



Queen Mary's Grammar School

Substance and Alcohol Abuse Policy

Approved by the LGB, November 2023

Principles

The School strongly opposes substance abuse (such as drugs, Legal Highs, alcohol, solvents and tobacco) and will take appropriate disciplinary action against offenders. Any pupil found to be in possession of an illegal substance, or Legal High substance can expect to be permanently excluded.

The School believes that action against substance and alcohol abuse helps:

- the maintenance of a purposeful, orderly community.
- the encouragement of health and safety among all members of the community.
- the care and recovery of anyone involved in abuse.

The School will take action against abuse:

- in School,
- during journeys to and from School,
- during all extra-curricular activity in or away from School,
- and may take action against abuse in any circumstance outside school.

Action is carried out by

- the Designated Teacher – Miss R Naguthney (Assistant Headteacher)
- the appropriate Head of Year
- the Headmaster
- Teaching and Pastoral staff

All of these would be carried out in collaboration with the Parents of the pupil concerned in a recognised mechanism of upward referral.

Illegal behaviour will typically be reported to the Police.

If pupils or parents come into contact with any abuse, or action which might lead to abuse, they should contact

- The Headmaster
- The Designated Teacher
- The relevant Head of Year
- Any member of staff in whom they feel they can confide in
- Email well-being@qmgs.merciantrust.org.uk, safeguarding@qmgs.merciantrust.org.uk or enquiries@qmgs.merciantrust.org.uk

1 A Statement of Policy on Substance Use and Misuse

- The School does not condone the misuse of drugs, other harmful substances and alcohol by any member of the School, nor the illegal supply of any of these materials.
- The School is committed to the health and safety of its members, and will take action to safeguard their well-being.
- The School acknowledges the importance of its pastoral role in the welfare of young people, and through the general ethos of the School we will seek to help pupils in need of support.
- The School believes that it has a duty to inform and educate young people on the consequences of use and misuse of drugs, other harmful substances and alcohol, and recognises that health education is a vital part of the personal and social education of all our pupils, whose differing needs we will support.
- Fundamental to our values and practice is the principle of sharing the responsibility for education of our pupils with parents, by keeping them informed and involved at all times, and providing them with appropriate training to raise awareness.

2 In pursuit of this Policy, the School has the following Aims:

- *To protect pupils from the harmful effects of substance abuse and to maintain the School as a “drugs and alcohol free zone”*
- To enable our pupils to make healthy, informed choices by increasing their knowledge, and to provide them with appropriate personal support, within or from outside our community
- To provide accurate understanding about the implications and possible consequences of use and misuse
- To widen understanding about related health and social issues
- To seek to minimise the risks that users and potential users face
- To minimise any of the harmful effects that an instance of misuse might have on other members of the School Community
- To engage with the wider School community on such issues

3 The School will endeavour to implement these Aims as follows:

(a) In General

- Through aspects of our pupils’ experiences in the taught curriculum, the informal curriculum and through opportunities in extra-curricular activities.
- The School may actively co-operate with other agencies such as the police, social services and health and drug agencies to provide drugs education and to deal with incidents of substance and alcohol use and misuse.

(b) Through the roles of Headmaster, Governors and Designated Teacher:

- The Headmaster takes overall responsibility for the Policy and its implementation, for liaison with the Governing Body, parents and appropriate outside agencies; and for the appointment within School of a Designated Teacher responsible for the co-ordination of action against substance and alcohol abuse.
- The Headmaster will ensure that all members of staff dealing with substance and alcohol matters are adequately supported and trained.
- In instances involving substance misuse or supply on the premises, and following discussion between the Headmaster, Designated Teacher, appropriate Head of Year and others who know the pupil well, the Headmaster will inform the parents at the earliest opportunity. The Headmaster will take appropriate disciplinary action and School and parents will then work together to support the pupil involved.
- If a pupil admits to using or supplying substances or alcohol off the School premises, the

Designated Teacher should be informed; they will pass this information to the Headmaster and parents will be informed.

- The Local Governing Body will be kept aware of substance and alcohol abuse education and in any incidents in the same manner as any other issue concerning the direction of the School, the Headmaster taking responsibility to inform the Body appropriately.
- Although, there is no legal obligation to inform the police, the School will normally do so.
- Each substance incident will be considered individually, and the implications of any proposed action will be carefully examined, since there should be a proper balance between the interests of the pupil concerned, other school members, and the wider community.
- The School will consider the full range of sanctions available to it, including permanent exclusion. Any pupil found to be in possession of an illegal substance or alcohol at school, during journeys to and from school, or while engaged in any extra-curricular activities, can expect to be permanently excluded.
- The School will follow the DfE Policy on Drugs and Alcohol Misuse as part of its Health and Safety Policy, which is designed to reduce as far as possible the effects of substance misuse on the user, other employees and the environment.
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/270169/drug_advice_for_schools.pdf
- The Headmaster will take responsibility for liaison with the media, to ensure that any reporting of incidents remains in the best interests of our pupils, their families and the School.
- In accordance with the school's Behaviour Policy and the DfE guidance on Searching, screening and confiscation July 2023, the school has and will use the power to search pupils where there is cause for concern.