



Drugs Policy

September 2025
(to be reviewed September 2026)

Audience

This policy is intended for a wide readership and reflects Larches High School's approach to drugs in relation to safeguarding and the health and safety of pupils and others involved with the school.

Rationale

The purpose of the Drugs Policy is to provide guidance in relation to drugs:

- Clarify the legal requirements and responsibilities of Larches House School
- Clarify the approach of Larches High School to drugs for all staff, pupils, parents/carers.
- Give guidance on developing, implementing and monitoring the drug education programme.

Larches High School will review this policy annually and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the School.

Illegal and unauthorised drugs are not acceptable within the school boundaries.

Aim of the policy

The aim of this policy is to provide guidance for Larches House School in relation to managing drugs on school premises and any incidents that occur with confidence and consistency and in the best interests of those involved and to ensure that the response to incidents, involving drugs complements the overall approach to drug education and the values and ethos of Larches High School.

This policy applies to:-

- All staff, pupils, parents/carers and partner agencies working in Larches High School premises.
- Staff and pupils involved in work experience and other activities taking place outside School i.e. extra- curricular activities

Definitions

The definition of a drug given by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime is:

‘A substance people take to change the way they feel, think or behave’

The term drugs and drugs education is used throughout this document to refer to all drugs:

- All illegal drugs (those controlled by the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971).
- All legal drugs including alcohol, tobacco, volatile substances (those giving off gas or vapour which can be inhaled) ketamine, khat and alkyl nitrites (known as poppers).

1. Drugs, health and needs of the pupil

The professionals working within Larches House School believe that the use, possession or supply of illegal and other unauthorised drugs, within the service boundaries, is unacceptable.

2. Prescribed

Issues concerning a pupil's health are discussed with parents/carers as part of the admission's procedure. At these time decisions on administering prescribed medication are agreed.

3. Non prescribed medicines

It is advised that staff do not give non-prescribed medication to pupils.

4. Managing Drugs

In every case of an incident involving drugs school will place the utmost priority on safety, meeting any medical emergencies with first aid and summoning help before addressing further issues. If in doubt medical assistance will be sought immediately.

5. Staff with Key responsibility for Drugs

The Head teacher / SLT are responsible for dealing with any alcohol and drug related issues within school.

The members of staff who deliver the PSHCE curriculum will have responsibility for overseeing the planning and co-ordination of drug education and the management of drug incidents in the relevant centre, although all members of staff should be aware of the procedures for managing a drug related incident, if the key member of staff works on a part-time basis or if tuition takes place away from the centre.

6. Drug Education

The aim of drug education is to provide opportunities for pupils to develop their knowledge, skills, attitudes and understanding about drugs and appreciate the benefits of a healthy lifestyle, relating this to their own and others actions.

The minimum requirement in the National Curriculum is that pupils are taught:

- Key Stage 1 – about the role of drugs as medicines and the basic skills for making healthy choices and following safety rules.
- Key Stage 2 – about the effects and risks related to tobacco, alcohol, volatile substances and illegal drugs.
- Key Stage 3 – about the effects and risks of drugs and the laws relating to this. They continue to develop skills to make choices for a healthy lifestyle.
- Key Stage 4 – build on their knowledge and learn more about the effects of drug misuse on family, friends, community and society.

However, the essential aim is to give pupils the facts, emphasise the benefits of a healthy lifestyle, and give young people the knowledge and skills to make informed and responsible choices now and later in life.

In school, drugs Education is delivered through:

Curriculum – A comprehensive drugs education policy for all pupils is provided as part of the health education module within the PSHCE programme. Elements of drug education are also found within the Science curriculum.

Cross-curricular links - Although drugs education is delivered in the taught curriculum, further opportunities to reinforce learning occur in other areas of the curriculum.

Pastoral support – A particular strength within the school is the strong, individual pastoral support for pupils. This allows for drugs education to be delivered by teachers and teaching assistants through informal discussion and counselling.

7. Timetabling, Staffing and Teaching

The teachers with responsibility for teaching citizenship and PSHCE within the school will plan the drugs education. The curriculum will also be extended by the involvement of external speakers from other agencies.

8. Methodology and Resources

Teaching methods need to ensure that:

- Every pupil succeeds by providing an inclusive education within a culture of high expectations.
- It builds on what learners already know using structure and pace so students know what is to be learnt and how.
- Learning is vivid and real – understanding through enquiry, relearning and group problem solving.
- Learning is enjoyable and challenging.
- The learning is an enriching experience.
- It promotes assessment for learning.

9. Staff Support and Training

All staff should have a general drug awareness and a good understanding of the services for drug and other related policies.

There will be continuing professional development opportunities for all teachers delivering drug education including:

- Training courses with support to apply learning in the classroom which can be cascaded down to all staff, where relevant outlined by Local Authority and their local Healthy Schools Programme.
- Meeting and discussions of relevant materials and courses by teachers who teach PSHCE and citizenship in school.
- Peer observation of other skills of staff.

10. Management of Drugs Incidents

Defining Drug Incidents

- Drugs or associated paraphernalia are found on school premises
- A pupil demonstrates an inappropriate level of knowledge of drugs for their age

- A pupil is found in possession of drugs or associated paraphernalia
- A pupil is found to be supplying drugs on school premises
- A pupil, parent/ carer or staff member is thought to be under the influence of drugs
- A staff member has information that the illegitimate sale or supply of drugs is taking place in the local area
- A pupil discloses that they or a family member are misusing.

10.1 Drug Paraphernalia

Any needles or syringes discovered in school should be placed in a sturdy, secure container e.g. a tin with a lid, using gloves. Used needles and syringes should not be disposed of in domestic waste. School should liaise with the Local Authority on the best way to dispose of syringes and needles.

10.2 Disposal

The law permits the temporary possession of what is thought to be an illegal substance by a member of staff if the purposes are preventing an offence from being committed or continued in relation to that drug, providing that all reasonable steps have been taken to destroy the drug or deliver it to a person lawfully entitled to take custody of it.

It is vital that:

- A second adult witness is present throughout.
- The sample is sealed in a plastic bag.
- It is stored in a secure location e.g. a safe or other lockable container with access limited to two senior members of staff.
- Police are notified immediately. The law does not require the name of the pupil from whom the drugs were taken, but where the pupil is identified the police will be required to follow set internal procedure.
- Record details of incident including police incident reference number.
- Inform parents/carers unless this would jeopardize the safety of the pupils.

11. Searching pupils or their possessions

Searching with consent

School staff can search pupils with their consent for any item which is banned by the school rules. An additional member of staff must be present.

Searching without consent

If a member of staff suspects that a pupil may be in possession of illegal drugs, every effort should be made to persuade him/her to hand over the illegal substance voluntarily, which should be in the presence of a second adult witness. If the individual refuses then the Education act 1996 allows Head teachers and staff authorised by them to search without consent a pupil (or his/her possessions) whom they reasonably suspect is carrying alcohol or controlled drugs. An additional member of staff must be present. If the pupil refuses the police may be called and the pupil may be excluded.

12. Management of Drug Related Incidents

The school acknowledge that each drug related incident should be treated individually and recognise that a variety of responses may be necessary to deal with incidents. When dealing with incidents reference should be made to the Behaviour Policy and Health and Safety Policy.

13. Confidentiality

The school may maintain confidentiality and is not obliged in law to act when:

- Being told a pupil has used an illegal drug.
- Observing possession or use of illegal drugs outside tuition session or off school premises.
- There are occasions when, although not legally obliged to do so, the service may feel it is appropriate to inform parents/carers and or police.

The school has a statutory requirement to breach confidentiality:

- Where a third party or child is at risk from serious harm.
- When life is in immediate risk.
- Where a member of staff is required to give evidence in a court of law.
- Where there is a child protection issue.

14. Forms of Incidents

14.1 Emergencies

If someone is found in an unconscious state, they should be placed in the emergency position and an ambulance called. The first aider will be called and the victim will not be left unattended. The situation will be assessed, taking into account witness statements, in an attempt to ascertain whether a substance has been taken. Any information will be reported to the paramedics on their arrival.

14.2 Intoxication

The pupil should be removed from the room and be constantly supervised. A first aider will be called.

If a pupil is suspected of being under the influence of a substance / alcohol then the pupil will be asked to leave the site. The decision to ask a pupil to leave will be made by two members of SLT and parents / carers will be notified. Further support will be offered to the pupil.

14.3 Discovery/Observation

Any pupil discovered using, possessing or supplying an illegal substance will be approached and the substance confiscated. Police and parents/carers will be contacted.

14.4 Disclosure

If a pupil discloses to a teacher that he or she was using drugs or knew of someone else using drugs, the first consideration is the welfare of the pupil. Confidentiality will be observed so long as the welfare of the pupil will not be compromised.

14.5 Rumour and Hearsay

School will deal responsibly with any information gained this way. The decision whether to attempt to substantiate the information will depend on the circumstances. A record will be kept of the incident.

14.6 Parents and carers under the influence of drugs on school premises.

When dealing with parents/ carers under the influence of drugs on school premises, staff should attempt to maintain a calm atmosphere. On occasion. A teacher may have concerns about discharging a pupil into the care of a parent/ carer. In such instances. School will discuss with the parent/ carer if alternative arrangements can be made for example, another parent / carer accompanying the pupil home.

The school DSL will be informed.

The focus for the staff will always be the maintenance of the pupil's welfare, as opposed to the moderation of the parent/ carer's behaviour. Where the behaviour of a parent/ carer under the influence of drugs repeatedly places a child at risk or the parent/ carer becomes abusive or violent staff will consider whether to refer to CSC and / or involve the Police.

15 Police Involvement

School reserves the right where appropriate to contact the police about any incident. There is no legal obligation to inform the police of incidents, although it is recognised that they may be able to provide relevant support and advice.

Support and guidance for pupils is provided through the pastoral system. Strong links are maintained with other agencies, which can offer individual and, where appropriate, confidential support.

All incidents are recorded and retained as confidential information. These records are kept in school and detail the nature of the incident and the action taken.

The partnership with other agencies is essential when dealing effectively with the education regarding drugs and also the management of any incidents. Although there are few incidents in which the police may be involved, it is important that communication is maintained between school and the police (Schools Involvement Unit or a named officer).

16. Involvement of Parents and Carers

In any incident involving illegal and unauthorized drugs the parent/carer needs to be involved and the procedure explained as to the response of the school to this incident, unless this would jeopardize the safety of the pupil.