



# Beacon Academy Trust

A COMPELLING VISION FOR SUCCESS

## Drugs Policy

*This policy is under continuous review because of the changing drugs scene both nationally and locally.*

## **1. Ethos of the Trust**

The philosophy of the Trust is to provide a supportive and nurturing environment in which all students are enabled to develop their learning and personal skills. This strives carefully to prepare them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences they may encounter in their future lives and this policy has been written in accordance with this philosophy.

## **2. Rationale**

It is our aim to help all students to be able to take their place safely in a world where a wide range of drugs exists. We recognise that some drugs have beneficial medicinal effects, but also that every drug has potential harm. For this reason, all drugs need appropriate and responsible care and management. In order to be able to make informed choices, staff and students need to understand the nature of drugs, their social and legal status, their uses and effects.

## **3. Definition of a drug**

A drug is a substance that affects the way in which the body functions physically, emotionally or mentally. This definition includes illegal substances and also legal substances such as: alcohol & tobacco, volatile substances, over the counter & prescription medicines.

## **4. Aims of the policy**

- To support the school's endeavour to maintain the safety and well-being of all students and staff;
- To clarify legal responsibilities, entitlement and obligations;
- To support all the members of the school community by providing clear guidance and procedures on drug related issues to ensure clarity and consistency;
- To develop a whole school approach to drug education in the context of the curriculum of the school.

## **5. Policy background**

This policy has been written with reference to national and local developments and has been informed by relevant research data.

## **6. Drugs on school premises**

6.1 The legal definition of premises of a school includes everything within the property boundaries including buildings, outbuildings, playgrounds, fields and also extends to include other settings such as vehicles or any venue managed by the school at the time e.g. premises of a school trip or visit.

- **Medicines**

The school has a policy/procedure for the administration of medicines that must be followed for everyone's safety;

- **Alcohol**  
No alcohol will be consumed during the course of a normal school day. Students and visitors under the effects of alcohol will be asked to leave the premises and return at a later date for the safety of the whole school. Parents will be asked to collect their children;
- **Smoking**  
The school is a no smoking site at all times. Students are not permitted to bring to school smoking materials, including matches and lighters. In the interests of health and safety, should a student be found in possession of any of these on school premises, they will be confiscated and parents informed;
- **Illegal drugs**  
No illegal drugs are allowed to be brought on to, or used on school premises;
- **Solvents**  
The school will ensure that potentially hazardous substances are stored safely, and students will be supervised if it is necessary that they come into contact with them in the course of their work. Students are not permitted to be in possession of sniffable products;
- **Responses to drug related incidents**  
A drug incident may be any of the following:
  - Finding drugs, or related paraphernalia, on school premises;
  - Possession of drugs by an individual on school premises;
  - Use of drugs by an individual on school premises;
  - Supply of drugs on school premises;
  - Individuals disclosing information about their drug use;
  - Rumours of parents, staff or students using drugs;
  - Reports of parents, staff or students using drugs.

6.2.1 The school is aware of its legal responsibilities in regard to drug related incidents and in responding to incidents, seeks to work in line with local and national guidance as outlined in The Right Responses. A member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) will normally be responsible for co-ordinating the management of drug-related incidents, offering sources of support and liaising with outside agencies. Incidents will be dealt with after making an assessment of the situation and will be reported to the Headteacher. All incidents and responses will be recorded within 24 hours.

6.2.2 Appropriate support will be offered to those with substance related problems. Talking with an individual about a drug related incident will have as its purpose to confirm or reject suspicions or allegations, rather than conduct a wider investigation.

6.2.3 Evidence of drug use or possession will not necessarily result in permanent exclusion. Permanent exclusion will only be considered in serious cases and will be in accordance with DfE guidance on exclusions. A case conference will be called if necessary. Each case will be assessed and levels of sanctions may vary according to the seriousness of the incident and the student's involvement.

## **7. Individuals in possession of drugs**

If any student or adult on school premises is found in possession of an unauthorised drug it will be confiscated, if possible. If the drug is suspected to be illegal, the school may wish to contact a police officer for discussion. Illegal substances will be legally destroyed or handed to the police as soon as possible and not stored. Parents will normally be informed (for a

student) and other professionals such as the Local Authority, Youth Service, Police, GP, Social Services will be informed or consulted as appropriate.

## **8. Confidentiality**

Complete secrecy can never be promised to a student, though information given in confidence will not generally be disclosed to anyone else. In particular if a student chooses to disclose that they are using a drug without medical authorisation, this information will not be used against them. However, action will be taken to ensure the student comes to no serious harm if this is considered a risk. Regarding disclosures, staff need to carefully define and communicate the boundaries of confidentiality offered.

## **9. Support for students**

- 9.1 At our school the welfare of the student is paramount. We maintain that constructive strategies that enable students to continue to benefit from continued education are preferable to exclusion.
- 9.2 Following actions to preserve safety, the health & emotional needs of students will be considered. Support is available through the pastoral system, to ensure a caring response to students in distress. Interventions will be considered if the school feels a student is showing signs which indicate particular risks of, or from, involvement with drugs, whether their own or their parents'/carers'. Such interventions may include consultation with parents/carers and other agencies, possible case conferences and subsequent referral. Permanent exclusion from school will rarely be considered as permanently excluded students become significantly more vulnerable to drugs than those within formal schooling.
- 9.3 In line with recent legislation, the staff reserve the right to search students if they have reason to believe that they are carrying offensive weapons or illegal substances. Similarly students can expect to be physically restrained if they present a danger to themselves or other members of the community.
- 9.4 Searches will be carried out by Heads of Year or members of the Senior Leadership Team and Parents/Carers will always be informed when this has happened.
- 9.5 If inappropriate articles are brought in to school or used inappropriately they may be confiscated and kept in the school safe for collection at the end of the day. If these items are dangerous or illegal they may be handed to the Police for safe disposal.
- 9.6 We work closely with Police Liaison Officers. If students are involved with any activity which breaks the law, the police may be involved in the confiscation of items, Restorative Justice Conferencing, group work and education as well as links with home. Parents/Carers will always be informed when the police are involved and given the opportunity to attend any interviews.
- 9.7 Similarly the police will be involved if any student is suspected of having contact with an illegal substance. This includes possession, using or dealing. In such cases, the police will decide what course of action should be taken.