

	Substance Abuse Policy	
	Last reviewed: September 2026	Next review: September 2029
	Linked Governor: Tracey Evans	SLT Member: David Beattie

Aims of this policy

It is our aim to help all students to be able to take their place safely in a world where a wide range of drugs exists. We recognise that some drugs have beneficial medicinal effects, but also that every drug has potential harm. For this reason, all drugs need appropriate and responsible care and management. In order to be able to make informed choices, students need to understand the nature of drugs, their social and legal status, their uses and effects.

This policy aims to

- support the school's endeavour to maintain the safety and well-being of all students and staff
- clarify legal responsibilities, entitlement and obligations
- support all the members of the school community by providing clear guidance and procedures on drug related issues to ensure clarity and consistency
- develop a whole school approach to drug education in the context of the curriculum of the school

This policy should be read in conjunction with the School's Behaviour Policy and Exclusions Policy.

Range of Substances Covered by this Policy

References to 'substances' or 'drugs' in this document include anything that affects the body functions, physically, emotionally or mentally, such as alcohol; tobacco; legal stimulants such as caffeine; over-the-counter medicines (such as paracetamol or cough medicine); prescription medicines (such as amphetamines, anabolic steroids and tranquillisers); volatile (sniffable) substances (such as aerosols, solvents, glue, butane and petrol), illegal drugs (such as cannabis, heroin, LSD, ecstasy); and psychoactive substances (often referred to as 'legal highs').

Guiding Principles on Substance Use and Misuse

- Ashlyns School does not permit possession, supply or use of illegal substances on school premises.
- Ashlyns School does not condone the misuse of substances by anyone in the school community.
- Ashlyns School is committed to the health and safety of its members and will take action, which may include exclusion and involvement of external agencies such as the police or Children's Services, to safeguard their well being.
- Ashlyns School acknowledges the importance of its pastoral role; we will promote an ethos which will encourage members of the school to come forward if they need support; we will promote and signpost support available so students whose own alcohol or drug use, or that of a family member, is causing concern, including external agencies
- Ashlyns School believes it has a duty to inform and educate on the consequences of substance use and misuse and to promote a healthy lifestyle.

The above principles will apply to all members of the school community, on the school premises, when travelling to and from school or in school uniform, and wherever students are within the care of school staff. This includes school trips and educational visits. The school also has an interest in the health and well-being of students beyond these school boundaries and encourages parents and carers and others in the community to adopt the same principles.

Substances on school premises

A. Medicines:

The school has a procedure for the administration of medicines that must be followed for everyone's safety. Medication and Pain Relief Consent Forms can be accessed through the [school website here](#). Parents should contact the School Matron concerning any medication their child requires to be administered during the school day.

B. Legal substances - energy and THC drinks:

Energy drinks such as “Red Bull”, “Monster”, “Rock Star” and supermarket chain equivalents are not to be brought on to school site and are considered a banned substance. The same applies to any drink or substance that may contain tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) and cannabidiol (CHD)

C. Alcohol:

No alcohol will be consumed during the course of a normal school day. Students are not permitted to bring alcohol onto the school site.

D. Smoking:

The school is a no-smoking/vaping site at all times. Students are not permitted to bring to school smoking/vaping materials or paraphernalia, including matches, filter papers, grinders, matches and lighters. In the interests of health and safety, should a student be found in possession of any of these on school premises, they will be confiscated and parents informed.

E. Illegal substances

No illegal substances are allowed to be brought on to, or used on, school premises

F. Solvents

The school will ensure that potentially hazardous substances are stored safely, and students will be supervised if it is necessary that they come into contact with them in the course of their work. Students are not permitted to be in possession of sniffable products.

Visitors and students who are under the effects of alcohol or illegal substances

Visitors under the effects of alcohol or illegal substances will be asked to leave the premises and return at a later date for the safety of the whole school. Students who are under the effects of alcohol or illegal substances will be isolated, whilst parents are contacted to arrange collection of their child from the school site pending disciplinary action in line with the school's Behaviour Policy.

Responses to drug-related incidents

A drug incident may be any of the following:

- Finding drugs, or related paraphernalia, on school premises
- Possession, supply or use of drugs on school premises
- Individuals disclosing information about their drug use
- Rumours and reports of parents, staff or students using drugs

The School cannot knowingly allow its premises to be used for the production or supply of any controlled drug, or the preparation or smoking of cannabis or opiates. Where it is suspected that substances are being sold and bought on the premises, all information gathered will be passed to the Police.

Ashlyns School will consider each incident individually and recognises that a variety of actions may be necessary as recommended by local and national guidance. The implications of any action taken will be considered very carefully. The School will seek to balance the interests of the person involved, other school members and the local community.

The school has the right to search students in line with *Searching, Screening and Confiscation Advice for schools July 2022 (Department for Education)* should it be suspected that they are in possession of any of banned items including the substances detailed above. Staff can also search school property, for example, lockers.

If the incident leads to a medical emergency the School's First Aid Procedures will be followed immediately.

In incidents involving substance possession or misuse on the school premises, and following discussion with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Headteacher, parents will be informed at the earliest opportunity. All incidents and initial responses will be recorded within 24 hours. The DSL, or a member of the school's Leadership Team, co-ordinates the management of substance-related incidents, offering sources of support and liaising with outside agencies. The School and the parents can then work together to support the young person involved. Such an incident is a serious breach of the School's behaviour Policy and could lead to suspension or possibly permanent exclusion.

If any student or adult on school premises is found in possession of an unauthorised substance it will be confiscated. If the substance is suspected to be illegal, the school may contact a police officer for discussion. Illegal substances will be legally destroyed or handed to the police as soon as possible and not stored. Parents will normally be informed and other professionals such as the LA, Youth Service, Police, GP and Children's Services will be informed or consulted as appropriate.

Any incident involving substance-supply (buying, selling or sharing) on the school premises is a very serious breach of the School's Behaviour Policy and could lead to permanent exclusion. Any incident involving substance supply or consumption when travelling to and from school or when identifiable as an Ashlyns student could equally result in permanent exclusion.

Support

Appropriate support will be offered to those with substance-related problems.

At Ashlyns School, the welfare of the student is paramount. Support is available through the pastoral system, to ensure a caring response to students in distress. Interventions will be considered if the school feels a student is showing signs which indicate particular risks of, or from, involvement with drugs, whether their own or their parents'/carers'. Such interventions may include consultation with parents/carers and other agencies, possible case conferences and subsequent referral.

If a member of the School becomes aware that a person is **misusing or supplying substances off the school premises**, informing the Headteacher and the parents would be appropriate.

Education

Substance Use and Misuse Curriculum:

Ashlyns School believes and supports the following educational aims in respect of substance use and misuse:

- to enable young people to make healthy, informed choices by increasing knowledge, challenging attitudes and developing self-confidence
- to educate young people on the safe and appropriate use of substances
- to provide accurate information about substances
- to increase understanding about the implications and possible consequences of use and misuse
- to encourage an understanding for those experiencing, or likely to experience, substance use including those dependent on medicinal drugs
- to widen understanding about related health and social issues, e.g. HIV and AIDS
- to seek to minimise the risks that users, and potential users, face
- to enable young people to identify sources of appropriate personal support

These aims are fulfilled through aspects of the student's experiences in the taught curriculum, the informal curriculum, such as assemblies and external speakers, and through opportunities for extra-curricular activities. Delivery of the taught curriculum is mainly through Personal & Social Health Education (PSHE), Science and English but other opportunities to reinforce learning will occur in other parts of the teaching programme.

The School actively co-operates with other agencies such as Community Police, Hertfordshire Children's Services, and Health and Drug Agencies to deliver its commitment to Substance Education and to deal with incidents of substance use and misuse.

Roles and Responsibilities:

Students: Ashlyns School aims to provide a caring community in which people can learn to respect themselves and others and take responsibility for their own actions. Whilst we acknowledge that the number of people nationally who use and misuse substances is rising, it is important to recognise that a larger number of people are choosing not to use or misuse substances.

Parents: Fundamental to Ashlyns School's values and practice is the principle of sharing the responsibility for education of students with parents, by keeping them informed and involved at all times. Effective communication and co-operation is essential to the successful implementation of this policy.

School Staff: The School expects all staff to consider themselves as role models whose behaviour young people are likely to notice and often follow. Staff have a responsibility to know how they should respond to any possible substance misuse incident and will receive training and support to enable them to deliver these responsibilities.

Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team (SLT): The Headteacher takes overall responsibility for the Policy and its implementation and for responding to incidents relating to substance misuse as well as liaison with parents and carers, the Governing Body, LEA and appropriate outside agencies. In the absence of the Headteacher an appropriate member of SLT will deputise.

The Substance Policy Co-ordinator at Ashlyns School is the DSL. The Coordinator is responsible for appropriate curriculum content and delivery, monitoring and evaluation of the Policy and practice throughout the school and other elements of school life contributing to substance education. The Co-ordinator will also liaise with other Coordinators in feeder and neighbouring schools.

Ashlyns School Governing Body: monitors this Policy and its implementation as well as delegating responsibility for its annual review to the Headteacher. Incidents of substance misuse will be brought to the attention of the Governing Body via the Headteacher's termly report.

This policy has been designed with reference to guidance from the [DfE and the Association of Chief Police Officers](#)