



ABINGDON

Policy on Drugs and Substances

Scope

1. *Applications:* This policy relates to the misuse of controlled drugs and other substances and applies to all pupils at Abingdon School. It applies at all times, including holidays, whether or not the pupil is in the care of the School.
2. *Drugs and Substances:* These expressions refer to the possession, use and supply of controlled drugs and the paraphernalia of drugs or substances intended to resemble drugs, or “legal” drugs which can be obtained from a chemist shop, performance enhancing drugs, anabolic steroids, glue and other substances held or supplied in each case for the purposes of misuse.

Aims and Policies

3. *Prevention:* The central aim of this policy is to keep drugs out of Abingdon School. We aim to do so by means of education, pastoral care, detection of users and a sanctions policy.
4. *Education:* We educate pupils to understand that the use of illegal drugs is or may be a criminal offence and will be harmful to their health, integrity, independence, opportunities and careers and will damage the society in which they live. We educate by means of personal development courses and by example, by discussion and by means of lectures from outside experts.
5. *Pastoral Care:* We encourage the pupils to discuss their anxieties about drugs or substances in confidence with a member of staff or the school counsellor. Matters brought into counselling by a pupil or his parents, in circumstances which are genuine, will be “ring-fenced” from disciplinary sanctions or adverse report but a pupil who is suspected of involvement with drugs or substances outside this context will face the full disciplinary consequences.
6. *Detection:* Every complaint or report of involvement with drugs and substances will be followed up and investigated. A pupil suspected of involvement with drugs and substances may be suspended.
7. *Sanction for Supplying:* Anyone supplying drugs *must expect to be expelled immediately* even if he is about to sit public examinations.
8. *Sanction for Possession or Use:* Anyone possessing or using drugs *must also expect to be expelled* but in exceptional cases a supportive regime, including drug testing, may be offered as an alternative to expulsion.

Testing for drugs

9. *Urine sample:* If, outside the context of confidential counselling, there is reason to suspect that a pupil has been involved with drugs or substances, he may be required to supply, under medical supervision, a urine sample for analysis. The reason for this policy is:

- 9.1 to deter the use of drugs and substances
- 9.2 to identify users
- 9.3 to absolve those who have been wrongly suspected

Reason to suspect use of illegal drugs may arise as a result of information or a complaint received or because of a pupil's behaviour.

10. *Informed Consent:* The relevant consent to a drugs test is that of the pupil rather than the parents, even if the pupil is under 16 years of age, provided he is of sufficient maturity and understanding and gives his informed consent in writing.
11. *Notifying Parents:* Reasonable endeavours will be made, before a urine sample is taken, to notify a parent, guardian or education guardian of the requirement for a urine sample and the reasons for that requirement.
12. *Medical supervision:* The urine sample will be taken under medical supervision, normally by the senior school nurse. Another member of the school staff will also be present. All due care will be taken to respect the pupil's privacy and human rights.
13. *Refusal:* If a pupil refuses to provide a urine sample, he will be asked to say why he has refused. The School will be entitled to draw inferences from his response and general demeanour, which may strengthen the case for expulsion, and the police may be informed.
14. *Testing procedures:* These will be in accordance with standard good practice.
- 14.1 Care will be taken (including careful measurement of the urine temperature) to make as certain as possible that the sample provided is genuine and uncontaminated.
 - 14.2 If the initial chemical strip test analysis is positive or equivocal, the urine sample will be poured into two clean sample bottles which will be sealed and labelled immediately in the pupil's presence. The bottles will then be placed in an appropriate envelope.
 - 14.3 The supervisor will organise the paperwork. The donor will be asked to sign various seals and documents which confirm that the specimens are his. The donor will also be asked to sign a form which signifies that he has been satisfied with the collection procedure and gives consent for the results of the test being made available to the Head.
 - 14.4 The forms and both samples will then be sent immediately and securely to The Regional Laboratory for Toxicology, City Hospital NHS Teaching Trust, Birmingham B18 7QH

15. *Medical Record:* The outcome of the test, whether positive or negative, will not form part of the pupil's permanent medical record.
16. *Outcome:* If the initial chemical strip test analysis is positive or equivocal, reasonable attempts will be made to notify the parent by telephone. When the School receives the laboratory report:
 - 16.1 Reasonable attempts will be made to notify the parent by telephone.
 - 16.2 If the result is negative, the second sample will be destroyed.
 - 16.3 If the result is positive, the second sample will be made available for analysis. The sample will be released, on request by the parents, to the parents' solicitor. The solicitor would then pass on the sample to an independent laboratory, of the parents' choice, for testing. Before testing, that laboratory would check that there had been no tampering with the specimen's seal.
17. *Procedure:* The School will treat a positive laboratory test, although not infallible, as evidence that the pupil has been using drugs. A meeting will be arranged at which:
 - 17.1 The pupil will be asked to attend the Head (or, in her absence, the Second Master) with a member of the school staff chosen by him to assist him.
 - 17.2 The evidence of the positive sample and all other relevant evidence will be put to the pupil and he will be invited to respond.
 - 17.3 His response will be heard and considered and further inquiries will be made if necessary.
 - 17.4 The Head will make a finding of fact based on the evidence and supported by reasons.
18. *Sanction:* If the Head's decision is that a pupil has been using drugs, the Head will outline the range of sanctions she is considering and will then, or at a later meeting if requested, hear mitigating circumstances and consider the pupil's academic and disciplinary record before deciding on the sanction.
19. *Review:* If the pupil is expelled or required to leave, he and his parents will be offered a Governors' Review which will normally take place under a separate procedure, within ten days and his suspension may be continued in the interim.