



Emanuel School

Drugs Policy

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1. Introduction

Young people are increasingly pressured to use or experiment with controlled drugs. The school is committed to reducing these pressures by educating pupils about the risks of drug involvement, maintaining a drug-free environment and fostering a culture where pupils feel confident seeking support. These efforts are part of the school’s broader policy to safeguard the physical and moral wellbeing of pupils, promote respect for the law and ensure good order and discipline within the school community. These efforts also contribute to protecting the school’s reputation.

In addition to its duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of all its pupils, the school has a duty under the criminal law not to allow its premises to be used for drug-related activities.

2. Scope

This policy applies to the possession, use/consumption and supply of all drugs (as defined below), whether or not the activity may constitute a criminal offence.

This policy applies:

- while pupils are at school, or in the care of the school including when taking part in any school-organised or school-related activity such as trips and visits.
- to all pupils when they are travelling to and from school, wearing school uniform or in some other way identifiable as a pupil at the school.

It may also apply in other circumstances when their conduct outside school could have repercussions for the orderly running of the school, poses a threat to another pupil or member of the public, or could adversely affect the reputation of the school.

3. Regulatory Framework

This policy has been prepared to meet the school's responsibilities under the:

- Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014
- Education and Skills Act 2008
- Children Act 1989
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR
- Equality Act 2010

This policy has regard to the following guidance and advice:

- [DfE and ACPO Drug Advice for Schools](#) (2012)
- [Searching, Screening and Confiscation: Advice for Schools](#) (DfE, September 2022)
- [Behaviour in Schools: Advice for Headteachers and School Staff](#) (DfE, February 2024)

4. Definitions

The term **drugs**, unless otherwise stated, is used to refer to all illegal drugs and all legal drugs including alcohol, tobacco, nicotine (including nicotine pouches), volatile substances giving off a gas or vapour which can be inhaled (this includes vaping), ketamine and alkyl nitrates (known as poppers). The definition of 'drug' also includes substances intended to resemble drugs and/or the paraphernalia of drugs.

Tobacco means any tobacco-related product and/or paraphernalia including cigarettes, cigars and pipes and any other smoking-related products such as tobacco and cigarette papers.

Smoking means smoking tobacco or anything containing tobacco, or smoking any other substance in a form in which it could be smoked. The purpose of this policy, smoking also refers to the smoking or vaping of e-cigarette, cig-a-likes or electronic vaporisers.

Supply means providing or sharing (whether or not for money or other consideration) or facilitation of supply (e.g. sale, exchange). It also includes the promotion/advertisement of supply.

Possession means any item over which the pupil has or appears to have control; this includes clothing, desks, lockers and bags.

5. Safeguarding Pupils from Drug and Alcohol Harms

The school takes a proactive and whole school approach to drugs by:

- raising awareness through effective drug education,
- considering responses to drug-related incidents carefully,
- offering early access to specialised support and assistance for pupils at risk of drug-related harm and those with drug or alcohol misuse in the family,
- working with parents and carers,
- having clear school rules and firm disciplinary procedures.

6. Preventative Education Programme

Drug education is a key part of preventing drug misuse and promoting the health and wellbeing of young people. Education and information about drugs and their misuse come within the Life Education programme.

Effective, age- and developmentally appropriate drug education is a major component of the school's drug prevention programme and is an important aspect of the school curriculum aimed at providing pupils with opportunities to develop their knowledge and understanding about the impact of drugs and appreciate the benefits of a healthy lifestyle, relating this to their own and others' actions. It aims to:

- increase pupils' knowledge and understanding and clarify misconceptions about:
 - the short- and long-term effects and risks of drugs the rules and laws relating to drugs,
 - the impact of drugs on individuals, families and communities,
 - the prevalence and acceptability of drug use among peers,
 - the law relating to drugs and alcohol
- develop pupils' personal and social skills to make informed decisions and keep themselves safe and healthy including:
 - assessing, avoiding and managing risk,
 - devising problem-solving and coping strategies,
 - developing self-awareness and self-esteem.
- enable pupils to explore their own and other peoples' attitudes towards drugs, drug use and drug users, including challenging stereotypes and exploring media and social influences.

Drug education is delivered through a cross-curricular programme including assemblies, Life Education provision, carefully selected outside speakers and subject specific content.

The school's drug education is intended to be inclusive and accessible for all, allowing space for discussion and recognising the importance of religious or cultural beliefs that prohibit drug and alcohol use.

Through the tutor system, the pastoral staff have a responsibility in accordance with the ethos of the school to help pupils prepare for taking responsible informed choices for themselves. In conjunction with the structured Life Education programme and at all opportunities as they arise, the pastoral staff develop pupils' awareness of the dangers of drug-taking. Staff are encouraged to respond to a pupil who seeks information or help on drugs or personal problems; that help can take the form of putting the pupil in touch with those with appropriate knowledge.

7. Pastoral Support

Pupils are encouraged to seek advice and/or discuss their concerns about drugs including concerns about someone else's drug use with a member of staff or another responsible adult. The school has a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of all its pupils, which in appropriate circumstances, may override any duty of confidentiality owed to a pupil if further support is to be considered.

Trained school counsellors also offer a private and confidential space for pupils to discuss anything which is impacting their psychological wellbeing and daily life. They also have access to information about outside agencies able to provide confidential advice and assistance.

Accredited counselling services and specialist support can be recommended by the school to a pupil in appropriate circumstances, after consultation with his/her parents.

Parents themselves are encouraged to inform the headmaster or deputy head: pupils if they have any reason to think that their son/daughter may have been involved with or affected by drugs, to ensure the safety of their, or any other, child at school and that suitable advice and assistance can be given. Pupils and parents may also wish to refer to the [Talk to Frank service](#) for advice and information about drugs. Appendix I includes a list of supporting organisations and helpline services for young people.

The school will provide pastoral support and safeguard any pupil for whom concerns have been raised. Parents will be invited to discuss such concerns with the headmaster and/or the deputy head: pupils and drug testing may be requested on the basis that, whatever the outcome of the test, the response would be pastoral. As appropriate, pastoral support may also include working with external agencies and making a referral to children's social care in line with the school's *Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy*.

8. Management of Drug-Related Incidents

In this school, a drug-related incident includes any incidents involving any drug that is unauthorised and therefore not permitted within the school boundaries.

Emanuel School has a strict disciplinary approach towards the possession, use or supply of illegal and other unauthorised drugs. Possession, use or supply of any illegal or unauthorised drugs is strictly forbidden. A range of responses and sanctions can be applied depending on individual circumstances and in line with the school's disciplinary procedures.

Disciplinary sanctions will be considered carefully but involvement in drugs carries a very real risk of exclusion. Parents and pupils are reminded that under the terms of the contract signed by parents (*Terms and Conditions*) a pupil may be excluded if the headmaster is reasonably satisfied that the pupil's conduct (whether on or off school premises or in or out of term time) has been prejudicial to good order and school discipline or to the reputation of the school.

Disciplinary procedures will not be applied in cases where confidential advice or assistance is genuinely sought and disciplinary action is considered inappropriate. Any decision by the headmaster that a pupil should be excluded from the school or should be required to leave the school because of involvement in drugs may be appealed by making a written request in accordance with the *Suspension and Exclusion Policy* and *Complaints Procedure*.

9. Investigation

The school will investigate any suspected involvement in drugs. The investigation may involve segregating a pupil (for no longer than necessary); asking him/her questions; asking him/her to give a written account of relevant circumstances.

If a search of a pupil is required, staff should refer to the *Search and Confiscation Policy*.

Investigations will be conducted fairly and with sensitivity. The pupil's parents will be informed at the earliest opportunity. So far as practicable, the pupil will remain accompanied at all times. Interviews will normally be conducted by the deputy head: pupils or by a senior member of staff. The pupil must be accompanied at interview by another appropriate member of staff. Sources of information will not normally be disclosed. Any failure to co-operate may result in the drawing of adverse inferences.

Where the headmaster considers the circumstances of the case to warrant it, the police will be informed. Police may advise on analysis and formal identification. If formal action is to be taken against a pupil, the police will make arrangements for them to attend a local police station accompanied by an appropriate adult for interview.

In any incident involving illegal or unauthorised drugs the school will normally involve the pupil's parents/carers and explain how they intend to respond to the incident and the pupil's needs. Where the school suspects that to do this might put the pupil's safety at risk or if there is any other cause for concern for the pupil's safety at home, then the school will exercise caution. In any situation where a pupil may need protection from the possibility of abuse, the school's DSL must be consulted and appropriate safeguarding procedures followed.

10. Testing for Drugs

If, following an investigation, the headmaster thinks it is appropriate to do so, the pupil may be requested to undergo a drug test (or a series of drug tests) to determine whether there are traces of controlled drugs in their body.

Such a test would be performed by an accredited drug testing provider and may involve the provision of a sample of hair, urine, blood, nail and/or saliva. All due care will be taken to respect the pupil's privacy and human rights.

A test programme may be used as a way to help a family establish parameters for the child's welfare, as well as part of a disciplinary procedure. All tests must be paid for by the parent.

11. Managing Authorised Legal Drugs

11.1 Prescribed Medicines

The school is aware of the potential for the misuse of medicines. For this reason, parents wishing their child to take medicines in school must make arrangements for them to be administered by the school nurse. Prescribed medication being used by another pupil, not intended as the patient, will be treated in the same way as other drugs.

The school's policy on the administration of medicines is included in the *Medical and First Aid Policy* which is available on the school website.

11.1 Hazardous Chemicals and Volatile Substances (Solvents)

Arrangements for the secure and safe storage of chemicals (e.g. for scientific experiments) are set out in the school's health and safety policies.

Medical sharps to manage health conditions (e.g. insulin or gluco blood testing) will be disposed of in sharps disposal bins which are located in the medical room.

11.2 Alcohol

Alcohol is not an authorised substance for any pupil or student at the school, including sixth formers, who are not permitted to consume alcohol at school social events or during educational trips.

Staff accompanying children on day trips are not permitted to drink alcohol. Staff expectations relating to the consumption of alcohol during overnight school trips are outlined in the school's *Educational Visits Policy*.

12. No Smoking/Vaping Policy

The school has a strict no-smoking/vaping policy to promote a healthy and safe environment for all pupils, staff and visitors. Smoking is prohibited on school premises, including indoor and outdoor areas, as well as within the immediate vicinity of the school grounds.

Pupils will be supported to make healthy choices in relation to smoking/vaping through Life Education lessons/assemblies and in the general school curriculum.

Pupils who are caught vaping/smoking or who are in possession of vaping/smoking paraphernalia will be sanctioned in line with the school's *Behaviour Policy*.

13. Guidelines for Staff

13.1 What to do when a pupil appears to be in possession of drugs

These guidelines are intended to protect staff and pupils from making mistakes or misjudgements.

- An impartial atmosphere must be preserved at all stages. There must be no presumption that offences have been committed. The aim of the actions and investigation is to establish the facts.
- Tact and discretion are needed at all times. Nothing that is under investigation should be discussed in the common room or be divulged to pupils or parents. It is for the headmaster/ deputy head: pupils to inform the parents of a pupil under investigation.
- Public statements are given only by the headmaster or the deputy head: pupils/designated safeguarding lead.

The actions taken by the **member of staff** will depend upon the circumstances. The following guidelines should be adapted accordingly:

- At the earliest opportunity, the member of staff must put the matter in the hands of senior management. They should request assistance from senior management by sending a pupil to find the nearest colleague, ensuring that the critical area remains under observation.
- Unless it is not feasible, the member of staff should wait for senior management to arrive before taking any action.
- However, the member of staff should take whatever actions may be necessary to hold the situation intact until a proper investigation can begin. Staff should prevent the pupils from:
 - disposing of any substances,
 - departing from where they are observed,
 - becoming aware that they are under suspicion,
 - alerting other pupils to the situation.
- Such moments as the end of a period or break or the departure of pupils from a changing room or form room may necessitate the immediate intervention of the member of staff.
- It is best that the member of staff says as little as possible, other than to ask the pupils to stay where they are. Staff should:
 - if possible, leave pupils unaware that there is an incident in progress;
 - not declare the suspicion;
 - not accuse or express an opinion;
 - not search a pupil;
 - not search a pupil's possessions in the presence of other pupils;
 - not search a pupil's possessions without another member of staff present as a witness;
 - not leave the remaining pupils without supervision, or allow them to mix with other pupils at the end of a lesson if the investigation is in progress and the issue is known to the pupils: news of it will travel immediately throughout the school, and may enable evidence elsewhere to be destroyed.
- If the member of staff needs to remove the pupil, he/she should tell them only that the pupil must come with him/her and that he/she should bring his/her possessions. The pupil must walk in front of the member of staff and be kept under sharp observation so that he/she is prevented from destroying evidence. An LSD tab can easily be dropped or hidden, or a small quantity or block of cannabis can be slipped to a pupil passing in the opposite direction.

- The pupil or pupils under suspicion should be taken to a secure room to be asked questions.
- At the earliest opportunity the member of staff should write down the facts, names, times, words of key statements (questions and answers). He/she should convert this into a report as soon as possible.
- In circumstances where it is not possible for senior management to be present, telephone contact should be established as soon as possible. Such circumstances could, for instance, be an incident on a school outing. The senior member of staff present should then assume responsibility and should follow the procedures, adhering to the principles and adapting the practices as necessary. He/she should proceed no further with the investigation than is necessary as a holding exercise until senior management are present or contacted. See Appendix I for objectives of the interview and Appendix II for advice on interview techniques.
- If a substance suspected to be an illegally-held drug is found, it should be confiscated, put in a bag or other container, and taken to a secure place. It is a defence against the offence of possession (The Misuse of Drugs Act 1971) that, knowing or suspecting a substance to be a controlled drug, a person takes possession of it for the purpose of preventing another from committing an offence and that as soon as possible after taking possession of it he/she takes all reasonable steps to destroy it or to deliver it into the custody of a person lawfully entitled to take custody of it. The member of staff should not put him/herself at risk by having it in his/her possession longer than is necessary. If the drug is confiscated abroad, he/she must not bring it back through Customs but record a description of it and destroy it.

Responsibilities and actions of the **senior management team**:

- The senior management should set the appropriate conditions for the investigation. These must be compassionate, impartial and conducive to a fair discussion. (See further guidance in Appendix II.)
- The interview should take place privately; for example in the deputy head: pupils' office.
- It is essential that at least two members of staff (one of them senior management, the other the pupil's tutor or another member of staff) should be present, one of whom takes notes during the interview, recording times, places, names, actions, allegations, responses and admissions.
- The senior member of staff should ask questions and obtain answers so that a full picture of the circumstances is achieved (see Appendix I). He/she is likely to interview several pupils and to re-interview some before the investigation is complete.
- Any searches will be carried out in accordance with the school's *Searching and Confiscation Policy*.
- Co-operation in answering questions or responding to reasonable requests which would provide clarification is to be expected. (Failing this the matter will be referred to the headmaster, and eventually the police may be called.)
- The record should show the sum of what was said, the names of those present, the date, and the times of starting and finishing. The written record should be shown to the pupil. He/she is entitled to request amendments. He/she will be asked to sign it as an accurate record. The interviewing staff should also sign it.
- Staff will:
 - keep the headmaster informed of all developments, and consult with him over all major decisions;
 - decide whether to send for more pupils for interview;
 - ensure that all pupils interviewed are given opportunities to go to the lavatory, and are given meals;
 - ensure that at the appropriate time the pupil is given the opportunity to consult his/her form tutor, if that is possible, or another member of staff of his choice if it is not possible;
 - ensure that at the appropriate time the pupil is given the opportunity to speak to his/her parents by telephone;

- keep reviewing the timing, so that interviews and business are concluded by the end of the day, and the next day's programme is planned;
- keep assessing the evidence, noting consistencies, inconsistencies, what is agreed and what is disputed, and the degree of seriousness of different pupils' positions.

Responsibilities and actions of the **headmaster** with **senior management**:

The headmaster will:

- advise on all major decisions,
- decide if a test should be used to establish the presence or otherwise of a controlled drug,
- decide how to inform a pupil's parents that there is a situation involving drugs,
- inform the chairman of the governing body at the appropriate time,
- decide if, when and how the Wandsworth Schools' liaison officer should be informed, and what role he/she should be asked to play.

The headmaster and senior management, having taken all steps to consult the relevant staff, and having considered whether they have taken into account all factors and implications, will decide on the range and details of the school's response. They will decide upon the sanctions and the pastoral programmes that will ensue, and how these will be announced and put into effect.

13.2 Pupil's possible involvement in drugs outside school

If an alleged incident occurred outside the school but which might have an adverse effect within the school or on the reputation of the school, then the responsibility to investigate remains with the school.

A member of staff receiving information should always avoid giving a promise of unconditional confidentiality. Staff should be guided by professional judgement and sensitivity and should use discretion. However, in all cases staff should seek advice at least in general terms from senior management, and is strongly advised to pass information or allegations concerning drugs to senior management.

Senior management will know if the allegation links to information already held and, with due consultation, they will be in a better position than the individual member of staff to judge whether any information should be passed on to parents either of the pupil who is the subject of the allegation or of pupils judged to be at possible risk. Senior management will decide whether any pastoral actions or programmes should be planned and implemented.

The headmaster will authorise any such action.

14. Involving Police

In most cases a drug-related incident will be a school rather than a police matter. The school must notify the police of actual or alleged criminal activity. If the school suspects that a criminal offence has taken place in relation to the possession, use or supply of drugs, then consideration will be given to reporting this to the police/safer school police officer. The school will only call 999 in an emergency.

15. Policy Review and Approval

The policy will be reviewed:

- following any serious incident involving pupils and drugs.
- following publication of new guidance from the Department for Education (DfE).
- in any event, every year.

Policy Owner	Deputy Head: Pupils/Designated Safeguarding Lead
Date of last review	Spring 2025

Approved by	Cabinet: 29 January 2025
Responsible Governor Committee	Pastoral
Date of next review	Spring 2026

16. Related Policies and Documents

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Behaviour Policy (incl. School Rules)
- Educational Visits Policy
- Searching and Confiscation Policy
- Life Education Policy
- Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy
- NHS | [Smoking, Drinking and Drug Use Amongst Young People in England 2023](#) | October 2024
- Pastoral Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Suspension and Exclusion Policy
- Terms and Conditions

Appendix I: Supporting Organisations and Helpline Services for Pupils



- FRANK** Provides honest information about drugs and alcohol.
<https://www.talktofrank.com/>
 Opening times: 24/7
 Live Chat: 2pm – 6pm/any day of the week
 Email: frank@talktofrank.com
 Text: 82111
 Call: 0300 123 6600
- Childline** Confidential support service for under 19-year-olds.
<https://www.childline.org.uk/>
 Opening times: 24/7
 Free 1-2-1 [Counsellor Chat](#)
[Message Boards](#) (experience sharing with other young people)
 Call: 0800 11 11
- The Mix** Offers online information as well as helpline services.
<https://www.themix.org.uk/>
 Opening times: 4pm to 11pm/any day of the week
 Call: 0808 808 4994
 Email: Support via [online form](#)
- YoungMinds** A guide for young people on drugs and alcohol can be found [here](#).
- Diana Award** The Diana Award Advice Messenger provides free confidential support via text message. <https://diana-award.org.uk/news/the-diana-award-advice-messenger>
 Opening times: 24/7
 Text: Text **DA** to **85258**

This is not an exhaustive list of outside agencies that offer support for young people.

Appendix 2: Objectives of Interview

The aim is to establish the following, if possible:

- the pupil's account of the events, with his/her explanations;
- who else was involved, (inside and outside the school);
- whether the pupil was offered a drug and, if so, in what circumstances;
- whether the pupil has been in possession of a drug and, if so, in what circumstances;
- whether a drug has been on school premises and, if so, when;
- whether arrangements about a drug have been made on school premises;
- what the arrangements for distribution of the drug were (with whom he/she was going to split it, sell it on to, how much others were to pay, and for what quantities);
- how the pupil obtained the drug, (when, where, from whom, with whom, paying how much, for what quantities);
- whether the pupil has used a drug and, if so, in what circumstances;
- how long the situation has been happening, how frequently, involving whom;
- whether the pupil has supplied a drug to others (when, how often, where, obtained from where, supplied to whom, price of purchase, price of sale, packaging).

Appendix 3: Interview Advice

- Whenever interviewing a pupil suspected of possession and/or distribution of illegal substances, there should be no assumption that the person has actually committed an offence.
- If the questioning is detailed and intelligent, the truth is as likely to be achieved by an approach free from animosity as by aggressive questioning. If the person interviewed should be innocent, no harm will have been done, there will be no need for apologies or embarrassed withdrawals of accusations, and future relationships will not have been jeopardised.
- Leading questions render imperfect and unreliable the information obtained, and they thus invalidate it, legally.
- No words should be put into the mouth of anyone being interviewed.
- Questions should be open and neutral, and free from emotive language.

Not: *"Did you say anything like 'Have you any cannabis for sale?'"*

But: *"What did you say to that person?"*

Not: *"Did the person have a crooked front tooth?"*

But: *"Describe in detail the face of the person."*

Not: *"Was Jason Smith in the room?"*

But: *"Name the people who were in the room."*

- Facts in the interviewed person's own words will be more useful in establishing truth when testimonies differ than statements in the interviewer's words.
- No statements of suspicions, assumptions, speculations, or threats should be used or implied. e.g. *"We know you did this, so you might as well admit it."* Or *"I expect you'll be thrown out for this!"*
- No expression or implication of opinion should be used. e.g. *"How could you be so naive?"*
- No brow-beating or intimidation should be used. e.g. *"Don't lie to me!"* or *"You idiot!"*
- Refer to the behaviour, not the person, as being anti-social.
- Avoid any personal animus or insult. Treat the person being interviewed with respect, even if it is beyond doubt that offences have been committed. The long-term consequence is likely to be more socially acceptable behaviour from the person interviewed because of the self-respect that the interviewer has preserved.
- Do not expect a person to admit a serious offence easily. Give him/her time to come to the truth gradually. If an admission is humiliating, a person is normally able to concede only a little at a time, so allow for this. Accept each new admission and keep firmly returning for more.
- Experience has shown that patience and not overreacting to inconsistencies, however important they may be, is more likely to eventually lead to the truth.
- Give the person repeated opportunities, unpressurised, to correct errors or misrepresentations.
- Truth gives the offender the chance to salvage a little self-respect and something upon which to rebuild a reputation. An offender has huge relief when he/she admits what he has been denying and what has been troubling his/her conscience but which, as things have become more entangled, he/she has not known how to retract.
- Hasty conclusions should not be drawn or expressed in public on the basis of what may turn out to be ambiguous evidence.

Appendix 4: Signs of Drug Use

There are many different physical and socio-emotional signs of drug abuse and addiction. Being aware of both physical and behavioural signs of drug use will enable staff to take the preliminary steps in recognising a potential problem.

While many of the following symptoms can relate to substance abuse, it is important to acknowledge that a young person exhibiting symptoms of alcohol or drug use can be attributed to a number of different problems. Some behaviours can be symptomatic of stress, depression or other physical or mental health issues.

Signs that could indicate that a pupil is using drugs or illegal substances include, but are not limited to:

Physical Health and Signs

- frequent sickness
- unexplained weight gain or loss
- extreme loss of, or poor, physical coordination, including slow or staggered walk
- unusual smell in breath or clothing
- poor hygiene
- unusual lack of grooming
- blank stare, red watery eyes, over or under dilated pupils
- hyperactivity and excessive talkativeness
- shaking hands or cold sweaty palms
- puffy flushed or pale face
- runny nose and cough
- experiences nausea and vomiting
- tremors of the head, feet or hands
- burns or soot on fingers or lips

Behavioural Signs

- absence or loss of interest in school
- change in attitude and personality, without other notable cause
- avoidance of friends and family members
- developing 'loner' tendencies or anti-social behaviours
- a drop in grades and work ethic
- abnormal forgetfulness and inattentiveness
- change in habits with family and in the home
- unexplained gifts
- lack of motivation and energy
- excessive temper and irritability
- mood swings and instability
- nervousness and anxiety
- giddiness and excessive laughter, without known cause
- unusually private, secretive and suspicious behaviour