



Alleyne's School Policies & Procedures

Drugs and Harmful Substances* Policy

Name of Policy	Drugs and Harmful Substances* Policy
ISSR	N/A
Reviewed by	SLT
Author/SLT	Mr G English Deputy Head (Pastoral)
Date of school review	September 2025
Date of next school review	September 2026

Policy Overview

* In this policy, we regard the term 'drugs and harmful substances' to refer to any psychoactive or intoxicating agent, or substance that if taken inappropriately - like a prescribed drug - would be harmful to the person.

This policy applies to the Senior School.

Introduction

Young people - not least those living in a big city - can experience pressure to use, or experiment with, drugs and harmful substances, including illegal substances, alcohol, tobacco, so-called legal highs or prescription drugs. At Alleyne's, whilst we recognise this, we do not accept that it is a normal part of adolescence or that it is ever an inevitable part of any pupil's experience in growing up.

We address this pressure and the risks it can bring to our pupils in both our PSHE and RSE curriculum, which explores issues to do with harmful substances at age-appropriate stages of a child's time at Alleyne's. We take seriously the need to educate children about the risks of involvement with harmful substances, how to make informed decisions, and how to manage risk.

Our curriculum is informed by guidance from the PSHE Association, which emphasises a spiral curriculum, building students' knowledge and skills around substance misuse in age-appropriate ways. In particular, we address new and emerging trends in substance use, including youth vaping, which Public Health England and the Office for

Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID) have identified as a rising concern, particularly among 11–17-year-olds.

We aim to equip pupils to critically assess peer influence, social media messaging, and the marketing of such products. We recognise the importance of maintaining an environment free from the risk of harmful substances. We include in this, smoking, and cigarettes, e-cigarettes and vapes, all of which are prohibited on the School site at all times.

This policy complements the policies that pertain to other important matters of life at school, including Safeguarding, Pupil Code of Conduct, Mental Health and Well-being and the Alleyn's Vision and Values.

The major responsibility for taking care in these matters, falls to parents, as substance misuse usually takes place at times when children are outside of the School's daily care. However, Alleyn's provides a space where pupils, teachers and parents can inform themselves and communicate about the issues and risks involved. For this policy to be effective, there must be agreement about the steps the School will take when the use of drugs or harmful substances comes to its attention. The steps that the School will ordinarily take are guided by the publication from the Department for Education (DfE).

Policy aims

Our policy at Alleyn's emphasises the following points:

- We aim to provide pupils with accurate and age-appropriate information about drugs, including so-called legal highs, prescription medication, vaping products, and other harmful substances, drawing on PSHE Association guidance (2023), public health data from OHID and ASH (2024), and recent findings from the Office for National Statistics on adolescent behaviour.
- We aim to promote in children the skills of risk assessment, management and the ability to deal with challenging social situations. This includes recognising the important part they have to play in our community, upholding our values and keeping themselves and others safe in working with the School to report serious concerns;
- We treat knowledge of the misuse of drugs or harmful substances - whether outside school or not - as a matter of serious concern, that will be addressed within the School's disciplinary, pastoral and safeguarding frameworks;
- We consider the bringing of drugs or harmful substances onto the School site as a serious matter of disciplinary concern. Such substances put the safety of other pupils at risk, and a pupil known to have brought such substances onto the School premises can expect their place at the School to be at serious risk;
- We aim to work with parents to provide:
 - a) a clear statement of our position on these matters;
 - b) opportunities to articulate our shared concern about the dangers that can arise;
 - c) A cooperative approach to managing concerns around a pupil's potential use of drugs or harmful substances through the use of a *School - Parent - Pupil behaviour agreement (managing behavioural risk)*;
This would typically include the School's own concerns, those of the parents, or concerns brought to the School by a third party. It is hoped that this agreement will act as a deterrent to poor decision making around drugs and harmful substances and can serve the pupil in challenging social situations as an incentive and tool to making healthier decisions;
 - d) If necessary, and in the case of substantiated concerns around drug use or following a failure to adhere to the aforementioned behaviour agreement, the School will put in place a *Drugs and Harmful Substances Contract*, signed by the pupil and his or her parents or carers, that can act as a further deterrent and as a greater incentive to healthy habits and decision-making. This also makes clear the consequences for a pupil's continued misuse of substances and includes, as part of its implementation, the requirement to submit to random drugs testing of either hair or urine samples;
 - e) Pastoral care for any pupil in need includes the offering of counselling and guidance both of which would usually include support mechanisms and strategies agreed with parents and pupils and put in

place by the Deputy Head (Pastoral), supported by the pastoral team. Pupils and parents are expected to engage fully with these strategies as part of any agreement or behavioural contract.

- We aim to gain the agreement, support and co-operation of parents and pupils with implementation of this policy;
- We will aim, in cases where misuse of alcohol and other drugs cause concern, to make an early help assessment, as directed in Paragraph 20 of *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (September 2025).

This policy has been drawn up in accordance with the guidance contained in the following publications amongst other;

[DfE, Searching, Screening and Confiscation: Advice for Schools \(July 2022 update\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/searching-screening-and-confiscation)
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/searching-screening-and-confiscation>

[DfE, Behaviour in Schools: Advice for Headteachers and School Staff \(updated September 2024\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/behaviour-in-schools--2)
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/behaviour-in-schools--2>

[DfE, Keeping Children Safe in Education \(KCSIE\) – September 2025](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2)
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

[PSHE Association, Programme of Study for PSHE Education \(2023\)](https://pshe-association.org.uk)
<https://pshe-association.org.uk>

[OHID, Vaping among young people in England: 2024 Evidence Review](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/vaping-in-england-2024-evidence-update)
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/vaping-in-england-2024-evidence-update>

Given our concerns for the welfare of the pupils and the reputation of the School, this policy applies at all times and not only when pupils are at the School or under the direct supervision of the School in activities held during holidays, weeknights or weekends.

Safeguarding and Early Help

The misuse of drugs and harmful substances is not only a behavioural concern but also a safeguarding issue, as recognised in Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2025. The School will always consider a pastoral and safeguarding lens when responding to concerns about substance use, and may initiate an Early Help Assessment in line with KCSIE 2025. This is particularly important where substance misuse may be a symptom of wider vulnerabilities, including abuse, neglect, peer exploitation, or mental health difficulties.

The Implementation of the Policy

This policy is implemented to promote the wellbeing and safety of all pupil's at Alleyn's and to encourage good and informed decision-making around behaviour and substance use. It aims to be a deterrent as well as a guide to good behaviour. The Head takes overall responsibility for the policy and its implementation, and she refers concerns that come to her attention for action by members of the Senior management team, most likely the Senior Deputy Head or the Deputy Head (Pastoral).

Involvement of parents

Parents are informed when any change is made to this policy. Opportunities are regularly taken to raise the matters in open forums with parents, such as information evenings at the invitation of the APA, the Heads of Section, the Senior Deputy Head and the Deputy Head (Pastoral). Parents should know they can contact the School if they have concerns about the harmful use of substances by children at Alleyn's.

Individual pupils

Pastoral support will be provided for any pupil at Alleyn's who seeks it. Pupils and parents may voluntarily ask to be placed on a *School - Parent - Pupil behaviour agreement* or a **drugs and harmful substances contract** as an incentive to help them change patterns of behaviour. In such cases a pupil can speak to any member of staff who will pass on the information to the Head of the relevant section who will inform the Senior Deputy Head or Deputy Head (Pastoral). The Head will be made aware but the management of the matter, as one of safeguarding, pastoral and disciplinary concern, will be the responsibility of the Head of Section and ultimately the Senior Deputy Head and the Deputy Head (Pastoral).

Following up concerns about use and misuse of drugs and harmful substances

The School must investigate any report of involvement with drugs or harmful substances by a pupil, and this can involve the searching of pupils and possessions (see below). The initial investigation will involve speaking to the pupil and the Senior Deputy Head, Deputy Head (Pastoral) (or other member of staff authorised by the Head) will have another member of staff (usually the Section Head or Head of House) present. The Senior Deputy Head or Deputy Head (Pastoral) may ask for a written account of circumstances and may ask to inspect personal belongings or take belongings for further analysis. The Senior Deputy Head or Deputy Head (Pastoral) may make contact with parents and parents may be invited to join the conversation. The School is under no obligation to inform parents or involve parents in these discussions but will always consider the wellbeing of pupils alongside the need to act in a timely and sensitive manner to concerns in this area. Sources of information cannot be disclosed. Reasonable adjustment will be made to these processes overseen by the Deputy Head Pastoral taking into consideration any potential vulnerability or disability including neurodiversity of pupils.

Searching Pupils and Their Possessions

The Senior Deputy Head, Deputy Head (Pastoral), or authorised staff may search a pupil or their possessions where there are reasonable grounds to suspect that the pupil is in possession of a prohibited item. These items may include illegal drugs, alcohol, vapes, new psychoactive substances, oral nicotine products, or any object believed to pose a risk to health, safety, or good order.

In line with the DfE's *Searching, Screening and Confiscation: Advice for Schools* (2022) and the School's safeguarding and behavioural responsibilities under *KCSIE 2025*, the following principles apply:

- A search does not require the consent of the pupil or the parent/carer, though efforts to engage supportively will always be prioritised where possible.
- Parents are not required to be informed before a search takes place. However, where alcohol, illegal drugs, vapes, or other harmful substances are found, the School will ordinarily inform parents or guardians promptly, unless doing so would pose a safeguarding risk.
- Complaints related to searches will be handled through the School's established complaints procedure.

Searches will be conducted with care to:

- Uphold the dignity, privacy, and wellbeing of the pupil;
- Ensure the presence of a second member of staff, preferably of the same gender as the pupil;
- Avoid any unnecessary escalation or embarrassment.

Searches may include asking the pupil to empty their pockets, bags, or pencil cases, and to grant access to lockers or school-owned devices. Strip searches will never be conducted by school staff under any circumstances. Where such a search is ever considered necessary (e.g., at police request), the School will ensure parental involvement and child advocacy protections as required under DfE guidance.

Recording and Follow-up

Although there is no legal requirement to keep a record of every search, Alleyn's School will keep a record of any search that meets any of the following thresholds:

- Where a prohibited item is suspected or found;
- Where a pupil is visibly distressed by the process;
- Where the search results in disciplinary, safeguarding, or police involvement.

The record will include:

- The name of the pupil searched;
- The reason for the search, and whether consent was given;
- The time, place, and staff present;
- The outcome of the search and any confiscated item(s);
- Any follow-up actions, including communications with parents or external agencies.

These records support safeguarding transparency and contribute to identifying patterns that may indicate wider concerns.

General power to confiscate

Under Section 91 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, and in accordance with the DfE guidance *Behaviour in Schools: Advice for Headteachers and School Staff* (September 2024), members of staff have the authority to confiscate, retain, or dispose of a pupil's property as a disciplinary measure, where it is reasonable to do so.

Where substances or paraphernalia are found that may be associated with drug or harmful substance use—and which may not necessarily be controlled drugs—these may still be confiscated if they are believed to be harmful or detrimental to the good order and discipline of the school. This includes:

- New psychoactive substances, also referred to as 'legal highs';
- Oral nicotine products (e.g. Snus, pouches, snuff);
- Unidentifiable substances or items believed to be used in the consumption of drugs or intoxicants;
- Vapes and e-cigarettes, which are categorised as drug-related paraphernalia in this context due to rising concerns around their use as delivery systems for harmful substances.

In line with public health advice from the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (2024) and ASH UK, vaping products will be treated with the same seriousness as smoking and drug paraphernalia, due to their links with adolescent substance experimentation and health risk.

If the legal status of a substance is uncertain, it will be treated as a controlled drug until further information is obtained.

Testing*

Where the School has reasonable cause to suspect a pupil has used drugs, alcohol, or other harmful substances on the school site, it may take proportionate steps to establish the facts. In such cases:

- The Police may be consulted where illegal activity is suspected.
- Pupils may be asked to provide a urine sample, under the supervision of the School Nurse, to test for the presence of harmful substances.
- If the misuse of alcohol is suspected, the pupil may be asked to undertake a breathalyser test, also administered under appropriate supervision.

This includes scenarios where vapes or e-cigarettes are suspected to be used as delivery devices for illegal or harmful substances. Testing will be used with care, within the pastoral and safeguarding frameworks of the School, and results will be considered in conjunction with the broader context of pupil welfare.

Smoking, Vapes and oral nicotine products

The School adopts a zero-tolerance approach to smoking and vaping on site in line with its responsibility to safeguard pupil health and wellbeing, and to ensure a safe learning environment.

- Vaping devices, including disposable and refillable e-cigarettes, are strictly prohibited. In accordance with 2024 public health guidance, their widespread availability, links to peer influence and potential use with cannabis or THC-based substances present a significant risk to students.
- Vapes found on school grounds will be treated as prohibited drug paraphernalia. Their use, or possession, will trigger a disciplinary response.
- Snus, snuff, and other oral nicotine products are also prohibited. These products are illegal to buy or use under the age of 18 and pose significant and unregulated health risks. The School treats their possession or use as a disciplinary matter.

- Tobacco smoking on school grounds is strictly forbidden and will be treated as a serious breach of School rules due to both fire safety risks and health implications.

All students are made aware of the School's smoke-free and vape-free status during induction and through the curriculum.

Police involvement

If a prohibited substance or item is found and believed to be illegal, the School will involve the Police as soon as reasonably practicable.

This includes situations where:

- An item believed to be an illegal drug is seized;
- A device or substance is of unclear status but poses a substantial risk;
- There is concern for the welfare of a pupil or others due to possession or intent to supply.

The School may contact the police even before a substance has been seized if advice is needed. The welfare of the pupil and the safety of the community will remain the priority throughout.

The School's behaviour agreement (managing behavioural risk) & the drugs and harmful substances contract and testing

If, outside the context of confidential counselling, the Head, Senior Deputy Head, Deputy Head (Pastoral) or other relevant member of staff forms a reasonable suspicion that a pupil has been involved with drugs or harmful substances, the pupil will be placed on either a behaviour agreement or a drugs and harmful substances contract. Which of these is best applied will be decided by the Head following guidance from the Senior Deputy Head or Deputy Head Pastoral, and it will depend on the circumstances around the substance abuse; how substantiated the suspicions are and the concerns raised following the investigations. Failure to agree to the signing of either the agreement or contract will put the place of the pupil at Alleyn's in jeopardy and would be followed-up with parents in the first instance usually by the Head.

The School - Parent - Pupil 'behaviour agreement (managing behavioural risk)' sets out strategies and expectations for pupils and parents in managing behavioural risk and supports pupil to make good and healthy decisions both generally and when in challenging social situations. It also sets out agreed strategies that the school will implement in support of the pupil and their parents' efforts. Parents pupils and the School, normally the Senior Deputy Head or Deputy Head Pastoral will sign this document once support strategies have been agreed.

The Drugs and harmful substances contract sets out the expectation that for the remaining time of the pupil at Alleyn's or until the School deems it appropriate to step down to a 'behaviour agreement', the School will - without prior notice and on random occasions over the period of the contract, take a sample of hair from the pupil and send it to a professional testing facility to check if substances have recently been used, or the school may ask a pupil to provide a urine sample (under the supervision and guidance of the school nurse) for testing. A test result that comes back indicating use of drugs or harmful substances* during the period of a drug and harmful substances contract will normally put the place of the pupil at the school in jeopardy.

It should be noted that so called 'legal highs' will often and are likely to test positive as part of this process. They will be treated as an illegal substance.

Following concerns about the use of drugs or harmful substances the School will aim to manage the matter as one primarily of pastoral concern. Pupils will be informed who they might speak to at the School and also who they might consult confidentially outside the School. The School will consider each incident individually and recognises

* The drugs that are tested for include the following: Amphetamines (including methamphetamine); Benzodiazepines; Buprenorphine; Cannabis; Cathinone; Clozapine; Cocaine; Fentanyl; Haloperidol; Ketamine; Lysergic acid diethylamide (LSD); Mephedrone; Meperidine; Mescaline; Methadone; Opiates; Phencyclidine (PCP); Propoxyphene; Tramadol; Trazodone; Zolpidem

that a variety of strategies, interventions and actions will be necessary and appropriate when dealing with any concerns.

However, where an individual's behaviour raises serious concerns about the safety and welfare not only of that pupil but of other pupils at the School, or where a drugs contract has been established but a test returns with an indication of continuing use, then the pupil would normally be asked to leave the School. Such behaviour includes any attempt to share or sell harmful substances to fellow pupils.

Policy reviewed in June 2025 and will be reviewed:

- after any serious concern about use of drugs or harmful substances, or
- in June 2026, or
- if new guidance is published in the meantime by the DfE.

Appendix 1

Useful Organisations

Addaction is one of the UK's largest specialist drug and alcohol treatment charities. As well as adult services, they provide services specifically tailored to the needs of young people and their parents.

Website: www.addaction.org.uk

ADFAM offers information to families of drug and alcohol users, and the website has a database of local family support services.

Tel: 020 7553 7640 Email: admin@adfam.org.uk

Website: www.adfam.org.uk

Alcohol Concern works to reduce the incidence and costs of alcohol-related harm

Tel: 020 7264 0510. Email: contact@alcoholconcern.org.uk

Website: www.alcoholconcern.org.uk

ASH (Action on Smoking and Health) A campaigning public health charity aiming to reduce the health problems caused by tobacco.

Tel: 020 7739 5902 Email: enquiries@ash.org.uk

Website: www.ash.org.uk

Drinkaware - An independent charity that promotes responsible drinking through innovative ways to challenge the national drinking culture

Tel: 020 7307 7450 Website: www.drinkaware.co.uk/

DrugScope is a centre of expertise on illegal drugs, aiming to inform policy development and reduce drug-related risk. The website includes detailed drug information and access to the Information and Library Service.

Website: www.drugscope.org.uk

FRANK is the national drugs awareness campaign aiming to raise awareness amongst young people of the risks of illegal drugs, and to provide information and advice. It also provides support to parents/carers, helping to give them the skills and confidence to communicate with their children about drugs.

24 Hour Helpline: 0800 776600 Email: frank@talktofrank.com

Website: www.talktofrank.com

Mentor UK is a non-government organisation with a focus on protecting the health and wellbeing of children and young people to reduce the damage that drugs can do to their lives.

Tel: 020 7739 8494. Email admin@mentoruk.org

Website: www.mentoruk.org.uk

National Children's Bureau promotes the interests and well-being of all children and young people across every aspect of their lives.

Tel: 020 7843 6000 Website: www.ncb.org.uk

Family Lives - A charity offering support and information to anyone parenting a child or teenager. It runs a free-phone helpline and courses for parents.

Tel: 0800 800 2222 Website: <http://familylives.org.uk/>

R

e-Solv (Society for the Prevention of Solvent and Volatile Substance Abuse)

A national charity providing information for teachers, other professionals, parents and young people.

Email: information@re-solv.org Website: www.re-solv.org

Smokefree - NHS Smoking Helpline: 0800 169 0 169

Website: <http://smokefree.nhs.uk>

Stars National Initiative offers support for anyone working with children, young people and families affected by parental drug and alcohol misuse.

Website: www.starsnationalinitiative.org.uk

Appendix 2

Alleyn's School Drugs and harmful substances contract:

I understand that, in line with the School's Drugs and Harmful Substances Policy and following conversations with members of staff, the School has reasonable cause to suspect that I have been involved in the misuse of drugs or harmful substances and that, as a result, I am being placed on a drugs and harmful substances contract.

This contract confirms that, for the remainder of my time as a pupil at Alleyn's or until the school feels it is appropriate to step this arrangement down to a behaviour agreement (managing behavioural risk)', I undertake not to misuse drugs or harmful substances. I also understand that the School can - without prior notice - request a sample of hair, which will be sent to a recognised testing laboratory, or in the case of a need for a more recent and immediate test, a sample of urine, to be given under the direction of the School Nurse, for testing. I understand that a positive test result indicating the misuse of drugs or harmful substances will put my place at Alleyn's in jeopardy.

I recognise that should drugs be taken in the holidays, weekends or evenings, it will still show positive in a drugs test of this kind.

I also recognise that so called 'Legal Highs' will also likely test positive in these circumstances and will be treated as a positive test result by the School.

I know that there are various members of staff who I can speak to if I am concerned about my wellbeing or my ability to adhere to this contract, and I undertake to engage fully with the additional pastoral and academic (if relevant) support being offered by the School, as part of this contract. I also understand that the School will do its

best to support me but, if my behaviour raises serious concerns about the safety and welfare, not only of myself, but of other pupils in the School, then I will be asked to leave the school.

By signing this contract, I accept that this agreement is reasonable, and I understand that, should I break the terms and conditions set out above, my place at Alleyn's will be at risk.

Pupil's Name:

Pupil's Signature:

Date:

Parent's Name (witnessing):

Parent's Signature (witnessing):

Date: