



DRUGS POLICY

ODBST Level 1 Statutory Policy:	ALL Schools require this policy with no changes allowed to core text. No changes are necessary to personalise this with school name and branding, as this is a Trust level policy for use, without change, by all schools, except where a school contact is required as identified in the content of the policy. LGBs will note adoption in LGB meetings. Review will take place at Trust level, and schools will be notified of updates and review dates as necessary.
Other related ODBST policies and procedures:	Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy Behaviour Policy SEND Policy Suspension and Exclusions Policy Use of Medicines in School Policy Health and Safety Policy Risk Assessment for storage and use of solvents in school
Committee responsible:	School Effectiveness Committee
Approved by:	SEC
Date Approved:	November 2025
Review Date:	AUTUMN 2028

1.Introduction

The proprietors of Academies have a duty under paragraph 7 of Schedule 1 to the Education (Independent Schools Standards) (England) Regulations 2010 to make arrangements to ensure that their functions are carried out with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. This includes the safe management of drugs in all schools and this should be read in conjunction with the ODBST Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and the ODBST Behaviour Policy and the other associated policies.

2.Objectives

This policy is based on the key principles in which our schools respect and accept pupils and staff, regardless of age, gender, race, sexuality, religious beliefs, disability or academic ability. The ODBST recognises that some pupils have SEND and that this will always be taken into account when planning strategically and when managing individual cases covered by this policy.

This policy describes how the ODBST will promote good behaviour around the use of drugs in school and regulate the conduct of pupils, staff, parents/carers and visitors.

Our policy shows how drug use is monitored and how we expect our school communities to function and flourish by:

- promoting a safe and healthy environment;

- providing clear guidance on managing drug-related incidents;
- supporting pupils in making informed choices;
- ensuring compliance with legal responsibilities.

3.Scope

- ODBST Trustees
- Local Governing Body
- Headteacher
- Teaching staff
- Support staff
- All school staff
- Pupils
- Central Office Staff
- Contractors/Service providers
- Users of the school site and buildings
- Parents

4.Relevant Legislation

- Education Act 1996
- School Standards and Framework Act 1998
- Education Act 2002
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- School Information (England) Regulations 2008
- Equality Act 2010
- The Education (Independent School Standards) (Attended) (England) Regulations 2014
- Education Act 2011
- Schools (Specification and Disposal of Articles) Regulations 2012
- Behaviour in School Advice for Headteachers and school staff 2023
- Suspension and Permanent Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement: Guidance for maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England August 2024
- Searching, Screening and Confiscation advice for schools 2022

5.Date of Review

The policy will be reviewed as required by the Board of Trustees of ODBST to take account of any legislative changes and/or national policy development as well as feedback from ODBST staff and schools and in any event, by November 2028.

6.General Principles

6.1 Definitions

- Where the term “relevant body” has been used in legislation this refers to the Board of Trustees of ODBST. In this document the term Trustees is used for simplicity.
- The term “Proprietor” is also used to refer to Trustees of ODBST.
- Unless indicated otherwise, all references to “teacher” include the Headteacher.
- Unless indicated otherwise, all references to staff include teaching and support staff.
- All references to “parent” include the parents, carers and any other person with parental responsibility.

6.2 Delegation

The Trustees have chosen to delegate its functions to Local Governing Bodies and Headteachers as set out in this policy.

6.3 Monitoring and Evaluation

The Local Governing Body and Headteacher will monitor the operation and effectiveness of the Drugs Policy and deal with any queries relating to it. The Director of Education will quality assure the implementation of this policy. The Oxford Diocesan Bucks Schools Trust (ODBST), through the School Effectiveness Committee, will monitor any concerns or complaints raised in relation to the policy on an annual basis.

6.4 Definition of Drugs

This policy covers:

- Prescription and over-the-counter medicines
- Alcohol and tobacco
- Illegal substances
- Psychoactive substances (“legal highs”)
- Solvents and other harmful substances

6.4.1 Medicines: The ODBST has a policy/procedure for the administration of medicines that must be followed for everyone’s safety. Please refer to our Medical Needs Policy

6.4.2 Alcohol: No alcohol may be brought on to ODBST school premises or consumed during the course of a school day. Any adult (including staff, students, parents, carers and visitors) under the effects of alcohol will be asked to leave the premises and return at a later date for the safety of the whole school.

School staff are not expected to consume alcohol when in direct supervision of pupils, including on school visits and residential journeys.

The moderate consumption of alcohol at PTA events and other school based social occasions is permitted when events are out of school hours and when school staff are not directly responsible for the supervision of pupils.

6.4.3 Smoking and vaping: ODBST school premises are a no smoking or vaping site at all times. Pupils are not permitted to bring to school smoking or vaping materials including matches and lighters. In the interests of health and safety, should a pupil be found in possession of any of these on school premises, they will be confiscated and parents informed. This also applies to the use of electronic cigarettes.

6.4.4 Illegal drugs and “psychoactive substances”: No illegal drugs, new psychoactive substances or drugs paraphernalia are allowed to be brought on to, or used on, school premises. Bringing any such items onto school premises is considered a serious breach of this Drugs Policy. Seeking to influence or glamorise illegal drug use or the use of psychoactive substances either in person on school premises or via social networking sites is also considered a serious breach of this Drugs Policy.

6.4.5 Solvents and Gas Canisters: The school will ensure that potentially hazardous substances it authorises are stored safely, and pupils will be supervised if it is necessary that they come into contact with them in the course of their work. Pupils are not permitted to be in possession of solvents or gas canisters.

6.4.6 3 NPS are drugs that are designed to replicate the effects of other illegal substances. People may refer to these drugs as “legal highs”, but all psychoactive substances are now either under the control of the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 or subject to the Psychoactive Substances Act 2016 (PS Act). Bringing solvents or hazardous substances onto school premises is considered a serious breach of this Drugs Policy.

7. Drugs on school premises

The legal definition of school premises includes everything within the property boundaries including buildings, outbuildings, playgrounds, fields and also extends to include other settings such as any venue managed by the school at the time e.g. premises of a school trip or visit, pupils attending work experience or college placements, those attending alternative provision and all other times when the school is deemed to be in loco parentis.

It also includes pupils when are travelling to and from school or who, when off site and including online, are in any other way reasonably identifiable as being part of the school community.

8. Persons to whom this policy applies

This policy applies to all school staff, students, parents, governors and other partner agencies working with the school. It applies to all external visitors to the school.

9. Responses to drug related incidents

A drug incident may be any of the following:

- Finding drugs, or related paraphernalia including gas canisters, on school premises
- Possession of illegal or unauthorised drugs by an individual on school premises
- Use of drugs by an individual on school premises
- Supply of drugs on school premises
- Individuals disclosing information about their drug use
- Student reports of parents, staff or other students using drugs
- Hiding drugs in or around the school premises for later collection (by themselves or by third parties)
- Glamourising or encouraging the use of drugs and other substances (including via social networking sites)
- Pupils smoking cigarettes or vaping in school
- Pupils selling cigarettes or vaping materials to other pupils
- A parent/carer collecting their child whilst drunk or intoxicated by drug use
- Misusing another pupils’ asthma inhaler
- Giving medicines to another pupil
- An adult with information about the illegal sale of cigarettes at a local shop
- Finding used syringes in the playground
- A member of the public contacting the school to say they have seen pupils smoking/vaping/misusing drugs nearby

9.1 Any response to drug related incidents needs to balance the needs of the individual student and the wider school community.

Exclusion from school is not an automatic response to a drug incident but permanent exclusion is considered in serious cases where:

- There is a serious breach or persistent breaches of our Drugs and/or Behaviour Policies and
- Allowing a student to remain in the school would seriously harm the education, safety or welfare of the student or others in the school.

9.2 The Headteacher will be responsible for co-ordinating the management of drug-related incidents. They will work with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and will offer sources of support and liaise with outside agencies. Incidents will be dealt with after making an assessment of the situation. All incidents and responses will be recorded within 24 hours.

9.3 Parents will be informed of all incidents unless there is strong evidence that the safety of a pupil would be compromised by doing so.

9.4 The ODBST rules for drugs apply to all people who are on the school premises and we expect that everyone will adhere to these rules. If anyone comes to school and appears to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol, they will be asked to leave. If a parent has come to collect their child, we will sensitively offer to phone for someone else to come and collect the child. If we are concerned that the child is at risk, then we will follow the Child Protection procedures.

9.5 We are sensitive to the needs of pupils whose parents or family members have problems with drugs. Where problems are observed or suspected, or a pupil discloses problems, we will assess the pupils' welfare and support needs and if needed, involve external support for the pupil and, where appropriate, for the family.

10. Aims of drug education

ODBST trustees expect schools to give pupils information about drugs and help them develop the skills and attitudes to make healthy and safe decisions about drugs, alcohol, tobacco and medicines.

As part of being a healthy school Trustees expect a whole school approach to drugs through:

- a planned drug education programme through PSHE and Science informed by pupils, staff and parent's views;
- carefully considered responses to drug-related incidents informed and supported by the views of the whole school community;
- clear rules and consequences related to drugs;
- access to specialist support and advice, if needed;
- training and support for staff.

To achieve this, the drug education programme will help pupils:

- gain knowledge and understanding about the effects and risks and dangers of drugs and correct myths and misunderstandings;
- develop skills to make informed decisions, including communication, self awareness, negotiation, finding information, help and advice, helping others and managing situations involving drugs;
- develop skills to manage situations involving drugs including assessing and avoiding risks, assertiveness and refusal skills and helping others;
- explore their own and other peoples' attitudes to drugs, drug use and drug users, including challenging stereotypes and dispelling misinformation, disinformation and conspiracy theories and exploring media and social influences.

11. The curriculum

11.1 Teaching about drugs, alcohol and tobacco is taught through PSHE and in Science, where it is required in the National Curriculum.

The curriculum for each individual school is set at school level and quality assured by the Director of Education. The curriculum should be made easily available parents.

11.2 A wide range of active teaching methods are used that enable pupils to learn skills to be safe and healthy, discuss their views, explore their own and other peoples' attitudes and values about drugs, as well as learn key information about the effects and risks of drugs and practice skills to stay safe if involved in a drug-related situation.

All classes establish clear ground rules to ensure that pupils discuss opinions with respect and listen to one another as well as ensuring that pupils and teachers do not disclose personal information.

Drug education sometimes involves the school nurse or other suitably qualified professionals, including Buckinghamshire and/or Milton Keynes health professionals.

12.Support for pupils

12.1The welfare of all ODBST pupils is paramount and intervention will be made if the school feels a pupil is showing signs which indicate particular risks of, or from, involvement with drugs, whether their own or the involvement of their parents.

We believe that early intervention, where possible, is significant and may include:

- support and advice in school (Counsellor, School Nurse, Year Leader, Classteacher/Form Tutor, Family Liaison Officer or a member of the school safeguarding team);
- referral to specialist outside agencies for support including the Early Help team;
- working with the Police and Young Offenders.

12.2 Medical emergencies when a pupil is unconscious as a result of drug use
Staff with first aid qualifications should be called immediately and the pupil must not be left alone. The pupil will be placed in the recovery position and an ambulance called immediately if they are unconscious. Parents will be informed unless there is good evidence that this will compromise the pupil's safety.

12.2 Intoxication, when a pupil is under the influence of a drug
The pupil will be removed to a quiet room and not left alone. The first aider and Headteacher will be called. The pupil will be supported and medical assistance sought immediately. Parents will be informed and called to the school unless there is good evidence that this will compromise the pupil's safety.

13. Discovery/observation

13.1. When a person is discovered using, supplying or holding a substance that is not permitted on school premises and which is described in this policy.

If the substance is suspected to be illegal, staff can take temporary possession of it.

- It will be confiscated, in the presence of a second member of staff as witness.
- The sample will be sealed in a plastic bag with details of the date and time of the seizure/find and witness present and stored in a secure location (e.g. a safe or lockable container) with access limited to the Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher.
- The pupil will be taken to the school office and the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher called and the pupils questioned.
- The police will be notified immediately, who will collect it and store or dispose of it, in line with locally agreed protocols.
- The school will record details of the incident, including the police incident reference number.

- The school will inform the pupil's parents and they will be asked to come into school, unless it is not in the best interests of the child to do so.
- Identify any safeguarding concerns and develop a support and consequences response including internal exclusion whilst investigations are carried out.

13.2 If the substance is legal (but unauthorised in school) it will be disposed of or handed to the parent.

13.3 Searches

Staff are allowed to confiscate pupil's property, as a disciplinary penalty, where reasonable to do so, including searching for substances, whether legal or not.

If school staff are unable to identify the legal status of a drug, it should be treated as an illegal drug.

If a member of staff has reasonable grounds for suspecting that a pupil is carrying illegal drugs on them or in their personal property, they will ask the pupil to voluntarily produce the substance, in the presence of two members of staff. In circumstances where a pupil refuses to do this the member of staff will discuss with the Headteacher who may decide to carry out a search in the presence of another member of staff. The Headteacher is the only person authorised to carry out a search, unless they are not the same sex as the pupil and then the Headteacher will authorise a senior member of staff. The search will take place in school or where staff have lawful control of pupils.

The school will keep a record of the search and inform parents if a substance is found, although there is no legal requirement to do this or inform parents before or after a search or seek their consent to search a child.

13.4 Dealing with drug-taking materials

School site staff make regular checks of the school grounds and know how to deal with drug-taking materials, including needles, in line with health and safety advice.

Pupils are taught what to do if they come across needles on the school premises and know not to touch needles and to inform a member of staff immediately.

13.5 Disclosure

If a pupil discloses to a member of staff that they have been using drugs or is concerned about someone else's drug use, staff will be non-judgemental and show concern for the pupil. Pupils know that teachers cannot promise total confidentiality for safeguarding reasons. The Headteacher and DSL should be informed as soon as possible so that appropriate support can be found.

Pupils need to be able to talk in confidence to staff without fear of being judged or told off. The welfare of children and young people is central to our policy and practice. However, teachers cannot promise total confidentiality in order to seek specialist help if needed. This is made clear to pupils through the PSHE and citizenship programmes. Information about a pupil in relation to drugs will follow the same procedure as for other sensitive information. If teachers have any concerns about the welfare of children, they must inform the Headteacher and DSL.