



Thorpe Acre Junior School



Thorpe Acre Infant School

Substance Related Incidents Policy

Approved by : Headteacher
Date : April 2025 – GDPR update Jan 2026
Next review due by : April 2028

Learning, Working and Succeeding Together
Reaching High, Learning and Growing Together

Safeguarding Statement

At Thorpe Acre Junior School and Thorpe Acre Infant School, we respect and value all children and are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our pupils so they can learn, in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. We believe every pupil should be able to participate in all school activities in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from harm. This is the responsibility of every adult employed by, or invited to deliver services at Thorpe Acre Junior and Infant Schools. We recognise our responsibility to safeguard all who access school and promote the welfare of all our pupils by protecting them from physical, sexual and emotional abuse, neglect and bullying.

GDPR Statement

Data will be processed to be in line with our requirements and protections set out in the UK General Data Protection Regulation, Data Protection Act as amended by the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025.

Equality Impact Statement

We have carefully considered and analysed the impact of this policy on equality and the possible implications for pupils with protected characteristics, as part of our commitment to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) requirement to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

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1. Management of Drugs in Schools

The schools do not permit the possession, use or supply, of any illegal or legal drug (unless authorised legal drug) which takes place on school premises, within the school boundaries. This applies to the school day, on school visits, school journeys/residential trips and at school social events. These rules apply equally to staff, pupils, parents and carers, governors and those working in and visiting the schools.

2. Medicines

In most cases, staff do not administer medicines at school to a pupil unless it would be detrimental to health not to administer and only with parental written consent. Details about managing medicines can be found in our policy on the Administration of Medicines.

3. Hazardous Chemicals

Arrangements for the secure and safe storage of chemicals are set out in the Health & Safety Policy. The school will ensure that potentially hazardous substances 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 products such as solvents and aerosols (only exception permitted is aerosol ventilin / any other approved medicines administered in the presence of an adult and stored in the medicine cupboard).

4. Alcohol

No alcohol will be consumed during the course of a normal school day. Alcohol is not permitted on the school premises except by the permission of the Headteacher. Any adult under the effects of alcohol will be asked to leave the premises for the safety of the whole school. There are occasions when alcohol is authorised at school during parent/carer events and staff social events. Staff accompanying pupils on school journeys/residential trips, are not permitted to drink when responsible for pupils.

5. Smoking Policy

We are a smoke free school and staff, parents and carers, pupils and visitors are not allowed to smoke anywhere on the school premises or in sight of the school. Pupils are not permitted to bring to school smoking 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. Although e-cigarettes are not covered by smoking legislation, we do not allow the use of them by staff, parents and carers, contractors or visitors on the school premises.

6. Illegal Drugs

No illegal drugs are allowed to be brought onto, or used on, school premises. To protect the health and safety of the school community, regular checks will be made of the site to ensure that drug paraphernalia, particularly needles and syringes, are cleared away safely and legally.

7. Managing Drug and Alcohol Related Incidents

A drug or alcohol related incident includes any incidents involving any drug or alcohol that is unauthorised and therefore not permitted within the school boundaries. These can involve a parent/carer collecting their child while under the influence of alcohol; misusing another pupil's inhaler; disclosing concern about a family member who is abusing drugs or alcohol; giving medicines to another pupil and the school finding drugs, or related items, on school premises.

A drug or alcohol related incident may also include any of the following:

- Finding used syringes in the school grounds;
- Possession of drugs by an individual on school premises;
- Use of drugs by an individual on school premises;
- Supply of drugs or alcohol on school premises;
- Individuals disclosing information about their drug or alcohol use;
- Rumours or reports of drug possession, supply or drug use.

8. Guiding Principles

The schools are aware of their legal responsibilities in regard to drug related incidents and in responding to them. The schools' first responsibility is for the welfare of the individual, balanced with the need to protect the community as a whole.

The Headteacher will normally be responsible for coordinating the management of drug or alcohol related incidents, offering sources of support and liaising with outside agencies. The schools acknowledge the importance of their pastoral role and will support all concerned in ensuring the wellbeing of their pupils. Parents/carers are encouraged to become involved as much as possible in order to achieve a successful drugs education programme.

In all drug or alcohol related incidents, the following principles will apply:

- The Headteacher and members of the Senior Leadership Team, will be informed immediately;
- All situations will be carefully considered before deciding on the response;
- The needs of the pupil(s) will always come first, whilst also taking into account the needs of the school as a whole;
- Support agencies, including the police, will be involved as appropriate and in keeping with legal requirements;
- Incidents will be reported to the Chair of Governors.

Possible responses might be:

- Support and counselling
- Sanctions – where a school rule related to drug or alcohol use is broken, sanctions may be given. Decisions about sanctions will be made by the Headteacher.

9. Procedures

All drug or alcohol related incidents are reported to the Headteacher. The Headteacher, in consultation with key staff, will decide on the responses.

10. How school will manage a drug-related incident:

Staff will consider the nature of a drug-related incident and respond appropriately. There are four options which may be taken when managing a drug-related incident, some of which include involving the Police:

- Manage the incident internally
- Inform and involve parents
- Inform and involve parents and the Police
- Manage the incident internally and involve the Police.

In all of these situations the incident will be recorded, using CPOMS, the schools' internal procedure.

11. The schools will ask the Police to attend our schools for the following reasons:

- To remove illegal drugs from the premises
- To investigate possession/use of drugs
- To investigate use, supply or intent to supply of illegal drugs at, or in the vicinity of schools
- To investigate adult drug misuse which puts a child at risk e.g. a child alleges their parent/carer uses illegal drugs or the child's clothes or possessions smell of cannabis. In these cases Child Protection procedures will also be followed where relevant.

12. Hearsay / Rumour

Drug or alcohol use is often discovered by hearsay. This should be passed on to the Headteacher, or a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) in their absence, who should record the matter as hearsay evidence and begin to log concerns.

13. Searches

Storage areas within the school grounds are the property of the schools and the Headteacher, or her representative, may authorise a search of these if there is reasonable suspicion. This must be carried out in the presence of a witness.

14. Suspicious Behaviour

Behaviour that could indicate involvement with drugs or alcohol should also be logged so that patterns of behaviour can be observed and concerns acted upon where necessary.

15. Finding Substances

If a substance, or equipment, thought to be either illegal or harmful is discovered, it should be removed to a place of safe keeping in the presence of a witness from the Senior Leadership Team. If the substance is known or suspected to be illegal, the police must be informed. If a substance is found, the incident should be recorded, including:

- The date and time of the find or retrieval;
- The size and appearance of the substance;
- The names of those concerned;
- The time the police were contacted;
- The police incident number, once reported;
- The action taken.

Any equipment associated with drug misuse should be handled with care, recorded and in the case of such items as needles and syringes, should be placed in a secure and rigid container for collection by the appropriate person.

16. Medical Emergencies

If an individual has taken a harmful toxic substance, or is otherwise at immediate risk of immediate harm (is unconscious; is having trouble breathing; is seriously confused or disorientated), medical help will be sought and first aid given if required. The priority will be the person's safety. If a pupil, parents will be notified immediately.

17. Disclosure

If a pupil discloses to a member of staff that he/she is concerned about someone else's drug or alcohol use, staff will be non-judgemental and caring and show concern for the pupil. Pupils know that staff cannot promise total confidentiality. The Headteacher or a DDSL should be informed as soon as possible, so that appropriate support can be found.

Our school rules for drugs and alcohol apply to all people who are on the school premises and we expect that everyone will adhere to these rules. If we are concerned that a pupil is at risk, then we will follow the school's Child Protection & Safeguarding procedures.

We are sensitive to the needs of pupils who live within families where there is evidence of drug or alcohol abuse. Where problems are observed or suspected, or if a pupil discloses, we will assess the pupil's welfare and support needs and, if needed, will involve external support for the pupil and, where appropriate, for the family.

18. Confidentiality

Pupils need to be able to talk in confidence to staff without fear of being judged. The welfare of children will be central to our policy and practice; however, staff cannot promise total confidentiality in order to seek specialist help if needed. Information about a pupil, in relation to drugs and alcohol, will follow the same procedure as for other sensitive information. If teachers have any concerns about the welfare of pupils, they must inform the Headteacher or DDSL, if she is unavailable.

19. Curriculum

Through our RSE curriculum, pupils learn at an age-appropriate level, about healthy life choices, legal and illegal harmful substances, associated risks and how to make informed decisions.

20. Glossary:

A drug: Any substance which affects how a person thinks, feels or behaves (World Health Organisation). The term embraces medicinal, non-medicinal, legal and illegal drugs. Therefore, "drug" includes alcohol, tobacco, volatile substances (solvents, aerosols etc.), Psychoactive Substances (incorrectly labelled legal highs), medicines and illegal drugs.

Drug use: The taking of any drug.

Drug misuse: Drug taking which harms physical, mental and/or social wellbeing. This could include physical and/or psychological dependence, improper use of medicines, intoxication, or breach of school rules or the law.

Authorised drug use: Where drug use is accepted by the school, for example prescribed medication. Reference might be made to these in other school policies.

Unauthorised drug use: Where use is restricted or prohibited.

Staff should not assume use of drugs or alcohol on the basis of rumours or behaviour alone; however, if there is a suspicion, evidence will be collected over a period of time before a decision is made.