



Do Talk Write Alternative Provision
Drugs and Substance Misuse Policy

Created: October 2025

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PURPOSE OF THE POLICY

Pupils' wellbeing is of paramount importance and Do Talk Write alternative provision is therefore committed to promoting a healthy, safe environment by delivering a clear, consistent moral framework. We aim to nurture an environment where good citizenship and respect for the law can flourish; this policy is designed with that in mind.

DTW strives to give our pupils the understanding and self-confidence to reject illegal drugs and substances, whilst taking measures to keep the DTW community protected from such misuse.

DEFINITIONS

This policy covers the possession, use and supply of 'drugs' and 'substances' and applies at all times, whether or not the student is in the care of DTW.

"Drugs" and "Substances" means without limitation, controlled drugs including for example cannabis, amphetamines, ecstasy, cocaine, heroin and LSD or substances intended to resemble drugs. It also means solvents, aerosols, performance-enhancing drugs, anabolic steroids, mushrooms and other substances possessed or supplied in each case for purposes of misuse, including "legal high" substances (new psychoactive substances).

EDUCATION

Through our PHSE programme we aim to educate students about the potential short-term and long-term impacts on health from drug and substance abuse. This programme concentrates on teaching the importance of making healthy, informed choices. These teachings also include an ethical dimension, designed to help the students understand the importance of complying with the law.

DO TALK WRITE'S STANCE

Given the adverse effect that drugs and substances have on young people we intend to take a zero-tolerance approach and as such it is DTW's policy that any pupil found to be possessing, supplying or dealing in drugs or substances into DTW or using them at our venues, (including an obvious intention to do any of these things) must expect to be permanently excluded.

INVESTIGATION OF POTENTIAL DRUG AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

We will investigate reports, complaints or observations made about a pupil's involvement in drugs and substances. These investigations could include questioning and searching the pupil where there is reasonable cause. Any search will be conducted in accordance with the guidance contained in the Department for Education document "Screening, Searching and Confiscation". Examples of reasonable cause might include implication in another drug related incident, admission or strong suspicion of misuse outside of DTW, if there is a marked change of behaviour or attitude or a severe fall off in the quality of work. At this point we will inform parents and guardians as a matter of urgency and invite them into our establishment to discuss the matter.

1. Evidence of Misuse

Any pupil who, while at DTW, or in the care of DTW, is found to use, possess, supply or deal in drugs or substances, or demonstrates an obvious intention to do any of these things, must expect to be expelled from DTW (excluded permanently), regardless of whether or not the pupil is about to take public examinations.

If a pupil is in the company of another pupil or pupils who are caught using an illegal drug (or any substance that contravenes this Policy) DTW reserves the right to deal with the matter as a breach of DTW discipline. This will be termed 'involvement with drugs by association.'

Where a pupil's use of a drug, or any substance that contravenes this Policy, is outside of term time and/or not on DTW's site, but affects their performance or behaviour at our establishment, and/or brings our establishment's reputation into disrepute, they may expect to be expelled (permanently excluded) from DTW. For the purposes of this Policy, 'term time' includes weekends.

If a student confesses that they have been mis-using drugs/substances outside of DTW then the subsequent course of action taken by DTW is at the discretion of the Headteacher and may involve 'Support' as detailed on page 2 of this document.

2. Searches for drugs and substances

When undertaking searches, DTW will follow the advice from the Department for Education contained with their publication 'Screening, Searching and Confiscation' or successor publications.

Searching with consent

DTW staff can search pupils for drugs or substances with their consent. The member of staff will consider the pupil's age and other factors when determining whether the pupil is capable of giving consent. Formal written consent is not required from the pupil for this sort of search – it is enough for the teacher to ask the pupil to turn out their pockets or if the teacher can look in the pupil's bag or locker and for the pupil to agree.

Searching without consent

If a pupil refuses to give their consent to a search, they will be asked to say why they have refused. DTW will be entitled to draw inferences from their response and general demeanour and the police may be informed. A pupil can be searched without consent if there are reasonable grounds for suspecting that a pupil is in possession of a prohibited item (drugs or substances). This must be done by the headteacher or a member of DTW staff authorised by the headteacher. The member of staff conducting the search must be the same sex as the pupil being searched; and there must be a witness (also a staff member) and, if at all possible, they should be the same sex as the pupil being searched. There is an exception to this rule. A member of staff may carry out a search of a pupil of the opposite sex and without a witness present, but only where they 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.

If DTW seizes a controlled drug, the drug may be destroyed if there is good reason to do so. Otherwise DTW will deliver it to the police as soon as reasonably practicable. In all other cases, DTW may decide to request the involvement of the police from the outset. If the police suspect that a pupil possesses or has stored drugs, substances or related paraphernalia, the police may elect to investigate using their own procedures or may pass the matter back to DTW to investigate.

3. Suspicion of misuse

If a member of staff has reason to suspect that a pupil is misusing drugs in (or out of) DTW, whether in term or holiday time, they must report the situation through the pupil's Headteacher, who will decide if further investigation is warranted.

Alcohol

Students are not allowed to bring alcohol onto the premises or to drink alcohol on the way to or from DTW. If a student is suspected of being under the influence of alcohol or is caught in possession of alcohol, the student's parents/carers will be contacted. Depending on the severity of the incident the student can expect to suffer a sanction such as a fixed-term exclusion.

We recognise that any student who abuses alcohol, needs support. We would therefore hope that, in most circumstances, the school and parents/carers can work together to support the young person involved. The student will be referred to Danielle Ford for a discussion and information given regarding alcohol abuse.

CONTACT WITH POLICE

If a pupil is found to be in possession of an illegal drug or substance or if a pupil has taken an illegal drug or substance, DTW will inform the Police of the pupil's name and home address. DTW will inform parents prior to contacting the police, unless it is deemed inappropriate to do so.

RECORDING

All incidents of drug or substance abuse (or suspected abuse), including searches, should be recorded using the DTW Incident Report Forms, a copy of which should be placed on the pupil's file.

PARENTS

If parents attending DTW's premises appear to be under the influence of drugs, they will be asked to leave and the member of staff making the request should refer the matter to DTW's Designated Safeguarding Lead for child protection/safeguarding. If a member of staff suspects that a parent has driven or will drive whilst under the influence of drugs, the member of staff should report the matter to the Designated Safeguarding Lead who may telephone the police. If the Designated Safeguarding Lead reasonably believes that a child is at immediate risk of harm from a parent who is under the influence of drugs, the child will not be released into the care of the parent and DTW's child protection procedures will be followed.

