The School condemns the misuse of drugs and the supply of illegal substances. In its responses to drug misuse and in the education it provides about drugs, the School broadly follows the guidance provided by the Department of Education in its publication SEPTEMBER 2012 DFE AND ACPO DRUGS – GUIDANCE FOR SCHOOLS. It should be read in conjunction with the school rules, the school’s policies on behaviour, health and safety, medicines, confidentiality, safeguarding and pastoral support, school visits and use of controlled drugs.

In this policy the term DRUGS includes:

* Alcohol
* Tobacco
* Illegal drugs
* Prescribed medicines
* Psychoactive substances (formally described as “legal highs”)
* Volatile substances

Drugs education at Howard House School endeavours to give factual information about drugs and the consequences of their use. Through specific education in PSHE and other areas of the curriculum, we aim to help students to make balanced and informed judgements about drugs and to develop the attitudes and skills they need to avoid their misuse. This includes visiting outside speakers and opportunities for parents and staff to learn more about drug use.

The School believes that all students, staff and parents/carers have a duty to take action when they learn of the misuse of drugs.

**For Students and Parents/Carers**

**Over the counter medication**

If a student requires regular over the counter medication, e.g. for allergies, then parents/carers should inform the School that their child has this medication with them or would like the school to hold medicine for them.

**Prescribed medication**

If a student is taking prescription medicines during the school day, the parent/carer need to inform the School. It must be in its original container and the original dispensing label must not be altered. In the School, students may keep their medicine with them providing they have agreed this with the School who are also able to keep the medicine. Students who take medication for on-going conditions, such as asthma and diabetes, are encouraged to keep their medication with them. If they use an adrenaline pen, they should keep one with them. An additional adrenaline pen should be kept in the school office.

Medications kept by the School are stored securely in a locked cupboard, in a locked room.

If the medication is a controlled drug (for example, for ADHD), then the School MUST be informed and they will keep the drug securely.

In extreme emergencies, e.g. an anaphylactic reaction, certain medications can be given or supplied without the direction of a medical practitioner or there being a patient group directive (PGD), for the purpose of saving life. For example, the administration of adrenaline by injection (1:1000) and chlorpheniramine are among those drugs listed under Article 7 of the Prescription Only Medicines (Human Use) Order 19997 for the administration by anyone in an emergency for the purpose of saving life.

**Recording and monitoring of records**

All medications given to the School Nurse are recorded in the child’s medical records.

**Disposal of medicines**

If unused medications are returned to the school’s medical centre, the School Nurse will contact the child’s parent and request that they collect the medication.

**Alcohol**

Students must not bring alcohol onto school premises. Students are forbidden to drink alcohol on the school premises or elsewhere when they are clearly identified with the school. The supply of alcohol in school is a serious matter which could lead to suspension or expulsion.

**Smoking**

Students must not bring alcohol or tobacco onto school premises. Students are forbidden to smoke on the school premises or elsewhere when they are clearly identified with the school. The whole site is a NO SMOKING area. The supply of tobacco in school is a serious matter which could lead to suspension or expulsion. Given the age-range of students at the school, it is also inappropriate and forbidden to use electronic or other fake cigarettes.

**Drugs and other substances**

It is clear in the school rules that the possession and supply of drugs on school premises and its immediate environment is a serious matter which in most cases will lead to expulsion.

Notwithstanding the above, the school’s primary concern is with the welfare of its students and the health and safety of the school community. Any student (parent/carer or friend acting on their behalf) genuinely seeking help on a drugs related matter will be supported in a non-disciplinary manner. Students will be given help, support and advice, and staff will treat any conversation or information given with privacy and will not share it indiscriminately. We may need to share information on a need to know basis with other professionals so that they can take appropriate action. Within school, a student can approach any member of the teaching staff.

If students are found under the influence of drugs on the school premises, our priority is to ensure their immediate safety by providing first aid and calling for further medical assistance if this is necessary. The school’s SAFEGUARDING POLICY may come into effect at this point.

**If the school suspects that there is illegal drug possession or misuse of drugs in school**

The School will thoroughly investigate suspicions of drug possession and use in school. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will oversee the investigation which is likely to involve other key staff.

Investigations may include the interviewing of a number of students, the scrutiny of CCTV footage, the searching of students’ lockers, bags and clothing with their consent (in extraordinary circumstances without their consent as directed by the DfE advice Searching, screening and confiscation January 2018), screening and testing. Any drugs or drug paraphernalia which are found as a result of investigations will be immediately confiscated and held securely by the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Head of School before they are destroyed. If it is clear that the law has been broken and the matter is referred to the police, then the evidence will be handed directly to them. There will be a thorough investigation of events and personal circumstances of the students involved. The Head of School will be informed of the outcome of investigations.

Parents/Carers will be informed if their child has been involved in an investigation and will be contacted prior to the School contacting the police.

**Parents and carers under the influence of drugs**

The School will ask parents or other adults to leave the school site if their behaviour gives cause for concern and/or if they are clearly under the influence of drugs. The school’s safeguarding procedures may also come into use in these circumstances.

**For staff**

All staff should be mindful of the potential for drug misuse by our students and the potential harm it can cause. A member of staff should report any concerns related to drug use directly to a senior pastoral member of staff who will then assess if any school intervention is necessary. A member of staff should never seek to deal with issues alone but always look for advice and support. If unidentified or illegal substances are found in school they should be removed to prevent harm to students and a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) informed immediately. Holding on to illegal drugs can be seen as possession and passing illegal drugs between colleagues can be construed as supplying so it is important to get help as quickly as possible.

Suspected illegal or controlled drugs will be sealed in a plastic bag in the presence of a second witness (usually a member of the SLT) and logged (details of date, time of seizure and witnesses), stored in a secure location and then disposed of legally, for example, by handing to the police as soon as possible.

School rules with regards to drugs still apply on all school trips. Parents will be informed prior to the trip if senior students will be allowed access to alcohol and under what circumstances this will occur.

The school disciplinary procedures for staff make it clear that performance of duties while under the influence of alcohol, of certain prescription medication which may impair judgement or illegal drugs is considered gross misconduct and could result in immediate dismissal.

There are numerous organisations who can give up-to-date information on drug and alcohol issues. Good starting places include:

www.talktofrank.com

www.drinkaware.co.uk