

# **POLICY AND SANCTIONS WITH REGARD TO DRUGS, ALCOHOL AND SMOKING**

## **General statement of Policy**

Blundell's School tolerates neither the misuse of drugs or alcohol by members of the School nor the illegal supply of these substances.

Blundell's School is committed to the health and safety of its members and will take action to safeguard their well being.

Blundell's School acknowledges the importance of its pastoral role in the welfare of young people and through formal education and the School's general ethos; it will seek to provide the support pupils need to avoid the problems of substance abuse.

## **Policy Aims**

Blundell's School believes and supports the following educational aims in respect of drugs and substance use and misuse:

1. To enable pupils to make healthy and informed choices by increasing knowledge, challenging attitudes and developing and practising decision-making skills.
2. To provide accurate information about substances.
3. To increase understanding about the implications and possible consequences of use and misuse.
4. To widen understanding about related health and social issues.
5. To enable young people to identify sources of appropriate personal support.

These aims are fulfilled through a programme of education arranged through the established curriculum, through the PSHCE syllabus and through specially invited external speakers. The programme involves pupils of all ages and continues throughout their time at the school. Our Medical staff also play an active role in promoting greater awareness about the risks involved, and will offer informed medical advice.

Pupils can discuss their individual worries with their House Master/Mistress or Tutor or any other member of the Pastoral Team. They can also refer themselves to the Medical Staff and to the School Counsellor for individual guidance, without fearing sanctions or adverse report. We also invite groups of parents and guardians to Information Evenings, and are very conscious of the importance of working together in order to promote the well-being of your son or daughter.

The School actively co-operates with other agencies such as the local Police, Social Services, and the Health Promotion Unit to deliver its commitment to drugs education and to deal with incidents of substance use and misuse.

The policy will be reviewed regularly and in the light of any drug-related incident.

## **Specific policy and the management of incidents**

### **1. Tobacco**

The School rule states: Smoking and the possession of smoking materials are forbidden. Pupils should not return to School having clearly smoked elsewhere.

All Smoking incidents are reported to a pupil's Housemaster/mistress and parents will normally be informed at the earliest opportunity. All offences will be reported to the Head Master. A first offence will attract a minimum of a weeks gating and may require the writing out of an appropriate report which considers the damage to health caused by smoking. A second offence attracts further gating, with a letter sent home. Thereafter the whole question becomes more one of consultation with parents in conjunction with the gatings. A pupil may be referred for a session of counselling (at the parents' expense) where we have reason to believe that he or she has issues with tobacco, for example, when there are repeated infringements. Continued abuse of the Smoking rule may well result in suspension or even expulsion.

The School will always contact the manager of any establishment found to be active in selling tobacco or tobacco products to under age pupils and the Police may also be informed.

Members of staff (academic and non-academic) are reminded that smoking is banned across the campus both inside and outside buildings. It is also expected that staff should refrain from smoking in the presence of pupils at any time.

### **2. Alcohol**

The School rule states: Alcoholic drinks may be consumed only at authorised School occasions. Alcoholic drinks may not be brought onto the school premises or campus. Drinking to excess under any circumstances is unacceptable. Pupils should not return to School clearly having consumed alcohol elsewhere.

The School is clearly bound by the Law of the land and those laws guide our policy. Pupils are encouraged to adopt a sensible attitude towards alcohol. Alcohol should not be served to any pupils below the Sixth Form. Sixth form pupils may take meal leaves but these do not entitle pupils to ignore the law governing alcohol consumption. Only those old enough may drink beer, cider or wine - and then only in moderation. No spirits of any kind, or drinks containing spirits, may be consumed.

We believe that pupils in their final two years at the school should learn that the moderate consumption of alcohol has its place in our civilisation when accompanied by food and lively conversation. Therefore Sixth Form pupils may be served alcohol in moderation at certain formal School occasions usually accompanying a meal (e.g. School and House social events, Sports Dinners) but never in the absence of a member of staff. Soft drinks are always available at such events.

All alcohol offences will be reported to the Head Master and to parents. Evidence of alcohol consumption will be enough to attract a disciplinary reaction. Minor alcohol offences would be considered to be possession of beer or being caught in a pub. These can lead to gating and the writing out of an appropriate report. The first two offences being comparable to being caught Smoking. A pupil may be referred for a session of counselling (at the parents' expense) where we have reason to believe that he or she has issues with alcohol, for example, when there are repeated infringements. Suspension and expulsion are ultimate possibilities.

Offences involving spirits will tend to attract a greater disciplinary reaction. Persuading other pupils to partake of spirits is regarded in a particularly serious light. Should somebody be incapacitated, end up sick or be put into the San, then it is likely that a period of suspension would follow. For alcohol offences the School reserves the right to telephone parents and ask them to collect their child immediately.

In the case of any incident involving the sale of alcohol to under age pupils, the School will personally contact the manager of the establishment involved and the Police will be informed.

### **3. Drugs**

The School rule states: Taking, possessing or dealing in drugs is forbidden.

The definition of a drug used by the then DfES in 'Drugs guidance for Schools' is:  
*A drug is a substance people take to change the way they feel, think or behave.*

This includes:

- Drugs which are controlled/illegal substances (for example cannabis, amphetamines, ecstasy, LSD and mephedrone) under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971. Also so-called legal or herbal highs which are considered illegal under current medicines legislation to sell, supply or advertise for 'human consumption'.
- Over-the-counter and prescription medicines used improperly, which can include sleeping tablets and slimming tablets
- All legal drugs when misused including volatile substances and solvents, Ketamine, Khat, alkyl nitrites.
- Drugs which are misused to enhance performance (for example analgesics or steroids)

*The Head Master reserves the right to react to the emergence of new substances and changing circumstances as they occur, based on the DfES definition of a drug above.*

We are committed to promoting a healthy, safe environment at Blundell's, in which good citizenship and respect for the law can flourish. We believe that it is important to deliver a clear, consistent moral framework that promotes the integrity of our community, and gives all of our pupils the understanding and self-confidence to reject illegal drugs and substances. All our staff have been trained in recognising and responding to the symptoms of drug and substance abuse. Any member of staff or parent concerned that a pupil might be involved in drug abuse should inform the pupil's Housemaster/mistress immediately.

We will always investigate rumours about involvements in illegal drugs and substances, including questioning a pupil, searching his/her room and personal possessions. We will inform parents and guardians as a matter of urgency and invite them into the school to discuss the matter.

The Governors have agreed a contract with a clause making it a condition of admission that parents of pupils accept the School's right to require a pupil to undergo a test for the use of illegal drugs or other substances damaging to health, where there are reasonable grounds for suspicion. A procedure for the testing of pupils who are suspected was established. Drug testing is organised by the Second Master in conjunction with the School's Medical Centre. Full details of the arrangements are available to parents on request. A test will only be required following consultation between a pupil's Housemaster/mistress and the Head Master (or in the latter's absence, the Second Master). Reasonable endeavours will be made, before a drugs test is conducted, to notify a parent, guardian or education guardian of the requirement for a drugs test and the reasons for that requirement.

The Drugs Testing Policy is designed to be constructive and to support those pupils most at risk of drug taking, to dispel ill-founded suspicion of drug taking and to act as a general and efficient deterrent. Our drugs sanction policy allows the School to exercise clemency where it is merited, or give support and advice to those who need it. It aims to encourage honesty and in certain circumstances to allow a pupil to recognise that he or she has made a grave mistake and to strive to make amends for it within Blundell's.

Our sanctions policy is as follows:

- I. Any pupil selling or distributing drugs or otherwise actively encouraging their possession or consumption by others will be expelled.

- ii. Anyone caught possessing or consuming illegal drugs while under the School's jurisdiction in term time loses any right to immediate membership of the School and must expect expulsion to be a very strong possibility.
  - a) In some cases there may be mitigating circumstances; if so, they will be carefully considered.
  - b) The Head Master will normally consult the Police about the possession, consumption or supply of an illegal drug, since it carries the possibility of being a criminal offence.
- iii. If the only firm evidence that a pupil has been involved with illegal drugs is a positive drugs test, he or she may be allowed to stay in School provided that he or she
  - a) Gives a written assurance to the Head Master and to his/her parents that he/she will not become involved with illegal drugs again.
  - b) Agrees to undergo the drugs tests at various times during his/her remaining School career.
  - c) Agrees to take part in drug counselling if the School requires.

The same undertakings will also be required of any pupil who may be allowed back after an offence (see ii above) because of mitigating circumstances.

- iv. The scope of the School's discipline reaches to the point where there is a transfer of responsibility from school to parent. However, where it becomes known that drugs abuse is taking place outside school, then the School is then in possession of information, which could be deemed to be criminal and may thus:
  - a) Inform parents of the nature of what is being said.
  - b) Ask that there should be drug counselling.
  - c) Require that the pupil be drug tested in the future.
  - d) Talk to the local police about the matter.
- v. In the event of the School's reputation being brought into disrepute it will be the School's qualified right to invoke its full disciplinary procedures.
- vi. Any subsequent drugs abuse, including a positive test result, will result in expulsion. Semantic debate about drugs taken in the holidays or at leave weekends will not be conducted.
- vii. Solvent abuse is also a serious school offence. The School may react to solvent abuse in a similar way to other forms of drug abuse.

*(Revised June 2011)*