

Misuse of Drugs Policy

Policy Code:	SW3
Policy Start Date:	September 2026
Policy Review Date:	September 2028

Please read this policy in conjunction with the policies listed below:

- HR6 Data Protection Policy
- HS2 Medical Treatment Policy
- SW2 Exclusions Policy
- SW4 Student Behaviour and Discipline Policy
- SW5 Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- SW17 Safeguarding Adults Policy
- TL6 SEND Policy

1 Policy Statement

- 1.1 This policy outlines the manner in which instances of drug misuse on Trust premises or whilst on trips/visits will be managed. It relates to Section 91 of the *Education and Inspections Act 2006*; DfE *Searching, Screening and Confiscation: Advice for Schools*; *The Misuse of Drugs Act 1971*; and Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Partnership's Model Drugs Policy.
- 1.2 This policy does not focus on drug education. It covers broader behaviour and pastoral support, as well as managing drugs and drug-related incidents within the Trust's settings.
- 1.3 References to the Trust or Academy within this policy specifically include all nursery, primary, secondary and special academies within the Trust, as well as Priory Apprenticeships and Lincolnshire ITT.
- 1.4 This policy does not form part of any member of staff's contract of employment and it may be amended at any time.

2 Roles, Responsibility and Implementation

- 2.1 The Education and Standards Committee has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy and for ensuring compliance with the relevant statutory framework. This committee delegates day-to-day responsibility for operating the policy and ensuring its maintenance and review to the Director of Safeguarding.
- 2.2 This policy is approved by the Education & Standards Committee before being ratified at the next available Trust Board meeting. Approval and ratification is minuted, with records kept by the Clerk to Trustees.
- 2.3 Leaders and Managers have a specific responsibility to ensure the fair application of this policy and all employee are responsible for supporting colleagues and ensuring its success.

3 Aims

- 3.1 To protect and promote the health and welfare of pupils.
- 3.2 To clarify legal responsibilities, and promote understanding of the relevant powers and duties in relation to searching for and confiscating drugs.
- 3.3 To support all members of the Trust community by providing clear guidance and procedures on drug related incidents to ensure clarity and consistency.

4 Definitions

- 4.1 The definition of drugs used in this policy is the definition given by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime – ‘a substance people take to change the way they feel, think or behave.’

This refers to:

- legal drugs, including alcohol, tobacco, vapes, volatile substances (solvents), poppers and psychoactive drugs (“Legal Highs”);
- misuse of over the counter and prescription medicines;
- illegal drugs (those controlled by the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971); and
- any other drugs such as anabolic steroids.

- 4.2 Throughout this policy the term ‘drugs’ is used to refer to all of the above, unless stated otherwise.

5 Legislation

- 5.1 Under the *Misuse of Drugs Act 1971*, it is generally illegal to possess or supply a drug covered by the Act, unless authorised (e.g., possessing drugs prescribed for personal medical use). Solvents are dangerous substances as well. Under the *Intoxicating Substances (Supply) Act 1965*, it is illegal for anyone to supply or offer to supply a substance if they know or believe that the substance being supplied will be inhaled by a person under 18 for the purpose of intoxication.

6 Drugs Misuse Outside of Trust Premises

- 6.1 Where it has been brought to the attention of the Headteacher/Head of Setting or CEO that a pupil has been formally cautioned by the Police for the possession of an illegal drug, the Trust reserves the right to take disciplinary action.

7 Searching

- 7.1 In the event that a search of a pupil is required in relation to an incident involving drugs, it will be carried out in line with SW4 Student Behaviour and Discipline Policy.

8 Procedures when a pupil is found to be in possession of, or under the influence of, a drug

- 8.1 If any pupil is found in possession of a suspicious substance, it will be confiscated from them. The substance will then be taken immediately to a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) or the Academy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). The Headteacher will also be informed. Please see Section 9 for steps to take if a drug is confiscated.

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- 8.2 Parents/Carers will be informed and, if relevant, the Police will be contacted.
- 8.3 If a pupil is suspected of being under the influence of drugs or alcohol on academy premises, it should be dealt with as a safeguarding incident, and the safety of the young person and those around them will be prioritised. If necessary, it should be dealt with as a medical emergency, administering First Aid and summoning appropriate support.
- 8.4 When appropriate, the pupil will be spoken to by a member of SLT (or nominated member of the pastoral team) to determine the circumstances of the incident.
- 8.5 Where necessary, a multi-agency response may be needed in order to safeguard the child and others.

9 Confiscation of drugs

- 9.1 Where substances which are not believed to be controlled drugs are found these can be confiscated if a member of staff believes them to be harmful or detrimental to good order and discipline. This would include new psychoactive substances or 'legal highs'. If academy staff are unable to identify the legal status of a drug, it should be treated as a controlled drug.
- 9.2 In the event that staff confiscate a drug from a pupil, the Police may be consulted concerning the nature of the substance and the best method for disposal.
- 9.3 Parents/carers will be contacted on the same day if staff confiscate a drug from a pupil.
- 9.4 Any substance (except a controlled drug) confiscated will be disposed of by staff, with another staff member present, and this will be recorded on the Trust's safeguarding system.
- 9.5 In taking temporary possession and disposing of *suspected* or known **controlled drugs**, settings are advised to:
- ensure that a second adult witness is present throughout;
 - 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, such as a safe or other lockable container with access limited to senior members of staff;
 - notify the Police without delay, note down who will collect it and then store or dispose of it in line with locally agreed protocols. The law does not require a school to divulge to the Police the name of the pupil from whom the drugs were taken but it is advisable to do so;
 - record full details of the incident on the Trust's safeguarding system, including the police incident reference number;

- inform parents/carers, unless this has been agreed with the Headteacher and the DSL that there are safeguarding reasons for not doing so; and
- identify any safeguarding concerns and develop a support and disciplinary response.

9.6 The Trust has a template form staff can use to document any disposal of substances (accessed on SharePoint → Inclusion). Each setting will have a confidential shared area where completed forms can be uploaded in the event that there is no known pupil linked to the substance and, as such, the form cannot be uploaded to the Trust's safeguarding system.

10 Drug Testing

10.1 Where there is concern about a pupil regarding the misuse of drugs, it is possible, with the consent of the relevant pupil and parents/carers, for drug testing to take place. This decision can only be taken by the Headteacher, or a nominated deputy in their absence, of the relevant academy.

11 Exploitation

11.1 Academy staff should be alert to the possibility that a pupil found in possession of/using/buying/supplying drugs may be at risk from/there may be links to child criminal exploitation (county lines). It is important, therefore, that the Setting DSL is always involved in any incident involving drugs. Please see SW5 Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

12 Discipline

12.1 Being under the academy's authority means:

- throughout the academy day, whether on or off the premises;
- whenever the pupil is involved in any activity organised by the academy; and
- whenever the pupil is identifiable as a member of the academy.

12.2 Any response to drug-related incidents needs to balance the needs of the individual pupils concerned with the wider academy community. In deciding what action to take, academies should follow the Trust's disciplinary procedures (please see SW4 Student Behaviour & Discipline Policy), academy rules and Local Authority/LSCP guidance.

12.3 Each case will be looked at individually and any specific circumstances taken into account.

12.4 Suspension should not be the automatic response to a drug incident and permanent exclusion should only be used in extreme cases. Please see SW2 Exclusions Policy for further information. In line with the approach

taken by Lincolnshire Local Authority, a restorative approach may be endorsed.

12.5 Drug use can be a symptom of other problems and academies should be ready to involve or refer pupil to other services when needed. It is important that academies are aware of the relevant youth and family support services available in their local area.

12.6 Each academy will provide information on sources of advice and local services for pupils and parents/carers.

13 Managing medicines

13.1 Some pupils may require medicines that have been prescribed for their medical condition during the school day. For more information and procedures please refer to HS2 Medical Treatment Policy.

14 Records

14.1 Any incident relating to drugs and pupils will be recorded on the Trust's safeguarding system.

15 Staff Support and Training

15.1 Each academy's safeguarding team will receive training on drugs and responding to issues of misuse as part of their training pathway. All staff will undertake training as and when necessary.

16 Education

16.1 The Trust has a pro-active approach concerning the use of drugs and substances including alcohol and tobacco. This is expressed in assemblies, tutor periods, Science lessons, RE classes and the Personal Development Programme. Each setting's drug education curriculum is part of a well-planned programme of PSHE education, delivered in a supportive environment where pupils are aware of the academy rules, feel able to engage in open discussion and feel confident about asking for help if necessary.

16.2 In science lessons, the Trust ensures that academies follow the National Curriculum Science programme of study concerning drug education.

16.3 Any educational programme will be designed to strengthen the pupils' ability to assess and manage risk appropriately and to keep themselves safe.

17 Governors

17.1 Through Local Governing Body (LGB) meetings and link meetings, relevant governors will have access to training, where appropriate. They

will be informed by a Senior Leader if there are any drugs issues which might impact the academy.

- 17.2 The governor linked to safeguarding will be the lead governor on issues relating to drugs.

18 Policy change

- 18.1 This policy may only be amended or withdrawn by The Priory Federation of Academies Trust.