



# Drugs and Substance Abuse Policy

---

## **Introduction**

This policy replaces any previous policy and follows the DfE regulations and those issued by the London Borough of Harrow.

In line with the college's Equal Opportunities and Special Educational Needs policies, we aim to give all students equal opportunities to take part in all aspects of the college life, as far as is appropriate, practicable and compatible with giving regard to health and safety and the efficient education of other students.

This policy takes account of the Government's aim for children to have the support they need under Every Child Matters:

- to be healthy
- to stay safe
- to enjoy and achieve
- to make a positive contribution
- to achieve economic well-being

The policy will follow the five principles of the Children's Plan:

- to support parents and families;
- to allow children to reach their full potential
- to enable children to enjoy their childhood whilst preparing for adult life
- to provide services in response to children and family needs
- to use preventative measures to help students to avoid the possibility of failure

This policy is founded in the College's commitment to the development and maintenance of good behaviour and a positive and inclusive ethos for all members of the College community.

## **Foreword**

Rooks Heath College is a mixed 11 to 18 multicultural comprehensive in the London Borough of Harrow. This policy is formulated by the Deputy Head Teacher (Pastoral) in consultation with staff and is monitored by other members of the college's Leadership and Management Group. The policy is subject to review every 3 years by the college's Leadership and Management Group and is subject to approval by the governors of the college.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Physical Restraint Policy.

### **The purpose of developing a college drug policy is to:**

- clarify the college's approach to drugs for all staff, students, governors, parents/carers and external agencies
- clarify the legal requirements and responsibilities of the college
- give evidence to staff on the drug education programme
- enable staff to manage drug related incidents with confidence and consistency
- reinforce and safeguard the health and safety of the students and college community
- provide a basis for evaluating the effectiveness of the college's approach to drug education and its management of incidents involving substance abuse
- reinforce the role of the college in contributing to local strategies

### **What do we mean by Drugs?**

This includes legal drugs such as alcohol and tobacco as well as illegal drugs such as heroin, cannabis and amphetamine, volatile substances like aerosols, glues and gasses as well as over the counter and prescribed medicine. In college, legal 'highs', such as Shisha pens, pipes, electronic cigarettes will be treated as drugs. These are just examples and other substances may in future be interpreted as a drug.

### **Drug Education and drugs prevention**

The college provides a comprehensive and planned drugs education curriculum for all students including the use of visitors from outside agencies as part of Personal, Social and Health Education and through assemblies. It also takes place in other areas of the curriculum, particularly Science. Through exploration of issues and attitudes, students are encouraged to develop their abilities to make informed choices. This should not be confused with drugs prevention, which aims to reduce the misuse of drugs and the harm that they can cause. In some cases, the distinction between drug education and drug prevention may not always be maintained and both aspects may be dealt with simultaneously.

## **Statement on the Use of Drugs in College**

The college takes the view that the possession and/or use of drugs during the college day, including travel to and from college and Off Site Activities, is inappropriate and unacceptable. Illegal drugs as well as tobacco, alcohol, solvents or similar substances are not permitted to be brought to, sold, passed on, obtained or consumed on (or off) the college premises during the college day. Any breach of these rules may result in a range of punishments, including permanent exclusions.

### **Guidance provided by the DfES in circular 4/95**

*‘In cases where it is clear that a student is selling illegal drugs and the health and safety of other students is directly at risk the head teacher may decide that a student should be excluded. Fixed term exclusions will be appropriate in some cases and permanent exclusions may be warranted as a final sanction when all other reasonable steps have been taken.’*

### **Confidentiality**

The welfare of the students will always be central to our policy and practice. However, teachers will not be able to promise complete confidentiality. Information about a student in relation to drugs will follow the same procedure as for other sensitive information. The Deputy Head Teacher (Pastoral) and Head Teacher will be informed and further help sought if appropriate.

### **Parental Involvement**

Parents have the opportunity to raise concerns. Parents will be contacted if their child is involved in the breaking of the rules on drugs. Opportunities will be made available to get support and guidance concerning drugs issues.

### **Involvement of the Police**

In most cases, any punishment is likely to be a college rather than a police matter. However, the college is aware of the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971, which makes it an offence to possess or supply drugs. If a member of staff discovers any illegal drug, tobacco, alcohol, solvents or similar substances they should take them immediately to the Head Teacher for appropriate action. The college maintains strong links with the local community police through their involvement in the drugs education curriculum, which helps students to have a greater understanding of the role of the police and the law. It is the policy of the college to contact the local police where it is believed that an incident has involved illegal substances.

### **Responding to Drug-Related Incidents**

In all situations involving drugs the following principles apply:

- All situations will be carefully considered before deciding on the response.
- The needs and best interests of the College community will be taken into consideration.
- Parents/Carers will be informed at an early stage.
- Support agencies including the police will be involved if appropriate.

- Counselling will be arranged for students and their families if appropriate.
- Response may include both a disciplinary and counselling approach.

### **Disciplinary response**

Where college rules on drugs are broken, a sanction will be given, which will be recorded on the e-behaviour system. The type of sanction cannot be categorically stated as it will depend on the exact nature and degree of the offence. During the investigation, statements will be taken separately and as soon as possible, from all relevant parties, thus limiting the opportunity for collusion. Sanctions will include, but are not limited to, fixed term exclusion and permanent exclusion.

### **Managing Drugs-Related Incidents**

Incidents involving drugs may take the form of emergencies, intoxication, discovery / observation, disclosure, suspicion/rumour. This policy considers response to these situations.

### **The law and the College's legal obligations**

Staff are under no obligation to report incidences of illegal drugs in college to the police. However, circular 4/95 recommends that the police are informed whenever an incident involving illegal substances has taken place in college. The law consequently allows the College to deal with drug related incidents in the way that staff see fit taking into account individual circumstances of the students involved.

### **Emergency Situations**

In all cases where a student is displaying symptoms of illness or distress, which may be as a result of substance abuse, staff with first aid qualifications will be called and the student will not be left alone. The student will be placed in the recovery position and an ambulance called. The parents/carers will be informed and called to the college. The incident will be assessed and an attempt will be made to ascertain whether a substance has been taken. A written report will be given to the Head Teacher and Deputy Head Teacher (Pastoral). An Accident Form will be completed. These key staff will decide on any further action to be taken.

### **Intoxication**

Where a student is under the influence of a substance and may be a danger to themselves or others or are violent or causing damage, the student will be removed to a quiet room and will be accompanied at all times by a member of staff. Staff involved in a situation should adhere to the Physical Restraint policy. The welfare assistant will be called and further medical help summoned if necessary. Parents/carers will be informed and called to the college. Details will be logged on the e-behaviour system. The key staff as above will be informed and they will decide on further action to be taken.

### **Discovery/ Observation of Substance Use in College**

If a student is discovered using, supplying or holding a substance not permitted in college, the student will be approached and the substance confiscated, if possible. The student will be

asked to empty their pockets/bag. This will always be done in the presence of two members of staff.

The substance that has been confiscated will be placed in the College safe and the police informed if it is an illegal drug. In line with DfE guidance (circular 34/2014 'Searching, screening and confiscation') a search may be undertaken where unlawful substances may be present.

If the student refuses, the Head Teacher will be called in to deal with the situation. If the Head Teacher has reasonable grounds for suspecting that a student is in possession of a prohibited substance then he, or a member of staff authorised by him, can search the student. The requirement that the searcher is the same sex as the student and that a witness is present will continue to apply in nearly all searches. There is a limited exception to this rule. A member of staff can carry out a search of a student of the opposite sex to them and without a witness present, but only where you reasonably believe that there is a risk that serious harm will be caused to a person if they do not conduct the search immediately and where it is not reasonably practicable to summon another member of staff. Where it is practicable to summon a staff member of the same sex as the student and a witness then the teachers wishing to conduct a search must do so.

Intimate physical searches should never be made by a member of Rooks Heath staff. A senior member of staff together with another staff member, normally the Director of Learning, will question the person(s) involved and any substance found will be handed over to them. Where they find **controlled drugs**, these must be delivered to the police as soon as possible. Parents will be informed and called to college. A written report of the incident will be provided and key staff will decide on further action to be taken.

### **Disclosure of Out of Hours Substance Use**

A student may /can disclose to a member of staff that he/she has been using drugs or is concerned about someone else's drug use, out of college hours. Concern for the student's welfare will be shown and the student may be referred to their Director of Learning, Deputy Head Teacher (Pastoral), the Welfare Assistant or the designated Child Protection person who may refer them to a drugs or counselling service. Information will only be given to key people, but no individual teacher can promise total confidentiality.

### **Suspicion/Rumour**

Staff do not act hastily on the basis of a rumour of drugs or a belief that a student is using drugs based on just their behaviour alone. The situation will always be fully investigated, and evidence may be collected over a period of time before the relevant Director of Learning and Deputy Head Teacher (Pastoral) decide on the appropriate action to be taken. Parents/Carers will be contacted at an appropriate stage.

### **Monitoring**

The Deputy Head (Pastoral) will give an annual report to the Governing Body. This will analyse data for substance abuse, in the College, and the steps taken to address this issue.