



**HORRIS HILL
SCHOOL**

Substance Abuse and Response Policy

Policy reviewed: September 2025

Policy approval:

Date of next review: September 2026

Horris Hill's position on Substance abuse

This school condones neither the use of illegal substances (including psychoactive substances such as 'legal highs'), alcohol or tobacco nor the misuse of glue, solvents, prescribed and over-the-counter medicines.

This school acknowledges the importance of its pastoral role in the welfare of young people, and through the general ethos of the school, will seek to encourage pupils to make informed decisions in order to promote a healthy lifestyle.

Whilst it is highly unlikely that any pupil at Horris Hill will become involved in substance abuse during their careers with us, especially bearing in mind their age, it is not impossible.

DEFINITION

Drugs

In this policy the term 'drug' is used to include:

- (i) illegal substances
- (ii) substances which are legal but can be misused

Some of these substances would **not** be acceptable for possession and use by pupils on school premises under any circumstances, e.g. alcohol, tobacco

Other substances, for example, glue, solvents and over-the-counter medicines, would be acceptable for possession and use on school premises, provided this is for their proper, intended purpose and, in the case of over-the-counter medicines, under the supervision of the school's medical department.

Psychoactive Substances

Horris Hill acknowledges The Psychoactive Substances Act 2016 which creates a blanket ban on the production, distribution, sale and supply of psychoactive substances in the United Kingdom.

The Act introduces a definition of a psychoactive substance (which includes substances previously known by the generic term 'legal highs') but states that substances such as food, alcohol, tobacco, caffeine, medicinal products and controlled drugs are excluded from its scope.

The Act also sets out new offences of, amongst others:

- producing a psychoactive substance
- supplying or offering to supply a psychoactive substance
- possessing a psychoactive substance with intent to supply
- importing or exporting a psychoactive substance

In School

'In school' is taken to mean on school premises, including buildings and grounds. This can extend beyond the school gates when a pupil is wearing school uniform or travelling in the school minibus. The school policy also applies to off-site activities, visits and school trips, including those abroad.

The policy also relates to possession of illegal drugs by parents/carers and any visitors to the school.

Drugs Education

Education about drugs is delivered to Yr8 pupils through a talk by a member of the school's medical team as part of the PSHE programme in the summer term before they leave.

The programme aims:

- to enable students to make healthy, informed choices by increasing knowledge, increasing awareness and challenging attitudes. In addition, the talk aims:
- 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.
- to enable young people to identify sources of appropriate personal support.

Management of Drugs in School and Response (including police involvement)

In dealing with a child involved with drugs the school has to consider the good of the whole community as well as that of the individual.

If a student is found in possession of drugs (including legal drugs) at school the parents will always be informed.

If a student is found in possession of a substance suspected of being illegal the school will inform the police.

A member of staff may search a student's school bag, or other school property where (s)he has reasonable cause to believe it contains unlawful items, including illegal drugs. There should be a witness present, the student present and a receipt given for any item removed.

Where students are suspected of concealing drugs they will be encouraged to produce these voluntarily. If a student refuses, the police will be called in to deal with the situation.

Any suspected illegal drugs can be lawfully seized by staff and retained in locked storage pending the arrival of police. Staff seizing suspected drugs should avoid any skin contact with the drugs if possible, and preserve any relevant packaging.

Any parent/carer suspected to be under the influence of drugs may be asked to leave school premises.

Any member of staff found in possession of suspected illegal drugs will be dealt with through this policy and any relevant internal discipline policy.

Individual incidents will be dealt with according to the circumstances involved. Sanctions will be designed to ensure the student's continued education and support for his wellbeing. Students will be offered appropriate counselling and support as available within the school and parents may be offered contacts with agencies who offer support to young people overcoming drug related problems. The school child protection procedures may be invoked if there is significant concern for a child's safety.

When all other reasonable steps have been taken, or depending on the gravity of the situation, it may prove necessary to exclude the child from school, and in extreme cases to make a permanent exclusion as the final sanction.

Any pupil selling/supplying illegal substances or intending to sell/supply illegal substances on the school campus will be excluded permanently.

Searching pupils and their belongings. Please refer to the following:

- *Good Behaviour and Sanctions Policy*
- *Searching, Screening and Confiscation Advice for Schools 2022 (DfE)*

RESPONSE

Actions to be taken in incidents involving the misuse of drugs

1. Any member of staff suspecting, or having knowledge, of any pupil taking, having possession of, or being involved with the misuse of any type of drug must immediately report the child involved to the Headmaster.
2. The Headmaster will inform the parents if any child(s) involved in the misuse of drugs.
3. The parents of any child found misusing drugs, either on the school premises or on any form of school trip, will be expected to come into school to have a meeting with the Head and the child's tutor (*at the Head's discretion*), with the child present if appropriate, to discuss their actions.

After the initial meeting with parents, child and relevant members of staff, the Head may at their discretion apply the following guidelines:-

- a. The child might be sent home for a fixed period of time, after which he or she will have reviews involving detailed discussions/counselling on the misuse of drugs.
 - b. The child might be excluded permanently from the school.
4. The Head will assess the seriousness of the incident before deciding whether to exclude permanently or for a fixed period of time.
 5. Before making a decision on exclusion, the Head will ensure that a satisfactory investigation has been carried out.
 6. The Head will also determine what counselling needs to be taken during or after the exclusion if that exclusion is not permanent. The Head may take into account any medical/police/social service or drugs adviser reports when considering counselling.

Offences outside the School

If a pupil is involved in a drugs-related incident outside the school, the Head will assess the implication for the child and the school and then determine the best course of action, bearing in mind the interests of the pupil and the interests of the school and the wider community.

Drugs Education

In order to try and help prevent the misuse of drugs pupils in Yr8 are made aware of the dangers of substance abuse as part of the PSHEE curriculum and they are given a talk about Drugs and the consequences of Drug abuse by a member of the school's medical team so that they can progress to their senior schools more aware and more knowledgeable.