

INTERNAL PROCEDURE

Title: Alcohol and Drug misuse procedure

POLICY HOLDER: Library and Wellbeing Manager

APPROVAL BOARD: College Leadership Team

VERSION NO: 15

LAST REVIEWED: August 2026

REVIEW PERIOD¹: 1 Year

¹ The Review Period refers to our internal policy review process. The published policy is current and is the most recent approved version.

Summary: Sets out the College's procedure for preventing and responding to alcohol and drug misuse, providing guidance for staff and students on safeguarding, support, reporting concerns, disciplinary action, and the management of substance-related incidents to maintain a safe learning environment

Accessibility: If you would like this information in an alternative format, e.g. Easy to Read, large print, Braille or audio tape, or if you would like the procedure explained to you in your language, please contact the College's marketing team on 01603 773 169.

Further information: If you have any queries about this policy or procedure, please contact the named policy holder.

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Amendments log

Date	Version No	Reason for change	Author	Approved By
March 2012	1	Annual update	Sam Floyd	Helen Richardson-Hulme
March 2013	2	Annual Update	Jock Downie	Helen R-H
March 2014	3	Annual Update	AMT	Helen R-H
July 2015	4	Annual Update	Jock D	Helen R-H
September 2016	5	Annual Update	Jock D	Helen R-H
September 2017	6	Annual Update	Jock D	Helen R-H
August 2018	7	Annual Update	Jock D	Helen R-H
February 2019	8	Mid-year Update	Jacky Sturman	Helen R-H
August 2019	9	Annual Update	Alex Wallace	Helen R-H
March 2020	10	Mid-Year – amendment of Appendix 1: March 20	Alex W	Helen R-H
September 2020	11	Annual Update amendment of Appendix 1	Alex W	Helen R-H
September 2021	12	Annual Update amendment of Appendix 1	Alex W	Helen R-H
November 2021	12	Review by SMT C&S	Helen R-H	SMT
September 2022	12	No Changes	Helen R-H	SMT
September 2023	12	No Changes	Helen R-H	SMT
September 2024	13	Annual Update amendments of 2.1,2.3,2.12	Samara Castro	Helen R-H
August 2025	13	No Change	Samara C	Helen R-H
March 2026	14	highlighting student disciplinary actions and when to contact Police in 1.0, 2.3 and 2.9 2.12 Nicotine pouches included (not just snus) 2.15 Transporting students – referring to new Medical Conditions procedure.	Helen R-H	SMT
September 2026	15	Annual update Addition of appendix 1 – flow chart	Samara C	Helen R-H

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1.0 Introduction

The College treats the misuse of any substance, including alcohol, illegal drugs, legal/herbal highs, volatile substances, over the counter and prescribed medicine seriously. Anyone under the influence of substance misuse whilst attending College will be dealt with according to the drugs and alcohol procedure.

The possession of illegal substances, or any substance including legal highs (New Psychoactive Substances), with intention to misuse, is strictly forbidden. Possession of paraphernalia for the use of substance abuse is also forbidden. The College will take disciplinary action where rules have been breached and will report all incidents of this nature to the Police.

Consequences and Student Disciplinary

Details about the consequences of bringing drugs and alcohol on to college premises, along with possible sanctions, are set out in the Student Engagement Procedure in Appendix 1 – Gross Misconduct:

'Gross Misconduct

'Involvement in actions which are unlawful, or which directly threaten the learning, rights, well-being, safety and/or security of persons rightfully using the College, or which threatens the well-being, safety and/or security of private or College property. Attitudes, behaviours, or actions which have the potential to bring the college into disrepute...

- *'Possession of and/or intent to supply controlled drugs or alcohol.'*

1.1 County Lines

Where we believe there is a County Lines link to any drug related activity or incident, we will work with external partners including the Police, the C.A.D.S. team and any other statutory partners that we need to. We will always report cases as well as intelligence. The Senior Management Team will review any drug related incident on a regular basis, to look for any identifiable patterns and implement remedial action.

Intelligence regarding the misuse of drugs or alcohol on site may come from a range of sources, including concerns raised directly by students, staff, parents, or other members of the college community. In addition, potential cases are routinely reviewed by safeguarding colleagues, as well as those undertaking Duty Manager or Duty Principal responsibilities.

The College recognises the difference between casual use and dependency and will educate, support and take disciplinary action accordingly.

Access will be provided to skilled and supportive advice and information on any form of substance misuse to ensure that all students receive accurate information to provide a safe learning and working environments for all students and staff.

The College is committed to keeping itself up to date with issues (both national and local), by maintaining good relationships with the NHS, Police, Children's and Adults Services and national and local drug agencies and support groups.

2.0 Procedure

2.1 Designated members of College staff

Each College site has a Duty Principal who is the lead for any matters relating to drugs and alcohol misuse. Duty

Principal matters including those related to Drug and Alcohol misuse and searches are logged on the Duty

Principal records, and any significant issues are escalated for discussion at SMT or the DSL monthly meeting.

Staff should contact their Head of Area for drug and alcohol related matters where they have a concern.

2.2 Searching Students

In the event that a student and/or their property require searching, Estates and Facilities colleagues, the Duty Principal and the Head of Area should be contacted. The Duty Principal or the authorised alternate is responsible for making sure the student knows why the search is taking place. Estates and Facilities and/ or the Duty Principal and/or a member of college staff with delegated authority must be present to conduct the search. Refer to the Searching Students procedure for further guidance.

2.3 Disciplinary action

All incidents where a student is found to be in possession of an illegal drug or under the influence of a banned substance whilst on site will be dealt with by disciplinary action initiated by the relevant Head of Area or Delivery Manager.

The Duty Principal, working with Estates and Facilities colleagues, will liaise with police and take advice on individual cases.

All incidents of supplying or dealing an illegal or banned substance will be dealt with as a matter of "Gross Misconduct."

2.4 External Misuse – Guidance for staff

Where a staff member is informed that a student has been misusing substances off-site and are not intending on returning until after they may be sober, the staff member should consider approaching the relevant student upon their return to college to openly discuss the information and consider completing a Wellbeing referral form with the student for additional support. Where there is a safeguarding risk the first staff member to receive the information should complete a Safeguarding referral.

2.5 Students confiding in members of staff about Drugs and Alcohol

If a student informs a member of staff of their personal substance misuse dependency or that of a friend or relative, they should be referred to the Wellbeing team for confidential support. If the student does not wish to access support through the College, then the member of staff can access information about external services and advice on how to work with the student via the Wellbeing team.

2.6 Parents and carers misuse of drugs

Cases where a student informs a member of staff that a caregivers' substance misuse is having a significant impact on them or another child or a vulnerable adult's wellbeing, should be referred immediately to the Safeguarding Officer.

Where a student is experimenting or casually using/ misusing substances, information and advice on health and legal matters can be accessed through the Wellbeing team. In situations where substance

misuse appears to be commonplace among a group of students, a member of the Wellbeing team should be contacted to arrange an information session.

2.7 Students reporting concerns about staff

If a student gives you information about a member of staff's substance misuse it should be reported confidentially, directly to the Principal in line with our whistleblowing policy.

2.8 Discovery of Drugs on College Premises – Guidance for Staff

When drugs (including New Psychoactive Substances) are located on College premises, the member of staff that makes the discovery should make no attempt to move the drugs without a second staff member witness being present.

A member of the Estates and Facilities Team should also be contacted to oversee the removal, storage and legal disposal of the substance.

2.9 Contacting the Police and Parent/ Carers

In situations where a very small amount of drugs are discovered, the Duty Principal may authorise its safe disposal. The Student's parents/ carers (where they are under the age of 18) will always be contacted.

Where the quantity of drugs found exceeds what could reasonably be considered a *very small amount*, the Duty Principal will contact the Police to report the incident and will follow police guidance from that point forward. Incidents of this nature will be regarded as gross misconduct.

Determining what constitutes a *very small amount* is at the discretion of the Duty Principal and may involve consultation with another senior colleague to support the decision-making process. All decisions, including the rationale, will be recorded in the Duty Principal Log.

2.10 Suspicious Activity – Reporting to the Duty Principal

Any concern of suspicious activity should be immediately reported to the Duty Principal, who will investigate the concern.

2.11 Alcohol

Alcohol consumption by students or staff, over the legal drinking age, is not allowed where their use poses a risk to the individuals who have taken them or where their use is a risk to others, or at times and places they are forbidden. This applies in instances where it is apparent to someone else, that a student is under the influence of alcohol.

2.12 Smoking

The smoking of tobacco is permitted only in designated areas by students over the legal smoking age. All staff are expected to challenge anyone who appears to be under the legal age for smoking. Any student aged 14-16 and found smoking, should be reported to the 14-16 Aspire Head of Area. Staff should challenge a student smoking if they think they are under 16 years old and report their concerns to the 14-16 Team. This includes visitor under the age of 16 smoking on site.

Under no circumstances should a member of staff provide a lighter, cigarettes or any paraphernalia relating to smoking to a student. The College does not endorse smoking amongst students but recognises that providing students with a safe location to smoke reduces the risk of them being harmed by going off campus and crossing or smoking alongside a busy road. Smoking cessation advice and guidance is provided to students through the Wellbeing service.

The College recognises the increase in popularity of E-Cigarettes/Vapes/nicotine pouches in helping students and staff cease smoking. Those staff and students using E-Cigarettes/vapes are required to use designated areas which are separate to the smoking shelters. The use of E-Cigarettes/Vapes and nicotine pouches anywhere in the College buildings is not permitted. The use of nicotine pouches in classrooms is also not permitted.

2.13 Intoxication - when we think students are under the influence of Drugs and/or Alcohol

All incidents of intoxication should be reported to the Duty Principal who will liaise with the student's Head of Area who, where necessary, will arrange support, disciplinary action and a search of the individual.

In situations where a student is or appears to be intoxicated they will not be allowed to engage in learning activities or have the use of college facilities. The Head of Area will be informed to follow up on any actions necessary.

2.14 Informing the Police about intoxication

Where through intoxication a student's behaviour is posing a risk to others or College property, the Duty Principal should be immediately called. The Police will be informed by way of an intelligence report where we think a crime is likely to be committed. E.g. Drink driving.

Where a student is intoxicated the priority is their personal safety. When they are deemed to be unable to take care of themselves, they should, where possible, be escorted to the Nurse's room or a quiet area until they are deemed safe enough to go home or be collected by a parent or carer. If the student is under the age of 18, The Head of Area will co-ordinate the informing of parents / carers and arrange any necessary transport.

Where the intoxicated student is a 14-16 student, the 14-16 Aspire Team should be contacted, who will contact the student's school and parent/ carer as necessary.

2.15 Transporting a Student Home

If it is deemed that a student should be sent home, then the procedure for dealing with unwell students and supporting with medical conditions should be followed. There is detail about this in the flow diagram in Appendix 2 v5.

If it is deemed that a student should be sent to hospital, then the procedure for Supporting Medical Conditions should be followed.

If the decision is to send a student home where the student is under 18, we will always contact the parents/ carers to ensure safety; best practice is for the parents/ carers to come and collect the student.

2.16 Searches

The College reserves the right to conduct searches of students and classrooms where required or if there is suspected possession of drugs and/or alcohol. The College also reserves the right, from time to time, in cooperation with the Police to invite a drugs dog onto the premises for an out of hours search.

The Facilities and Estates team and contracted cleaning staff have a particular duty to be vigilant in checking drug "hides" and "stashes" and will receive appropriate and relevant training.

The College will conduct searches in line with the Searching Students Procedure.

2.17 Medicine

Where a student requires to carry and take medication whilst on site, the College recommends that only enough medication for the day is brought with them.

The College will confiscate medication where it believes the student carrying the medication intends to use it to cause significant harm to themselves or others.

Where it appears that medicine is being sold illegally, the College will contact the Police, and the student will be suspended under gross misconduct.

2.18 Trips

If an incident of being in possession (or being under the influence) of drugs and/or alcohol occurs whilst being on a College trip or excursion, the student's parents/ carers will be contacted and asked to collect the student. Where this is not possible the incident should be dealt with on return to the College. Advice for staff on situations where a return to the College is not possible can be sought from the Duty Principal.

Appendix 1 – Flow Chart

