



Drugs Education Policy

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Review: October 2026

Chair of Governors:

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Headteacher:

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Ethos of The Orchard School

At The Orchard School, **Everyone Matters, Everyone Cares**. Our ethos is rooted in the belief that every child has the potential to grow, thrive, and succeed when provided with the right environment, relationships, and support. **The Orchard Way** guides everything we do, ensuring that our approach is therapeutic, inclusive, and centred on understanding behaviour as communication. We are committed to nurturing the social, emotional, and mental health (SEMH) needs of our pupils, recognising their unique challenges while celebrating their individuality. Through strong relationships and a culture of care, we create a school where every pupil feels safe, valued, and empowered to reach their full potential.

Principles of Our Ethos:

1. **Respect for the Individual:** Every pupil deserves respect, dignity, and the opportunity to be heard.
2. **Relationships at the Heart of Learning:** Positive, trusting relationships form the foundation of our work.
3. **Equity and Inclusion:** We ensure all pupils have access to the support they need to succeed.
4. **Therapeutic and Nurturing Approaches:** We integrate trauma-informed strategies to promote resilience.
5. **High Expectations with Compassion:** Balancing aspirations with understanding and personalisation.
6. **Collaboration with Stakeholders:** Families, carers, and agencies work together to support pupils.
7. **A Safe and Predictable Environment:** Structure and boundaries foster trust and confidence.
8. **Restorative Practices:** Addressing conflicts through understanding, accountability, and growth.

Introduction

This Drugs Education Policy outlines the principles and procedures for providing pupils at The Orchard School with the knowledge, skills, and support to make informed and safe choices about drugs and substances. The policy promotes a safe, inclusive, and nurturing environment that recognises the SEMH needs of all pupils and equips them to manage risks and responsibilities. It aligns with the Equality Act 2010, ensuring that all teaching and practices promote equality and inclusivity while eliminating discrimination, harassment, and victimisation.

Policy Vision

The Drugs Education Policy aims to provide pupils with the knowledge, understanding, and confidence to make safe and informed decisions about drugs and substances. The policy promotes a preventative, supportive, and educational approach that reflects the SEMH needs of our pupils and fosters resilience, responsibility, and respect. It is committed to equitable, inclusive, and accessible practice for pupils, staff, families, and the wider school community. The policy is underpinned by the principles of the Equality Act 2010, ensuring that all pupils, staff, and stakeholders are treated fairly, with dignity and respect, regardless of their characteristics.

Drugs Education Policy

The Orchard School is a specialist SEMH school committed to promoting a healthy lifestyle and safeguarding pupils from the risks associated with drugs, alcohol, and substance misuse. This policy is based on statutory guidance, including the Misuse of Drugs Act (1971), DfE and LA guidelines, and incorporates best practice for SEMH provision.

Aims

- Clarify The Orchard School's approach to drugs for staff, pupils, governors, parents and carers.
- Clarify the legal requirements and responsibilities.
- Provide guidance to staff on The Orchard School's drugs education programme.
- Safeguard the health and safety of pupils and staff.

- Enable staff to manage drug-related incidents appropriately.

Terminology

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime defines a drug as a substance people take to change the way they feel, think or behave. This policy refers to:

- Illegal drugs (Misuse of Drugs Act 1971).
- Legal drugs, including alcohol, tobacco and volatile substances.
- Medicines, whether prescribed or over-the-counter.

Objectives of Drugs Education

Drugs education at The Orchard School will:

- Build on pupils' knowledge and understanding.
- Provide accurate information and address misconceptions.
- Explore attitudes, values, risks and consequences.
- Develop interpersonal skills, self-awareness and self-esteem.
- Ensure consistent teaching appropriate to developmental level and SEMH context.
- Follow guidelines agreed by staff, governors and parents.

Curriculum Delivery

Drugs education is a whole-school responsibility and will be embedded across the curriculum, particularly through PSHE. It will be addressed as part of the Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 curriculum, with a focus on supporting pupils in understanding peer pressure, recognising the risks of county lines, developing decision-making skills, and building safe and respectful relationships.

Drugs in School

- Hazardous chemicals stored securely (COSHH).
- Medication administered in line with Health Care Policy.

- Presence of unauthorised drugs is not acceptable.

Safeguarding Link

Children may be adversely affected by parental or personal substance misuse. Staff will remain alert to indicators of harm, including neglect, emotional difficulties, self-harm, poor attendance, attachment issues and family dislocation. Concerns will be referred to Children's Social Services in line with safeguarding procedures.

Responsibilities

The Headteacher will:

- Designate key staff for drugs education.
- Ensure training and policy implementation.
- Manage drug-related incidents.
- Liaise with external agencies.

Governors will:

- Support and monitor implementation.

Parents will:

- Be informed of the policy and support key messages.