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DRUGS AND SUBSTANCES EDUCATION POLICY (KS/P&B/047)

Committee Responsible:	Curriculum and Pastoral
Lead Officer:	Deputy Headteacher
Date of Review:	June 2025
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Signed:	
Date:	



DRUGS AND SUBSTANCES EDUCATION POLICY

REVIEW SHEET

The information in the table below details earlier versions of this document with a brief description of each review and how to distinguish amendments made since the previous version date (if any).

Version Number	Version Description	Date of Revision
1	Original	May 2013
2	Policy Update	November 2015
3	Policy Update	June 2016
4	Policy Update	Feb 2018
5	Policy Update	May 2020
6	Policy Update	June 2022
7	Policy Update	June 2025

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1.0 ILLEGAL SUBSTANCES

- 1.1 The use of illegal substances can be a serious problem in society. Keswick School has an important role to play in this context. The school has a clear social responsibility towards students, parents and the wider community. **The school aspires to be a completely drug free zone.** Whilst at school our students will learn about the dangers of illegal substances and drugs. It is also important that the school and the Local Governing Body provide a clear statement as to what students and their parents can reasonably expect to occur if a drug related offence happens in school.
- 1.2 The Local Governing Body wish to make it explicitly clear that a consistent and very firm line will be taken if students are found in possession of, or found to have used, illegal substances on school premises, or on any organised activity at any time. This will follow our Behaviour Policy (KS/MAT/STAT/044). The school would normally report the offence to the Police. If a student is found to be distributing illegal substances on, or in the vicinity of, the school premises, or on any activity organised by the school, at any time, they will be liable for permanent exclusion from the school and will be reported to the police. This policy outlines the procedure for action should a drug related incident occur in school or in boarding.

2.0 A DEFINITION OF DRUGS

- 2.1 Drugs are any substance which alters the mind or the body. This policy is concerned with legal drugs such as alcohol, tobacco, nicotine pouches (snus) and solvents, e-liquids or vaping liquids, over the counter and prescribed drugs such as tranquillisers and pain killers, and illegal drugs such as MDMA (ecstasy), cannabis, mephedrone (“plant food”), cocaine, crack and heroin.
- 2.2 Drugs can be classed as follows:
Class A: illegal to have, sell or give away e.g. cocaine, crack, MDMA (ecstasy), heroin, LSD and magic mushrooms, etc.
Class B: only legally available on prescription e.g. amphetamines, barbiturates and cannabis.
Class C: it is not illegal to possess them without a prescription, but it is illegal to supply them or sell them to others, e.g. anabolic steroids and tranquillisers.
Others: cigarettes, alcohol, nicotine pouches (snus) and solvents, e-liquids and vaping liquids - substances which the law controls and have prescriptions attached to their use.

3.0 AIMS

- 3.1 Keswick School’s policy on drugs is to:
- keep everyone safe and protected;
 - maintain a positive school ethos of respect which supports self-esteem, enabling students to respond assertively and knowledgeably to situations involving drug use;
 - provide clear and appropriate information to all students which will help them to make decisions about all drug issues and their consequences;
 - work closely with parents on all matters to do with drugs, and particularly regarding circumstances in which their own children are involved or implicated;
 - work closely with the Police and all other relevant agencies through drugs education activities and courses, and when dealing with individual cases of drug abuse and misuse discovered at school;

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- deal fairly and sensitively with all incidents involving drugs, ensuring that students are not put at risk and that illegal actions are stopped, investigated and resolved quickly and equitably.

3.2 Keswick School does not condone the misuse of drugs and alcohol by members of the school community, nor the supply of these substances. The school is absolutely committed to the health and safety of all its members and will take appropriate action to safeguard everyone’s well-being. Where appropriate, the leaders and managers of the school will seek to encourage students in need of support to identify themselves and seek help.

3.3 This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Relationships and Sex Education Policy (KSMAT/STAT/002)
- Behaviour Policy (KSMAT/STAT/044)
- Search Policy and Procedures included in the Behaviour Policy (KSMAT/STAT/044)

4.0 THE DRUGS EDUCATION PROGRAMME

4.1 Students learn about making healthy and informed lifestyle choices through increasing their knowledge and understanding of safe and unsafe behaviour. Students are taught to make informed choices and to challenge negative attitudes. Students also learn about substance abuse. The school works with partner organisations, such as Cumbria Constabulary and School Health team, and a range of other providers.

4.2 We are committed to a comprehensive programme of drugs education in the context of Personal, Social and Health Education and through Personal Development lessons and activities. Keswick School shares a responsibility to help reduce the harm from drugs by educating students with the facts, so that they can make informed decisions based on sound knowledge. This policy emphasises the school’s pastoral role and proactive approach to drugs education.

5.0 STRATEGIES

5.1 Drugs Education is presented:

- through carefully planned lesson within the Personal Development programme, which deal with different types of drugs
- through assemblies and extra-curricular activities designed to raise awareness and bring drugs related issues to students’ attention
- through topics taught in the subject curriculum which both introduce information and require students to think constructively about decisions and choices to do with various forms of drugs
- through health education sessions/days offered by external agencies in support of school programmes

6.0 MANAGEMENT

6.1 The development, leadership, and resourcing of drugs education is the responsibility of the Head of Personal Development, in liaison with Heads of Department, whose subjects include reference to drugs. Staff will be given guidance about incidents involving drugs and appropriate staff will be given relevant training.

6.2 The Headteacher and other Senior Leaders are responsible for responding to and dealing with incidents in which drugs are discovered on school premises, or in which information indicates that students have been involved in the misuse of drugs.

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7.0 PROCEDURE FOR DEALING WITH SUSPECTED DRUG RELATED INCIDENTS

7.1 If it is alleged that students are in possession of or under the influence of drugs or other illegal substances the following procedure should be adopted:

1. Refer the incident immediately to the Headteacher or another member of SLT.
2. A team discussion will take place before action is taken.
3. Action will be based on each individual case, but could involve:
 - (a) Ensuring the physical and emotional well-being of the student
 - (b) Removing any illegal or controlled substances, involving the police for identification if necessary, including searching students and their possessions, in line with the search policy and procedures included in the Behaviour Policy (KS/ PP&PW/044)
 - (c) Interviewing student(s), under normal circumstances in the presence of another member of staff and ensuring as far as possible the confidentiality of the students involved
 - (d) Informing the parents
 - (e) Informing outside agencies, Medical Service, Police
 - (f) Informing the Chair of the Local Governing Body as soon as possible
 - (g) Informing the Local Authority Inclusion and Access Team if a Permanent Exclusion is put into place
4. Instigate Behaviour Policy (KS/ PP&PW/044) procedures.

8.0 CONCLUSION

8.1 Keswick School does not believe that any of the drugs or substances indicated in this policy should play any part of life within our school community. Where issues do come to light they will be dealt with very seriously and, depending on the circumstances, this might include a permanent exclusion from the school.

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