



# Ackworth School

## Drugs and Drug-Testing Policy

### Definition of a drug

The definition of a drug is:

**"A substance people take to change the way they feel, think or behave. This includes:**

- All illegal drugs (those controlled by the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971)
- All legal drugs, including alcohol, tobacco, volatile substances, ketamine, khat and alkyl nitrites"
- All over-the-counter drugs and prescription drugs"

Considerable pastoral effort is devoted by Ackworth to educating teenagers about the dangers of drugs and of substance abuse. Morning Meeting, PSHE and Science lessons are used to convey the message. The school may use talks by the Police, and use the many Road Shows, travelling workshops and the considerable quantity of teaching material that is freely available from the web sites of charities and public bodies to ensure that its message is understood.

At Ackworth we are committed to promoting a healthy, safe environment, in which good citizenship and respect for each other and the law can flourish. We believe that it is important to deliver a clear, consistent moral framework that promotes the ethos and integrity of our community, and gives all of our students the understanding and self-confidence to reject illegal drugs and substances.

We have a PSHE programme at Ackworth that educates the students about the potential short-term and long-term risks to health from drug and substance abuse. As with our related programmes concerning alcohol and tobacco, they concentrate on teaching the importance of young people making healthy, informed choices. However, they also include an ethical dimension, designed to instil an understanding of the importance of complying with the criminal law. Our programme involves pupils of all ages and continues throughout the students' time at the school. They extend across the curriculum, involving PSHE and Science lessons. We may also have Morning Meetings on the topic, talks from the Police and from time to time make use of travelling workshops and road shows to cover the serious risks from abuse of illegal substances and from alcohol and tobacco.

Our Medical staff, the School Nurse and the School Doctor, play an active role in promoting greater awareness about the risks involved, and will offer informed medical advice. Pupils can discuss their individual worries about drugs or substances with their House Master/Mistress/Tutor/ Senior Year Tutor or Deputy Head Pastoral. They can also refer themselves to the Medical Staff and to the School Mental Health & Wellbeing Practitioner for individual guidance, without fearing sanctions or adverse report. We are very conscious of the importance of working together in order to promote the well-being of our students.



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## **Support**

If a pupil comes forward and voluntarily identifies himself/herself as a drug user and asks for help, or if his/her parents or friends ask for help on his/her behalf, we may, depending upon the circumstances and at the discretion of the Head, offer him/her the opportunity to reform his/her habit with the support of a drug testing programme and Counselling. There may be an additional cost to the parent depending on the circumstances and need.

## **Drug Testing**

Drug testing is conducted by the School Nurse and is organised by the Deputy Head Pastoral in conjunction with the School's Medical Centre. Full details of the arrangements will be sent to any parent or guardian. The School takes Drug Testing very seriously, and evidence of tampering with a sample would be regarded as an admission of guilt.

## **Investigation**

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

## **Sanctions**

The normal sanction for offering drugs to another pupil is permanent exclusion, and, following consultation with the Clerk to the School Committee, the matter may be referred to the police. Pupils caught in possession of drugs or who have failed a drugs test could face permanent exclusion, but where there are mitigating circumstances, might be excluded for a fixed term and receive a final warning instead. Pupils who fail a drugs test may be required to undertake random tests.