



# Substances Policy

# Bancroft's

Independent Co-educational Day School 7–18

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## 1. Policy Statement

Bancroft's School (The School) is committed to the health and safety of all members of the school community and will take action to safeguard their well-being, with reference to DfE (Department for Education) guidelines: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/drugs-advice-for-schools>

All students are likely to be exposed to the effects and influence of drugs and alcohol in wider communities and may also be exposed to the opportunities to try both legal and illegal drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, and e-cigarettes. It should be noted that the School condones neither the misuse of drugs, alcohol, or dangerous substances by members of the school community, nor the illegal supply of these substances.

Through education and pastoral care, the School will promote the health and welfare of all members of the school community and will take all practicable steps to enforce an effective substances policy; this may involve other agencies such as the police, social services and health and drug agencies. A strong home/school partnership which fosters high self-esteem of the pupil and good knowledge of the dangers of substance abuse, is essential.

This policy is for Governors, teachers, parents, carers, guardians, and pupils. It is designed to give all parties a clear statement of the School's approach to education about substance abuse, its stance on the use of harmful substances by pupils at Bancroft's School, the relationship between the School and parents and the obligations attendant on both the School **and** parents.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Behaviour Rewards and Sanctions Policy
- Exclusions Policy
- Educational Visits Policy
- Medical Information Policy
- Learning for Life Programme
- PHSEE programme (Prep School)

The School is fully committed to ensuring that the application of this policy is non-discriminatory, in line with the UK Equality Act (2010). Further details are available in the school's Equal Opportunities policy.

## 2. Definitions and Terminology

Unless otherwise specified, where the document refers to drugs this includes;

- medicines – over the counter and or prescribed
- new (novel) psychoactive substances ('legal highs')
- volatile substances that may be deliberately inhaled such as solvents and lighter fuel
- unauthorised substances – including electronic cigarettes (vapes)
- "legal" drugs, including but not limited to, tobacco (including e-cigarettes) and alcohol
- illegal drugs including but not limited to the Class B drug cannabis, Class A drugs cocaine, crack, ecstasy, and heroin and Class C drugs ketamine (see Note I) and nitrous oxide (Laughing gas) ([1971 Misuse of Drugs Act](#))

- Drug Use is drug taking, consumption of alcohol or use of illegal drugs (or legal highs) which breaches rules and requires intervention.
- Drug and alcohol misuse is when a person experiences social, psychological, physical, or legal problems related to intoxication or the regular exercise of consumption or dependence.
- Possession is when a person knowingly has drugs within their personal control i.e. in their hand, pocket, bag, locker etc.
- The production, distribution, sale, and supply of drugs known as 'legal highs' or psychoactive substances became illegal in May 2016 ([The Psychoactive Substances Act \(2016\)](#)).

### 3. Our Ethos

- we seek to secure the welfare and safety of our pupils as individuals and as members of a community
- we seek to advance the education and intellectual and moral development of our pupils, whatever their capabilities, attributes, and interests
- We seek to be realistic, not alarmist; there is no assumption that children will use harmful or illegal substances, but a well-founded belief that they will meet plenty of opportunity to do so.

### 4. Aims:

- to enable students to make healthy, informed choices by increasing knowledge and challenging attitudes
- to provide accurate information about substances
- to increase understanding about the implications and consequences of use and misuse
- to enable students to identify sources of appropriate personal support
- to support, when possible, pupils whose own drug or alcohol use, or that of a family member, is causing concern, including referral or signposting to external agencies
- to ensure that the School complies with the criminal law and promotes exemplary behaviour among pupils and staff
- to ensure pupils leaving school will be intellectually and emotionally prepared for higher education and the world of work

The individual's rights have to be balanced against the entitlement of others to welfare, safety and good health; our pupils should be prepared for the world beyond school and be encouraged to develop behaviours which will keep them safe and fulfilled in the long term; pupils need to develop a sense of the obligations towards a community and the repercussions of pursuing their own interests without regard to the shared discipline of his or her chosen community. The School will approach issues of indiscipline in the knowledge of the realities facing young people and their parents, while working to secure a safe and healthy environment for all its members

Note 1. The Advisory Council's report states that Ketamine should be controlled under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971. Ketamine should be placed in Class C of the Misuse of Drugs Act and in Schedule 4 Part 1 of the Misuse of Drugs Regulations 2001 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ketamine>

It is illegal to possess, supply or produce it. Possession of Class C drugs carries a maximum sentence of 2 years' imprisonment and a fine. Possession with intent to supply, trafficking offences and production of Class C drugs carry a maximum sentence of 14 years imprisonment and a fine.

## 5. Jurisdiction of this policy

This policy will be applied on the School premises and beyond, and this includes occasions when pupils are within the care of school staff (e.g. school trips and educational visits) and when identifiable as a pupil of Bancroft's school (e.g. when wearing uniform or sports kit). The School also has an interest in the health and wellbeing of its pupils beyond school boundaries.

## 6. The Pastoral Strand

The School will regard involvement with harmful or illegal drugs as a pastoral matter when:

- parents or pupils approach the School to share their concerns about, or suspicions or knowledge of their child's experimentation with alcohol or drug abuse, particularly where this is accompanied by adverse changes in their child's behaviour or motivation;
- Drug or under-age alcohol possession for personal use (and not involving the supply of drugs to others) when a pupil is not under the responsibility of the School, when brought to the attention of the School by the pupil involved, other concerned pupils, parents, or the police;
- the pupil genuinely wants the support and help of the School, in conjunction with parents and external agencies, to reject substance abuse and alter their conduct to fulfil the aims and ethos of the School.
- the School judges that there is no significant threat to the reputation of the School in following the Pastoral strand of the Substances Policy.

In addition, the School will also contact parents directly if a pupil's conduct or performance at school suggests that, in our experience, substance abuse or other inappropriate lifestyle choices may be undermining their prospects of remaining safe, healthy, and achieving their potential, or that of other members of the Bancroft's community. The fact of contacting parents should be seen as one among many usual monitoring actions that are at the heart of effective pastoral care. We will strive to deal with each case on an individual basis, seeking to provide support, encourage parental involvement and, where appropriate, the intervention by specialist medical health workers.

If a pupil comes to us seeking help, we will consider each situation individually, recognising that a variety of responses may be necessary; perceived disciplinary responses (e.g. drugs testing) are best used on an agreed basis, but will not usually be imposed upon parents except in the context of a response requiring a mix of pastoral and disciplinary measures and at the School's discretion.

## 7. Pastoral Support for Pupils and Parents

Responsibility for dealing with general pastoral issues lies first with a pupil's House Staff, supported by the Tutor. These teachers should be the first point of contact for any parent or pupil with any concerns. The School's pastoral teams have considerable experience of dealing with young people and are always prepared to listen and offer appropriate assistance.

They are not, of course, professionally equipped to provide confidential counselling or specialist advice on matters such as drug addiction or the medical consequences of substance abuse. However, House staff, the Assistant Head (Pastoral) and the Deputy Head

(Pastoral) do have a list of contact numbers that can refer parents to specialist and confidential help. The School Counsellors are also available to provide confidential advice to pupils. The School Nurse can offer support; the School strongly recommends that family GPs are contacted at the earliest opportunity if substance abuse by a pupil is revealed or suspected.

## **8. A shared responsibility**

The School is concerned about the health and well-being of its pupils and all staff are encouraged to raise any concerns about a pupil with the appropriate pastoral team or the School Nurse. Physical or emotional signs of substance abuse, in the absence of a history or suspected history of substance abuse, may be difficult to detect. Where parents are concerned for the safety of their child and their vulnerability to substance abuse, it is important that they share those concerns with the School.

Where a pupil reports (anonymously or otherwise) any concerns about drug or substance abuse-related matters involving another pupil, the parents of that pupil will be informed of the concerns raised. It is important that pupils (and their parents) feel able to report to the School any concerns about drug or substance abuse-related matters; to that end, the School may keep the details of those reporting concerns confidential. The School will always pass on the content of reported concerns to the parents of any pupil allegedly involved in drug or substance abuse-related matters, so that parents can take appropriate steps and measures to safeguard their child.

The School may also take its own steps in the light of concerns received, for example, discussions with the pupil identified, increased monitoring and vigilance surrounding that pupil, referral to a school counsellor and drug testing.

The School's pastoral work relies upon excellent communication between parents and the School, and a high degree of parental confidence in the School. Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare is a responsibility which parents and schools share and necessitates introduction, explanation, and practice. To this end, parents will be invited to attend information evenings and briefings covering: substance abuse education; ways for parents to prevent, monitor and, where necessary, manage their children's experimentation with alcohol and substances; adolescent health; current trends in substance abuse among young people.

## **9. Content of the Drug and Alcohol Education Programme**

The purpose of a substance abuse education is to give pupils the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to appreciate the benefits of a healthy lifestyle and to relate these to their own actions, both now and in the future.

Education relating to drugs, alcohol, and dangerous substances forms part of the Learning for Life programme in Year groups 7 to 13 and in PHSEE in the Prep School. More information can be found in our PHSEE policy and our Relationships, Sex and Health Education Policy. The scheme of work can be found on the website. The Drug Education Programme at Bancroft's is supported by external speakers. The programme informs students about drugs and their effects as well as the health and social implications in the

case of their misuse; it also promotes a positive attitude towards a healthy lifestyle and informs students about action open to them if they, or people they know, become involved in drug-related activity.

## **10. Substance Misuse**

The use, consumption, or possession by pupils, including sixth formers of cigarettes, smoking paraphernalia, e-cigarettes (vapes), alcohol, illegal drugs or legal 'highs' are forbidden on school site. This rule applies to school trips (including residential trips) and other school run events, either on or off the school site. In exceptional circumstances and authorised only by the Head or delegated member of the Senior Leadership Team, students over 18 may be permitted to drink moderately, for example at a sports dinner.

Any case of substance misuse/supply on the school premises, or while a student is in the care of school staff, will be investigated. Staff should ensure that all cases of misuse or suspected misuse of alcohol, are reported to the Head or a member of the Senior Leadership Team. The student will be removed to a place of safety and medical help sought if necessary. The student's parents/carers will be informed at the earliest opportunity.

Although there is no legal obligation to inform the police, they may be asked to offer relevant support and advice. If it is suspected that illegal drugs have been brought onto the premises, details regarding those involved may be passed to the police.

If a concern is raised about a student using drugs, the School reserves the right, subject to the consent of the student and the parent/carer, to medical testing by blood or urine to assess the extent of the influence of drugs on that student. Parents/carers will be informed at the earliest opportunity and invited to be present for the testing. If the School is unable to contact the parents, a test may still be carried out, and parents will be informed as soon as possible. If the student is not in a fit state on a given day to undergo a drug test, the School may require them to do so at a later stage.

If a student fails this drugs test, appropriate disciplinary action and support will follow. The School may also undertake drug testing of random groups of students should a concern be raised about drugs and alcohol misuse and illicit drug use within the student body. The aim of such testing is both for deterrent purposes and to ensure that students at risk can be supported and their parents/carers informed.

The Head will decide on the sanctions to be applied to those involved in accordance with the school's disciplinary procedures. In some cases, pupils' behaviour in relation to illegal substances could immediately bring into question their place at Bancroft's. The supply of illicit substances to other students will be treated with the utmost seriousness and may result in permanent exclusion. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will be informed in accordance with safeguarding procedures and any necessary pastoral support or Early Help will be actioned as appropriate.

Pupils who volunteer information about their own or others' substance abuse will be reassured that severe disciplinary sanctions (i.e. permanent exclusion) will result only after investigation and consideration where it is the School's conclusion that the pupil's behaviour must be investigated by the police as a crime, where the School judges that the pupil has been sourcing and supplying drugs for other members of the School or where the interests

of the pupil or the School community are best served by a permanent exclusion. Clarity about, and a managed response (involving counselling and on-going monitoring by health professionals) to, a pupil's substance abuse is so important that the School will strive to achieve an agreed outcome with parents and pupil and expects co-operation from parents in achieving that end.

## **11. Screening, Searching and Confiscation**

In the event of any requirement to search the property of individual students, the School will have regard to the advice set out in the document Searching, Screening and Confiscation Advice for Schools (July 2022).

Parents/carers and students should be aware that any student involved in the possession, supply or use of illegal substances is at risk of permanent exclusion.

Students are encouraged to confide in members of staff about matters of concern, which may include the misuse of substances. However, confidentiality must never be promised and, for the sake of the student(s) concerned and the rest of the school community, issues of this nature must be reported to the relevant people, including the Head and Designated Safeguarding Lead.

## **12. Action Plan**

The Head has overall responsibility for the implementation of the policy regarding substance use and misuse.

## **13. Availability, Monitoring and Review**

The Governing Body is responsible for the effective oversight, review and amendment of this policy and understands its legal obligation to do so.

This document will be reviewed and updated bi-annually by the Deputy Head Pastoral or as events or legislation requires.

The content of the Learning for Life and PHSEE programmes for each year group is reviewed every year and published on the School's website or can be obtained from the School.

## Appendix I

If someone needs urgent help after taking drugs or drinking alcohol, call 999 for an ambulance. Tell the crew everything you know. It could save a life.

### Useful Contacts:

#### **FRAN**

[www.talktofrank.com](http://www.talktofrank.com)

0300 123 6600 (helpline) 82111 (SMS)Text question and Frank will text you back

This support agency provides confidential advice 24 hours a day to parents as well as to pupils. They can give information on services in the local area including counselling and specialist clinics.

#### **ADFAM**

[www.adfam.org.uk](http://www.adfam.org.uk) [admin@adfam.org.uk](mailto:admin@adfam.org.uk)

This is the leading charity in England for people affected by someone else's drinking, drug use or gambling.

#### **Childline**

0800 11 11 11

Free 24-hour helpline for children or young people in trouble or in danger

#### **Families Anonymous**

Helpline: 0207 4984680 [office@famanon.org.uk](mailto:office@famanon.org.uk)

A global fellowship of families and friends affected by another's abuse of substances and related behavioural problems, which organises a network of support groups for parents of drug users.

#### **Young Minds**

0808 802 5544 (Parent's helpline)

Free confidential helpline providing information and advice for any adult with concerns about the mental health of a young person

### **Local Support Agencies:**

Redbridge Substance misuse support services

<https://www.redbridge.gov.uk/health-and-wellbeing/drugs-and-alcohol/>

**R3 (Redbridge, Recovery and Reintegration)**

Tel: 0300 303 4612

Email: [redbridge@viaorg.uk](mailto:redbridge@viaorg.uk)

Free and confidential support service for individuals and their families in Redbridge affected by drug and alcohol problems.

The R3 service offers a wide range of support to individuals and their families who wish to receive advice, assessment, and treatment for their drug and/or alcohol problems.

## **Via - Fusion**

Telephone: 020 8708 7800

Email: [fusion@viaorg.uk](mailto:fusion@viaorg.uk)

Via - Fusion provides a free, friendly confidential service to young people in the borough of Redbridge under the age of 18 who are using, or at risk of using drugs and alcohol. It also provides family support for parents or carers of young people who are using substances. They provide training and workshops for young people and professionals around drug and alcohol awareness and the risks and effects associated with substances. Referrals are accepted from parents/carers, school nurses, teachers, social services, and specialist children's centres. Young people can also self-refer.