



# **Substance Misuse Policy**

# **Varndean College**

## **Substance Misuse Policy**

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### **SCOPE OF THE POLICY**

This policy covers the use, sale, possession of illegal drugs, alcohol and 'legal highs' on College property, on College educational visits or when engaged in any College related activity. The policy covers students while in College, students involved in on any College related activity and students who are in the area immediately adjacent to the College.

\*'Legal Highs' refers to substances which can be purchased legally but which are recognised as having an intoxicating and/or consciousness changing effect. Selling 'legal highs' for human consumption is illegal.

### **POLICY STATEMENT**

The recreational use of illegal drugs, alcohol and 'legal highs' is widespread in the population. It is therefore important that all staff recognise their responsibility to respond following College guidelines to incidents involving their use.

The use or sale of illegal drugs or legal highs on the College site is forbidden. The use or sale of alcohol is forbidden on site without the express permission of the Principal.

Varndean College recognises that the use of illegal drugs, alcohol and legal highs can be detrimental to an individual's health and well-being and to their readiness to learn in the classroom. We also recognise that the use of such substances can affect the learning of others.

Varndean College further recognises its duty to do everything it can to prevent those who seek to profit from young peoples' use of recreational drugs of any kind from doing so on College property including those individuals who are students at the College.

Varndean College fully recognises its responsibilities to increase the knowledge and awareness of its students of the risks of using illegal drugs, alcohol and 'legal highs'.

Varndean College will ensure that its students are aware of:

- the legal position with regard to illegal drug possession and use
- the severity of the College's response to a student's, sale, possession or use of recreational drugs on College property;
- the College's response to students who are under the influence of illegal drugs, alcohol or 'legal highs' in class or on College premises;
- the risks different substances, legal and illegal, pose to the health and well-being of users
- factual information regarding the effects of different substances on users;
- the support provided by the College and external agencies which is available to those students who find themselves in difficulty because of their use of illegal drugs, alcohol or 'legal highs'

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### 1. Aims of the Policy

Varndean College aims to:

- protect the interests of students, staff and visitors at the College,
- provide opportunities through tutorial and through wider college awareness raising to promote knowledge and understanding of the risks associated with the use of illegal drugs, alcohol and legal highs;
- respond supportively to any student in difficulty through their use of illegal substances, alcohol or 'legal highs', but with due regard to the College's legal responsibilities;
- respond to those found in possession of, illegal drugs or 'legal highs' taking account of the aims listed above;
- respond to those dealing in illegal drugs or legal highs more severely than users

### 2. Responsibilities

#### **Any member of the College staff:**

- a) has professional and legal responsibilities which must be discharged irrespective of personal views on the use of drugs;
- b) who finds a student or other individual dealing, using or in possession of an illegal drug, alcohol or a 'legal high' in the College grounds will inform a member of the Senior Leadership Team immediately. A member of this team should also be informed if such activity is suspected or a student is believed to be under the influence of an illegal drug, alcohol or a 'legal high';
- c) who suspects that a student may be in difficulty because of their use of legal or illegal highs or alcohol should report their concerns to the student's Head of School (Students);
- d) should have due regard for the College's Safeguarding and Child Protection policies

If a student confides in a member of staff that they are in difficulty because of their use of illegal drugs or legal highs, the member of staff must inform the Head of School who will seek support for the student either in College or from external agencies as appropriate.

#### **The Senior Leadership Team:**

- a) will ensure that staff are made aware of their responsibilities through induction and training;
- b) will ensure that staff are given regular opportunities to update their knowledge and awareness of substances misused by young people.

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#### **3. Responses**

- a) Where the sale of illegal drugs or 'legal highs' is confirmed on site or during a college activity, the College will involve the police and will exclude the student concerned permanently.
- b) Where use of illegal drugs or 'legal highs' by a student on site or on a College activity is confirmed, the College will make an appropriate response including support, but will also take disciplinary action which could include referral to the police. The response will take account of the Student Support Policy and parents will be informed.
- c) Where the consumption or sale of alcohol on the premises is confirmed disciplinary action will be taken under the Student Support Policy and parents will be informed.
- d) Where a student is identified as being in difficulty in circumstances which indicate the misuse/abuse of drugs or alcohol, the College will aim to provide appropriate support to the student using in-house and/or external agencies. This will not preclude the use of the Student Support Policy's staged procedures.
- e) Where a student attends College under the influence of illegal drugs, alcohol or 'legal highs' they will be sent home and parents/carers informed. Where it is deemed unsafe for the student to travel unaccompanied, a parent or carer will be asked to collect the student from College.
- f) The College will aim to raise student awareness of the risks of misusing drugs and alcohol through Core Studies activities and activities by outside agencies within College e.g. RUOK.

More detailed guidance is given in Guidelines for Staff: Responding to Misuse of Drugs.

#### **4. Publication**

This policy will be publicised on the College website