



## **The Tiffin Girls' School**

### **STUDENT SUBSTANCE ABUSE POLICY**

**REVISED March 2025**

#### **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 or any venue managed by the School at the time e.g. premises of a school trip or visit.

## 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. Abuse of these substances will be treated in the same ways as other drugs as per the School's Behaviour for Learning policy and Safeguarding Policy.

## 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 agency 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** 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, they will receive medical care whilst we will take further 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/force or if necessary to call the police. Student safety and the safety of other students and staff is our paramount concern. Refer to the School policy for reasonable restraint and force for further guidance.
  - 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, vapes/e-cigarettes, 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. Before searching a student, the member of staff should discuss this with the Headteacher. 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. Refer to the School Behaviour for Learning Policy for further 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)/agency.
  - 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 school 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 students 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 and organisations 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-ordinators with responsibility 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 unless actions are being taken as outlined in the School Behaviour for Learning Policy.
- 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 as outlined in the School Safeguarding Policy.

#### **Linked Policies**

- 34.** This policy should be read in conjunction with the following documents:
- Behaviour for Learning Policy
  - Safeguarding Policy
  - Students with Medical Conditions Policy
  - First Aid Policy
  - Student Restraint and Reasonable Force 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.