



ILLEGAL SUBSTANCES POLICY

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed in full by College every two years, or earlier if major change.

The policy was last reviewed January 2017.

It is due for review in January 2019

Mandate Holder: Geert Alkema

Illegal Substances Policy - Pupils

This policy applies to all RSSKL Pupils and Boarders.

RSSKL condones neither the misuse of drugs and alcohol by members of the school, nor the illegal supply of these substances. RSSKL is committed to the health and safety of its members and will take action to safeguard their well-being. RSSKL acknowledges the importance of its pastoral role in the welfare of its pupils, to inform and educate them on the consequences of drug use and misuse.

Aims

RSSKL believes and supports the following educational aims in respect of substance use and misuse:

- To ensure compliance with the criminal law;
- To enable pupils to make healthy, informed choices by increasing knowledge, challenging attitudes and developing and practising skills;
- To provide accurate information about substances;
- To increase understanding about the implications and possible consequences of use and misuse.
- To encourage an understanding for those experiencing or likely to experience substance use;
- To widen understanding about related health and social issues, e.g. sex and sexuality, crime, HIV and AIDS;
- To seek to minimise the risks that users and potential users face;
- To enable young people to identify sources of appropriate personal support.

These aims are fulfilled through aspects of the pupils' experiences in the taught curriculum, the informal curriculum and through opportunities for extra-curricular activities. RSSKL delivers drugs education in the taught curriculum mainly through PSHE. We hope to influence pupils to make the right choices but we also recognise that disciplinary sanctions are sometimes necessary.

RSSKL is committed to maintaining the school as a 'drug and smoking free zone'.

Counselling

All members of staff have some pastoral responsibility and in this capacity may have the opportunity to counsel individuals who are, or have been, involved in some form of drug abuse, or who are concerned about their friends. We realise that, when it occurs, drug abuse may be a symptom of other psychological, emotional or spiritual needs, and every effort is made to enable pupils to talk about these – either to someone in school or to someone outside.

Within RSSKL, Class Sponsors, Pastoral Care and the Drugs Awareness Officer all have a special part to play in this.

Discipline

We recognise that some pupils may still be tempted, because of their inexperience and the pressures of society, to ignore the information and advice offered. Therefore,

in order to protect the community as a whole, we apply the following disciplinary sanctions for any incidents of drug use.

Smoking (including e-cigarettes) and Alcohol

These may not be consumed at any time on the premises, nor should they be consumed off the premises within the vicinity of the school, immediately before or after school hours.

Any pupil who does not comply with this, or is in the company of someone not complying is liable to sanctions.

The sanction for being caught smoking in the vicinity is a Saturday detention.

Illegal drugs

The possession and/or use of drugs and other illegal substances on the school premises is strictly forbidden. Anyone involved in buying, selling, possessing or using drugs (except under medical advice) will be permanently excluded.

In disciplining students, our main concerns will be:

- To deal severely with those who may be supplying drugs to others and/or encouraging others in drug abuse;
- To provide appropriate disincentives so that pupils may be discouraged from experimenting with drugs;
- To provide appropriate support for those who may have been involved in drug abuse and wish to stop.

A person who volunteers an admission to having been involved in drug abuse could reasonably expect to be treated more leniently than someone who is caught in the act.

The normal punishments are as follows;

- Exclusion in the case of someone found to be in possession of and/or using drugs in school
- Exclusion in the case of someone found selling drugs to others

The school cannot rely on hearsay and rumour or changes in a pupil's demeanour and behaviour as evidence of drug taking, but, if it has reasonable grounds for being suspicious that a pupil may be using drugs, the school will take the following actions:

- Initiate action to ascertain the relevant facts and circumstances
- Inform the parents of the pupil(s) involved
- Consider informing the police
- Consider suspending the pupil(s) concerned; the pupil(s) will be given work to do at home
- Consider informing the parents of other pupils in the same class(es) as the suspected pupil(s)

Legal Highs

As part of the School's PSHE policy, students will be educated about the development and dangers of legal highs. Students involved in buying, selling,

possessing or using legal highs will be subject to the same procedures as those involved in illegal drugs.

Guidance on Legal Issues

1. Any suspected substance found in school must be put into a sealed container in the presence of a witness. Although there are no statutory requirements to do so, the Secretary for State would expect the police to be informed when illegal drugs are found on a pupil or on school premises. The responsibility for deciding whether or not to report an incident rests with College, and the Drugs Awareness Officer, Mr Geert Alkema.

The police need to be informed at this point:

- in cases of pushing or dealing
- where class A drugs are involved; cocaine, heroin, LSD, ecstasy, methadone, morphine, opium and pethidine
- where a separate police investigation is likely

In such cases it would be expected that the police would be informed before the school made any detailed investigation. It is not permissible for the school to retain the substance as this would constitute an offence against the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971. With Amendment 2014 nor is it permissible for staff to try to analyse or to taste an unidentified substance. It is expected that staff involve College as soon as possible rather than seeking to investigate an issue by themselves. In investigating drug issues it is important that no unacceptable stress is caused to the innocent. The Co-Chairs of College will notify parents as soon as possible of any investigation taking place. If a witness or suspect shows signs of distress he/she should be offered the opportunity to have another member of staff present or to speak to his /her parents on the telephone or have them present. It is essential in any case for a suspect to have an adult "friend" (Class Sponsor or another teacher) present during any interviews. It is considered good practice to get any witness to give, initial and date a written version of any information they provide.

In the case of a suspect, it is considered best practice to:

- explain that answers to questions will be noted down and considered carefully;
- explain what has been alleged and, unless good reason for confidentiality, by whom;
- read over notes, ask if correct, initial notes date and time;
- tell pupil of next stages;
- if a pupil wishes to make a statement this should be done in the presence of an additional adult;
- if parents have not been present earlier and if a suspect has admitted a serious breach which is likely to lead to exclusion parents must be asked to attend without delay.

2. On suspicion, searches of a pupil's possessions may be made. A witness should also be present. Pupils may be asked to hand over substances voluntarily, for example, by turning out their pockets or bag. However, physical searches of pupils are not allowed by law. If a pupil refuses to turn out his /her pockets, etc, the DfE

advice is that the police should be called. This decision should only be taken by the Co-Chairs of College and Drugs Awareness Officer.

3. If parents choose to accuse the school of not behaving appropriately, the courts will apply the principles of natural justice, i.e.:

- the pupil is not pre-judged;
- the procedures are fair, unbiased and impartial;
- all investigations that appear necessary are carried out;
- measures are taken to ensure the well-being of the pupil(s);
- the pupil and parents are given the opportunity to be heard;
- in the case of expulsion, the pupil and parents are informed of an appeal or complaints mechanism.

Warning Signs that might suggest drug misuse

- Decline in school performance
- Unwillingness to take part in activities previously enjoyed
- Unusual outbreaks of temper
- Marked mood swings, restlessness and irritability
- Staying out more, perhaps with a new group of friends
- Excessive spending or borrowing of money
- Reduced interest in personal appearance
- Excessive tiredness without obvious cause
- Lack of appetite

The Law relating to Drugs

Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 is the principal law governing illegal drugs. The drugs it covers are divided into three classes, (A), (B) and (C).

Principal drugs include:

Class A: Opium, heroin, methadone, cocaine, crack, LSD, ecstasy, possessed "Magic Mushrooms" and any Class B drug prepared for injection, cannabis oil.

Class B: Amphetamines, barbiturates, cannabis, codeine

Class C: Tranquilisers, some painkillers, most anabolic steroids, GHB, Ketamine

Premises

It is an offence knowingly to allow premises for which you are responsible to be used for smoking cannabis or opium or the production or supply of controlled drugs.

This means that, if a member of staff knows that cannabis is being smoked by a pupil on school premises and he or she does nothing to stop it, that member of staff commits an offence. Knowing that another person is in possession of a controlled drug on school premises offered for supply to another, the person responsible for the premises commits an offence unless he or she acts to stop it.

Confiscation

It is legal to confiscate an illegal drug in order to prevent an offence being committed and then to destroy or hand it to the police. It is illegal to retain the drug, i.e. it must either be disposed of or handed as soon as possible to the police.

Disposal

Schools are allowed to dispose of illegal drugs. Witnesses should be present and the action recorded. Alternatively, the drug may be handed to the police.

Issue Date: November 2015

Review Date: November 2016 or earlier if major change