



THE RAMSEY ACADEMY, HALSTEAD

DRUGS AND ALCOHOL POLICY

Last Reviewed	8 June 2026
Next Review Date	September 2027
Ratified Full Governors	2 July 2026

Policy Statement

We will not tolerate the misuse of drugs alcohol or any prohibited substance/paraphernalia within our Academy and its grounds nor by students either representing the Academy out of school hours or on any Academy organised trips or visits. Students are representing the Academy and therefore subject to our rules and sanctions on their way to and from the Academy at the beginning and the end of the day, and at any time they are wearing our uniform, or in some other way identifiable as a student at the school (including facial recognition)

This applies also to any adult or persons who may come onto the school site and may be intoxicated and/or in possession of illegal drugs and/or any prohibited paraphernalia. Our school is a no-smoking and vape free area and we request that all members of the community and visitors refrain from smoking on or around the premises. These measures are in place to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all members of the school community. We are also committed to educating all members of the school community about the risks associated with substance use and the importance of maintaining a safe and healthy environment. We will prioritise early identification and intervention to support individuals at risk and prevent escalation of concerns.

We recognise that some of our students and parents need a variety of medicines and appropriate arrangements are made to enable the correct distribution of these. The Drugs and Alcohol Policy forms part of our overall approach to health and well-being. Through our Personal Development curriculum, our tutor time activities, our assemblies and through our school ethos. We aim to ensure that students recognise the importance of what they eat and drink and the effect that this can have.

Self-respect and a healthy lifestyle are all part of an approach which will enable our students to make the right choices for themselves and their families now and in the future. It is important to note that the Academy sees inappropriate drug use by students as something to be challenged and changes in behaviour sought through support and counselling wherever possible. It is likely however, that any student found to have been distributing illegal drugs, whether or not in return for payment, will be excluded from the Academy and the police contacted.

Definition of “Drugs” for the benefit of this policy

The term “drugs” refers to:

- All illegal drugs.
- All legal drugs, including alcohol, tobacco, vaping and vaping products, e-cigarettes and electronic smoking devices, volatile substances (solvents) and novel psychoactive substances ('legal highs')
- All over the counter and prescription medicines.
- Any other drugs such as anabolic steroids.
- Any other paraphernalia not explicitly mentioned.

Aims of the Policy

The Ramsey Academy believes that as part of the care and welfare of its students it has a duty to:

- Develop students' personal and social skills to enable them to make informed decisions and keep themselves safe and healthy.
- Enable students to explore their own and other people's attitude towards drugs, drug use and drug users. Increase students' knowledge and understanding and to clarify their misconceptions about drugs.
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- Ensure the safety of staff and students when on site or when on any Academy organised trip or visit, residential or otherwise.
- To prevent the use of drugs and alcohol by students through promoting a safe, healthy, and supportive school environment
- To educate students about the risks and consequences of taking/using any banned substance, enabling them to make informed and responsible choices.
- To safeguard the school community by promoting the wellbeing, safety, and protection of all students and staff from harm related to drug, vaping and alcohol use.
- To provide appropriate support and guidance for students and families affected by drug and alcohol-related issues, working in partnership to promote wellbeing and positive outcomes.
- To establish clear referral pathways to appropriate external agencies and support services to ensure timely and effective early intervention where needed.

Context

Education about drugs and alcohol is provided through PSHE lessons, assemblies, tutor time activities, visits from outside agencies, the school nurse and curriculum areas. Our curriculum aims to involve parents and encourage them to take an interest.

Drugs and alcohol education should:

- Be delivered in the context of the school as part of the local community and take account of local or national concerns and issues.
- Take account of age, sex, ethnic/cultural/social background of the students at whom it is targeted.
- Provide factual and accurate information backed up with consistent advice.
- Aim to teach the students necessary personal and social skills.
- Drugs and alcohol education should highlight the risks associated with drugs, alcohol and vaping, including their impact on physical health, mental wellbeing, and future life choices.
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- Drugs and alcohol education should highlight the risks associated with drugs, alcohol and vaping, including their impact on physical health, mental wellbeing, and future life choices, as well as the influence of peer pressure in shaping decisions and behaviours, while equipping students with appropriate coping strategies to manage pressure and make safe, informed choices

Management of Drugs Related Incidents on School Premises

The Academy believes that as part of the care and welfare of its students it has a duty to:

- Maintain a health-promoting, drug-free environment.
- Minimise the effects of drugs and alcohol on students' learning.
- Act on suspected drug or alcohol use.
- Provide a co-ordinated and consistent response to any drug or alcohol related incidents.
- Use suitable sanctions where appropriate.
- Provide support to any student who is showing signs which indicate particular risks of, or from, involvement with drugs, whether their own or the involvement of their parents.

Drug Related Incidents may involve:

- Possession of known/unknown substance(s). (including looking after for a friend)
- Suspected/evidence of supplying substance(s).
- Use of drugs at the Academy.
- Use of a drug outside of the Academy which is affecting learning/progress.
- Discovery of drugs in a place on the Academy premises.
- Retrieval of drugs from such a place.
- Suspicion of drug abuse (where information may have come from other students, parents, the police or other sources)
- Self-referral by student.

Each case should be treated in accordance with the principles above and the procedures below.

Drugs on Academy Premises

Our Academy makes it clear that drug use on the Academy premises is not acceptable, except in the case of prescribed medication which is known to the relevant members of staff. In such cases, parents/carers must ensure that they have signed the appropriate permission slips and followed the Academy's procedures for medication.

Incidents would include:

- Any adult or persons who may come onto the school site and may be intoxicated and/or involved in the possession, use or supply of illegal drugs and/or any prohibited paraphernalia.
- Alcohol on the Academy site.

- Alcohol consumed by adults on the premises at a time other than may be authorised by the Governors and/or Headteacher in conjunction with an approved and/or appropriately licensed event.
- Adults or students on Academy premises who are evidently under the influence of alcohol or substances which impair their judgement.
- Adults or students who are in known possession of alcohol or illegal substances around the Academy premises.

Where Academy staff suspect any one of the incidents may have occurred, they should consult with a member of the Senior Leadership Team who will make a judgement as to whether they should:

- Approach the individual.
- Call the police.
- Make arrangements to isolate the individual to ensure the safety of all other students on the Academy site.

Additionally, in the case of the following:

- Needles/sharps – these will be safely removed by a designated member of staff and placed in an appropriate sharps disposal box.
- Illegal drugs – These should be confiscated in the presence of another adult. The drugs should be sealed in a plastic bag with details of the date and time they were found or confiscated. The police should then be notified. The drugs should be kept in the safe in the main office until such time they can be collected or disposed of.

NB – The person seizing the substances should wear rubber gloves and should wash their hands thoroughly after the incident.

Alcohol and Tobacco use or Possession by Students

- Items will be confiscated. Where a person conducting a search finds alcohol, Vapes tobacco, cigarette papers or fireworks, (or any other paraphernalia linked to drugs or alcohol use) they may retain or dispose of them as they think appropriate but should not return them to the student.
- Other substances which are not believed to be controlled should also be delivered to the police, or disposed of as above, if the member of staff believes they could be harmful.

All drug related incidents should be referred immediately to the headteacher or the Designated Safeguarding Lead. The following actions may result:

- Suspension/ permanent exclusion of the student.
- Confiscation, where possible of the substance following the Confiscation section of the school's Behaviour and Discipline Policy.
- Where there are child protection concerns, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will be informed.
- Contact with parents/carers.
- The arrangements of a meeting with the student, parents/carers, pastoral staff. The meeting should provide an opportunity to:

- Exchange information and opinion on the nature of the student's involvement with drugs.

- Hear the student's view.
- Agree a detailed plan covering support from the Academy and outside agencies as well as monitoring review. Where appropriate, a PSP (Pastoral Support Plan) may be established following any drug-related incident in school.

Drugs on School Visits and Trips

Where drugs or drug related paraphernalia are discovered on an Academy organised trip, procedures will generally follow those for drugs found on Academy premises.

Additionally, the trip leader will discuss this with the EVC and/or the Designated Safeguarding Lead. The Academy reserves the right to require a parent/carer to attend and collect the student immediately or as soon after as practicably possible.

In the event of:

- Suspicion of a student under the influence of drugs/alcohol/solvents/novel psychoactive substances ('legal highs')
- Student in possession of drugs/alcohol/solvents/novel psychoactive substances ('legal highs')
- Student discloses that they are misusing drugs/alcohol/solvents/novel psychoactive substances ('legal highs')
- Student discloses that parents or friends are misusing or selling drugs/alcohol/solvents/novel psychoactive substances ('legal highs')
- School becomes aware of the availability of drugs/alcohol/solvents/psychoactive substances ('legal highs') in the Academy vicinity.
- Student or parent asks for advice on illegal drug misuse.

Teachers should contact a member of the Senior Leadership Team who should follow the appropriate guidance. All disclosures and other incidents should be fully documented and reported on the schools safeguarding system as soon as possible. Staff must ensure that on no account should they promise confidentiality.

Emergency Procedures – Advice to Staff

If a student appears to be under the influence or suffering from the effects of drugs, alcohol, or solvents, staff must:

- Prioritise the student's immediate safety, seeking first aid assistance without delay and calling emergency services if required.
- Assess the situation calmly, avoiding confrontation, and respond in a reassuring and supportive manner.
- Remain with the student at all times, ensuring they are supervised and not left alone. Inform Reception who will summon a First Aider.
- If they are semi-conscious or in a coma, make sure the student is lying in the recovery position on their side. An ambulance must be called immediately.
- If they are hyperactive, try to find a calm, dark area where they can sit with someone to reassure them.
- Keep any containers or pills that are at the scene to show the doctor or paramedic.
- Ask friends, if present, if they know what and how much the student may have taken.
- Stay with the student until assistance arrives.

- Immediately inform a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) or the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).
- Remove the student from the classroom or public area to a safe and appropriate space, where they can be monitored.
- Do not attempt to physically intervene unless necessary to prevent harm to the student or others.
- A member of the Pastoral team, safeguarding team or senior leadership team will inform parents/carers as soon as possible, in line with school policy and safeguarding considerations.

Reporting and recoding concerns

- Record the incident accurately and promptly, including observations of the student's behaviour, appearance, and any statements made. This should be recoded on the school safeguarding platform.
- Make a clear, factual written record of the incident as soon as possible, including:
 - Date, time, and location of the incident
 - The student's presentation (e.g. behaviour, physical symptoms, speech)
 - Any substances or paraphernalia found
 - Any statements made by the student or others (using their exact words where possible)
 - Actions taken by staff, including first aid or external support
- The pastoral team should follow safeguarding procedures, including referral where appropriate, recognising that substance misuse may indicate wider vulnerabilities.
- Cooperate with external agencies, such as medical professionals or the police, where required.
- Report concerns immediately to a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and/or the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).
- Avoid making assumptions or interpretations, ensuring that records are objective and evidence-based.
- Submit records through the school's agreed recording system (e.g. safeguarding software or incident forms) in a timely manner.
- Ensure confidentiality is maintained, with information shared only on a need-to-know basis in line with safeguarding and data protection requirements.
- Follow up as required, cooperating with further investigation, safeguarding referrals, or external agency involvement.

Accurate and timely reporting is essential to ensure that appropriate safeguarding actions are taken and that patterns of concern can be identified and addressed.

Confiscation Procedure

Where there is a reasonable suspicion that a student is in possession of drugs, alcohol, solvents, or related paraphernalia, staff must follow the school's procedures for search and confiscation in line with current legislation and safeguarding guidance.

Staff must:

- Request that the student hands over the substance or item voluntarily. Where appropriate, this should be done in the presence of another member of staff.
- Only conduct a search in accordance with school policy and statutory guidance, ensuring that it is carried out by an authorised member of staff, with a second adult witness present wherever possible.
- Ensure that searches are conducted respectfully, maintaining the dignity and privacy of the student at all times.

- Confiscate any prohibited substances or items where found, taking care to handle substances safely and minimising risk. Drug disposal kits are available in the main office.
- Immediately pass any confiscated items to the Headteacher or a designated senior leader, who will take responsibility for their safe storage and appropriate disposal.
- Do not dispose of suspected controlled drugs themselves. These must be handed to the police or disposed of in line with legal requirements and school procedures.
- Record the confiscation in detail, including what was found, where it was found, who was present, and any actions taken.
- Inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) so that appropriate safeguarding considerations and next steps can be addressed.
- Ensure parents/carers are informed, in line with school policy and safeguarding considerations.

Staff must not put themselves at risk when confiscating items and should seek support from senior staff if there is any concern about safety.

Roles and responsibilities

Role of the Headteacher:

The Headteacher has overall responsibility for the implementation, monitoring, and review of this Drugs and Alcohol Policy. They will ensure that the school provides a safe and supportive environment in which all members of the community are protected from the risks associated with drugs and alcohol misuse.

The Headteacher will:

- Provide strategic leadership to ensure that this policy is effectively embedded across all aspects of school life and is consistent with safeguarding, behaviour, and health and safety procedures.
- Ensure safeguarding responsibilities are upheld by responding appropriately to all drug- and alcohol-related incidents, with a clear focus on the welfare and wellbeing of students. The Headteacher may delegate day-to-day operational responsibility to a designated senior leader, but retains overall accountability.
- Facilitate effective communication of the policy to students, staff, parents and carers, and ensure that expectations are clear and understood by the wider school community.
- Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the policy, including reviewing incident data, identifying patterns or concerns, and reporting to the Governing Body as required.
- Ensure compliance with legal requirements, including those relating to controlled substances, safeguarding, and the school's duty of care.

The Designated Safeguard Lead (DSL) and senior leadership team:

- Work in partnership with external agencies, including the police, local authority, health services, and specialist support services, where appropriate.
- Oversee the delivery of appropriate education on drugs and alcohol through the curriculum, including PSHE, ensuring that students are equipped with the knowledge and skills to make informed and responsible choices.
- Ensure all staff are informed and appropriately trained to recognise, respond to, and report concerns relating to drugs and alcohol. Staff will be supported to follow agreed procedures and understand their responsibilities within the policy.
- Oversee the management of incidents, ensuring that procedures for searching, confiscation, recording, and disposal are carried out in line with current legislation and statutory guidance. They will ensure that responses to incidents are proportionate, consistent, and balance disciplinary measures with pastoral support.

Role of Staff

All staff have a responsibility to support the implementation of this Drugs and Alcohol Policy and to contribute to maintaining a safe and healthy school environment.

Staff will:

- Be familiar with and adhere to this policy, including the procedures for managing drug- and alcohol-related incidents.
- Maintain a duty of care by acting in the best interests of students at all times and prioritising their safety and wellbeing.
- Be vigilant to signs of drug or alcohol misuse, including changes in behaviour, attendance, or wellbeing, and respond appropriately to any concerns.
- Report all concerns and incidents promptly in line with school procedures, ensuring that accurate records are made and passed to the appropriate senior leader and/or Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).
- Respond to disclosures sensitively and appropriately, without promising confidentiality, and ensure that information is shared in accordance with safeguarding procedures.
- Follow agreed procedures for managing incidents, including confiscation and storage of substances where necessary, without placing themselves or others at risk.
- Promote positive messages and attitudes towards health and wellbeing, including through their role in the curriculum and as role models for students.
- Support the delivery of drug and alcohol education, where appropriate, by contributing to planned curriculum activities such as PSHE.
- Engage with training and professional development to ensure they are confident in recognising and responding to issues related to drugs and alcohol.
- Work collaboratively with colleagues, parents/carers, and external agencies, where appropriate, to support students affected by drug or alcohol-related issues.

Role of Students

Students are expected to play an active part in supporting a safe, healthy, and drug-free school environment. They are responsible for their own behaviour and for contributing positively to the wellbeing of others.

Students will:

- Follow school rules and expectations regarding drugs and alcohol, including not bringing, using, or being under the influence of substances on school premises or during school activities.
- Take responsibility for their own health and safety, making informed and sensible choices in relation to drugs and alcohol.
- Engage positively in learning about drugs and alcohol through the curriculum, including PSHE, and apply this knowledge to make safe decisions.
- Act responsibly and respectfully towards others, ensuring that their behaviour does not put themselves or others at risk.
- Seek support from a trusted adult in school if they are worried about their own or someone else's drug or alcohol use.
- Report concerns about drugs or alcohol to a member of staff, recognising that this contributes to keeping the school community safe.
- Cooperate with staff when incidents are being investigated, including following instructions that are given to ensure safety.

Role of Parents and Carers

Parents and carers play a vital role in supporting the school to maintain a safe and healthy environment in relation to drugs and alcohol. The school works in partnership with parents and carers to promote the wellbeing and safety of all students.

Parents and carers will:

- Support the school's Drugs and Alcohol Policy and reinforce its expectations at home.
- Ensure that their child understands the school rules regarding drugs and alcohol and the importance of making safe and responsible choices.
- Work in partnership with the school where concerns arise, including attending meetings, sharing relevant information, and supporting agreed actions or interventions.

- Inform the school of any concerns regarding their child's involvement with drugs or alcohol that may affect their wellbeing, behaviour, or safety in school.
- Ensure their child does not bring prohibited substances onto school premises or to school-related activities.
- Support the school's response to incidents, recognising that the school will balance disciplinary measures with a safeguarding and pastoral approach.
- Engage with external support services, where appropriate, if their child requires additional help in relation to drugs or alcohol

Confidentiality and Advice

Students should be made aware that information cannot be confidential i.e. where the student is involved in the misuse of drugs. However, they should be offered sensitive and appropriate support.

Other Related Documents which should be referred to:

- Behaviour and Discipline Policy
- Exclusions Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Supporting Students with Medical Conditions Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Right to Confiscate Policy
- DfE and ACPO Drug Advice for Schools 2012
- Keeping children safe in education
- Working together to safeguard children

Useful Contacts:

- Drugscope – the UK's leading independent centre of expertise on drugs, aims to inform policy development and reduce drug-related risk.
- www.drugscope.org.uk
- www.drugeducation.org.uk
- www.nc.uk.net
- www.drugs.gov.uk
- www.wrecked.co.uk
- www.talktofrank.com

Relevant Legislation

- Misuse of Drugs Act 1971
- Medicines Act – 1968
- Children and Young Person (Protection from Tobacco) Act 1991