



Godalming College

SUBSTANCE MISUSE POLICY

MAY 2000

Approved by the Corporation 26 June 2000

Approved by the Corporation 2 July 2003

Approved by the Corporation 26 June 2006

Approved by the Corporation June 2009

June 2012 Review

January 2015 Review

Principles

- It is a criminal offence to possess, supply or deal in illegal drugs. If any student is found in possession of illegal drugs, or involved in any way with drug taking, he/she may be required to leave College and the police may be informed.
- The College is charged with providing a safe environment for all its members. In carrying out this duty it strongly opposes the use, abuse and supply of illegal, prohibited or inappropriate substances including drugs and alcohol.
- The College is a place for students to study on a full-time basis. It is a place of work and we are committed to a partnership with parents and agencies to promote the health and safety of all members of our community. We will take firm action to safeguard their well-being.
- Issues concerning substance abuse may be explored and debated as part of the Shaping Futures programme alongside other educational programmes and activities, some of which may also include the police, e.g. Police sniffer dogs
- All members of the College have a responsibility to implement this policy.
- The College reserves the right to conduct appropriate searches of student's belongings in order to check for drugs or other prohibited substances in line with guidance from the Department of Education on Searching, Screening and Confiscation published in February 2014.

Procedures

1. If a member of staff suspects a student is involved in the misuse of substances or that he/she is under the influence of drugs or alcohol, the Assistant Principal for Student and Staff Development, Principal or Senior Tutor should be informed and he/she may investigate the matter further. If there are strong grounds for suspicion, the student will be interviewed, warned and may be suspended from College according to college procedures pending the outcome of further investigation; this may include dismissal / permanent exclusion.
2. Searches of students' bags or pockets on college premises may be carried out with their consent and in the presence of a witness, usually a Senior Tutor or Security Guard. Searches without consent may still be carried out by the Principal or designate, usually Carol Horlock, Assistant Principal for student and staff development and another member of staff as a witness (usually a Senior tutor or one of the Security Guards) if there are reasonable grounds for suspecting a student is in possession of drugs. If drugs or other inappropriate substances are found, they will be confiscated and disposed of appropriately when no longer needed for evidence. Any sort of drug taking paraphernalia will also be confiscated but may be returned if required to do so by the student's parent or guardian.
3. Staff discovering illegal substances being used or traded by a student(s), should ascertain the name of the student, request that the substances are handed over and that the student(s) accompany the member of staff to a senior member of staff (Senior Tutor, Principal, Assistant Principals or Director of Services). It is advisable that the member of staff enlists the help of another colleague in confronting the student if possible. The substances should be identified and placed in safekeeping. All actions taken by the member of staff should be recorded in writing.

The Senior Member of Staff should investigate promptly and thoroughly, recording the details in writing. The Principal or designated alternate should be alerted as early as possible and be involved in the interviewing if this seems appropriate.

If it is deemed that a serious offence has been committed in breach of the substance abuse policy the following procedure will take place:

- if the student is under 19 parents will normally be informed
- the student will be suspended from College both as an initial punishment and/or to provide a period of time in which to investigate the matter
- the Principal will interview the student following the suspension and will either exclude the student from the College or allow them to continue their education
- if the student is to return to College, conditions will be negotiated between senior staff, the student and, if appropriate, their parents and may include some of the following: disciplinary warning, undertaking a programme of drug awareness education, attendance at a clinic

The Principal or designated alternate may inform the police and hand over the substance to them.