take a test. The Deputy Head (Pastoral) will ensure that all investigations are carried out with as much fairness and openness towards the affected pupil.

Parents will, wherever possible and appropriate, be informed when a test is administered, and will be offered the opportunity to be present. The giving of samples for tests will be supervised by one of the nurses from St Andrew's Lodge; protocols for the procedure are available on request.

The procedure may change from time to time as dictated by experience and scientific developments in the testing procedure itself. It is a requirement that urine samples will be collected in the School Medical Centre, St Andrew's Lodge, under conditions of the strictest hygiene and care, whilst maintaining the privacy and dignity of the pupil. The staff member conducting the test will inform the relevant persons of the result as soon as it is possible to do so.

In the event of a positive sample a second test can be taken and sent to an independent laboratory

and the same laboratory will properly maintain the second sample for a period of six months, so that it is available for re-testing by another laboratory if this is required by the parents. Complete chain of custody records for the urine samples will be kept. It is intended that the procedures be fully in accordance with the standards required to satisfy any legal challenge.

Failure to agree to the testing process places an impossible obstacle in the way of the School's fulfilling its welfare obligations. In such an event, the test which has been missed or refused will be deemed to have been positive. If the test is proven to have been tampered with, the test will also be deemed to be positive.

Investigation may also involve searches of pupils' person, possessions, desks, studies or living areas, and may involve the police. Such searches will always be carried out in the presence of another member of staff and, wherever possible, the pupil involved. Any interviews will be carried out with careful preparation, and with respect for the rights and needs of the pupils involved.

Authority to carry out testing

All parents are required to give permission for such testing on a pupil's admission to the School.

Action following misuse

If a test is positive or an admission is received from the pupil, then the pupil will become involved in a programme, which will involve both appropriate sanctions and support, and will usually include being randomly tested thereafter. A repeated positive test for illegal drugs will, under normal circumstances, almost certainly result in the pupil being required to leave the School. Where it is not possible to carry out testing, due to the nature of the substance that may have been misused, but where sufficient evidence suggests misuse, the pupil will become involved with an appropriate programme of sanction and support.

The School is committed to working with those who make mistakes and, whenever possible, to keeping them within the community unless:

- Mistakes are repeated
- The first mistake is so serious that proper punishment leaves no possibility other than the pupil concerned leaving the School
- If the mistake is so damaging to the pupil concerned or to others that continued membership of the community poses an unacceptable risk;
- or if a mistake is part of a series of other serious disciplinary misdemeanours.

In such cases, the most caring support that can be offered is requiring that they leave the School.

It is the School's policy to inform the police of any case of serious drug abuse and to give the authorities assistance during the course of any subsequent enquiries. Unless the offence is one of dealing, or is at a significant level, or unless the drug involved is a Class A drug, it has been agreed by the School and the local police force that the police will exercise their discretion not to arrest on condition that the pupil concerned is willing to be interviewed for the purpose of intelligence gathering, if required. Such interviews will be conducted without a member of staff present and any evidence so gathered would be inadmissible in any subsequent criminal proceedings.

Investigation into suspicion of supply or possession

School staff can search a pupil for any item in line with our [Search and Confiscation Policy](#). The Head Master and appropriate members of staff have statutory power under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to search pupils or their possessions, without consent, where they have

reasonable grounds for suspecting the pupil may have a 'prohibited item,' which includes illegal drugs. School staff can seize any prohibited item found as a result of a search. They can also seize any item, however found, which they consider harmful or detrimental to School discipline (e.g. so called 'legal highs').

Where controlled drugs are found, these will be delivered to the police as soon as possible, but may be disposed of if the person thinks there is a good reason to do so. In deciding what is a 'good reason,' the staff member will take into account all the circumstances and use their professional judgement to determine whether they can safely dispose of a seized article. Where staff are unsure as to the legal status of a substance and have reason to believe it may be a controlled drug they will treat it as such.

In taking temporary possession and disposing of suspected controlled drugs, the School will:

- ensure a second adult witness is present;
- 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;
- notify the police immediately, who will collect it and then store or dispose of it.

The law does not require a school to divulge to the police the name of the pupil(s) from whom the drugs were taken but the School will do so if it is deemed appropriate given the nature of the specific situation. If doing so, the School will:

- record full details of the incident, including the police incident reference number;
- inform parents/carers, unless this is not in the best interests of the pupil;
- identify any safeguarding concerns and develop a support and disciplinary response.

Categories of controlled drugs

All controlled drugs are put into one of three categories according to how hazardous they are:

- Class A drugs are most dangerous. These drugs include cocaine, ecstasy and heroin.
- Class B drugs are less dangerous, but they can still damage if misused. Class B drugs include, cannabis, speed and some amphetamines.
- Class C drugs are less dangerous than Class A and Class B. They are still branded as prohibited and can be harmful. Class C drugs include ketamine and some tranquilisers.

Confidentiality

Details of tests will be kept confidentially. The records will not be used for any other purpose.

3) Smoking

This policy encompasses any materials that are 'smoked' or 'vaped' including electronic cigarettes.

Wells Cathedral School does not permit smoking by any pupil. It also seeks to educate pupils about health hazards associated with smoking. No-one any longer denies the damage smoking inflicts on health and it can also cause a significant fire hazard.

Rules

- Smoking is not permitted by any pupil under School responsibility or at any School-related event.

- Pupils under School responsibility may not be in possession of cigarettes, tobacco or any material associated with smoking
- E-cigarettes and vaping are strictly forbidden at all times and in all places. As a consequence, vaping incurs the same sanctions as smoking.

Education and Prevention

Wells Cathedral School seeks to educate pupils about the dangers of smoking through our PSHE programme. Reinforcement is also carried out by House parents, Heads of Year and Tutors. Support from St Andrew's Lodge medical centre and through our counselling team.

Sanctions

Sanctions will be actioned in line with the School's [Behaviour Management Policy](#) (Senior School) The location of the offence will be considered.

The Law

A person must be over 18 to buy cigarettes or e-cigarettes in the UK. If a person is under 16 the police have the right to confiscate their cigarettes.

It is illegal:

- for shops to sell cigarettes or e-cigarettes to a person who is under 18
- for an adult to buy cigarettes or e-cigarettes for a person who is under 18 · to smoke in a car (or other vehicle) with anyone under 18

Pupils who supply cigarettes or e-cigarettes to students under the age of 18 will be subject to severe and proportionate sanctions. Those in the company of smokers and / or those vaping or consuming illegal substances are likely to receive the same sanctions.