



Desborough College

Substance Misuse Policy

Policy reviewed and adopted by Governors	15 th January 2025
Responsible Officer	Andy Murdoch

Desborough College Substance Misuse Policy

Rationale

At Desborough College, our aim is to equip all students with the knowledge and understanding to make safe and informed choices in a world where a wide range of drugs exists. We acknowledge that some drugs have legitimate medical uses, but also recognise the potential harms they may cause. Therefore, all drugs require careful and responsible management. To make informed decisions, both staff and students need to understand the nature, effects, legal status, and uses of drugs. As part of our statutory responsibility to promote pupil wellbeing, we are committed to preventing substance misuse and supporting our pastoral duties.

Smoke-Free Environment

Desborough College is committed to providing a smoke-free environment for all students, staff, and visitors. Exposure to second hand smoke increases the risk of serious health issues, including lung cancer and heart disease. Moreover, witnessing role models smoking normalises the behaviour, undermining the message of a smoke-free environment.

Aims

- To maintain the safety and wellbeing of all students, staff, and visitors.
- To clarify legal responsibilities, entitlements, and obligations regarding drugs.
- To provide clear guidance and procedures for managing drug-related issues, ensuring clarity and consistency.
- To develop a whole-school approach to substance misuse education integrated into the curriculum.

Key Roles and Responsibilities

Drug-related issues will be managed by the Heads of Year, in collaboration with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and the Senior Leadership Team (SLT). The Department

for Education (DfE) and the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) substance misuse advice for schools, provide the framework for the following responsibilities:

- Provide accurate, age-appropriate information on drugs and alcohol through education and targeted initiatives.
- Tackle problem behaviour, with the power to search and confiscate as necessary.
- Collaborate with local and voluntary organisations, health partners, and the police to prevent substance misuse.

Inclusive Definition of Drugs

Desborough College defines a substance as any substance that, when ingested or absorbed into the body, alters the way we feel, perceive, or function. This includes illegal substances, as well as legal substances like alcohol, tobacco, solvents, and prescription medication.

Substance Education

Context:

Substance misuse education is delivered through the PSHE curriculum and the pastoral programme during tutor time.

Ethos:

Our substance misuse education aims to empower students to make informed, healthy choices. We focus on increasing knowledge, exploring attitudes towards substance misuse, and developing decision-making skills. The curriculum follows national and local guidelines for best practice and is tailored to students' age and experiences.

Content and Delivery:

We will use a variety of teaching approaches to meet the diverse needs of our students. External speakers and visitors may support the programme, provided that all sessions are teacher-led and adhere to national and local guidance.

Managing Drug-Related Incidents

Medicines:

Please refer to the policy and procedure for the administration of medicines, which aligns with government guidance. Parents must complete permission forms for the administration of medication.

Alcohol:

Students are prohibited from bringing alcohol onto the school site. Visitors or parents who are under the influence of alcohol will be asked to leave and return later. Children will not be allowed to leave with parents who appear to be under the influence. Alternative arrangements will be made with designated contacts or social care services if necessary.

Tobacco:

Desborough College operates a no-smoking policy at all times, both indoors and outdoors, including on school vehicles. Students are not permitted to bring smoking materials, including matches and lighters, to school. If a pupil is found in possession of these items, they will be confiscated and not returned to the pupil or their parents.

E-Cigarettes and Vapes:

E-cigarettes and vapes are included in the school's smoke-free policy for the following reasons:

- E-cigarettes, though less harmful than traditional cigarettes, are not risk-free.
- The appearance of e-cigarettes and vapes can confuse enforcement of the smoking ban.
- Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) products are available via prescription for staff wishing to quit.

Solvents:

The school ensures that potentially hazardous substances are stored safely. Students are not permitted to possess solvent-based products.

Illegal Drugs:

The use or possession of illegal drugs is strictly prohibited. This includes substances classified as illegal (Class A, B, or C), as well as 'legal highs' such as Nitrous Oxide, alkyl nitrates ('poppers'), ketamine, volatile substances, and performance-enhancing drugs. These substances pose serious risks to health, safety, and wellbeing, and may expose others to legal or criminal consequences.

Incident Management Procedures**Medical Emergencies:**

In the event of a medical emergency, such as unconsciousness, difficulty breathing, or severe confusion due to suspected substance misuse, immediate medical help will be sought by dialling 999. The safety and wellbeing of the individual will be the primary concern. Vomiting will not be induced, and the person should not be moved until help arrives.

Possession of Drugs:

If any individual is found in possession of drugs on school premises, the substance will be confiscated. If the substance is suspected to be illegal, the police will be contacted immediately. Drugs that cannot be legally disposed of will be handed over to the police without delay.

Searching and Testing:

The school reserves the right to search students for drugs or other contraband without prior notice or consent. Testing may be non-invasive, and we may refer students to other agencies for further testing as necessary.

Support for Students:

The school will provide support for students involved in drug-related incidents, considering

their emotional and health needs. Interventions may be offered through the pastoral system or referrals to appropriate services if the school believes the pupil is at risk due to their own or their family's substance misuse.

Recording:

Incidents will be recorded within 24 hours and stored securely in the safeguarding file, overseen by the Associate Director of Student Welfare.

Confidentiality

Staff cannot offer complete confidentiality, though any information shared in confidence will be disclosed only in the interest of safeguarding. If a pupil admits to substance misuse, appropriate steps will be taken to prevent harm. Staff will inform students about the limits of confidentiality, ensuring their involvement in the process when possible.

Staff Training and Support

Desborough College recognises the importance of training staff to deliver substance misuse education effectively and manage incidents appropriately. Staff will receive training based on identified needs as part of the safeguarding agenda.

Links to Other Policies:

This policy is linked to the school's Behaviour Policy, Suspension and Exclusion Policy, Child Protection Policy, and Staff Code of Conduct.

Monitoring and Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed and developed with input from the whole school community. It will be communicated through staff induction, the staff handbook, the website, and the school prospectus. The policy will be monitored by the Headteacher to ensure compliance and successful implementation. It will be reviewed every three years and ratified by the Education Standards Board.