



## **The Tiffin Girls' School**

### **STUDENT SUBSTANCE ABUSE POLICY**

**REVIEWED March 2023**

#### **Rationale**

1. At The Tiffin Girls' School, we 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 can cause potential harm. For this reason, all drugs need appropriate and responsible care and management.
2. 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 and also the sanctions that we may put in place should an individual possess, sell or be under the influence of drugs whilst they are at school. We also recognise that the use of drugs or the onward selling of an intoxicating substance can indicate safeguarding concerns around a young person.

#### **Aims of the policy**

3. To support the School's endeavour to maintain the safety and well-being of all students and staff.
4. To clarify legal responsibilities, entitlement and obligations.
5. To support all the members of the school community by providing clear guidance and procedures on drug related issues to ensure clarity and consistency.
6. To develop a whole School approach to drug education in the context of the curriculum of the School.
7. To provide support if a student has a problem with any of the above.

#### **Definition of a drug**

8. A drug is a substance that affects the way in which the body functions physically, emotionally or mentally. This definition includes:
  - all illegal substances (those controlled by the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971)
  - legal substances such as: alcohol and tobacco, volatile substances (those giving off a gas or vapour which can be inhaled), ketamine, khat and alkyl nitrates (poppers)
  - over the counter and prescription medicines
  - new psychoactive substances – formerly known as 'legal highs'

#### **School Premises**

9. 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.

## Alcohol

10. No alcohol will be consumed during the course of a normal school day. 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/carers of students under the effects of alcohol will be asked to collect their children. There will also be a sanction as per the School's Behaviour for Learning policy.

## Smoking

11. The School is a no smoking site at all times. Students are not permitted to bring to school smoking materials, including E-cigarettes for vaping, equipment, matches and lighters. In the interests of health and safety, should a student be found in possession of any of these on the School premises, they will be confiscated and parents/carers informed. There will also be a sanction as per the School's Behaviour for Learning policy.

## Illegal drugs

12. No illegal drugs are allowed to be brought on to, or used on school premises.

## Solvents

13. 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.

## Volatile substance abuse

14. Volatile substance abuse refers to the inhalation, sometimes referred to as 'sniffing', of gas or vapours from volatile substances, including butane and propane, aerosol propellants, some glues and solvents, petrol, nitrous oxide, etc. for intoxicating purposes. The effects are much like those of alcohol, though they do not last as long. This can be referred to as solvent misuse.

## General advice and practice for dealing with drugs within school

15. Drugs, alcohol or solvent abuse has no place in The Tiffin Girls' School.
16. However, we will always listen to students who have queries about the use and abuse of drugs, alcohol or solvents or who are experiencing or are aware of problems related to such substances, either personally, at home or because they have concerns about a friend.
17. If you feel a student may have a problem related to substance abuse, staff will encourage them to discuss this with a member of the pastoral team or the school nurse so that the best support can be determined.
18. We will try to preserve student confidentiality, but we cannot guarantee to do this if we feel a student is at risk.
19. If we are concerned that a student has a serious drug, alcohol or solvent abuse related problem, we may refer them to an appropriate person for help.
20. It is the responsibility of every student to alert a member of staff if they are aware that another student is under the influence of any of the above substances.

- 21.** Appendix 1 details the signs and symptoms that might be observed in someone who is under the influence of drugs or other intoxicating substances.
- 22.** If a student comes to school and we know/suspect they have taken drugs or have used solvents or are under the influence of alcohol:
- 22.1** We will deal with them kindly but firmly and we will take immediate action.
  - 22.2** It is not our responsibility to provide medical care for a student who is under the influence of drugs and alcohol or have abused solvents; of course, if they are clearly unwell or are unsafe, we will take medical advice and if necessary send them for medical attention elsewhere.
  - 22.3** We will contact parents/carers and ask them either to collect the student from school or inform them where they have been sent for treatment. Students will not be allowed to go home on their own from school or any treatment centre. If we cannot find a student's parents we will contact the named person supplied by parents/carers as the emergency contact.
  - 22.4** Should a student behave aggressively or violently, we have the right to use reasonable restraint or if necessary to call the police. Student safety and the safety of other students and staff is our paramount concern. Appendix 2 highlights school procedures for reasonable restraint.
  - 22.5** Any poor behaviour because a student is under the influence of drugs, alcohol or solvents will not be seen as an excuse. Any such incident will be followed up by sanctions in accordance with the School's Behaviour for Learning policy.
- 23.** If a student brings drugs, alcohol or solvents on to school premises:
- 23.1** In the case of drugs, this is a criminal offence. If a student is suspected of intending to deal or supply drugs, this is an even more serious offence and may lead to permanent exclusion.
  - 23.2** A member of staff has the right to search a student and their possessions if they are suspected of having brought substances into school. This must take place always in the presence of another adult. Alternatively, the police may be called to undertake this search where there is firm evidence that the young person has breached the school's substance abuse policy. Appendix 2 details the School's processes for searching and screening.
  - 23.3** Parents will be informed if a search is to take place. They cannot prevent or unduly delay the search.
  - 23.4** Anything found in a student's possession will be clearly labelled and sealed in their presence. It will be handed on to the appropriate person(s).
  - 23.5** Parents/carers will be informed of the outcome of any search and what further action the school will take.
  - 23.6** In the case of drugs, the police will be informed. The law does not require us to divulge the student's name to the police, but it is usually our policy to do so. They will always take action even if only a small amount of an illegal substance is found.

**23.7** If a student is found to have been involved in the purchase, possession or consumption of illegal drugs or substances of abuse you may expect as a minimum penalty a period of fixed-term exclusion from the school and possibly permanent exclusion.

**23.8** It is also very likely that criminal proceedings may follow.

### Medicines

- 24.** Medicines may only be brought on to school premises with the knowledge and approval of parents/carers and Medical staff and or the pastoral team. Students must hand these over for safekeeping to the office and can access these medicines at agreed times when a supervised dose has to be taken. There may be other occasions when the School agrees that a student can self-manage taking and holding their own medicine.
- 25.** The only other general exceptions to this are asthma inhalers and adrenaline auto-injectors which students may keep secure ready for immediate use as needed.

### Drug Education

- 26.** Drug education at the Tiffin Girls' School will be delivered in Science lessons as well as being a key component of the Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education programme. Health education is delivered through the tutorial programme at key stages 3, 4 and 5 and additionally as a component within the PSHE programme at key stages 4 and 5. It is delivered at regular intervals throughout a child's school career in order to maximise its effectiveness.
- 27.** Drug education will be delivered by both pastoral and subject staff. All involved in the teaching of it will receive appropriate training and support. It will be delivered in a clear and honest manner that informs pupils and adds to their understanding and development of skills and attitudes.
- 28.** Where appropriate, visitors from outside agencies will be involved to support the work of staff e.g. the Police, School Nurse, representatives from Kaleidoscope – an organisation providing support to people affected by substance abuse. The visits are planned educational experiences as part of the overall programme and not isolated or incidental events.
- 29.** The curriculum co-ordinator for drug education will offer advice and maintain suitable resources for use by teaching staff and will review and evaluate what is being taught on a regular basis.

### Information Sharing

- 30.** Parents/carers will be made aware of this policy and its contents.
- 31.** As well as a designated member of staff with oversight of this policy, it may be appropriate for other pastoral members of staff, SLT and Governors to have knowledge of any incidents in school involving banned substances. Governors will only receive anonymous information.
- 32.** Sensitive information is only disclosed with careful attention to student rights and needs.
- 33.** We will take safeguarding measures if we fear students' safety is under threat.

### Linked Policies

**34.** This policy should be read in conjunction with the following documents:

- Behaviour for Learning Policy
- Students with Medical Conditions Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Student Restraint Policy

### **Signs and symptoms of substance use**

#### **Some signs of drug use may include:**

- Withdrawal from friends and family
- Change in friendships or problems with friends
- A drop in grades or attendance at school
- Signs of sadness, depression, agitation or hostility
- An increase in borrowing money
- Evidence of drug paraphernalia or missing prescription drugs.

Drugs have different effects depending on the type of drug taken and whether it is a depressant (e.g. alcohol) or a stimulant (e.g. methamphetamine).

#### **Some signs that someone may be under the influence of a drug include:**

- Enlarged pupils, bloodshot or glassy eyes
- Increased energy and confidence
- Loss of inhibitions
- Loss of coordination
- Aggressive behaviour
- Trembling, twitches
- Paranoia (being extremely suspicious)
- Hallucinations (hearing or seeing things that aren't really there)
- Nausea and vomiting
- Complaints of stomach cramps, blurred vision, headaches or dizziness
- Exhaustion, fatigue or insomnia (being unable to sleep)
- Irritability and moodiness
- Changes to eating patterns such as eating less or more
- Anxiety symptoms such as panic attacks, dizziness, sweating, dry mouth, muscle aches and headaches.

### Guidance for Searching, Screening and Confiscation

The following document is designed to inform and guide staff in best practice for searching students, screening students and confiscating items from students. This is based upon the following guidance from the Department for Education *Searching, Screening and Confiscation* from January 2018.

- School staff can search a student for any item if the student gives consent.
- Headteachers and staff authorised by them have a statutory power to search students and their possessions, without consent, where they have reasonable grounds for suspecting that a student may have a prohibited item.
- Prohibited items include: knives or weapons, alcohol, illegal drugs, stolen items, tobacco and cigarette papers, vaping paraphernalia, fireworks, pornographic images, any article that the member of staff reasonably suspects has been, or is likely to be used to commit an offence or to cause personal injury, damage property or another person
- Headteachers and any staff authorised can also search for any item which is banned by the school rules.
- School staff can confiscate the following items: prohibited items, items considered harmful or detrimental to school discipline.
- Under Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights students have the right to respect for their private life and therefore in this context have the right to expect reasonable levels of personal privacy. The advice from the Department for Education is in accordance with Article 8.
- Schools can require students to undergo screening by a walk-through or hand-held metal detector (arch or wand) even if they do not suspect them of having a weapon and without the consent of the students.
- Schools have a statutory responsibility to make rules on student behaviour and therefore screening can be part of that.

At The Tiffin Girls' School we are proud of our safe learning environment where the need for searching and screening is very rare.

### Process for Searching

The following process should be undertaken if a member of staff suspects a student has a banned item in their possession.

1. Establish ground rules for the search with the student, explaining what you are going to do
2. Ask for verbal consent e.g. for students to turn out pockets, empty their bag or locker
3. Ascertain whether the student is in possession of a banned item. The extent of the search should only include students being asked to remove outer clothing (e.g. a coat), empty pockets, desks, lockers and bags.
4. If the student is in possession of a banned item
  - a. Confiscate the item
  - b. If this item is a prohibited item then parents/carers should be contacted. The police may also need to be contacted if an item is stolen or needs to be disposed of. All contact with the police should be carried out via a member of SLT.
  - c. Apply the appropriate sanction which could include contacting parents/carers, detention or school community service
5. All incidents should be logged.

If a student refuses consent to search then the following process should be followed:

- If there is reasonable evidence to suggest that the student is in possession of prohibited items or items banned by the school rules then the member of staff should inform a member of SLT.
- The student or the student's belongings can still be searched (as above) if there is reasonable evidence to suggest the student is in possession of a prohibited item or items banned by the school rules.
- The extent of the search should only include students being asked to remove outer clothing (e.g. a coat), empty pockets, desks, lockers and bags.

### **Process for Confiscation**

There is sometimes a need to confiscate items from students when they are not adhering to the school rules. This is most necessary at The Tiffin Girls' School with mobile phones and jewellery. This process may also be required if a student is found to have illegal substances on their person or have been found to be carrying a weapon.

### **Mobile phones and other hand-held technologies**

If a phone is confiscated whilst a student is on the school site then this should be handed into the school office immediately for safekeeping.

The owner can collect the phone from the school office at the end of the day. The student will have to sign for this on return.

### **Uniform**

If students are not in the correct uniform, then certain items can be confiscated. This is mostly items of jewellery.

If a pupil is wearing a disallowed item of jewellery (e.g. indiscreet earrings, necklaces, bracelets, anklets), then a teacher can confiscate this and hand it into the school office for safekeeping.

This is logged by the school office.

The owner can collect the item from the school office at the end of the week. The student will have to sign for this on return.

### **Illegal substances and weapons**

If a student is found to have illegal or prohibited substances on them, or are found to be in possession of a weapon, then these will be confiscated/disposed of either through the school or by contacting the police who will collect and dispose of prohibitive substance and illegal weapons. In all cases, this will be logged by the school.